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University of Turku

MANAGERIAL INTERACTION — DISCUSSION
PRACTICES IN MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

Kirsi Lainema



Turun kauppakorkeakoulu
Turku School of Economics



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and rationale of the study

Management and leadership perspectives that place particular emphasis on communication and interaction have gained momentum over recent years. According to Cooren (2007, xiii) the first decade of the 21st century marks the beginning of an *interactional turn*¹ in organization studies. This “turn” places particular emphasis on highlighting the details of interactions to better understand the functioning of the organizational world (ibid.).

The interest in interaction among management and organization studies (MOS) and leadership studies is obvious and self-evident; talk-in-interaction is the central medium through which the daily working activities of many professionals and organizational representatives are conducted (Drew and Heritage 1992, 3). These activities and practices, such as decision making, transmission of information, and the close coordination of physical tasks, are “required to be done face-to-face, require being done this way, and are vulnerable to face-to-face effects” (Goffman 1983, 8). Daily interactions between members of work groups are, therefore, a constituting characteristic of the organizational context and the way through which organizations exist and work. The structure of an organization is, thus, constituted through interactions among its members (Alby & Zuccheromaglio 2006, 943).

The centrality of interaction in the practice of management was identified, although not explicitly acknowledged, in Mintzberg’s (1973) seminal study on managerial work. Mintzberg observed that more than 70% of managerial work is based on various forms of verbal interaction. Tengblad (2006) compared Mintzberg’s findings with more recent studies on managerial work, and confirmed that verbal interactions remain in a similarly dominant role in managerial work².

Conversely therefore, it is somewhat surprising that interaction and communication are *only now* gaining more attention. Until recently, the role of interaction in managing and organizing has mostly been noted in passing in

¹ The “linguistic” turn that took place in the organization studies in the 1980s was followed by the “practice” turn in the 1990s (Schatzki 2001).

² Tengblad and Vie (2012) provide a comprehensive overview of how managerial work has been studied in different times. In addition, particular characteristics and contexts of managerial work are discussed by Tengblad (2012).

MOS³. At best, interaction has been addressed descriptively, but not analytically. However, there is a long tradition of ethnomethodological (EM) and conversation analytical (CA) studies that examine the production of everyday organizational action in, and through, talk-in-interaction (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh 2010). These studies have, for example, examined how asymmetries in interaction are reflected and constructed (e.g. Ten Have 1991, Heritage & Greenbatch 1991, Llewellyn 2010) and how they can be recovered and worked out (e.g. Kettunen, Poskiparta & Karhila 2003), and how power and influence can be interactively constructed (e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2000b, 2003a; Clifton 2009). In addition, studies on technology and information systems illuminate how designing and using new technologies are fundamentally dependent on local and collaborative organization of talk-in-interaction (e.g. Rawls, Garcia & Mann 2008, Rawls & Mann 2010, Whalen & Vinkhuizen 2000). Further studies demonstrate how disturbances in interaction contribute to fatal incidents in routine activities, such as emergency calls (Whalen, Zimmerman & Whalen 1999), medical handovers (Weick 2002), and in environments prone to accidents, such as flight decks (Weick & Roberts 1993). All of these studies illustrate that organizations are highly dependent on interaction and, at the same time, vulnerable to disturbances in it. In particular, this applies to complex organizations, and to “personnel who have managed to acquire governing roles” that is, the managers (Goffman 1983, 8). Therefore, it is time for MOS and leadership studies to take the detailed study of interaction seriously and pay more attention to looking at how *leadership and management are accomplished in the situated social interaction*. This is also the aim of the present study.

Meetings represent an opportune context for the study of managerial interaction, as it is in these that much of the communicative and interactive work of leaders and managers takes place⁴. Tengblad (2006) notes that the share of meetings of the weekly working hours of top managers has remained steadily over 60% for decades. Meetings are a universal, pervasive, and frequent managerial practice in all types of organizations. They often form the basic communicative structure of an organization and can, therefore, be regarded as the backbone of organizing and managing. In other words, meetings fundamentally structure the intra- and inter-organizational communicative encounters that provide the essential *interactive* mechanism

³ Samra-Fredericks' studies (e.g., 2000a, 2000b, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2005, and 2010) on managerial work represent rare exceptions in this respect.

⁴ Overall, managerial practices, be they budgeting (e.g. Fauré, Brummans, Giroux & Taylor 2010), performance appraisal reviews (e.g. Asmuss 2008, Gordon & Stewart 2009), or strategic planning (e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2010, Spee & Jarzabkowski 2011), among others, are extantly based on interaction.

through which organizations create and maintain the practical activity of organizing (Schwartzman 1989, Boden 1994).

Until recently, studies on meetings in the field of MOS have predominantly focused on examining how to make meetings more efficient (Asmuss & Svennevig 2009). Consequently, little is known about the interactive practices employed by managers in meetings when dealing with organizational issues (Samra-Fredericks 2000a). If it is maintained that managerial practices based on interaction, such as management meetings, are influential and consequential to the survival and success of the organization, it is paramount to learn more about how managerial interaction in meetings is organized, and how these variously organized interactions contribute to the practice of management. In the following chapters, I will describe how this gap in the literature is addressed in this study.

1.2 Aims of the study and the research questions

The study at hand is based on longitudinal observational data on management meetings in one meeting group. The data cover 35 management meetings from the first meeting of the new group in autumn 2007 until meetings in spring 2009. In the study, I focus on examining how interactions in these managerial meetings are organized and structured, and how they are constructed and sustained in the practice of management meetings. Analysis of the longitudinal data also enables an examination of how the practice of management meetings is shaped by the discursive practices in use.

The aims of the research are as follows:

1. To examine how discussions in management meetings are organized and structured as discursive practices.
2. To analyze how these discussion practices are constructed and sustained in social interaction among the participants.
3. To examine how the practice of management meetings is shaped by the discussion practices employed.

Therefore, this study aims to develop a more refined understanding of the features of various types of managerial interaction, and their role in the managerial practice of management meetings. In this regard, essential issues are *who gets to talk* and *when they get to talk*. The analysis also allows for observing how participants' roles are reflected in, and constructed through, the variously organized meeting interactions.

In addition, the analyses yield in a classification of discussion practices. The classification is based on a set of distinctive features of interaction such as

turn-taking structures and organization of talk, the dynamics and focus of the talk, and the participants' roles in the interaction.

Furthermore, this study examines the effects of the variously organized and structured discussion practices, both on the interactive situation at hand and meeting practice in general. Thus, the study seeks to illuminate how the practice of management meetings is shaped by, and established on, particular discussion practices. This is possible due to the nature of the longitudinal observational data and the chosen analytical methodologies.

A detailed examination of the situated interactions also allows for observing how aspects are made or not made mutually intelligible, and for producing new knowledge on how organizational issues are constructed and labeled as important. This way, the study also illuminates how managerial agenda is interactively formed and established.

The purpose of the present study is not to produce normative guidelines on how meeting discussions should be organized and issues discussed. Instead, this study aims to highlight how the employed discursive practices intertwine with the managerial practices and their outcomes.

1.3 Framing the study

The present study is conducted as an ethnomethodologically informed observational study on more than 30 managerial meetings over approximately 18 months. In this case the application of an ethnomethodological perspective involves focusing on the examination of the actors' (members') situated practices of interaction, and on how the variously organized local interactions shape both the studied interactive situation and the evolving practice of management team meeting⁵. Therefore this study seeks to respond to calls for a tighter focus on what people do for work and for methods that yield detailed descriptions of work (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh 2010, Barley & Kunda 2001).

I use the term practice to refer to the socially enacted work in which the actors engage "in order to interactively construct a mutually intelligible world" (Rawls 2008b, 7). Management team meeting is a social practice based on interaction, and engaging in this practice requires constant mutual attention to the continuously produced situated interaction. Management team meeting

⁵ The field of microanalysis of conversations is diverse and represents various different approaches, and in the area of MOS and leadership studies there are several discursively and/or interactively oriented subfields (Asmuss & Svennevig 2009). Cooren (2007) divides these fields to LSI (Language and Social Interaction), a subfield entailing e.g. conversation analytical studies, and to OC (Organizational Communication) a subfield focusing, for example, in looking how organizational metaconversation is constituted through communication (see e.g. Taylor and Every 2008). In the extent of this dissertation it is, however, not possible to scrutinize these subfields in detail.

becomes an orderly and a mutually recognizable and established practice through its repetition. Meeting interaction, in turn, consists of various kinds of differently organized and structured discursive practices. These discursive practices create the basis for the practice of management team meeting, simultaneously shaping and framing this practice. The implications of the adopted perspective on studying interaction as a situated accomplishment are both theoretical and analytical.

The ethnomethodological and the conversation analytical approaches employed in the study at hand are anti-cognitivist, and thus reject the goal of explaining action by reference to underlying cognitive states or entities (see e.g. Coulter 1991, Hepburn & Potter 2004). Llewellyn (2008, 783) notes that “The best way of grasping knowledgeability is to examine live conduct within a practice. By this token, links between knowledge and action (mind and body) are preserved, rather than artificially separated, as mutually constitutive elements of practice.” Consequently, knowing needs not to be reduced to a cognitive phenomenon as the participants display and, thus, make public their knowledge of what (in their view) takes place in each interactive situation (Llewellyn 2010). Thus, in this study at hand an understanding of action is pursued by examining the live conduct of the actors.

The adopted ethnomethodologically oriented perspective has further implications. While managerial interaction in general can take place between various intra- and inter-organizational actors in both formal and informal settings such as briefings, goal setting discussions, lunch and coffee breaks, corridors, parking areas, company retreats, and strategy days, I have, for various reasons, chosen to focus on studying interaction in one meeting group in one organization. First, management meetings represent an important, formal, and purposeful managerial practice, and I wanted to explore how this practice is interactively constructed and sustained in this particular meeting team. Starting observing the meetings from the very first meeting of the new top team provided a unique opportunity for this exploration. I wanted to utilize this opportunity in full by focusing solely on this particular meeting team, and sought to learn as much as possible about the practices of this particular meeting team. Therefore, other occasions of managerial interaction in BioCorp (pseudonym) and between other organizational members are outside the scope of this study. These choices are, thus, connected to the employed research methodologies and, as with all ethnomethodological and ethnographic studies, this study is a single case study that focuses on learning about what happens in a particular case.

The level of analysis employed in the this study focuses on the organizing and structuring features of the talk-in-interaction in management team meetings, and on how language use shapes both the immediate situation and

the meeting practice in the long term. Thus, I do not focus on the detailed study of the linguistic features of the meetings discussions as such, but instead look at how the various forms of language use simultaneously construct and are constructed by the situated social interactions. Moreover, I seek to shed light on how particular features of interaction contribute to shaping the actors' roles and their opportunities to contribute to the interactions and practices of managing and organizing.

Meeting talk is intertwined with and paced by the use of various types of artefacts, such as PowerPoint-presentations, strategy documents, organization charts, task descriptions, budgets, financial reports, flip charts and meeting agendums and memorandums. However, due to retaining the focus on the interactive practices artefacts and their role in the meeting discussions are not taken in the analytical focus, but rather mentioned briefly.

The long observation period enabled recording the development of the discussion practices and the meeting practice in time. However, the temporal trajectory is embedded in the analysis of the interactive practices, rather than addressed explicitly. This choice allows for placing the organizing and structuring features and the effects of the variously organized discursive practices center-stage. Therefore, the purpose is not to provide a general description and analysis of meeting discussions *as they happened*, but rather to focus on examining and explicating particular and distinctive characteristics and features of the identified discursive practices.

The present study is interdisciplinary in nature, and can therefore potentially contribute to multiple fields, such as management and organization studies, leadership studies, practice-based studies, and studies on ethnomethodology. As Llewellyn and Hindmarsh (2010) note, it is already known that people can *do* organization; now it is the task of social scientists to find out *how*.

1.4 A glimpse of a management team meeting

It is early afternoon on a Thursday in an austere, windowless meeting room in BioCorp. The members of the Top Management Team of Operations (TMTO) take their seats, having helped themselves to coffee and pastries from the side table, while Anthony, the controller, adjusts the data projector to project the excel sheet containing the past month's financial figures onto the screen. Pre-meeting small talk, about gardening and the forthcoming Easter holiday, around the oval-shaped meeting table subsides as Anthony begins to go through the realized costs of the operations organization over the previous month. The two-and-a-half hour TMTO meeting in BioCorp has begun.

Extract 1 Meeting 35, settling period.

Meeting time 00:05:44.

1 ANTHONY: Ye:es (.) salaries and side costs

2 thirty thousand below.

3 PETER: What about these (omitted)-people who were made redundant

4 they still show this month, right?

5 ANTHONY: They show there this month yes.

6 But not from here on.

7 PETER: Ye:es.

8 JANICE: Except for them who (inaudible)

9 ANTHONY:=There as a matter of fact,

10 we did lag behind in them salary expenses

11 now like as said before

12 them side costs are (inaudible) calculated.

13 These, like (inaudible) expenses, like (inaudible)

14 mainly the training costs

15 they remained under a half

16 the budget of (omitted) thousand,

17 remained under half remained in almost (omitted) thousand (cont.)

Above, Extract 1 shows how the meeting begins with a review of the *financial figures*⁶ and metrics for the previous month, led by Anthony. Commencing meetings with Anthony's financial reporting was established as a regular and taken-for-granted practice in the meetings over the year-and-a-half during which I attended BioCorp's TMTO meetings as observer. In this particular meeting, Anthony's reporting review on the financial figures and metrics continues for approximately three quarters of an hour.

The reporting discussions are punctuated and surrounded by short *free-flowing focused discussions and two-party discussions* participated variously by the team members.

Extract 2 Meeting 35, settling period.

Meeting time 00:31:00.

1 JANICE: And we won't probably change the old (entries)

2 but why can't there be the whole

3 because there are anyway

4 although we're talking like about the operations

5 these others (costs) are sort of

6 from the whole house. Like can't there be overtimes (costs) from the whole

⁶ A members' term referring to the profit and loss account.

7 house and the head count from the whole house?

8 PETER: Well if Rebecca looks at it

9 she won't be interested in whose lot it is whose

10 overtime (costs) it is.

11 ANTHONY: Yes and it's not like

12 it could be quite ok the whole lot.

13 In any case most of it is in practice

14 from the operations. (cont.)

During the free-flowing focused discussion, illustrated in Extract 2, the discussants mutually engage in forming a perspective on how to introduce the structure of particular costs to Rebecca, the General Director (GD) of BioCorp, in a consequent managerial meeting. The realm of the meeting practice of the TMTO was marked by the GD during the orientation period of the TMTO. By introducing the GD into the discussion as the *principal* in line 8, Peter emphasizes that the issues discussed in the TMTO meetings are still evaluated against the anticipated expectations and preferences of the GD.

In comparison to those a year ago, reporting discussions are now more participatory and dynamic. Overall, the meeting discussions are now characterized by un-restrained turn-taking and dynamic changes in the pace and length of the turns. The participants' familiarity with the meeting practice and issues on the agenda is exhibited as fluency in the interaction, and in smooth transition from one issue to another. On occasions, transition from one topic to another is facilitated by Peter, chairman of the TMTO and Director of Operations.

During Anthony's reporting reviews, Peter briefly takes the floor to introduce new cost control practices implemented by Corporation (pseudonym). These practices are aimed to reduce travel expenses in BioCorp in anticipation of future developments in the economic situation. As part of the multinational Corporation, BioCorp is required to adopt and adhere to various universal practices introduced by Corporation, which range from accounting and reporting to human relations (HR) practices. The short free-flowing focused discussion that follows Peter's introduction of new travel instructions is facilitated by Peter. During this discussion the participants freely assess, critique, and elaborate on Corporation's motion; shortly after which the discussion is drawn to a close by Peter.

The order of the agenda items in this meeting follows an expected and established pattern. Subsequent to reviewing the financial figures and metrics, the team discusses HR issues introduced by Janice, the acting personnel manager. The topical HR issues include, among others, the recently terminated employees' cooperation negotiations and their influence on personnel, the

prospective personnel performance pay reviews, and the future training opportunities for the directors of operations' subordinates. Each of these issues is first introduced by Janice and then discussed by the group in a free-flowing focused practice.

Following Janice's turn, each director introduces their *highlights and disappointments reviews*. These operation-specific reporting reviews, illustrated variously by PowerPoint slideshows, provide a compact cross-section of topical issues, both recent and future, in each of the operations. The following extract illustrates Iris reiterating her review that addresses issues such as level of performance and its contributory factors, priorities in the current quarter, and the most pressing challenges in the *Liquids* operation, such as overload of projects vis-à-vis skilled personnel.

Extract 3 Meeting 35, settling period.

Meeting time 2:00:02.

1 IRIS: (cont.) so in that respect we're in good shape.

2 Then this, the rest of

3 the disaster recovery plans meaning the upper level

4 and then more closely the lower level

5 And then, in ((department))

6 there are a lot of things

7 there are over 40 projects

8 and there are under 10 people there

9 so they pretty well, juggle

10 those projects and take them forward.

11 So this is for example why that, ((name of female employee))'s message

12 that there are not (.) that (.) there is just

13 that there are not enough people

14 to take all, all our projects ahead so (.)

15 PETER: It shows in ((name of female manager))'s pipelines

16 the same thing =

17 IRIS:=Ye:es (.) So we do have enough to do.

18 I had the ((name of quality process)) there in the highlights also

19 but I took it off this morning

20 I thought that, there are still a few (issues) in the procurement

21 so (.) So no, in my opinion we're not as clear

22 that need to be explained from this as I would have hoped but (½)

23 Quite ok (.)

24 AMANDA: But it could have been

25 a lot worse also! (Gives a laugh)

26 IRIS: Could be worse but we did, like,

27 in general I think it went well.

28 I wouldn't brag about it though (½)
29 PETER: How's, Iris, we talked earlier about, about
30 the manufacturing line and
31 some minor adjustments have been made there quite a lot actually
32 in order to get a grip and control (of the issue) there (.)? (cont.)

Iris' *operation-specific reporting*, partly shown in Extract 3, elicits comments from the other participants, and after she has concluded her review, Peter takes up a related issue that is then discussed briefly by multiple participants. As often is the case with meetings, this discussion topic leads to setting up another meeting (see e.g. Schwartzman 1989).

In this particular meeting, the meeting discussions remain focused on the issue, and the occasional *drifting discussions* are brief. In addition, contrary to many previous meetings, the meeting team does not engage in *micro-mining*, the exploration of the minutiae details of operative issues that, in general, are easily galvanized, especially by the operation-specific reporting reviews. Therefore, the meeting discussions proceed in a dynamic fashion and are structured as a series of relatively brief introductory addresses or presentations followed by *free-flowing, focused discussions* as shown in Extract 3.

When the time allocated to the meeting is coming to an end, Peter begins to wrap up the discussion, and after a few additional quick announcements the participants, one by one, start collecting their notebooks, laptops, mobile phones, and other personal items, and check their e-mail and text messages. Anthony gives final reminders regarding the preparations for BioCorp's monthly management review simultaneously as the directors start heading back to their offices to continue their day with their other managerial duties.

It would seem that the meeting discussions in the TMTO mostly deal with mundane managerial issues; however, many of the issues in the meeting have a strategic bearing as they are significantly, although not necessarily explicitly, "consequential to the success and survival of the firm" (see e.g. Jarzabkowski 2004).

The last meeting of the observation period is adjourned. However, my work in examining the meeting data has only just begun.

2 THEORETICAL KEY CONCEPTS AND THE LITERATURE REVIEW

“The fundamental insight of ethnomethodology is that relationships are something we DO rather than something we HAVE.” (Mandelbaum 2003, 548, emphasis in original).

In this chapter literature on managerial interaction in meetings is reviewed. In conjunction with the literature review I introduce and define the conceptual tools and key concepts applied in the study. Chapter 2.1 introduces management meetings as occasions of goal-oriented institutional interaction that are guided by institutional norms and traditions, but that, however, can be variously influenced by the participants’ interactive contributions. In Chapter 2.2 I introduce and discuss selected studies on interaction in management meetings. At the same time I discuss the theoretical key concepts drawn from the literature as well as their applicability to the present study. Chapter 2.3 summarizes the discussion on previous studies on meeting interactions, and identifies a need for a more encompassing perspective on studying meeting interaction as an *in situ* accomplishment. In Chapter 2.4, I therefore introduce ethnomethodology (EM) as a feasible and workable approach to the study of interaction and human practices.

2.1 Meetings as a managerial practice

Meetings represent the most widespread and frequent organizational practice in all types of organizations, ranging from informal to formal organizations, and from non-profits to multinational corporations. Despite the increased application of virtual communication technologies, meetings are still predominantly based on face-to-face interaction.

Meetings range from board meetings and regularly scheduled onsite meetings to “away days” or strategy workshops, which occur outside the normal schedule of business meetings in the organization (MacIntosh, MacLean & Seidl 2008). The purposes of meetings range from exchanging ideas and opinions and achieving organizational goals by solving problems to making decisions, negotiating agreements, developing policies and procedures, and formulating recommendations (Asmuss and Svennevig 2009,

Schwartzman 1989). Thus, meetings differ from each other depending on the purpose and aims, and on the composition of the meeting group. Furthermore, the degree of formality in various types of meetings may vary from formal to more casual meeting conduct. However, despite the diversity and variance across differing types of meeting, the handling of issues is essentially based on talk and interaction. Thus, meetings represent a thoroughly interactive organizational practice.

Overall, the work of managers consists of managing and organizing, and activities such as directing, planning, decision-making, controlling, and budgeting are often depicted as typical characteristics of managerial work (see for example Tengblad & Vie 2012). Working as a superior for a number of subordinates adheres also to the distinctive features of a managerial position. Therefore, managerial meetings can be defined as meetings participated by managers.

Management meetings, as meetings in general, differ from other institutional communicative encounters in that they are prearranged and officially purposeful in the organizational sense. The participants gather to meet and act in their institutional roles, and deal with institutional issues typically oriented to achieving specific goals (Asmuss & Svennevig 2009). Thus, meetings represent a type of “focused interaction that as a communicative event organizes interaction in distinctive ways” (Schwartzman 1989, 274-275). Managerial meetings are critical for organizational validation and provide, therefore, an arena where important (i.e. strategic) issues can legitimately be addressed (e.g. Jedema, Degeling & White 1999; Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008, Samra-Fredericks 2003a) and where strategic views and guidelines are communicated and negotiated (e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2010, Nielsen 2009). Therefore, these meetings operate as focal points for strategic activities of organizational actors (Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008). Samra-Fredericks (2003a, 143) notes: “(...) it is through talking that strategists negotiate over and establish meanings, express cognition, articulate their perceptions of the environment (etc.) and from this basis, legitimate their individual and collective judgments.” Managerial meetings, thus, occupy an important role in the practice of management.

As meetings often provide opportunities to encounter people outside one’s immediate circle, they are important sites for sharing information and for forming perceptions. In addition to their role as sites of decision making and as instances of formal political power, meetings also serve as focal sites for collective sense-making and as important social and cultural validators (Schwartzman 1989). Furthermore, managerial meetings are found to serve as sites for promoting interpretations of critical key concepts, and organizational practices and procedures (Rawls & Mann 2010, Nielsen 2009). It is clear that

the organizational dictionary of relevant categories, concepts, and terms is not “just there” for the employees, or managers, to use, but rather needs to be established and acquired (Nielsen 2009). Therefore, meetings also provide an important learning opportunity for the participants. Managerial meetings also represent occasions in which power and influence and the “shaping of attention” can be interactively accomplished (Samra-Fredericks 2003a and 2003b), and where organizational actors can influence the decision-making episodes of work (Clifton 2009). In sum, management meetings form a binding interactive structure through which managerial activities gain continuance.

Managerial meetings also represent occasions of institutional interaction; the participants gather to meet and act in their institutional roles, and deal with institutional issues that typically orient to achieving specific goals (Asmuss & Svennevig 2009, Drew & Heritage 1992). The degree of formality across organizations and meetings varies from meetings with strictly controlled turn-taking procedures and formal conduct to more loosely managed and controlled meetings. Despite the variation in the degree of institutionalization, the institutional nature of management meetings is nevertheless illustrated in multiple ways. The background expectations and the “rules” that guide the interaction as well as the participants’ distinctive institutional roles are most clearly visible and observable in organizational interaction.

Interaction in meetings is, thus, influenced and shaped by the established organizational practices as well as by the institutional norms and traditions. These include the more or less explicit rules that regulate, for example, the turn-taking, the role of the participants and the norms of speaking. Thus, although social actors have some influence over how interaction proceeds, this influence is restricted or prescribed in formal settings, such as meetings, by the institutional “rules” that govern the interaction (Suchman 2007; quotation in original). These rules and the power influences by which they are enforced are, in turn, exhibited and visible in the interaction. Furthermore, these influences together with the institutional setting define also, to a large extent, the subject matter of the interaction. Deliberately arranged social gatherings, such as meetings, can therefore not be regarded as occasions of *everyday talk*; instead, management talk in meetings is highly political, sensitive, and loaded with meaning. Thus, meeting talk is both a source of explicit and implicit knowledge, and a record of events that is freely open for future analyses and readings.

While the discursive resources in managerial meetings are variously available to the participants, current studies on managerial interaction in meetings demonstrate that the content and direction of the interaction can be influenced by the participants (see e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 2003b;

Clifton 2009). Therefore, interaction in meetings allows for influencing the operations and activities of the organization in fundamental ways. As a key managerial practice, meetings form the backbone of managing, organizing, and strategizing. Thus, management meetings represent a critical managerial practice that essentially influences the success and survival of an organization.

The present study draws from multiple studies on managerial meetings and meeting interaction. All these studies have merits in their designated areas of study, and together contribute to the set of conceptual tools employed in this study. Thus, while the theoretical concepts and tools stem from the reviewed studies on managerial practices and interaction in meetings, the theoretical and conceptual groundwork is based on ethnomethodology (EM), which represents both the theoretical and analytical perspective in the present study. EM is an approach particularly suitable to the observational study of managerial practices, as it allows for looking at how social practices are engaged to *in situ*.⁷ Combined, the concepts drawn from literature and EM provide a multifaceted perspective on how the managerial meeting talk is structured and organized as distinctive discussion practices, and how these practices are established in the practice of management meeting.

2.2 The literature review on interaction in managerial meetings

In this chapter, I introduce and discuss literature and research that examine managerial interaction in meetings from perspectives closest to the present study at hand. In Chapter 2.2.1, I discuss strategy-as-practice (SAP) approach, and take Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) study of meeting practices in strategy meetings to a closer inspection. Subsequently, I review the study of discursive practices in hospital meetings by Iedema et al (1999) in Chapter 2.2.2. Poncini's (2004) linguistic study of multinational business meetings is discussed in Chapter 2.2.3. In Chapter 2.2.4 I review Samra-Fredericks' studies of power and influence in managerial meetings. In each chapter I also discuss the applicability and feasibility of the key concepts and observations for the study at hand.

⁷ Asmuss and Svennevig (2009) take note of the variety of discursively oriented approaches employed in recent meeting studies including discourse analysis, linguistics, and conversation analysis.

2.2.1 Meeting practices in strategy meetings

Researchers focusing on the study of *strategy as practice* (SAP) recognize meetings as a key managerial practice. The SAP approach is concerned with the question of what strategic actors actually *do in practice*. Beginning in the early 2000s, SAP has developed into a distinct practice perspective on strategy (Whittington 2002, Johnson, Melin & Whittington 2003, and Jarzabkowski 2004). The practice-based view on strategy and strategizing focuses especially on the actions and interactions of strategy practitioners – be they the routines, discourses, concepts, or technologies, through which the strategy labour is conducted (Jarzabkowski, Balogun & Seidl 2007, and Jarzabkowski & Whittington 2008). Practices, in turn, are perceived as the shared routines of behaviour comprising the traditions, norms, and procedures for thinking, acting, and using “things” (Whittington 2006, 619, quotation in original).

SAP employs a wide perspective on strategy practitioners, although the role and importance of top managers in strategizing is often emphasized (e.g. Jarzabkowski 2003 and 2005; Hoon 2007, Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008). By studying the work practices of strategists, SAP aims to generate knowledge that will be helpful for them in their work. Recently, also other organizational actors’, such as the middle managers’ and management consultants’ participation to strategy has been examined by SAP scholars.

Empirical studies on managerial (strategizing) practices range from studying top management teams in universities (Jarzabkowski & Wilson 2002, Jarzabkowski & Searle 2004, Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008), and middle managers (Rouleau 2005, Mantere 2005 and 2008) to specific occupational groups, such as project engineers (Laine & Vaara 2007), and business consultants (e.g. Sturdy, Schwarz & Spicer 2006), among others. These studies aim to emphasize the role and importance of the various actors and practices involved in the managerial practice of strategizing.

SAP researchers have probed both into scheduled, regular management meetings and particular off-site meetings, or away days. These studies highlight the importance of interaction, and find that the necessary skills for successful execution of away days are found to rely more on communication skills than on analytical competence (see e.g. Hodgkinson, Whittington, Johnson & Schwarz 2006; Johnson, Prashantham & Floyd 2006, Whittington, Molloy, Mayer & Smith 2006). Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) focus on the examination of the social practices through which the strategy meetings are accomplished. Their analysis points out that the implications of meeting practices are related to *who gets to speak and when they get to speak*. Jarzabkowski and Seidl’s (2008) study is, therefore, of particular interest to the present study, and will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) study takes a broad view on meeting practices; altogether 11 meeting practices are identified and collected in a taxonomic classification. This classification is presented in the following table (Table 1).

Table 1 Meeting practices (Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008, 1401; 1404; & 1410).

Bracketing participants in a central location
Setting agenda
Chairing meeting
<i>Free discussion</i>
<i>Restricted free discussion</i>
<i>Restricted discussion</i>
<i>Administrative discussion</i>
Working groups
Rescheduling
Voting
Stage-managing

From the mutual category of meeting practices, Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) identify four particular practices of meeting interaction, thus introducing the concept of *discussion practice*. The identified discussion practices, free discussion, restricted free discussion, restricted discussion, and administrative discussion, are of particular interest to the present study (in italics in Table 1). The identified discussion practices are distinguished from each other according to *who gets to talk* and *how they get to talk*. This organization is subsequently evidenced in the turn-taking features of the meeting discussions, and in the role of the chair in the meetings. The concept of discussion practice is useful for the present study at hand as it focuses on the particular ways the interaction in the meetings is organized.

Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) note that, by regulating participation in the meeting discussions, the chair can effectively manage the outcomes of the meetings. For example, the chair can open and encourage free discussion until a preferable mutual understanding is reached. However, the chair can simultaneously fend off participants' potential challenges and counter-arguments by restricting their participation in the discussions. For the purposes of the study at hand these observations are important, as they emphasize meetings as carefully managed and politically sensitive occasions of institutional interaction.

Control over the turn-taking influences, however, not only who gets to speak, but also the kind of interactive contributions that can be produced.

Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008, 1408) note that during restricted discussion participants tend to speak on points in line with existing orientations. Therefore, the restricted discussion has a stabilizing effect by constraining variation and encouraging confirmation of existing orientations. This is accomplished through the legitimation of strategy by asserting the democratic symbols of giving each participant a voice (*ibid.*). Free discussion, in turn, facilitates the emergence and development of variation by enabling the participants to examine the discussed issues through free-flowing addresses, and to develop proposals in a manner that increases organizational receptivity.

Administrative discussion, which took more than half of the meeting time in Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) study, dealt with items that were not likely to occasion variation, such as progress reports on capital expenditure. Administrative discussions were declaratory in nature, which implies that the agenda items were reported or presented by one participant, and not opened to public discussion. According to Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) administrative discussion occupies an important role in stabilizing strategy within the loosely structured and ambiguous university context.

Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) note, thus, that meetings actively create stability by reproducing legitimation and by fending off challenges to existing strategic orientations. The chair can enhance the stabilizing effect by controlling participation in the meeting discussion and limiting the range of discursive practices. However, variation in discussion practices is required to induce novel insights on conversations, and to encourage the elaboration of issues beyond declaratory accounts.

Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) study connects particular ways of discussing in meetings to the larger organizational outcomes. This is an important notion, which gives further impetus to a detailed examination of how interaction in managerial meetings is organized and to what organizational consequences. In the study at hand I can employ these observations as sensitizing concepts to investigate how managerial work is accomplished through various types of interactions.

Studies focusing on the organization of interaction, particularly conversation analytical (CA) studies, regard turn-taking a key feature of interaction (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974). In Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) study, however, turn-taking is treated more as an *explanans*⁸ to the effects on strategic orientations than as a self-subsistent focus of study; it follows that their analysis does not focus on a detailed examination of various

⁸ That which needs to be explained (*explanandum*) and that which contains the explanation (*explanans*)—either as a cause, antecedent event, or necessary condition. A Dictionary of Sociology. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-explnndmndxplnnsxplcndmnd.html> Fetched March 2nd 2012 at 13:06.

types of interaction. Instead, similar to SAP studies in general, their attention is directed more to the substantial field of strategy than to the detailed analysis of the social practices themselves (see e.g. Corradi, Vezzoni & Gherardi 2010, and Geiger 2009). Thus, for Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008), the identified discussion practices are important due to their influence on strategy. Consequently, the detail in which the observed activities are presented and described in Jarzabkowski and Seidl's study is rather coarse. It is, however, feasible to adopt the applicable key concepts and observations to the extent to which they are suitable for the present study, and to complement the conceptual toolbox from other studies.

2.2.2 Modes of interaction in meetings

Iedema, Degeling and White (1999) examine the discursive practices employed in hospital meetings at various hierarchical levels. Similar to Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008), Iedema et al (1999) also look at how the discursive practices relate to organizational outcomes.

The distinctive characteristics of various types of meeting discussions in Iedema et al's (1999) study first relate to the turn-taking structures and the discussion dynamics; secondly, to the consistency and focus of talk, and, thirdly, to the display of organizational identity and the membership rules of talk. For the study at hand, the first and second points are especially of interest.

Iedema et al (1999) focus their analysis on selected features of interaction, and show how these elements are relevant to discursive practices in meetings. The employed analytical scheme gathers various aspects of interaction, such as the structural and dynamic features of meeting talk, which are variously displayed in different types of meetings. Table 2 displays the outcome of these analyses, and presents the main characteristics of the identified discursive practices.

Table 2 Mid-level Meetings, Profession-centred Meetings and Management Meetings (Iedema, Degeling & White 1999, 146)

Feature of interaction	Management meetings	Profession centred meetings	Patient centred meetings
Turn-taking	Participants generally produce highly structured turns at talk	While the chair produces relatively structured turns, other participants often do not	Participants produce relatively structured talk centering around individual events
Consistency of the talk	Participants produce consistent types of talk	Talk can vary considerably in nature	Participants produce the types of talk associated with their professional role and status
Professional/organizational identity	Participants adopt organizational identities	Participants insist on professional rather than organizational identities	Participants enact professional identities
Shared focus of talk	Participants maintain shared focus of talk	Participants often conduct side conversations	Participants maintain a shared focus
Interruptions and overlap	Participants rarely interrupt each other: "non-dynamic talk"	Participants interrupt each other: "dynamic talk"	Participants sometimes interrupt each other: "semi-dynamic talk"
Length of turns	Participants can produce long turns	Participants can produce long turns, but the dynamics of the talk also produce short turns	Participants can produce long turns, but the talk also contains short turns
Membership rules of talk	Participants can insist on formalized membership rules	Participants rely on traditional, professionally delineated membership rules and relationships	Participants rely on traditional, professionally delineated membership rules and relationships

The key features of interaction are presented in the column on the left of Table 2, which shows how each of these features is manifested in the three types of meetings.

The first feature of interest to the study at hand is turn-taking. For Iedema et al, turn-taking is a feature that reflects the formality/informality of the discussion structure, and, therefore, also relates to the dynamics of the meeting talk. Iedema et al (1999) note that discussion in *the informal and more relaxed medical meetings* exhibits less structured turn-taking features. This is exhibited particularly in the addresses of participants other than the chair. Unstructured turn-taking makes the meeting discussions dynamic in the sense

that interruptions and overlaps occur repeatedly, and the lengths of turns vary. The chair's role here is to function as a facilitator of a participatory interactive atmosphere, and as a mediator between organizational and individual interests.

In *the more formal Management Committee meetings*, in turn, turn-taking is more structured, and the participants produce lengthy, organizationally processed information-level addresses. Finally, *the patient-centred meetings* exhibit semi-dynamic talk and fairly structured types of talk, and fall, therefore, between the above mentioned meetings in terms of interaction dynamics and structure. Thus, meetings with a more informal atmosphere seem to encourage free, unstructured, and spontaneous interactive contributions from the participants, whereas the more structured meetings encourage more formal and planned accounts.

Comparing the three different types of meetings allows for noticing how the degree of formality, reflected in the turn-taking structure and discussion dynamics, influences both the organization of meeting discussions as well as their outcomes. In the less structured and more dynamic meetings, discussants are able to participate in mutual knowledge creation. In formal meetings, in turn, the participants' potential interactive contributions are more restrained. This notion of the interconnection of the discussion dynamics and the participant's interactive contributions directs also my own analytical interest to looking at how these are interlinked in my own data.

The meetings differ from each other also with regard to their agenda items and discussion topics. Management Committee Meetings deal with organizationally processed issues, such as financial activity, organizational development issues, staffing, and issues of building space, which already seem to have been decided upon elsewhere. Iedema et al (1999, 145) conclude, therefore, that as the judgments and values displayed in the meeting had acquired a broader organizational validity, their reassessment and renegotiation in the meeting were rendered unlikely. Consequently, the nature of the meeting restrained the participants' positioning and their potential interactive contributions. Similar to Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) study, restrained participation in the meeting discussions, thus, stabilizes existing organizational orientations, and does not encourage the introduction of novel insights and suggestions.

Iedema et al (1999) demonstrate that the meeting agenda, as well as the interactive dynamics of meetings can be designed and facilitated to encourage or discourage participation in the discussion. Thus, the degree to which issues in meetings *can be discussed* is influenced primarily by their presentation. Iedema et al (1999) note, for example, that the management team agenda was explicitly designed to frame the agenda items as administrative, *unproblematic and declaratory issues already decided upon elsewhere*. The discussion topics

in the other two types of meetings were presented as issues that *could be elaborated and influenced* by the participants' interactive contributions. How agenda items in different types of agendums were interactively framed as such is, however, hidden in Iedema et al's (1999) analysis, as they do not give illustrations of any real-time sequences of interaction.

The capacity and opportunity for participants to contribute to the meeting discussions and influence issues under discussion was also, at least partly, determined by their professional expertise and knowledge. Thus, participation to the discussions in the less formal meetings was furthered both by the informal and facilitative chairing practices, and the participants' professional knowledge of the issue under discussion.

Iedema et al (1999) conclude that meetings with less informal turn-taking structures and more dynamic talk are more likely to involve multiple participants, and generate more mutual knowledge creation, whereas the formal and highly structured meetings restrain participation in meeting interactions, and rely more on a contribution of organizationally processed opinions and accounts. Thus, the level of formality and the dynamism of the discussion seem to correspond with, and influence, participation in meeting discussions. These notions are of importance for the present study as they illuminate the link between the structural organization of turn-taking, the overall dynamics of the discussion, and the meeting discussions' organizational consequences.

Iedema et al note that, in the formal meetings, discussions are more consistent and exhibit tighter focus on the issue at hand. However, meeting talk easily remains declaratory and does not encourage further exploration of issues. Alternatively, the more dynamic discussions exhibit a greater variety in the focus and consistency of talk. The more variable and dynamic meeting discussions seem to produce more organizationally relevant outcomes, as they encourage participants to debate the issues and offer suggestions. The study suggests that features that are generally considered eligible, such as consistency and focus of talk, may, in fact, be counterproductive in situations where the aim is to explore issues from various angles and produce novel insights.

However, as the analysis of turn-taking in Iedema et al's (1999) study focuses more on examining whether the meeting talk is formal and managed vis-à-vis informal, the issue of how meeting interactions are organized as turn-by-turn addresses is not probed in detail. The study also does not illustrate how meeting interaction is structured and organized as *talk-in-action*; it follows that the detail of the interaction remains unexplored. The observations of Iedema et al's (1999) study are nevertheless important and valuable for the present study. Their study develops a link between the overall structurality of

turn-taking and discussion dynamics, which I am able to utilize as a sensitizing concept. Iedema et al's (1999) study provides, thus, both analytical and conceptual resources for the study at hand.

2.2.3 Discursive strategies in business meetings

Poncini (2004) utilizes an applied linguistic perspective to study how participants in multicultural, multi-party business meetings employ selected features of language. In addition, the study examines how these language features relate to business activities, roles and relationships, and the goals of the group at the meeting (Poncini 2004, 276). Among a variety of categorizing tools, Poncini (2004) introduces the concept of speech event. Poncini's speech events can be understood as discussion practices, each of which have specific distinguishing features, and which, as Poncini notes, are used for different purposes in the meetings.

Poncini (2004) identifies four differing types of speech events (or discussion practices) in her data that comprise monologue, discussion (or open discussion), discussion with ordered turns, and small group discussion (Poncini 2004, 73). The speech events are described in Figure 1:

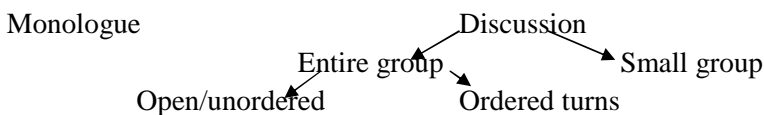


Figure 1 Speech events in multicultural business meetings (Poncini 2004, 74)

Similar to Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) discussion practices, speech events in Poncini's (2004) study refer to modes of discussion, in which participation in meeting discussions is variously organized. Monologue is literally a speech event with one of the participants speaking (i.e. giving a presentation) while others listen. Poncini notes that monologues typically occur when the company speaker (the chair of the meeting) provides information or makes announcements concerning past performance, new products, business issues, or strategy. As illustrated also in Figure 1, monologues do not evolve into group discussions. Poncini (2004, 73) notes that while the chair sometimes addresses one or multiple participants during his monologues, the predominant mode of communication remains one-party talk.

Group discussions in Poncini's study involve the whole meeting group or are conducted in smaller groups. Discussions with the whole meeting group can either involve open or ordered turns. Open discussions, conducted between the company speaker and other participants (distributors), are either announced by the chair (the company representative) or it is *generally understood* by the participants that floor is open. Open discussions are employed to enable participants to voice their opinions on issues of mutual interest, and therefore resemble free discussion in Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) categorization.

Alternatively, discussions with ordered turns are elicited by the company speaker from each distributor or country group around the table in turn. During ordered turns, each distributor comments on issues similar to those during open discussions, but in a more structured manner. Jarzabkowski and Seidl's restricted free discussions equals to Poncini's discussion with ordered turns. The fourth speech event identified by Poncini (2004) is the small group discussion, during which the distributors talk among themselves in small groups.

Poncini (2004) observes that diverse speech events facilitate varied participation in meeting discussions. She notes that there is little participation in discussions during the company speaker's monologues. Conversely, discussions with open floor and ordered turns invite others also to participate. Discussions with open turns and small group discussions, in particular, are found to facilitate more interaction among participants.

Extracts of the detailed transcriptions of the meeting data in Poncini's (2004) study illustrate how interaction between the company speaker(s) and the other participants is organized, and how the discussants' use of personal nouns and specialized and evaluative lexis contributes both to the interactive situation and the outcomes of the meeting discussions. However, as the analysis in Poncini's study mostly targets the linguistic features of meeting discussions, the discussion practices themselves retain a lesser role. Poncini (2004), nevertheless, illustrates how the use of particular interactive strategies contributes to the outcomes of the meetings.

Poncini's observations of differing participant roles and the influences of various speech events on meetings are also of interest to the present study. Poncini (2004) notes that while the occurrence of speech events was mostly influenced by the company speaker (chair), the other discussants (distributors) also had a degree of influence on how the interactions proceeded. Therefore, the interactive situation, as well as the agenda of the meeting, was shaped by the participants' mutual interactive contributions. These observations illustrate that the discussants, during sequences of talk-in-action, can influence the direction and results of interaction.

Poncini (2004) found that the company speaker's interactive strategies were central in managing participation to the discussions and the outcome of the discussions. The chair utilized various types of evaluations (i.e. the expression of viewpoints and attitudes) to build consensus for a specific strategy and the company's future vision, and to persuade distributors to modify their actions and attitudes to meet the goals (Poncini 2004, 279). The chair also strategically initiated shifts in participant roles so that he dealt at times with the entire group, or small groups, or individuals, and employed a variety of interactive strategies to manage the discussions and build common ground.

Overall, activities and interactions that build common ground are found central in facilitating an interactive atmosphere in which participants can gain an understanding of, and commitment to, mutual goals, as well as to interactively develop new joint solutions. Poncini (2004) finds that the shifts in speech events, primarily initiated by the chair, enabled wider participation in the meeting discussions. The data extracts illustrate, however, that the development of the interaction was also influenced by the distributors' comments and contributions, and that, on some occasions, shifts in speech events were initiated by the distributors. Overall, therefore, the interactive situation and the constructive communicative atmosphere were sustained through the participants' mutual work. Poncini's (2004) observation that alternating modes of discussion are necessary to facilitate participation emphasizes the importance of shifting dynamics in meeting interactions. Other elements and factors that were observed to facilitate participation in interaction were the use of shared lexis in discussions, and the use of visual aids and materials. The materials and the agenda helped to maintain the meeting discussions structured and focused. All of these are important and interesting observations for the present study, and focus attention on features in meetings that have an effect on the interactive situation and wider organizational outcomes.

A particularly interesting observation in Poncini's (2004) study is notion of monologue as a distinctive discussion practice; monologue as an interactive feature is seldom mentioned in studies on interaction in meetings. This is surprising, as it is probable that lengthy one-party addresses, during which one person talks and others listen, represent a common feature in meetings (see e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2004, 130). Poncini (2004) explicitly acknowledges one-party talk as a distinctive feature in meeting discussions, thus indicating differentiated speaker-hearer roles.

Contrary to the studies of Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) and Iedema et al (1999), Poncini (2004) illustrates meeting interactions by employing transcribed data extracts. However, as Poncini's analysis does not focus on a detailed examination of the discussion practices themselves, the data extracts

are largely not scrutinized with regard to the features of interaction considered important in the present study. However, the extracts illuminate the organization and structure of the interactions, and show how the participants jointly contribute to the interactive situation and its outcomes. These are important notions, and contribute to the range of conceptual tools employed in the present study.

2.2.4 Power and influence in management meetings

During fleeting moments of interaction it is difficult to notice how some issues are “talked into being”, how discussant roles are being constructed, and how interpretations of history and the future are rendered valid and, ultimately, legitimized. Samra-Fredericks’ ethnomethodologically oriented studies on managerial work explore interaction from this standpoint. Samra-Fredericks draws from the ethnomethodological and conversation analytical (EM/CA) approaches and ethnography to examine interaction in managerial meetings, and shows how these interactions contribute to organizational consequences. Therefore, her work provides essential theoretical and analytical tools and resources for the present study.

Samra-Fredericks examines interaction in management meetings, and her analyses focus on how knowledge and experience are deployed to influence boardroom/management team process (Samra-Fredericks 2000a), and how the assembly and display of emotion or mitigating interpersonal collision are performed in management meetings (Samra-Fredericks 2000b, 2004). Her work also illustrates how opportunities to influence the strategic direction of an organization can be interactively constructed (e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 2000b), and shows how persuasion and accountability are accomplished in interaction (2000b, 2005). While Samra-Fredericks’ studies examine the micro-linguistic features and resources-in-use in meeting talk, they also illustrate the interactive construction of management meetings as an organizationally consequential managerial practice. These aspects are important to the present study, and Samra-Fredericks’ work provides, therefore, important conceptual resources for my study.

The broad objective of Samra-Fredericks’ studies is to examine how strategizing/managing is accomplished through “real-time” talk-based *interaction* (Samra-Fredericks 2003b, 142, quotation and emphasis in original). Her work illustrates how the use of a variety of linguistic resources and strategies enables the construction of asymmetric power relations that can be employed to promote particular interpretations of the past and the future (Samra-Fredericks 2000b, 2003a, 2004, 2005). Samra-Fredericks’ studies

demonstrate how strategic views are constructed in talk-in-interaction, and how knowledge and expertise are employed as strategic resources, valuable only if and when they can be efficiently mobilized through the skillful use of language and a repertoire of linguistic strategies and tools. It is through language that particular actors may position some other actors in less favourable categories, and open their past actions to scrutiny. These observations challenge the traditional perspectives of power and influence, and provide valuable insights for study at hand.

Samra-Fredricks' repertoire of analytical tools, less frequently employed in management and organization studies, is of particular value for the present study. The detailed and illustrative analyses show how a variety of linguistic strategies and tactics are employed to legitimize particular interpretive schemes, and to persuasively promote specific perspectives on the past and the future. For example, the use of personal nouns is employed as an interactive strategy to position and categorize actors and things in particular ways. In her study of multinational business meetings Poncini (2004) found that the use of personal noun *we* created common ground between the participants to the effect that they perceived the goals and activities as mutual. In Samra-Fredricks' case the dominant speaker employs combative and contrasting personal nouns (I, you, and we) to position some participants as part of the "team" while positioning others as "out" (Samra-Fredricks 2000b, 315). In addition, through the use of specific lexemes, the dominant speaker successfully evokes and constructs membership categories and positions actors in them (Samra-Fredricks 2000b, 319). These observations emphasize the value of careful analysis of linguistic micro-moves, and inform the present study as to how these linguistic moves can be detected in talk-in-interaction.

Samra-Fredricks' studies also illuminate how influence and power are constructed as situated linguistic accomplishments. For example, the artful use of additional linguistic skills, such as metaphors and the use of mitigating expressions (i.e. but; well) appropriately and at the right time, combined with the emotional appeal, emphasize the plausibility of the points made and the sincerity of the claims (Samra-Fredricks 2000b, 2004).

Samra-Fredricks also shows how the longitudinal effects of brief interactions and micro-moves can be analyzed in the wider frame of longitudinal data. Through careful analysis of a series of interactions it is possible to discover how these discussions contribute to more far-reaching and strategically consequential developments. This is of particular value, as the challenge of scaling up and down, or zooming in and out, is continuously regarded as one of the key problems in studies on managerial practices and interaction (see Cooren 2007, Nicolini 2012).

In many studies on management meetings, the chair has an explicit and distinctive role in managing the meeting interactions (see e.g. Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008, Poncini 2004). Similarly, in Samra-Fredricks' case, the participants have a seemingly levelled access to the interaction, and equal opportunities to contribute and express their views. Samra-Fredricks' illustration of how asymmetric power relations are achieved in a situation of relatively levelled hierarchies is therefore of particular interest.

The data extracts in Samra-Fredricks' studies focus mainly on interactions between two discussants in the management meeting. In the combative high-pace interactive situation, other participants are obviously positioned in the audience and the dominant speaker can control access to the floor, as well as the topic and pace of the discussion. Thus, while control over the interactive situation is in the hands of the dominant speaker, the role left for the other participants is to silently accept the unfolding of events and interactions. As such, other managers come to acknowledge the dominant speaker's views and, finally, to subscribe to their legitimation. These observations are important as, for the most part, studies on interaction only acknowledge the role of active interactants, and the role of the audience is seldom addressed.

How opportunities to contribute to interaction are constructed or constrained goes mostly unnoticed in real-time situations; even less often are they examined analytically. Samra-Fredricks' detailed analyses enable observing of how opportunities to talk can be pre-empted, and what types of consequences this has, not only to the interactive situation at hand, but on a larger scale and longer term perspective.

In sum, the value of Samra-Fredricks' studies to my study lays in the ways in which she shows how interactive situations and their organizational outcomes are constructed through forms of language use that enable positioning and categorizing actors, making validity claims and legitimizing them, and in doing so, influencing the decisions and strategic direction of the company. Thus, her studies provide a set of conceptual tools for the present study and serve as examples of how talk-in-interaction can be examined in the situated practice of management meeting.

2.3 Summary of the literature review

The studies presented in the literature review in Chapter 2.2 each focus on selected aspects of meeting interaction. The reviewed studies also employ similar concepts and arrive at similar types of findings, albeit via slightly differing routes. Although the interactive practices are classified and named variously, the reviewed authors have recognized partly similar features and

practices. There is also overlap in their analytical schemes, which indicates that similar features of interaction can be identified by employing various approaches. Taken together, the reviewed literature provides a broad perspective on meeting interaction and important insights on managerial interaction in meetings. Each study also contributes to the repertoire of conceptual tools employed in the present study. Table 3 draws together the key concepts and features of interaction in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.2

Table 3 Key features and concepts in the reviewed literature

Feature of interaction	Jarzabkowski & Seidl (2008)	Iedema, Degeling & White (1999)	Poncini (2004)	Samra-Fredericks (2000a, 2000b, 2003a, 2003b, 2004)
Turn-taking	Relates to who gets to talk. Not addressed analytically.	Degree of structuration of turn-taking in the meetings (structured vs. unstructured).	Shown in data extracts, but not addressed analytically.	How interaction between participants is organized → what is accomplished in and through interaction.
Discussion dynamics	-	Interruptions, overlaps, and length of turns.	Shown in data extracts, but not addressed analytically.	Shown in data extracts, but not addressed analytically.
Consistency and focus of talk	-	Consistency and focus of talk (shared focus vs. side conversations) focused vs. fragmented discussion.	-	-
Role of the chair vs. other participants	Manages, controls, and facilitates participation in the discussions.	Manages and facilitates participation in the discussions.	Manages participation in the discussions.	The chair's role is not emphasized as participants contribute freely to the meeting discussions.
Power influences	Chair's control of the interactive situation is emphasized.	Formality/informality of the meeting influences the participants' opportunities to contribute to the discussions.	Participants' (esp. the chair's) linguistic choices influence the content and direction of the discussion.	Power, influence, and persuasion are constructed interactively. The role of the dominant speaker is emphasized.
Interactive strategies in use	Managing discussion on selected topics: opening, extending, and closing discussions.	Employing formal/informal chairing practices	Managing participation to discussions, making evaluations, and building common ground.	Positioning, categorizing, providing interpretations of past decisions, making validity claims, pre-empting opportunities to respond, and constructing a combative interactive atmosphere.

Next, referring to Table 3, I will discuss the reviewed studies and the conceptual and analytical resources they provide for this study.

Turn-taking is the main organizing feature of interaction and relates to who gets to talk, how they get to talk and when they get to talk. The degree of structuration in turn-taking is also reflected in the formality or informality of meeting discussions. In the reviewed studies, turn-taking is acknowledged as an important structuring feature of interaction; however, for the most part it is treated merely descriptively. Of the reviewed studies only Samra-Fredericks pays more focused analytical attention to turn-taking. As the most fundamental unit of social action, turn-taking deserves closer inspection, and it will therefore be analyzed as the key structuring feature of interaction in the present study.

Discussion dynamics is inherently linked to turn-taking, primarily in the sense that the more dynamic the talk, the more frequent the shifts between speakers. Thus, turns shift often in dynamic talk, which results in turns of moderate length. During dynamic talk, discussants may also interrupt each other and produce overlapping talk. The reviewed studies identify turn-taking and discussion dynamics as important features that structure and organize meeting interaction, but do not fully address them analytically. Thus, although discussion dynamics is exhibited in the data extracts in Poncini's (2004) and Samra-Fredericks' studies, it is, however, not addressed analytically. Further, Iedema et al (1999) discuss the characteristics of discussion dynamics at length, but do not illustrate it as talk-in-interaction. There is, thus, a gap in how this feature is analyzed and discussed. Thus, by analyzing the discussion dynamics of *talk-in-interaction* it is possible to provide a novel contribution to the literature.

Consistency and focus of talk are, in general, mostly ignored in studies on managerial interaction, with the implicit assumption seeming to be that managerial interaction is predominantly consistent, goal-oriented, and purposeful. However, as Iedema et al (1999) indicate, this is not necessarily the case. Instead, there is variation in meeting talk between various types of meetings and within meetings. Iedema et al's (1999) study shows that less consistent and focused meeting talk may have substantial benefits compared to more consistent and focused discussions. These observations can be employed as sensitizing concepts in the present study. Thus, new knowledge on the role of these less frequently analyzed features of managerial interaction is yielded by inclusion of consistency and focus of talk in the analysis.

A mutual notion in the reviewed studies is that the variously organized interactive situations enable differing types of contributions from the participants. *The chair's contribution* to the structure and organization of the meeting talk and his role in controlling, managing, and facilitating turn-taking

is emphasized in most of the reviewed studies. However, in Samra-Fredericks' case the chair suspended his authority and another actor was able to assume the dominant role in managing the meeting discussions. Aided by extracts from the transcribed meeting discussions, Samra-Fredericks, and also Poncini, show how *power influences and interactive strategies* can be identified in the meeting talk. Power and influence are, thus, not based only on the formal authority and the hierarchical position of the participants, but can be interactively evoked and negotiated. These notions are important for my study, which deals with a new group of actors engaged in negotiating the roles and power relations in the group.

Samra-Fredericks also provides a detailed display of the interactive strategies and micro-moves employed by the actors during the interaction. These interactive strategies become critical to the participants' immediate and long term opportunities. Samra-Fredericks' rigorous analysis is an illustration of how these types of micro-moves can be observed and analyzed from talk-in-interaction; therefore, her work provides practical analytical tools for my study.

When combined, the reviewed studies provide a multifaceted perspective on the examination of managerial meeting talk; they all share a perspective on meetings as interactive accomplishments, and contribute to the set of conceptual tools employed in this study. Samra-Fredericks' studies are, however, closest to the present study, and her studies also identify the clearest connection between the analyzed interactive sequences and the wider organizational outcomes. Samra-Fredericks' studies are informed by EM and CA traditions, which enable the detailed examination of situated action and interaction. In this study I also aim in examining the interactions and practices in situ, and therefore need to base the study on an ethnomethodologically oriented approach. In the following chapter I will discuss ethnomethodology's core ideas and concepts.

2.4 Ethnomethodology's central ideas and key concepts

Ethnomethodology (EM) is based on the ideas of Harold Garfinkel, and represents a unique and radical approach to the study of human affairs. In Rawls' (2008a, 708-709) words: "What is radical about ethnomethodology theoretically is that it does *not* reduce details to generalities - a practice generally considered the hallmark of theory - but, rather, locates the constitutive order properties toward which members mutually orient in the contingent details of their work." (Emphasis in original). As my study aims at

a close-up examination of details of interactive work in which the members of the management team engage, the EM approach is particularly apposite.

EM comprises various strands and approaches (Maynard & Clayman 1991). However, the EM studies share some fundamental assumptions, which are here taken as the theoretical starting point. In this chapter, the EM key concepts, or “vocabulary”, are discussed to the extent to which they are useful and applicable to the present study.

According to Garfinkel, social orders depend for their coherence on constant attention to, and a competent display of, shared *member’ methods* (ethno-methods): hence the term “ethnomethodology” (Rawls 2008a, 701-702)⁹. These methods, or practices, are actors’ interactive situated accomplishments. The actors place their interpretations into the developing order of interactional sequences for others to see and comment on (Rawls 2008b, 7). Through the use of these methodical practices members produce, make sense of, and thereby render accountable features of their local circumstances (Zimmerman & Boden 1991, 6). EM thus provides a theoretical and analytical framework for examining how social order is accomplished in interaction.

Garfinkel (1996, 6) provides the following description of EM’s program: “Ethnomethodology’s fundamental phenomenon and its standing technical preoccupation in its studies is to find, collect, specify, and make intractably observable the local endogenous production and natural accountability of immortal familiar society’s most ordinary organizational things in the world, and to provide for them both and simultaneously as objects and procedurally, as alternate methodologies. “The most ordinary things in the world” refer to taken-for-granted practices through which the social order is locally and interactively achieved. In the context of the study at hand this entails the interactive practices-in-use in management meetings. The appropriateness of EM for the present study is emphasized by the fact that the EM inquiry is anchored not in theoretical abstractions and concepts of practice, but in observable actions and interactions of practitioners.

The theoretical starting point of EM is, thus, that there is a self-generating order in concrete activities. According to Garfinkel, “order is the achievement of the members’ methods for producing it, rather than the result of structures, cultures, habits, routines, power, or interests, as some other theories assume” (Rawls 2008a, 708). The principle aim of EM is, therefore, to investigate the procedural accomplishment of these methods and activities as actual, concerted behaviours. Primacy is, thus, given to the direct observation of members’ activities and practices. Data are not selected for their relevance to

⁹ Rawls (2008a) notes that the term ethnomethodology was coined by Garfinkel in 1967.

some general issue, but instead are examined for the questions they might raise or the discoveries they might permit (Zimmerman & Boden 1991, 8).

Engaging in a situated practice, be it crafting a strategic plan (Samra-Fredericks 2010), administrative work (Wagenaar 2004), management consulting (Sturdy et al 2006), scientific experiments (Berends, Boersman & Weggeman 2003), or discussing in a management team meeting, as in the study at hand, is achieved through interaction, which, turn, requires mutual work among actors. Actors engage in this work to “interactively construct a mutually intelligible world” (Rawls 2008b, 7). This work is “public, visible and orderly passing back and forth, and it entails actors working together within shared fields of practice to create witnessable orders” (ibid.). Mutual intelligibility requires constant attention and competent use of shared methods of organizing action for its achievement (Rawls 2008a, 702-703).

For Garfinkel, the coherence of practices resides not in the intentions of actors but in the coherent production of mutually oriented action appropriate to the situation (Rawls 2006, 27). Therefore, social interaction is regarded as organized and structured, and in which each action must exhibit an order that is recognizable to other members of the same situation in order to be meaningful (Rawls 2008a, 703). Consequently, mutual understanding and coordinated action can be attained through the achievement and display of such recognizable orders (ibid.). In the present study, the interactive practices-in-use are viewed as social accomplishments of their participants, who engage in continuous work to sustain the orderliness of their interactions that, in turn, form the basis of their current practice (see e.g. Rawls 2006, 2008b). Actors engage in producing practices while recognizing the circumstances in which they are embedded. This way they are able to produce concerted actions that are appropriate and fitting in this specific situation. According to Rawls (2008a, 709) the situated need to make sense, and to mutually orient to objects and actions, imposes order requirements on participants. Thus, objects and actions are recognizable, and hence meaningful, only when they can be seen as orderly within a particular context of situated action.

Unlike some other approaches to language (e.g. semiotics, linguistics) EM emphasizes language as a fluid and flexible medium, and finds that language-in-use has a “local character” (Francis & Hester 2004, 14, quotation in original). This local character, and the situatedness of language use, means that what is said in any interaction is being said here and now in *this* situation, with *these* circumstances in mind, and *this* interactional task at hand (ibid.; emphasis in original). Thus, the form of words that a speaker employs is tied to, and displays, the character of the local situation (Heritage 1997). It follows that the sense of a descriptive utterance is always contextually determined (Heritage, 1984). Therefore, for utterances in any specific situation to be

intelligible, they need be constructively interpreted in relation to their context. This involves viewing an utterance against the background of *who* said it, *where* and *when*, *what* was being accomplished by saying it (Heritage 1984, 140, emphasis original).

In the EM view an utterance is, thus, a starting point for an interpretative process rather than something to be treated as self-subsistently intelligible (Heritage 1984). Context is, thus, “treated both as the project and the product of the participants’ own actions and therefore as inherently locally produced and transformable at any moment (Drew & Heritage 1992, 19, quotation in original). The relevant context is, thus, achieved in practice, and displayed in, and through, contributions to the conversation at hand (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010, 30). Llewellyn (2010, 76) notes: “Social settings do not simply happen; they have to be practically reproduced. In their part, social actors have to be practically (--) attentive to the ebb and flow of accountability and relevance; they have to be able to find “where things are going” and “what people are trying to do” as action unfolds” (quotations in original). Therefore, context is not something outside an interactive situation, but rather it is endogenously generated within the talk of the participants – created in, and through, that talk. The specific context makes the utterance make sense; simultaneously, the utterance is (at least partly) constitutive of that local scene (McHoul, Rapley & Antaki 2008, 43).

In addition, interactants’ background knowledge and expectations, and their understanding of what is feasible and “practical” in the emerging interactive situation, becomes also, at least in part, visible in the interaction. Therefore, these background expectations and this knowledge are exhibited in the interaction, and can be observed and interpreted in this particular context. However, as with all interaction, the guiding norms, conventions, and rules of a particular setting cannot be made completely transparent (Llewellyn 2010).

While the more traditional views on language and language use have focused almost exclusively on the speaker and his role in the interaction, the EM approach employed in the present study adopts a more encompassing view on an interactive situation and the actors therein. Rawls (2006, 78) notes that each time the “other” speaks, they are offering an interpretation of a prior action that tells the speaker how their “identified action” has been interpreted (quotations in original). Speakers then employ this information to understand not only the developing sequence of communication, but also their relationship with the person to whom they are speaking in that situation (*ibid.*). Thus, hearers perform active contextualizing work in order to see what descriptions mean, and speakers rely upon hearers performing such work so that their utterances will make definite sense (Heritage 1984, 148). This accountability is manifested in the collaborative ways in which the members

manage their conduct and their circumstances to achieve the observable, orderly features of their activities (Zimmerman & Boden 1991). The EM approach, thus, views social interaction as based on participants acting on the assumption that they, and their co-participants, are autonomous, morally accountable agents whose actions are neither determined nor random (Zimmerman & Boden 1991, 11; Rawls & David 2006). In any given situation, the participants are accountable for their own actions, and also rely on their co-participants to do so.

Despite their skills and hard work that actors contribute to interactive situations in order to sustain coherence and congruence, these attempts sometimes fail. According to Garfinkel, mutual trust in everyone employing the same tactics and strategies to produce order is paramount to the orderliness and coherence of interaction (Rawls 2008b, 30). Rawls' (2000) study on interaction orders between members of two racial groups, black and white Americans, illustrates how the employed communicative expectations and strategies are visible in their interactions, and form the basis for their interpretations. Rawls (2000, 241) notes that as the "language games" and conversational "preferences" practiced by the two groups are responsive to different Interaction Orders, the "working consensus" is substantially different (quotations in original). Consequently, the conversational "moves" are not recognizably the same (*ibid.*). It follows, therefore, that unless the actors are *actually using* the same methods to producing ordered interaction, the resulting actions will not exhibit mutually observable order (Rawls 2008b, 30, emphasis in original). The background expectancies and implicit "rules" that affect the interaction become, thus, visible and observable in the interaction.

Misunderstandings and conflicts in interaction can, thus, also occur despite an apparent mutual understanding and ostensible agreement on issues. EM enables examination of how the organization of the interaction and the manner in which utterances are produced inform about how the communication is *meant*. Therefore, the ways in which actors produce their utterances delivers information on how they are to be *taken*. In Wieder's (1999, 166) words: "These real interactional things (the observed phenomena) are what they are in the way that they are treated." EM differs here radically from such viewpoints that consider things and objects as the same regardless of their immediate context.

Garfinkel regards issues of power and force as matters internal to the dynamics of situated action (Rawls 2006). Rawls (2006, 53) notes: "Regardless of the demographic characteristics of persons, there are features of situated action, both in terms of identities and practice that can be mobilized by actors in ways that are consequential for the opportunities of others." How these issues are dealt with within an interactive situation illuminates the

situationally relevant power relations among the discussants. According to Garfinkel, practices are located in situations defined by constitutive expectations, not in persons (Rawls 2008a, 717). Consequently, the actors rely on the order properties of the situated group and the methods that define that group, instead of the organization or individual motives, for making sense (ibid.). Therefore, EM differs radically from such approaches that explain situated phenomena directly through hierarchical positions, demographic factors, or cognitive states of mind. Thus, while organizational constraint is consequential and relevant at the level of accounts, it does not *order* action (Rawls 2008a, 704, emphasis in original). Instead, order properties of the coherence of objects, identities, and situations are influenced and shaped by background expectancies that, in turn, can be observed in the interaction.

3 METHODOLOGY

“Planning for and thinking about upcoming trips are only rarely, and then only in glossed version, the same as actually getting on the road and adjusting to the omnipresent and unexpected circumstances involving altogether practical choices and actions” (Beach, 1995, 224).

3.1 Research approach

The present study is based on observing management meetings in one meeting group in one company over a time period of one-and-a-half years. The rationale for this research strategy stems primarily from the nature of the phenomenon under study and is also connected to the applied research methodologies.

Interactional phenomena are “things for direct observation” (Wieder 1999, 167). The researcher’s “being there” is, thus, a prerequisite for the study of interactive practices. Ethnomethodology (EM) is based on observing the *members’ methods*, and enables the observation of emerging interaction of organizational actors in their natural surroundings (e.g. Maynard & Clayman 1991, Francis & Hester 2004, Llewellyn & Hindmarsh 2010). The study at hand is ethnomethodological in the sense that it examines actors’ situated social encounters and analyses how interaction in these encounters is organized and structured.

Ethnographic and ethnomethodological studies in organizational settings aim in studying organizational activity that unfolds in a minute by minute fashion, and usually entail prolonged periods of fieldwork. This applies also to the present study. The long period in the field allowed for examining the temporal development of the phenomenon of interest, in my case the development of interactive meeting practices. The lengthy fieldwork also facilitated the development of competence to interpret my observations. A researcher can obtain this competency, or “unique adequacy¹⁰”, by immersing herself in the studied situation, and by learning about the methods and practices of the organizational actors. This way, the researcher can begin to

¹⁰ Garfinkel’s term, referred to by Rawls 2002, 6.

understand the relevant knowledge and skills of the actors, and the lifeworld under study. Unique adequacy needs to be built gradually, and this gives further impetus for a long period in the field.

Traditional perspective on case studies, promoted by Eisenhardt (1989) and Yin (2009), among others, emphasize the use of multiple cases and cross-case comparisons, which are thought to ensure the rigour and generalizability of the study. Conventional approach to case studies is, however, particularly ill-suited to ethnographic and ethnomethodological studies. Focusing on one case instead of many, which is the general practice in ethnographic and ethnomethodological studies allows for developing a deeper understanding of the phenomena under study. In studies that aim at an in-depth examination of situated phenomena, such as in the study at hand, this is of primary importance (see e.g. Flyvberg 2006). Fundamentally, all ethnographic studies are single case studies as they are interested in what happens in one particular case; a broader body of knowledge is developed gradually through several case studies. As Rawls (2011¹¹) notes: “Others who have done their own single cases supply the comparative data. However, comparison is never part of the ethnography.” The present study, thus, concentrates on the examining the interaction in one meeting group in one organization, since I am interested in learning about the discussion practices and their development in this particular meeting group. Consequently, the meeting discussions in this study are taken as a form of institutional interaction that requires analysis in its own terms and in its particular situated context (see e.g. Maynard 1989, Heritage 2005). However, the shape of talk found in a specific site reflects the context-sensitive (and thus particularized) application of a more general, context-free (and thus anonymous) interactional mechanism (Zimmerman & Boden 1991, 8). Therefore, while interactions in the present study are unique and particular to the specific interactive situation, they simultaneously exhibit general interactive features and qualities, which have been identified in earlier studies on interaction. Juxtapositioning the observations from a particular setting against the more general and context-free features of interaction becomes, thus, possible.

¹¹ Personal communication 04.10.2011.

3.2 Company in Focus

3.2.1 Negotiating access

The challenges of negotiating access to companies are familiar to many organization researchers. Especially management meetings are difficult to access, and the sensitivity of issues that relate to management and strategy often hinders empirical studies on such practices (Samra-Fredericks 2003a, Jarzabkowski et al 2007, Cooren 2007). In particular, methodologies that record the daily goings on, the discussions and interactions of the organizational members are often perceived as invasive. Samra-Fredericks (2000a, 254-255) notes: “Negotiating access to do this type of research can take many years marked by set-backs and disappointments (--).” In my case, the negotiations took only months; however, the process was nevertheless challenging.

In summer 2007 I contacted several companies from various industries (food stuffs; engineering; cosmetics; biotechnological), and suggested research collaboration: I would observe their management team meetings, and in return, I would share my observations with them, and this way, help them identify potential areas for development in their meeting practice. For practical reasons, the contacted companies were all situated between 2-300 kilometres from my university. Despite their positive response to my idea to study meeting practices in their management team meetings, majority of the companies declined. A number of these companies had already taken action to develop their management teams, for example, by hiring a consulting company to help them develop the efficiency of the management meetings. Therefore, they did not want “a crowd of outsiders” in their meetings. Others indicated that they found this study a good opportunity to reflect on their management team practices; however, each business was in such a hectic spin that they had to focus exclusively on their day-to-day work. Some companies were in the middle of restructuring, and felt that the time was not suitable for research interventions. However, the initial interest of these companies was encouraging, and confirmed that the study of management meetings was perceived as important by those involved in them.

One of the companies I contacted, BioCorp (pseudonym), however, responded positively to my proposal to observe their management team meetings. A unique feature of BioCorp was that it was in the process of major organizational restructuring, during which a new managerial team, the Top Management Team of Operations (TMTO), was being assembled. Consequently, I gained access not only to observe the much desired management team meetings, but also to examine how a new management team

got organized. This was a rare and valuable opportunity, as most companies seldom assemble new management teams. We agreed on a set of guidelines for the co-operation regarding, for example, confidentiality issues, and I joined the new management team in their first meeting in November 2007.

3.2.2 BioCorp

BioCorp is a Scandinavian unit of the multinational Corporation (pseudonym) in the biotechnology field. BioCorp operates in a highly specialized field of biotechnological innovations and applications for institutional customers. At the time of the fieldwork (2007-2009), BioCorp comprised a manufacturing location for two core technologies and the headquarters for one core technology. Corporation comprises dozens of units around the world specializing in various business areas and technologies. At the time of the fieldwork, Corporation employed more than 8,500 professionals globally, while BioCorp employed slightly more than 700 employees. In 2007, Corporation had operations in over 120 countries around the globe.

BioCorp was originally a small independent firm producing specialized instruments based on its own technological innovations. However, over the years, BioCorp grew to new areas of biochemical innovations, and experienced multiple changes of ownership. In the late 1990s BioCorp was acquired by a multinational company, and currently belongs to Corporation's global organization. Some of BioCorp's specific technological areas are administratively part of other international business units. Thus, business management and production facilities are in some instances geographically dispersed and, consequently, the organizational structures of Corporation and BioCorp are highly complex.

Dispersed and complex organizational structure requires coordination on various organizational, functional, and divisional levels. In BioCorp, the management of key functions in Research & Development (R&D), business, and operations, as well as the management of international business areas is organized with the help of various Top Management Teams (TMTs). In addition to the studied TMTO, there were also other TMTs in BioCorp. R&D and Quality organizations were managed with the help of their respective Top Management Teams. The chairman of the TMTO participated in BioCorp's Top Management Team and its quarterly operating review. As, due to its product and technology activities, BioCorp was part of various global organizations, many executives also participated in management teams organized according to geographical territories or business areas.

Meetings represent a pivotal managerial practice in managing the various technologies, businesses, and administrative units in Corporation and BioCorp. There are altogether 20 managerial meeting groups in BioCorp comprising three TMTs, 17 steering groups, and other meeting groups. In addition, BioCorp “participates” in five international or global executive groups. Meetings, thus, function as a central coordination mechanism across BioCorp and its various functions, and within the global organization of Corporation.

3.2.3 Top Management Team of Operations (TMTO)

The Top Management Team of Operations (TMTO) was formed as the result of a major organizational restructuring in autumn 2007. In conjunction with organizational changes the majority of directors in the newly formed TMTO were also promoted to new managerial positions. Consequently, many of them assumed new responsibilities and tasks. Thus, majority of the directors were new not only to the TMT work, but also to their respective tasks. Only one executive had previously participated in TMT meetings in the company, and another had experience of TMT meetings from her previous employment.

In the beginning, the TMTO comprised five newly appointed directors representing various operations in the company; hence, the Top Management Team of Operations. In addition to the directors, a Human Resource (HR) manager and a financial analyst, a controller from the financial department, were appointed to the team. Four persons in the team were male and three were female. All participants had been working for the company for between 2-16 years, apart from the controller who had recently joined the company. The original members of the management team were: Paul (Director of Logistics), Peter (Director of Gadgets; later, Director of Operations), Iris (Director of Liquids), Terry (Director of Technical Solutions), Amanda (Director of Quality Assurance), MaryAnn (Director of Process Development in R&D), Anthony (Controller), and Karen (HR manager). Alice functioned as the meeting team’s secretary, and Rebecca, the General Director (GD), chaired meetings during the first three months of the TMTO work operation. Theo, the Director of Finances in BioCorp, joined TMTO meetings on one occasion, meeting 13.

The Top Management Team of Operations experienced some changes in its composition during the observation period. Janice (controller) replaced Karen as the HR manager in autumn 2008 due to Karen’s maternity leave. Two additional persons joined the meetings in autumn 2008: Jerry (Director of Continuous Improvement) and Marcie (Director of Quality Management). In

addition, Sheila (Director of Product Development) and Barry (Information Technology manager) joined the meetings towards the end of the observation period, in the beginning of 2009.

As her area of responsibility was inherently connected with managing the operations' organizations, Janice's role and participation in the meeting discussions was more visible and influential than those of Marcie and Barry. Jerry's role was also connected to the operations, but not as directly and explicitly as Janice's, and his role in the meeting discussions was relatively marginal. Similarly, Marcie, Sheila, and Barry did not substantially contribute to the meeting discussions, and the purpose of their inclusion to the meeting team appeared rather to keep them informed on issues on the TMTO agenda. All team members called each other and the GD by their first names¹², and the chosen pseudonyms reflect the informal parlance of the management team.

Contrary to studies focusing on the examination of managerial teams' demographic factors, such as tenure, education, gender, and ethnic background, and their effects on performance (see e.g. Bell, Villado, Lukasik, Belau & Briggs 2011), the present study considers relevant largely such characteristics that are displayed, and oriented to in the interaction by the participants themselves. From the ethnomethodological perspective, actors are not regarded as *whole persons* but rather as actors with situated identities related to the particular situation (Rawls, 2006, 21). Consequently, issues of power and force are regarded as matters internal to the dynamics of situated action, rather than matters that determine what takes place during the action. Influence and power are, thus, rendered relevant if and when they are displayed in, and oriented to, the interaction. In the present study, this means that instead of taking the demographic characteristics of participants to explain what takes place in the management meetings the focus is on how actors mutually construct and sustain the interactive situation at hand. Rawls (2006, 53) notes: "Regardless of the demographic characteristics of persons, there are features of situated action, both in terms of identities and practice that can be mobilized by actors in ways that are consequential for the opportunities of others". How these issues are dealt with within an interactive situation informs then also about the situationally relevant power relations among the discussants. It also follows that the role of the participants is perceived through the practices which they take part in, and which they construe and shape through their interactions. Thus, their role in the interaction becomes observable and visible by looking at how they contribute (or not contribute) to the interaction *in situ*.

¹² For comparison, see e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2000a, 2000b, and 2003a.

The first three months of the new TMTO were outlined by the GD as the *orientation period*, which meant that this time was devoted to orienting to the TMTO work: to getting to know the substance area and to outlining the overall meeting practice. During this time the GD functioned as chairperson in the meetings, and communicated to the team that after the initial three months' period the TMTO would start working independently with rotating turns in chairing. The practices of interaction and the meeting practice were being formed and took shape during the time of rotating chairpersonship. The practice of rotating chairs came to an end as one of the directors in the TMTO, Peter, was appointed Head of Operations and, by the same token, chair of the TMTO. At this point, the practices comprising the TMTO meeting were already largely established, and the management team meeting practice became settled to its relatively stable form. The end of the orientation period (and the GD's chairing) and Peter's nomination for the head of operations formed explicit turning points in the TMTO meetings. Changes in the composition of the chairing responsibilities and the degree of stability in the meeting practice, thus, mark various time periods of the TMTO during my observation. As these developments induced observable changes in the roles of the participants and in the meeting practice they mark clear and apparent time periods in the TMTO work, which I have named *shaping period* (the time of rotating chairpersonship) and *settling period*¹³ (the time after Peter's nomination as chair). All three periods represent distinctive, and at the same time, interrelated, periods in the TMTO's work, and the naming of these periods stems, thus, from the observable phenomena in the TMTO meetings and the meeting team.

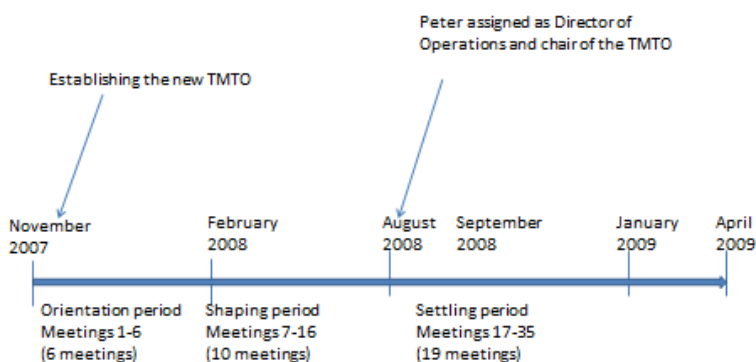


Figure 2 Timeline of the periods in the TMTO

¹³ Settling: in building construction terms, the gradual subsiding of a structure as the soil beneath its foundation consolidates under loading. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/settling/> Fetched October 15th 2010.

During my discussions with the GD prior to the first TMTO meeting, she described the aims and purpose of the new TMTO. The main purpose was to strengthen the management of the company and to improve its intra-operational fluency, efficiency, and performance, which all contribute to the competitiveness of BioCorp and its operations. BioCorp's competition stems both from other manufacturers of similar products and technologies, as well as from other subsidiaries of Corporation with current or potential R&D and manufacturing capacities and capabilities. Corporation was continuously seeking more cost-efficient solutions, both in R&D and manufacturing operations. Consequently, it was increasingly seeking alternative locations for both operations. Thus, increasing competition inside Corporation was becoming the most salient strategic challenge for BioCorp and the TMTO.

The new TMTO was also perceived as a change initiative by the GD; both the GD as well as the executives placed big expectations on its work. The GD believed that starting with a clean slate would enable the new TMTO to overcome some of the issues that were perceived as problematic in many managerial meeting groups in the company. The tendency to "think and act in silos" was acknowledged in BioCorp; this was identified as one of the key obstacles in the free flow of information, as well as a threat to improving organizational performance. In addition, problems relating to the meeting practice itself were identified as essential areas of improvement; for example, not finalizing decisions, concentrating on solving practical problems during meetings, and overly concentrating on detail instead of larger issues. In fact, "effective management team practices" was identified as a key strategic priority in BioCorp's yearly plan.

During the orientation period to the TMT work the GD emphasized an "out of the box" approach, which entailed critical examination of current practices, such as metrics and meeting practices. This pursuit was reflected, for example, in her reluctance to employ strategy documents and other "official" or previously prepared materials as a basis of meeting discussions that, in her judgement, would frame the discussion too narrowly. In all, the new TMTO was perceived as an opportunity for renewal, and a momentum for a change in many respects.

3.3 Data collection

The data in the present study were primarily collected through observation during one-and-a-half years of fieldwork. Benefits of observation as a research methodology include the quality of data thus obtained (observing participants' daily activities in their natural setting), first hand access to the source of data,

and the possibility to utilize the detailed description of the research situation in the analysis (Alvesson & Deetz 2000). In the study at hand, the meetings were scheduled and arranged regardless of the ongoing research, which means that the managers engaged in what they would do anyway.

It is common for fieldworkers to act in an unobtrusive manner (Emerson 1981). I would also characterize my role as an observer this way, since I primarily followed the meetings without participating in the discussions. Acting at management meetings as an observer enabled me to learn how interactions in the meetings were structured and organized, and how participants engaged in their work as managers “doing” TMTO meetings. As such, it became possible for me also to learn how the practitioners’ responded to the sequential constraints and opportunities presented in the interactive situation, an essential component of being a competent member of a community (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010, 27).

The fieldwork was “as a lived experience at the time, (--) all rather messy, ambiguous, and at times, so uncertain” (Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 149). Indeed, the fieldwork was an overwhelming experience due to the massive amount of new impressions, information, and new people. However, in a sense, I was “in the same boat” with the new top team, since they also were new in their respective tasks and the TMTO work. Ultimately, my initial confusion enabled me to pay attention to a large number of aspects that I otherwise might have treated as trivial and uninteresting.

In ethnomethodologically oriented studies, observation is often complemented by discussions or interviews with participants (Garfinkel 1967, David, Garcia, Rawls & Chand 2009; Rawls, Mann, Garcia, David, & Burton 2009). In the present study, I discussed with the GD on three occasions and with the other participants on two separate occasions. The role of interviews in the study at hand is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.7.4.

In the meetings, I would usually take a seat when everyone else was seated, preferably by a side table. If this was not possible, I would take any vacant seat. The audio recorder was positioned in the centre of the meeting table where it would catch the conversations as best as possible, and where it did not disturb the arrangement of other potential materials. Once the meeting began, I would listen and observe the meeting interactions, and take notes. If written materials were distributed in the meetings, a copy was handed to me, as well.

3.4 Empirical materials

The main body of data comprises observations and audio recordings of 35 TMTO meetings over a period of one-and-a-half years. I recorded the meeting discussions on audio tapes, which were subsequently transcribed verbatim. While the audio tapes and my observations remain the most important empirical materials, additional data, such as discussions with the participants and written materials, have facilitated my analytical work. The empirical materials are presented in Figure 3:

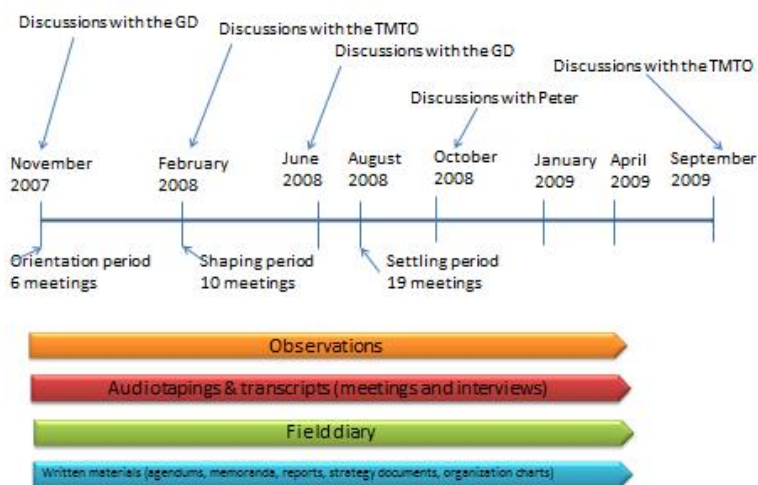


Figure 3 Empirical materials of the study.

Figure 3 displays the empirical materials of the study and shows the collection of data over time. The main body of the data comprises of my direct observations, which I also recorded in my field diary, and audio tapings of meeting discussions. The role and employment of empirical materials are described in more detail in Chapters 3.4.1–3.4.4.

3.4.1 Audio tapes and their transcripts

In studies on interaction, audio taped and/or video taped data is preferred. Recording enables observing how interaction becomes organized in a particular setting, and how that setting is achieved through the situated social interactions.

Video recording has additional benefits to audio recording. Video allows for a better access to a wider range of different kinds of semiotic resources, such as space, facial expressions, gestures, and body language (Goodwin 2000, Holmes & Marra 2007). Similarly, video recording enables observing how participants organize artefacts, such as documents and files, spatially and temporally, visually and vocally (Glenn & LeBaron 2011, 6). In the current study, however, only audio recording is employed in recording the interactions in the TMTO meetings. The main rationale for this choice is that the current study examines interaction practices focusing on features of language use. Although video recording without doubt would have added to the analytical repertoire, the choice of collecting in audio data only allows for feasibly managing and analyzing the massive amount of data, and keeping the analytical focus concise by targeting the features of interaction that the members orient to and that are relevant from the point of view of the emerging practice.

Audio taped data is transformed into written form, which enables analysis and reporting. Arminen (2005, 65) notes that transcripts provide materials to reconstruct social activities as well as evidence on which to base conclusions regarding observable details of conduct. In traditional organization studies, audio tapings and their transcripts are typically employed to capture content rather than action, whereas in EM/CA studies the objective is to explore the distinctive organization of an interactive situation (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010). Transcription in EM/CA research is, thus, aimed at facilitating the reader's understanding and appreciation of the interaction (Psathas & Anderson 1990, 84).

Decisions on what type of transcription system to employ relate to both analytical and presentational considerations. The general principle is that the transcription of audio tapes should be compatible with the analytical objectives. Thus, the aim is to produce a display of the interaction that captures features of analytic interest (Psathas & Anderson 1990, 76; Potter and Wetherell 1987). Conversation analytical studies and especially transcripts of empirical materials are generally regarded difficult to access by researchers from other disciplines (Taylor & Van Every 2008, Wood & Kroger 2000). Therefore, expected readership of the study also should be considered when making decisions regarding the type of transcription convention employed.

In this study audio tapes of meeting discussions were first transcribed verbatim, which means that words were transcribed as they were spoken. During the analysis I examined the tapes and the transcripts, and conducted a more detailed transcription to display the features of interaction relevant to my research (see Table 4). The original language of meeting discussions is Finnish, but the language used in this report is English. In studies focusing on

particular features of language it is customary to provide transcripts both in the original language and in the language of the research report, most often English. As the examination in the study at hand focuses on how the meeting interaction is structured and organized rather than on details of language, the data extracts in the text are presented in English. This presentational strategy also improves the clarity and legibility of the report, and facilitates focus on features relevant to the study. However, the original Finnish transcripts are provided as appendices (Appendix 1) in order to ensure transparency and consistency in the data analysis.

Data extracts shown in conversation analytical (CA) studies vary in length. Sometimes the extract displays only a few turns of exchanges with just two discussants, as in the classic example of a telephone call openings provided by Sacks (1992/2005, 3). On other occasions, extracts can be longer and involve multiple speakers. Long extracts of *naturally occurring* multi-party talk represent a challenge in studies on interaction in that, while they illustrate the participation in, and the dynamics of, the discussion, they require intensive concentration and focus. Therefore, there is a risk that long data extracts might obscure the analytical point. Thus, to improve the illustrativeness and clarity of the extracts, and also to safeguard the confidentiality of particular issues raised in the discussion, I have in some occasions omitted some lines of talk from the extracts. On every such occasion, I have carefully considered the editing effect on the illustrativeness and intelligibility of the extract. In the text I have clearly indicated the length of the omitted part of talk as well as the points where this style of editing occurs. Data analysis was undertaken with unedited Finnish transcripts, with editing performed at the reporting stage to improve the readability and accessibility of the extracts.

CA studies often use the transcription system developed by Gail Jefferson (see Sacks et al 1974, Jefferson 1985). The transcription conventions and symbols employed in the present study are also adapted from Gail Jefferson's transcription system. Ten Have (2002, [42]) notes that like any "standardized" "system", the system of transcription also needs "individual" and "local" decisions for its application in practice (quotations in original). The level of transcription detail in the present study is based on considerations regarding the analytical purposes and level of examination. Thus, I pursue to provide as much detail as necessary to illustrate the point, but not pursue as detailed a rendering as possible. For example, as the focus in my work is not on phonetic details of talk, these types of detail are not provided in the transcripts. In order to validate the transcription system, I have consulted studies with similar foci, such as Samra-Fredericks (2000b, 2003a, and 2005) and Llewellyn (2010), as exemplary studies on the presentation of transcription.

Transcription symbols employed in this study are presented in Table 4 (Sacks et al 1974, Psathas & Anderson 1990).

Table 4 Transcription symbols used in the study

Feature of interaction	Transcription symbol	Example
Pauses by tenths of seconds	(.) and (1)	(½)
Overlapping talk	[]	IRIS: [No, no] PETER: [Through these]
Comment	(comment) ((explanation))	(inaudible) (omitted) ((product)) ((metrics))
Latching on: the next turn begins immediately after the previous turn	=	11 PETER: Sorry, I didn't have time to ask from anyone else (inaudible) = 12 MARYANN: =Ye:es I (.)
Words are clipped or cut off	-	obviously it'll not be realized-
Stretch:	:::	Ye:es
Softly spoken °word°	° °	°If I just quickly ask°
Loudly spoken <u>word</u>	—	<u>I want</u>

In addition to the transcription symbols explicated in Table 4, I have in a few occasions highlighted (bolded) some words or expressions in the extract to draw attention to particular use of words or expressions; these occasions are clearly indicated in the text. Identification of the participants is achieved by assigning each a discrete identifying tag or acronym (Sacks et al 1974, Psathas & Anderson 1990). Anonymity of other persons is secured by employing a general description (e.g. “name of female employee” or “name of line supervisor”). The identifying acronyms are presented in Chapter 3.2.2. In addition, all potentially strategic information is secured by referring to such information with category names (e.g. name of product; name of process; name of metric), presented in the extract within double brackets.

The line-by-line presentation of utterances includes numbers preceding each line of print. Each line of utterance is generally as long as the speaker could produce in one breath (Psathas & Anderson 1990). This choice allows for presenting the pace of the interaction. In the transcript, the time, date, and place of the original recording are provided anonymously.

If more than two persons were speaking simultaneously, it was sometimes difficult to identify individual addresses and, on these occasions, utterances

could not be transcribed completely; these occasions are marked as overlapping talk or inaudible.

3.4.2 Field notes

Field notes are often regarded as an important and elementary component of empirical materials (see e.g. Manning 1992, Samra-Fredericks 2003a, Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008). In this study, field notes serve various important purposes.

During the fieldwork, I made two types of field notes. First, I made notes about key discussion topics, words, and phrases during the TMTO meetings. In addition, I made notes about regarding the themes of discussions and the progress of topics. These records helped me in building a fuller picture of the meetings by filling the gaps in “blind” audio recordings, and greatly assisted the transcription of the audio tapes. This was particularly important, as the audio recording quality of team discussions was sometimes compromised by noise caused, for example, by ongoing coffee-drinking, a typical feature in all types of meetings. Assisted by the field notes, it was also possible to identify a blurred word or a phrase in an audio recording.

Notes taken during meetings also contain descriptions of physical arrangements (e.g. the seating order), participants’ clothes and equipment (e.g. notebooks; mobile phones and the like), and visual illustrations employed during the meetings. These notes provide essential contextual information of the meetings, and enabled me to “get the feel” of the interactive situation when organizing and analyzing the empirical materials.

I also recorded in the field notes my observations regarding the atmosphere of the meetings, and on the pace, rhythm, and style of the interaction. These notes served the purpose of orientating to the communicational and interactional dynamics of the meeting group, and as interpretational tools in the analysis. By writing down observations on the meeting discussions and encounters with the participants I sought to learn “what it is that’s going on here” (Goffman 1969).

The second type of field notes was written after encounters with the TMTO or the managers (interviews and other “chats”). Subsequent to meetings or interviews, I often wrote a one to three-page summary of my reflections concerning what had been discussed, and of my observations regarding the situation. However, this type of summary was not produced after every encounter, as I did not always have the possibility to immediately write down my impressions. Although not comprehensive, these notes were nevertheless

valuable, as they provided new insights on many issues and helped me in the analysis of meeting discussion transcripts.

3.4.3 Written materials

Written materials in the present study comprise various materials utilized by managers in the meetings. These include strategy documents, organization charts, task descriptions, budgets, and financial reports (spread sheets), PowerPoint presentations, presentation hand-outs, meeting agendums and memorandums, and the company history.

The role of written documentation in the present study is two-fold. First, the materials helped me to learn the key concepts and vocabulary used in BioCorp, and to learn which issues were central to the managers' work. Secondly, I used the materials to attend to these aspects in the same manner as the members, which helped me to learn how they worked, and initially, to seek relevant competency. Thus, the written materials were not analyzed as data, but utilized to gain a better understanding of the managers' work and to support the ethnomethodological analysis.

3.4.4 Interviews

During one-and-a-half years of fieldwork I had discussions with the participants on multiple occasions. Prearranged discussions took place first, a few months after the first TMTO meeting, and a second time after I had concluded my observation. In addition, I had discussions with some participants on other occasions.

In ethnomethodologically oriented research, the role of interviews is to assist the researcher gain a better understanding of the members' practices (David 2011)¹⁴. In my case, the interviews assisted in building unique adequacy by enabling me to learn about various aspects of the members' work.

Discussions were guided by a broad list of various themes, rather than a predefined set of interview questions; thus, they were thematic and conversational in nature. Instead of emphasizing consistency in talk, variation and rich accounts were valued (Potter & Wetherell 1987). Therefore, I encouraged the managers to speak of matters relating to TMTO meetings, as well as aspects of their work that they wanted to discuss.

¹⁴ Personal communication 27.4.2011.

Emerson (1981, 358-360) notes that the ethnomethodologically oriented fieldwork is more interested in the actors' practices than in their perspectives and cognitive categories. Therefore, interviews are not treated as factual data, but rather they help me to understand and appreciate the situationally specific meaning and order in the setting, whilst simultaneously creating this meaning and order.

3.5 Analytical approaches: ethnomethodology and conversation analysis

The data analysis in this study is based on an analytical approach combining ethnomethodology (EM) and conversation analysis (CA). EM/CA studies share a mutual starting point and analytical orientation in that both examine social interactions in situations that, in turn, are created and sustained by these very interactions (Hepburn & Potter 2004, see e.g. Rawls & Mann 2010, David et al 2009, Rawls, Mann & Garcia 2008, Llewellyn 2010). CA holds everyday conversation as the basic model of which other forms of talk, such as institutional interaction, are adaptations (Boden & Zimmerman 1991). Therefore the findings of conversation analytical research on spontaneous everyday interactions also inform studies on interaction in institutional settings.

The EM/CA approach is a less frequently employed analytical approach in the field of management and organization studies (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh 2010). For the present study, EM/CA provides a particular contribution in two main ways. First, the EM/CA approach provides resources for analyzing how talk-in-interaction in the TMTO meetings is structured. Thus, instead of addressing the interaction only *descriptively*, it can with the EM/CA approach be *examined and analyzed* in detail to learn how it is organized and how the actors' interactive moves contribute to this organization. Second, the EM/CA approach enables recording how actors, the directors in the TMTO, mutually and interactively construct and sustain the practice of TMTO meetings. This can only be observed by analyzing the meetings as a *lived experience* (Samra-Fredericks 2003a). Thus, rather than probing with questions concerning the outcomes of interaction, the focus is on examining what takes place in the interaction (Peräkylä 2004, 163). Before presenting the analysis of the empirical materials I first discuss some of the key points of the EM/CA approach, concentrating on such aspects that are relevant to the present study.

The analytical lens adopted in interrogating ethnomethodological data is shaped by the recognition that interaction is structural and sequentially organized (Sacks 1995/2005, Garfinkel 1967, Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010).

Thus, interaction is regarded as a form of organized action, in which the meaning is created through and during the interaction. Similarly, CA is concerned with the methodical construction of social action in and through talk, and it investigates the structure and process of social interaction (Maynard & Clayman 1991, Peräkylä 2004). The premises of CA are, thus, that talk is action, action is structurally organized, talk creates and maintains intersubjective reality, and face-to-face interaction incorporates the broadest range of possible resources for communication (Peräkylä 2004, 154; Suchman 2007, 86).

The structural organization of talk is reflected in the sequentiality of interaction (Stubbe, Lane, Hilder, Vine, Vine, Marra, Holmes & Weatherall 2003). The mechanisms through which people organize and construct mundane conversations include, among others, procedures for turn-taking, repair of interactional troubles, and the adjacency-pair organization (Wilson 1991, 23).

The routines of turn-taking are built into the flow of human interactive sociability, and turn-taking is justly regarded as the most fundamental unit of social action (Boden 1994, 66; Sacks et al 1974). Turn-taking operates as “a type of revolving gate, demanding and facilitating deft entry and exit, and effectively managing the flow of talk by spacing speakers and pacing topics” (Boden 1994, 66). Turns in discussion are valued and sought after, but they may also be avoided (Sacks et al 1974). Turns are variously distributed among the discussants, sometimes competed for, and sometimes constructed as long as possible (Boden 1994). Examining who gets to talk, when they get to talk, and how they get to talk reveals the organization of turn-taking, and this, in turn, enables further analyses on how interactive opportunities and obligations between discussants are distributed, and how they can be constructed in interaction.

Adjacency pair, in turn, is one of the most basic and important sequences and analytical units in conversation analysis (Sacks 1995/2005, Peräkylä 2004). The first adjacency pair signals a need for the second pair: a question begs an answer; a greeting invites a return greeting; an offer waits for a response; an invitation requests an acceptance or declination (Francis & Hester 2004, Peräkylä 2004). Research on CA has indicated that adjacency pairs exhibit a phenomenon called preference. The first parts then displays a preference for the second pair, either acceptance or declination (Francis & Hester 2004, 63). Heritage (1984, 252) further notes that some of the more significant and characteristic aspects of the nature and workings of adjacency pairs become apparent when the expected pattern of action is breached. The absence of an expected second part, in the form of silence, signals that perhaps something is missing (Suchman 2007). The concept of adjacency pair is, thus,

helpful in examining how interactive opportunities and obligations are created and sustained in interaction. Questions, especially, are powerful interactive tools that have particular “performative force” (Steensig & Drew 2008). Questions may be employed as strategic tools with which to manage meeting talk and to achieve a shift in turn, for example (Sacks 1995/2005). An analysis of these basic mechanisms of interaction informs, thus, on how actors mutually contribute to the organization of the interaction.

The ultimate idea of studying the sequential organization of interaction is that the sense of a turn-at-talk in a conversation (or in any interaction) is in relation to an immediate temporal before and after. Therefore, each conversational turn “both displays an understanding of a prior and projects appropriate or relevant next action” (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010, 26). This sequential organization is regarded as a practical means for the actors to find out what an utterance is, or might be, trying to accomplish (*ibid.*, 27). Interaction can therefore be analyzed to exhibit organizational patterns of action to which the participants are oriented (Heritage 1984, 241). Thus, the most fundamental level of intersubjective understanding concerns the understanding of the preceding turn displayed by the current speakers (Peräkylä 2004, 156). Participants display their understanding (and misunderstanding) of the “state of the talk” for one another through the turn-by-turn character of talk, and this understanding is simultaneously made available to the analyst (Heritage 1984, Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010).

The indexicality of language means that the intelligibility of any utterance depends on the circumstances in which it appears (Garfinkel & Sacks 1970). The interactional context, in turn, is achieved and oriented to through the accomplishment of the social actors. Schegloff (1991, 65) refers to this as procedural consequentiality: that what seems inescapably relevant both to analysts and participants, concerning the “context” of the interaction is demonstrably consequential to some specifiable aspect of that interaction (quotation in original). Thus, the immediate context assists in evaluating, for example, whether an interruption can be interpreted in a negative or positive manner. The interruption may be interpreted negatively as “butting in” or as positive politeness, as “chipping in”, a method of helping the other in the conversation (see e.g. Schiffrin 1993). Similarly, in task-oriented business meetings interruptions may serve as important resources in the process of sense-making, for example, in providing additional technical information (Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris 1997).

The view that contributions to interaction are contextually oriented is, thus, mutual to both EM and CA (Heritage 1984, Boden 1994). Therefore, rather than comprising an alternating series of actions and reactions between individuals, conversation is regarded as joint action accomplished through the

participants' continuous engagement in speaking and listening (Suchman 2007). An important aspect in the ethnomethodological analysis is therefore to pay attention to what is said (meant) compared to what is talked about (Garfinkel 1967). The analyst needs to employ her "common sense knowledge of the society in exactly the ways that members use it when they must decide what persons are really doing or really "talking about" (--)" (Garfinkel 1967, 31, quotations in original). Combined, the EM/CA approach enables a detailed analysis of the (taken-for-granted) features and effects of talk-in-interaction, the key foci also in this study.

EM/CA research is, thus, an utterly empirical enterprise, in which the analysis is developed from phenomena that are directly observable and evidenced in the interaction (Heritage 1984, Peräkylä 2004). The researcher is not seeking for patterns, but rather analyzes the social practices in and through which patterns, such as structures and processes, emerge (Crabtree, Nichols, O'Brien, Rouncefield & Twindale 2000, 671). The analysis can therefore not proceed through the application of theoretically derived and pre-defined analytical frameworks. However, the analysis may yield classifications, but these need to be based on empirical findings, and not on *a priori* theoretical formulations.

The intersubjectively recognized infrastructure of mundane methods and practices enable concerted action, and produce order and intelligibility (Llewellyn 2008). These practices are observable for the participants and analysts alike. Both EM and CA are anti-cognitivist as they reject the goal of explaining action by reference to underlying cognitive states or entities (Potter & Wetherell 1987, Hepburn & Potter 2004). Analysts are, thus, not required to speculate on what participants might have possibly known or understood. Instead, the analysis can emerge from observations of the conduct of the parties to the talk themselves (Whalen et al 1999, 342; Sacks et al 1974, Llewellyn 2008).

In the next chapter I explain how the EM/CA approach informs my analysis and describe the analysis of the empirical materials in detail.

3.6 Analysis of the empirical materials

Accounts, and potential alternative accounts, in EM/CA research must be empirically supported (Llewellyn & Spence, 2009). Following this principle, my analysis is based on "raw data", which entailed carving out the findings through a detailed and thorough analysis of the empirical materials instead of relying on *a priori* hypotheses or pre-defined categorizations. In my analysis,

the key method has been analyzing and interpreting my observations and other empirical materials *in context*.

The repertoire of analytical tools was drawn from various complementary sources and the analysis was aided by various *probes*, techniques, and strategies. I commenced my analytical probings already a few months after the field work began. At this time, I sought to understand what was going on in the meetings. I examined the empirical materials, my field notes and the audio tapes and their transcripts in particular, with standard qualitative techniques that resembled qualitative content analysis (see e.g. Krippendorf 2004). I worked through the transcriptions first by tagging and marking interesting parts of meeting discussions and some features of interaction, which caught my eye at the time. Based on this work I composed lists of interesting topics and issues, which I then explored further, and mirrored against existing studies on (management) meetings, meeting interactions, and strategic practices. I also wrote synopses of some of the meetings to better understand “what it is that’s going on here” (Goffman 1969).

Other analytical techniques, such as counting the number of addresses of each participant, the time allocated to various themes, and some frequently appearing features, such as particular pronouns (*I, you, we*), allowed for observing the variation in how frequently the participants contributed to the discussion and how some addresses on specific topics were longer and more detailed than others. Working with this type of analytical approach to the data enabled me to gradually begin *to see* various distinctive features in the discussions and links between discussants’ addresses to what was previously said; I began to identify similarities and differences between various interactive sequences.

Over the whole analytical process I resorted both to the original transcripts of the meeting discussions in Finnish language as well as to the original audio tapes. While listening to the audio tapes and studying the transcripts, I consulted my field notes and pursued to get better immersed in the studied interactive situation (see e.g. Stubbe et al 2003). Thus, I employed the contextual information obtained through my observations and discussions with the participants as sensitizing tools in the analysis. Treating “ordinary” meeting talk as “analytically exotic” (Garfinkel 1967) allowed for asking questions concerning the roles of the participants, and their interactive contributions and the effects these contributions had on the overall interaction in the meetings. Simultaneously, I continued to build my knowledge and understanding of the practice of management in BioCorp.

This type of analysis can best be described as circular and repetitive iteration, during which particular phenomena appear and gain importance, observations and ideas concerning these phenomena become clearer, and

issues become interlinked in more apparent ways. At this stage, my data analysis proceeded in a similar manner to how Arminen (2005, 75) describes the process of conversation analysis: “In sum, the analytic procedure first identifies a generic structural feature, and then breaks it down into a set of observable and identifiable practices which themselves consist of enumerable interactional patterns.” The consequent analyses of the turn-by-turn development of the interactions and the careful examination of the meeting talk enabled more fine-grained features in the interactions, such as the use and effect of various interactive strategies, to be noticed. For example, the manner in which some participants talked appeared to encourage or restrain consequent interactive contributions of other participants. Simultaneously, the analytical tools provided by the EM/CA approach enabled observing how the social roles, power and influence were constructed *in situ*.

One of the tools I employed in the analysis was Heritage’s (1997) framework of dimensions of institutional character potentially observable in the interaction. The dimensions in Heritage’s (1997, 164-179) framework comprise:

4. Turn-taking organization: distinctive procedures and practices for allocating turns at talk that differ from casual conversation (e.g. chairing practices).
5. Overall structural organization of interaction: potential routine stages or phases in an encounter that recur across occasions (e.g. openings and closings in meeting; closing topics in meetings).
6. Sequential organization: specific ways in which organizational members exploit an understanding of the sequential relationships between turns at talk (e.g. who talks immediately after the chair).
7. Turn design: particular ways by which turns at talk (e.g. requests; invitations; questions; responses; rejections etc.) are designed to accomplish the organizational work.
8. Lexical choice: references to people, objects or events may reveal the institutional (as opposed to casual) nature of the activity at hand.
9. Interactional/institutional asymmetries in forms of participation, familiarity with organizational procedures, or access to institutional know-how.

Heritage (1997) notes that the institutionalization of interaction influences, for example, the potential range of interactive practices available for the participants. These aspects become analytically relevant once, and if, the participants themselves orient to them during their interaction. I employed the framework to reflect on my current findings and to examine the structure and organization of the interaction in more detail.

After the multiphase analytical wrestling and by combining various analytical and conceptual tools I came up with a set of organizing and

structuring features, and characteristics of interaction that are relevant to the aims of this study, and can be employed for further analyses of the data. The list of the main organizing and structuring features comprise the following aspects:

- turn-taking features of interaction;
- organization of turn-taking (shifts in turns; length of turns);
- speaker-hearer roles and participation to the discussions;
- focus and coherence of the talk;
- dynamism of the talk (e.g. overlaps; interruptions; pauses within and between addresses).

The set of features in the above list represent such features of interaction that were observable in the data and that, at the same time, were consequential to development of the situation and the meeting practice. The listed features of interaction are relevant from the viewpoint of *who gets to speak, when they get to speak, and how they get to speak*. They were employed to refine the analysis further and to engaged in what Emerson (1981, 352) describes as “the developing of relevant categories and analytic distinctions over the course of the study.”

A highly important method of verifying my observations, particularly the identified discursive practices and their effects, was to examine how *members themselves* treated their interactions. A close reading of meeting data indicated that the variously organized and structured discursive practices were initially recognized by participants themselves during meetings. During their interactions, the members also showed reflexivity and awareness of the effects of these interactive practices. The participants’ understanding of what is feasible and “practical” in the emerging interactive situation was shown in the interaction.

The longitudinal data also enabled investigating how the in the management meetings developed in time. I made comparisons of meeting transcripts from various time periods to identify how the interactive practices in use were similar to, or different from, each other in various meetings. By taking the prevailing practice as a starting point and by proceeding “backwards” I pursued to see how the practice was constructed (Arminen 2005). This type of examination enabled observing how the discussion practices and the overall meeting practice were constructed and sustained through the interaction.

Analysis of the empirical materials was in many respects intertwined with writing the report. During various stages of writing the manuscript I continuously resorted to the audio tapes, their transcripts and other empirical materials, and engaged in reconsidering, revising, and refining the findings. During the writing, I also made decisions concerning the presentation of the data extracts to best illustrate and support claims made concerning the data. I

engaged in this work with careful consideration in order to be true and loyal to my data, and to “avoid anecdotalism” (Silverman 2010).

In the next chapter I will move to describing the analysis of the data and the findings of the study.

4 DISCUSSION PRACTICES IN MANAGERIAL MEETINGS: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

“Focusing on discursive and organizing phenomena as situated, dynamic, interrelated, heterogeneous, and contingent provides a picture of organizing life as richly textured, ambiguous, and indeterminate” (Deetz, Heath & MacDonald 2007, 229).

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 introduces the analysis of the data and the findings of the study. In line with the EM/CA approach adopted in this study, the data analysis and the findings are brought forward by the use of data extracts. The practices of interaction are constructed and sustained *in situ* as an ongoing accomplishment, and the data extracts allow for demonstrating how the talk-in-interaction under examination looks like as a live conduct. At the same time, the employed method of displaying the data and its analysis enables illustrating the distinctive and relevant structuring and organizing characteristics of the interaction. Simultaneously, the rich use of data examples provides the reader direct access to the data, conveying a sense of *then and there*, enabling focusing on such features of context to which the participants themselves orient (Schegloff 1991). In all, the transcribed extracts of talk represent an essential part of the effort of analyzing the produced interaction in terms of its constitutive features (Psathas & Anderson 1990, 90). The extracts illustrate the discussion dynamics, and illustrate the situated and socially constructed and sustained nature of the various interactive practices.

The analysis in this chapter identifies characteristics and features of interaction that are relevant from the point of view of how the variously organized discursive modes allow for diverse interactive contributions, for various actor roles and for dealing with different issues. Analysis of the longitudinal observational data suggests that the identified modes of talk are more or less frequent and repetitive features in the meeting interaction. Indeed, their frequency corroborates them as practices of interaction, and not just occasional features of interaction.

To maintain the focus of this analysis, I employ a selected range of analytical concepts and tools. Therefore, only a finite proportion of potential

analytical opportunities provided by the EM and CA approaches are employed here.¹⁵ Due to space constraints and to preserve clarity of presentation, I also resort to ethnographic descriptions illustrated and supported with selected data extracts. Transcription conventions and symbols employed in the data extracts are explained in Chapter 3.4.1.

The most apparent organizing and structuring features in all interaction relates to *who gets to talk*. In the case at hand who gets to talk (and who not) also fundamentally shapes participants' roles and the meeting agenda. Further structuring features in the meeting interactions include the turn-taking organization and the ways in which shifts in turns during various sequences of interaction are accomplished and organized. The dynamics of interaction, and coherence and focus of talk are additional organizing features that distinguish the various modes of interaction. Therefore, examination of these aspects of discussion dynamics enables observing what is being accomplished by the participants during the interaction. In conjunction with this, I also examine how issues, roles and power relations are reflected and constructed in the interaction.

There is variation in the distinctiveness of the discussion practices over time, and often various modes of discussion are mixed with other discursive practices, which is a typical feature in discussions with multiple participants in general. In the analysis, I seek to highlight the variation within and between discussion practices and illustrate how shifts and transitions from one mode of discussion to another are accomplished. Although this study does not aim in providing an acute depiction of the anatomy of managerial meetings, the longitudinal data enable the recognition of repetitive interactional patterns and recurring dynamics within and between meetings. However, according to the framing of the study, this analysis focuses on identification, first, of practices of interaction employed in the management meetings and, secondly, on the types of interactive opportunities, constraints and obligations these variously organized and structured discursive practices provide for actors in the situated social practice of management meeting.

As discussed in Chapter 3.2.3, the meeting team under study experienced various changes that were also reflected in the meeting interactions, and that mark three distinctive time periods during the one-and-a-half year observation period. These periods, *the orientation period*, *the shaping period*, and *the settling period*, are characterized by changes in the composition and roles of the participants.

Different discussion practices were salient in different times during the observation period. A number of discussion practices appear mainly in some

¹⁵ Clearly, a wide range of other analytical avenues can be taken in future analyses.

periods and less during other periods, while some other discussion practices are more enduring elements in the meeting practice. The longitudinal data enable these developments to be recorded, even if the primary purpose of the study is not to explore in detail the process through which the management meeting practice and the employed interactive practices take shape. In this chapter, to broadly track the temporal developments during the observation period, the identified discursive practices are displayed approximately in order of their appearance. The appearance of identified discussion practices at various times during the observation period is also discussed in Chapter 4.8.3.

The order in which the discursive practices are addressed in this chapter, thus, follows the approximate order in which they first time appeared in the meetings.¹⁶ Each of the identified discursive practices will be examined in turn, beginning with monologue in Chapter 4.2. Chapter 4.3 addresses targeted dialogue and other forms of two-party communications. The practices of reporting (financial and operation-specific reporting) will be described and analysed in Chapter 4.3. Chapter 4.5 focuses on free-flowing focused discussion as the most pervasive mode of communication in the TMTO. The last two chapters address communicative modes that, despite their frequency in all types of meeting, are seldom discussed in meeting studies in general. These discursive practices are drifting discussions, exhibited in Chapter 4.6, and micro-mining that is discussed in Chapter 4.7. Finally, the findings of the analyses are drawn together in Chapter 4.8.

4.2 Monologue as a communicative practice

The new Top Management Team of Operations (TMTO) meet each other for the first time in their new roles in a launch meeting, which marks the beginning of a two-and-a-half month orientation period. The meeting discussions in the launch meeting, and during the whole orientation period, were chaired and facilitated by the General Director (GD). A typical feature of the meeting discussions at the time was the frequency and the long duration of the GD's addresses, which can be characterized as *monologues*. Monologue is an easily recognizable mode of communication as the participant roles are so clear-cut; the dominant speaker holds the floor while the others listen.

Monologue is a particularly interesting mode of interaction for the present study as it is an exclusive, discursive practice employed in group discussions.

¹⁶ The order of presentation of the identified discursive practices is, thus, data-driven, and allows for tracing the temporal aspects, although in the present study the temporal trajectory has not been taken in the analytical focus.

While disseminating information or giving briefings through lengthy one-party addresses in meetings is, as such, nothing unusual or out of the ordinary, the pervasiveness of one-party talk makes it a significant communicative mode in this case. Obviously, monologue has substantial effects, both immediate and long term, on the interactive situation, on relations among the participants, and to the meeting practice as a whole. In the studied TMTO meetings, monologue was employed by the GD for describing the novel and strategically consequential managerial practice to be developed mutually by the new top team. Consequently, the aims of the interactive situation and the employed mode of communication are, to a substantial extent, mismatched, and this makes monologue a particularly interesting practice of interaction.

In the literature on meeting interaction, monologue is seldom mentioned as a discursive feature or practice. Samra-Fredericks (2000b, 317) and Asmuss and Svennevig (2009) mention monologue in fleeting, but for the most part, monologue is not mentioned in the repertoire of communicative modes in meetings. A potential reason for this might be that the common starting point and expectation towards occasions of group interaction, such as meetings, is that multiple actors participate and contribute to the discussions (see e.g. Asmuss & Svennevig 2009), and more analytical attention is therefore directed to discursive practices involving multiple speakers. However, in her study on multicultural business meetings, Poncini (2004) identifies monologue as a distinctive speech event (i.e. discussion practice). In Poncini's (2004) study, the company speaker's (chair's) monologues had a visible (and audible) effect on the interactive situation; other actors did not participate in the discussion during the chair's monologues. In Poncini's case, however, the monologue types of interactive sequences were relatively brief, and after monological sequences the chair would facilitate more participatory discussions.

Monologue is an established discussion practice; for example, in lectures and academic presentations¹⁷ when it is employed as a customary method of disseminating information (Goffman 1981, see also Rendle-Short 2005). In these settings, the highly differentiated speaker-hearer- roles (one speaks, while others listen) are generally known to, and acknowledged by, all parties. Consequently, the differentiated participant roles adhere to the most distinctive and visible organizing features of monologues.

The monologue mode of communication is often preferred also in other types of presentations, such as press conferences and briefings, as it enables the efficient transmission of information to a large group of people without

¹⁷ Academic monologues are often followed by a Questions & Answers- session (Q&A), which allows for interaction between the speaker and the audience.

interruptions. Monologue is also the default communicative practice in AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) meetings, which are organized around a series of lengthy personal monologues, and in which direct conversational exchanges between the participants are excluded (Arminen 2001, 212). The practice of allocating each speaker the same time slot, three minutes, ensures that the speakers can each tell their story safely and without interruptions¹⁸. In these cases, the use of monologue can, thus, be understood as a specific discursive practice designed to secure a turn for one speaker at a time, and for securing efficient transmission of information. In the present case, however, monologue was employed in a communicative setting that characteristically intended to involve multiple discussants. Thus, instead of ensuring each speaker a turn, monologue created a communicative situation in which the interactions were controlled and dominated by one speaker.

Garrod and Pickering (2003) note that humans are “designed” for dialogue rather than monologue (quotation in original). Thus, the general expectation in situations of group communication is that the discussion will enable participation. Communicative situations in which this expectation is not met are, therefore, of particular interest.

4.2.1 Launching the new TMTO through monologue

In the case of a group communication situation, such as a management team meeting, monological talk organizes interactional opportunities and obligations of the participants in particular ways. The dominance of one-party talk establishes clear-cut and exclusive participant roles that separate the dominant speaker and the hearers, or audience. The listener’s role becomes fundamentally one of trying to recover the current speaker’s intentions (Linell 1998, 91). In monologue, both access to the floor and control over the development of the activity are predominantly in the hands of one discussant. Suchman (2007) notes that these two areas are found the key problems related to any interactive situation.

The lack of participation in the discussions during the first meetings in the orientation period was also noted and acknowledged by the dominant speaker, the GD, who occasionally made moves to engage the other participants in discussions. Extract 4 serves as an example of such situation. The extract also shows how some of the most distinctive characteristics of monologue are best

¹⁸ The formal arrangement of turn-taking as uninterrupted serial monologues ensures each speaker an ownership of their own problems (Arminen 2001).

highlighted when a shift to a more participatory mode of communication is attempted.

Extract 4 Meeting 1, orientation period.

Meeting time 00:31:15

- 1 GD: (---) I, my hands are itching a bit with this thing
- 2 to see how you start working (as a group).
- 3 I don't know how you feel about this, though.
- 4 Somebody, use an address (*lit. say something*)
- 5 so that I don't have to talk all the time.
- 6 What if we take a [round]
- 7 ANTHONY: [Personally] at least I find it great to be here,
- 8 to be involved in this.

Extract 4 is illustrative of how a shift in the mode of communication is achieved in lines 6 and 7, but also of how the members (here, the GD) themselves identify the discursive practice in use. The GD's comments in lines 4 and 5 shows that she is aware of the communicative mode and its effects on the interactive situation. The shift to a more participatory mode of communication takes place immediately after the GD opens the floor to the other participants in line 6. Anthony self-selects (Sacks et al 1974) himself as the next speaker in a situation of approximate (that is, non-addressed) speaker selection.¹⁹ The slight overlap between the GD's and Anthony's talk in lines 6 and 7²⁰ can be read as a signal of Anthony's eagerness to contribute to the discussion. Thus, the extract shows that ostensive *conversational latency* (Gibson 2010) of the other participants in distinctively monological communicative situations hinges necessarily not on their reluctance to contribute to the discussions, but rather on their inability to *gain access* to the discussion. The monological mode of discussion would be disrupted by the GD explicitly inviting contributions through the activities of asking questions or soliciting reflections from the other participants, as illustrated in Extract 4.

The following extracts further illustrate some of the challenges involved in the organization of communicative situations dominated by one-party talk. As noted above, other participants had difficulty in contributing to the meeting discussions in the launch meeting, except through explicit invitation. Consequently, their spontaneous contributions to the meeting discussions were few. However, the GD's attempt to adjourn the meeting prompts sudden interactive contributions from two participants, Karen and Paul. During this

¹⁹ This interpretation is made with caution, since in the absence of video tape and/or other recorded observations I have no data about body position and glance, see chapter 3.4.1.

²⁰ Transcription symbols are explained in chapter 3.4.1.

discussion, Karen and Paul take turns in seeking to elicit more information about the task and the role of the newly established TMTO. Karen, referring to her role as an “HR person”, masks her questions as a request for an “orientation briefing”, and Paul connects his enquiry, first, to the task of the new TMTO vis-à-vis other managerial teams in BioCorp (of which he has brief experience), and, secondly, to the tangible and concrete deliverables of the TMTO, such as metrics. Schegloff (2007) refers to this type of a tactic or strategy of topic introduction as *topic proffering*. Topic proffering sequences are based on questions that give the interlocutor the opportunity to accept the topical bid, for instance, by producing an expanded response, which is what takes place here. Paul’s and Karen’s topic proffering elicit an extended reply from the GD, exhibited in Extracts 5 and 6 (lines 17-24 omitted).

Extract 5 Meeting 1, orientation period.

Meeting time 00:51:54

1 GD: it becomes through this actually.

2 Like, once we get these strategies and others sorted out

3 and look at our focus areas and what our concrete targets are (.)

4 PAUL: mm.

5 GD: I don't want such a jungle of metrics that we've had so far.

6 There is no use us reporting on such metrics which are useful to no one.

7 So let's rather take fewer of them and take the most central ones.

8 PAUL: Ye:es.

9 GD: =and the ones that are our priority areas next year,

10 and that we want to invest in, in particular.

11 PAUL: Ye:es.

12 GD: With some of you I've already discussed

13 there, if you take a look at above Karen's head=

14 PAUL: =A-ha=

15 GD: = there are a lot of numbers.

16 Some of the numbers we went through with Anthony already.

Extract 5 demonstrates, first, the challenges involved in becoming involved in a discussion taken forward by one dominant speaker. The GD's fluent and assertive talk does not cater for potential shifts in turns. Minimal pauses in lines 3 (Extract 5), and 27, 30, 33, 35, and 38 (Extract 6), for example, are too short to facilitate shifts in turn-taking. The talk does not contain explicit invitations to participate (e.g. with questions), and therefore Paul's contributions remain on the level of occasional affirmative sounds. Thus, from the point of view of turn-taking analysis, the extract offers few analytical opportunities. In addition, due to the factual lack of shifts in turns, there is also minimal variation in the discussion dynamics. The discussion is taken forward

by the GD in a *self-reflective* manner; the communicative practice has a *recursive character* (see e.g. Jarzabkowski, 2004).

Extract 5 brings forward multiple factors that help to explain the persistence and frequency of monologue during the orientation period. The ethnomethodologically oriented analysis of the longitudinal data enables the examination of both immediate and long term effects of the monologues; first, focusing on factors exhibited in the immediate interaction.

An immediate and a visible effect of long sequences of one-party talk is that the longer the monologue continues, the more difficult it becomes for the others to join in. Gibson (2010) notes that *conversational latency* has a significant impact on discursive options; those who have fallen out of conversation for longer periods are susceptible to *alienation from topic* (Gibson 2010, 146-147). While alienation from topic in some cases may provide opportunities to change the topic, this option was not available for the participants at this time.

Another important reason for the other participants' immediate difficulties in contributing to discussions concerned the meeting agenda. Svennevig (2012, 54) notes that the meeting agenda provides participants with a "template" for the topics to be addressed and activities in which to engage during the meeting. This provides topics with a "known-in-advance" status, termed *business-at-hand* (emphasis and quotations in original). In meetings in general, the written agenda organizes and structures interactions through which the participants in local turns of talk contribute to topic progression. For participants, the agenda provides the intelligibility of topic introductions; by presenting the main items on the agenda, the chair creates a common frame of reference in the meeting (Svennevig 2012, 62). However, in the present case, the agenda, or list of relevant "talkables" (Schegloff 1986), would transpire on a turn-by-turn basis through the GD's talk. Literally, therefore, the meeting agenda transpires as "the speaker's current agenda, which we do not have access to until it is spoken" (Samra-Fredericks 2000b, 322).

Svennevig (2012) points out that the procedural consequentiality of the participants' orientation to the agenda becomes clear when topic introductions do not address an item of *business-at-hand*. In the present case, participants' obvious challenges in assimilating new information delivered through talk, and their struggles in comprehending the overall task of the TMTO, were amplified by the missing written agenda that, in fact, made it demanding for them to *locate* and *comprehend* the *business-at-hand*.

Participation in organizational interaction is important for organizational learning and for making sense of organizational events (e.g. Nielsen 2009, Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 2004; Clifton 2009). Interpretations and conclusions that lead to deeper understanding of issues and their interrelations need to be

processed through mutual interaction. In the present case, however, these processes are compromised due to the pervasiveness of one-party talk.

Visual and written materials, and various types of artefact (e.g. flipcharts; spreadsheets; PowerPoint presentations; memorandums; planning documents), play an important role in occasions of institutional interaction, such as workshops, negotiations, and meetings (Poncini 2004, Hodgkinson et al 2006, Johnson, Langley, Melin & Whittington 2006; Seidl, MacIntosh & MacLean 2006, Nielsen 2012, Kaplan 2011, Wodak, Kwon & Clarke 2011). Visual and written materials provide resources for disseminating information, focusing attention, and structuring and organizing meeting talk. Some of these materials might be prepared and circulated prior to the meeting, whereas other materials might be distributed in the meeting or even prepared on the spot.

Overall, employment of written materials was scarce in the TMTO meetings, and the launch meeting was carried out without a written agenda and visual presentations. The calculation on the flipchart, to which the GD refers in Extract 5, line 13, is merely referred to as a potential source of information and not employed as a basis for discussion.

The practice of not employing visual or written materials receives an (partial²¹) explanation by the GD in the next extract, which exhibits the direct continuation of the monologue shown in Extract 5.

Extract 6 Meeting 1, orientation period.

Meeting time 00:54:12

25 GD: So I hope now (.)

26 I don't want to list them for you, I want

27 this group to independently (½.) in a way (.) We'll find them.

28 Like, of course I can give them to you if you want to,

29 but then it doesn't come through you.

30 I want the strategy to come through you (.) that you understand

31 what the big picture is, what the important things are.

32 PAUL: Ye:es.

33 GD: After we have (½)

34 This was when we did, here we have our metrics

35 and others. And, I want it to come (.)

36 First, it comes, like, on the upper level,

37 what are our mutual goals that we aim in.

38 And then each one of you sees to your own area (½)

39 Do you want that we look at the upper level together,

40 and then share and divide the targets?

²¹ In the meeting, the GD also mentions that her computer is temporarily broken.

41 Wouldn't it be better if you thought it through amongst yourselves?

42 PAUL: hmm.

Extracts 5 and 6 allow for analyses from the viewpoint of content (issue) of the discussion and features of language use, the pronoun use, in particular. Issues and themes raised by the GD during her address essentially form the agenda for the orientation period. Thus, in explaining the key themes and elements of the TMTO work, the GD orally crafts the agenda for the orientation period. Whereas a written agenda performs the constitutional work of *making things work*, by providing both resources and constraints to action, the oral agenda in this case provides the GD (the chair) resources for “an authoritative basis for introducing new topics and managing the topic progression of the meeting” (Svennevig 2012, 64, quotation in original). In Extract 5, the GD referred to her reluctance to adopt a “jungle of metrics” (line 5) for the basis of the new TMTO, and in Extract 6 she continues to reason her approach to its work. Thus, instead of “giving ready answers” to the team (line 28), the GD wants the team to “find and develop the metrics *and* the strategy” (lines 27-30), to “mutually find and develop the upper level targets” (line 36) and the “mutual goals” (line 37). Finally, her disinclination to employ existing materials and approaches as the basis for the work of the new TMTO is highlighted in her last phrase in lines 39-41; in her mind, the most feasible approach for the new team would be to “think it through amongst yourselves in the gang”.

A short time later in the same meeting, the GD wonders aloud whether disseminating BioCorp's strategy documents to the TMTO would be a “bad thing”. Thus, her idea of “starting with a clean slate” is centrally connected to her preconception of visual materials overly constraining and framing the renewal of TMTO practices. This idea is supported by a number of studies that examine the use of artefacts. For example, Kaplan (2011) and Hodgkinson et al (2006) note that artefacts and materials also effectively frame and limit the potential topics of discussion and the potential views to be expressed. Routinized use of conceptual tools or artefacts (such as SWOT analysis) in strategy work, in turn, has been noted to lead to habituation of a practice that should provide for novel perspectives and be a source of renewal for the organization's strategy (e.g. Näsi & Aunola 2001). However, in the present case, abstention from employing the existing written and visual materials as a source of factual information on the current processes and practices in BioCorp compromised the new TMTO's opportunities to get a grip of its agenda and complicated members' opportunities to participate in the discussions. While both the agenda for the new TMTO and the required

managerial tasks were known to the GD, they were unique and novel to the other directors (see Ten Have 2007).

However, as the orientation period progressed, the TMTO began employing some written materials, such as agenda circulated prior to forthcoming meetings. The directors were also given preparatory tasks for the forthcoming meetings. In addition, some strategy documents and reports were reviewed and discussed in one of the meetings during the orientation period. The use of these materials provided slightly improved opportunities for the participants to contribute to the discussions that, however, remained difficult to access. The directors' participation was continuously complicated by their unfamiliarity with the practices of Top Management and deficiencies in their current deposit of relevant vocabulary and concepts (Nielsen 2009). These challenges were also addressed during meetings when participants frequently reverted to concepts or vocabulary, which were then explained by the GD or another actor. Overall, however, the practice of "mutually exploring" the strategy and goals of the TMTO and the whole orientation period were referred to in later discussions as "muddling through" or as "a confusing experience" by the directors.

While Extracts 5 and 6 aptly emphasize the challenges involved in renewing practices, discursive and other, they are also illustrative of the manner in which power relations are reflected and manifested in talk-in-action. Extracts 5 and 6 also are illustrative of the intra-group relations in the TMTO and, in particular, the role of the GD vis-à-vis the TMTO. In the next chapter, I will explore the participant roles reflected in and sustained through monologue in more detail.

4.2.2 Participant roles and hierarchical positions reflected in and constructed by monologue

In comparison to everyday conversations, organizational interaction is more sensitive and loaded with meaning. Actors consider the potential consequences of their communication more carefully, as occasions of organizational communication contain fewer opportunities for repair. Group communication situations are particularly vulnerable in this respect, as potential errors in communication and their repair are public and visible.

The prevailing organizational and hierarchical roles and positions between actors essentially create expectations to the interaction, and these expectations are both reflected and sustained in the interaction. Expectations regarding current and future communicative situations are formed on the basis of previous experiences and essential background knowledge of the

organizational settings, persons, and situations (see e.g. Rawls 2008b, Llewellyn 2010). These expectations influence how obligations and opportunities of interaction are perceived available to the actors, and, therefore they also influence on how the actors engage in the interaction. Some of these background expectations are likened to rules or norms of interaction that then, together with the roles of the participants, become visible and observable in the interaction. These roles are simultaneously constructed in and through the interaction.

Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris (1997) note that the length and number of turns in business meetings can serve as indicators of the discussant's relative position, and, thus, of power. By controlling the duration and direction of the talk, the dominant speaker can exercise power over the interactive situation. The analyses highlight particularly well how control over the interaction is executed and how monologue further contributes to consolidating the established participant roles.

The extracts in the previous chapter are illustrative of how power relations among participants are reflected in pronoun use. The next extract represents a snippet from Extract 6 and emphasizes, in particular, that shifts in pronoun use are informative of intra-group relations. The pronouns are highlighted with bold for illustrative purposes.

Extract 7. Meeting 1, orientation period.

Meeting time 00:54:12

25 GD: So **I** hope now (.)

26 **I** don't want to list them for **you**²² **I** want

27 **this group** to independently (½.) in a way (.) **we'll** find them.

28 Like, of course, **I** can give them to **you if you** want to,

29 but then it doesn't come through **you**.

30 **I** want the strategy to come through **you** (.) that **you** understand

31 what the big picture is, what the important things are.

32 PAUL: Ye:es.

33 GD: after **we** have (½)

34 this was when **we** did, here **we** have our metrics

35 and others. And, **I** want it to come (.)

36 First, it comes, like, on the upper level,

37 what are **our** mutual goals that **we** aim in.

38 And then **each one of you** sees to **your own** area (½s.)

²² You-plural.

Extract 7 provides an apt illustration of pronoun use and, in particular, of shifts in their use. A quick quantitative analysis of the snippet shows that within just a few moments of talk the GD manages to use a pronoun 19 times: the pronoun *we* is used six times (lines 27, 33, 34, and 37), *you* (plural) is used 9 times (lines 26, 28, 29, 30, and 38), and *I* is used five times (25, 26, 28, 30, and 35).²³

In general, pronoun usage is considered to both reflect and construct intra- and inter-group *identities, hierarchies, and power relations* (Drew & Heritage 1992, Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris 1997, Samra-Fredericks 2003a, Poncini 2004). Ample use of pronouns contributes to the emotional appeal of communication. Thus, examining the pronoun use allows for gaining insights into the *effects of language use*.

Pronoun usage is, thus, connected to the manner in which speakers present themselves vis-à-vis others and how they relate to others (see e.g. Poncini 2004). In institutional communication *we* is frequently employed to invoke an institutional identity (Goffman 1981, Drew and Heritage 1992), to build common ground (Poncini 2004, Clifton 2009) and as a tactic to implicate a more powerful position or social status (Banks 1988 as referred to in Poncini 2004). Employing combinations of *I – you*, *I – we*, and *you – we* the speaker brings forward the relations between various actors. In the present case, the GD's use of *I – you (plural)* functions to specify and underline the division of roles within the group. By employing *I – you (plural)*, the GD establishes a division of work in the TMTO; she tells the group what *she wants them* to accomplish, and *their task* is then to execute this assignment. This array is, however, softened by the increasing use of *we* instead of *you* as a referent to the group as a whole, now also including the GD. Drew and Heritage (1992) point out that the self-referring *we* can in organizational settings be used to invoke an institutional identity over a personal identity. In a similar vein, by replacing *you* with *we*, the GD seeks to rearrange perceived identities and roles within the group, at least *on the level of discourse*, so that instead of two separate groups of actors there is now one group with a mutual goal.

Thus, the abundant use of pronouns in Extract 7 also draws attention to the *frequent shifts* in their employment. Goffman (1974, 128) notes that a change in footing implies a change in alignment we take up to ourselves and the other present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance. However, a smaller linguistic unit can do the same job; shifts in pronoun usage can be taken as “code switches” that reflect shifts in footing. Extract 7 displays the GD's constant moves between *I*, *you*, and *we*, which evoke a variety of roles, and institutional and situated identities. Looking at

²³ Direct use of pronouns.

how pronoun usage develops during this short snippet of talk reveals that a change in the combination of pronouns employed occurs in approximately line 32. The pattern of the pronoun usage in Extract 7 is as follows: I – I – you – I – you (indirect) – we – I – you – you – you – I – you – you – we – we (ambiguous) – we (ambiguous) – I – we – we – you (indirect). Thus, in lines 25–30 the GD characteristically uses more *I – you (plural)*, whereas in lines 33–37 pronoun usage concentrates on *I – we*, and ultimately, on *we*.

The detailed analysis of the pronoun usage in the above short snippet of talk is important also on a more general level, as it is informative of the prevailing power positions between the GD and the new TMTO. This understanding, in turn, enables an appreciation of the frames, opportunities, and restrictions to activities and interactions of the TMTO in subsequent managerial meetings. As Poncini (2004, 145) notes: “By reflecting and construing roles and relationships, pronoun use reflects and construes the character of the group.”

In Extract 7, shifts in the use of pronouns also illustrate the challenges involved in pursuing a change in how things are done. The GD’s original aim to renew the practice of TMTO meetings so that *the team alone develops the measurements* for their performance, *finds the strategy*, and develops a new meeting practice, is difficult to attain. Organizational change is considered to be reflected both in how things are done *and* in how things are talked about. The manner in which things are talked about is also illustrative both of social and power relations between actors. The mode of communication is in itself also a message of how social relations between actors are organized, and in the present case it has a bearing both on the interactive situation at hand and on the overall meeting practice. Similar to Samra-Fredericks’ (2003a) study, the recurring occasions of interaction in the present study, interpreted in a wider frame of longitudinal data, allow for observing and appreciating how the relations within the group are organized.

4.2.3 Interactive dynamics and moves sustaining monologue

In the previous two chapters, I have analyzed and described some of the issues relate to the frequency of monologue in the TMTO meetings. The challenges of understanding topics, the agenda, and the overall task of the new TMTO, as well as the asymmetries of knowledge (Heritage 1997), were identified as important factors in complicating participation in meeting discussions, and thus contributing to the pervasiveness of the monologue mode of communication. However, the pervasiveness and dominance of one-party mode of communication during the orientation period relates also to the hierarchical relations between the GD and the rest of the group, as was

highlighted in Chapter 4.2.2. In this chapter, I elaborate on this theme and illustrate how monologue as a communicative mode was sustained by the participants' interactive moves during sequences of interaction that, in turn, can (at least partly) be explained by the prevailing power relations (rules and norms of interaction).

In meetings, the chair occupies a key role in managing the agenda and facilitating discussion (Pomerantz & Denvir 2007, Poncini 2004). The criticality of the chair's interactive moves are highlighted, for example in Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008, 1408) study, in which the chair would keep "calling for consensus although the meeting participants were providing one", with the effect that the meeting team delayed a decision that had practically been reached. Wodak et al (2011, 605) note, in turn, that by employing a variety of discursive moves, the chair can bring the discussion to a closure by reducing the equivocality of ideas; for example, by the promotion of her/his own perspectives without inviting more discussion, and by blocking the participation of others. Managing who talks in meetings, for how long they talk, and when they talk can, thus, consciously is employed as a purposeful strategic tool by the chair for eliciting particular organizational outcomes from the meetings. However, the practices of managing meeting discussions are not always the result of careful strategic planning; instead, they can be "gut reactions" to emerging situations or reflections of the chair's interactive style. People in general are often unaware of the effects that different types of chairing or other interactive practices and tactics have on a communicative situation. Thus, the effects and outcomes of these practices may be unintentional and unanticipated. Whichever the case, however, these practices have visible and observable effects on how interaction in the meetings is organized and participated.

During meetings, the chair, and also other participants, employs various types of interactive moves to encourage and discourage, to facilitate, restrain, and direct the interaction to various effects on the situation at hand. Extract 8 displays some of the interactive moves and discussion dynamics that contribute to the frequency and pervasiveness of the GD's monological talk; lines 8-22 are omitted to improve the clarity and illustrativeness of the extract.

Extract 8. Meeting 3, orientation period.

Meeting time 00:53:00.

1 GD: Overhead is 23 million.

2 This is (inaudible). I thought (inaudible).

3 So it adds up to 19, 23, what does it add up to (½)

4 And if we look, clearly in the Liquids organization,

5 our pressure is in overhead (costs)

6 and in Gadgets on materials, if we look for productivity

- 7 It is useless for us to look for productivity in direct work.
 23 And I want you²⁴ to come along to this, so that you understand the process (.)
 24 That in the future you²⁵ understand how they are formed (1)
 25 ANTHONY: We've already started.
 26 GD: Ye:es, because it's utterly important. That's that (1½)
 27 MARYANN: We're, a s a matter of fact, doing a bit of a similar exercise
 28 also in the R&D, we take a look at the costs in a [product], what they cost.
 29 GD: [ye:es]
 30 MARYANN: (inaudible) this is not completely clear.
 31 GD: = Surely in *Liquids* this 14 million is quite a pot,
 32 it's by no means a small pot.
 33 MARYANN: =Yes and increasing. It was 8, 9 million
 34 just a few years back.
 35 GD: The volume is increasing tremendously.(1) Yep.

In Extract 8 the GD's address lasts for slightly less than two minutes, before the one-second pause in line 24 indicates the end of the turn, which, in turn, enables two participants, Anthony and MaryAnn, to utilize the opportunity to join the interaction. The GD's address revolves around matters that essentially relate to issues and processes central to BioCorp's competitive advantage. The centrality of these aspects makes them crucial also to the TMTO, and their mutual exploration and discussion would, therefore, have been warranted. However, at this time, the GD's interactive moves pre-empt opportunities for further discussion.

Anthony's quick remark in line 25 is clearly not an indication of an intention to elaborate on the issue, but rather an acknowledgement that the importance of the issue has been recognized (by him). The GD's next turn, in line 26, signals that Anthony's acknowledgement is taken as such and immediately seeks to close the discussion (That's that). However, despite the GD's quite explicit indication of topic closure, MaryAnn takes a turn in line 27. MaryAnn's address and follow-up comment in line 33 represent, therefore, a more structured attempt to elaborate on the issues raised initially by the GD. The GD's response to MaryAnn, in line 31, shows little reflection to the content of her utterance and remains, therefore, unconnected to what MaryAnn has said. MaryAnn's attempts to open a discussion on the particular processes and practices that relate to building competitive advantage in BioCorp are discarded at this time. In her next turn, in line 35, the GD swiftly brings the discussion to a closure.

²⁴ Plural

²⁵ Plural

Extract 8 also highlights how the differently available opportunities to provide content to the meeting discussions are sustained by the differentiated participant roles. In this case, monologues deliver the relevant informational content, while the other participants' contributions are merely comments or reflections to the monologues. My analysis shows that this type of dynamics would frequently take place in meetings during the orientation period. After delivery of information, the GD often would move to close the discussion without opening it for mutual exploration. This dynamics is also illustrated in the following extract. Extract 9 stems from the last meeting of the orientation period, and is also illustrative of the turn-taking structures, discussion dynamics, and interactive moves that block mutual discussion, thus contributing to a discursive situation characterized by monological talk (Lines 5–23 omitted for clarity).

Extract 9. Meeting 6, orientation period.

Meeting time 00:08:10.

- 1 GD: So let's finish the package today
- 2 and another thing, I want that we take care of the agenda
- 3 what we'll cover in these meetings and go through
- 4 and take a look at what information we need in advance (½)
- 24 And of course we can take a look on the last year if it's necessary
- 25 but I don't know if it's necessary
- 26 I think everybody already knows pretty well
- 27 how the last year went. (10)
- 28 And then hey, we'll go through these
- 29 you'll get the profit and loss statement, the income statement
- 30 the key figures others, so go them through in your own steering groups.
- 31 As well as targets and focus areas and so (½)
- 32 First you tell exactly the same things to your own people
- 33 and then, give them also enough information
- 34 So it cascades downwards (½)
- 35 If you have subordinates' subordinates
- 36 see to it that it goes through them.
- 37 One option is for you to have once a month
- 38 for example with your own people, assemble everybody,
- 39 and then, tell the whole lot there if you want to,
- 40 how things are going in your own organizations.
- 41 PETER: I, for example, have done so that every other week
- 42 my own subordinates and then, again every other week so
- 43 that there are two levels.
- 44 GD: Ye:es, whichever way you find it best.
- 45 The most important thing is that no one comes to me to complain

46 that “I don’t get any information, I’m not told anything”.

47 That’s the aim (½) that you pass the information

48 through your own line (organization). (4)

49 TERRY: That’s some target.

50 GD: Ye:es (1)

51 TERRY: We’ll do our best.

52(sneeze)

53 GD: Bless you.[Is it] is it cold here? It is ? (½) For real.

54: Alice: [Thank you].

In Extract 9, the GD’s address in lines 1- 40 is followed by Peter’s address in line 41; Peter joins the discussion without explicit invitation and self-selects (Sacks et al 1974) himself as the next speaker. Peter’s utterance is well-connected to the matter raised last by the GD and represents, thus, a potential opening line to a mutual reflection and elaboration of *best practices* for communicating strategic goals and aims. However, such discussion does not take place, as the possibility of further discussion on communication practices is pre-empted by the GD’s interactive move, beginning in line 44. The GD’s utterance emphasizes her disinterest in the *actual practices of communication*; at this point, the most important aspect for her is that the potential for complaints from employees concerning not being informed are pre-empted by the directors of operations. As indicated by the four-second pause after the GD’s last comment in line 48 closing the discussion to any further elaborations is successful. After Terry’ comments in lines 49 and 51, designed to “round off” the closure, the GD makes a conversational shift by employing a direct observation on an occurrence in the meeting room (a sneeze) as a tool for achieving a passage in interaction.

The extracts in this chapter illustrate how various moves and strategies can be employed to manage an interactive situation to the effect that the discussions are dominated by one speaker. By controlling participation in the discussions, the chair has the opportunity to invite contributions, and also to block other participants from the discussion (Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008, Wodak et al 2011). Thus, the chair’s interactive strategies for managing participation are quite central, and participants in emerging situations of face-to-face interaction, such as meetings, are attentive to these controls. The interactional sequences exhibited in Extracts 8 and 9 are, thus, illustrative of how these interactive strategies work to sustain the differentiated speaker-hearer roles, and the pre-established and reaffirmed power relations between the GD and the other participants.

Understandings about what is being done during the interaction are constructed turn-by-turn as the interaction proceeds. When people act in light of a prior utterance, they inevitably display an understanding of what the prior

was doing or at least might have been doing (Llewellyn & Spence 2009, 1425). Interactions and their responses in any given situation inform the participants also about how *they* are perceived, and what their opportunities and obligations in that interactive situation are.

Thus, while social actors have some influence on the way in which interactions develop, this influence is restricted or even prescribed especially in formal settings, such as meetings, by the institutional “rules” that govern the interaction (Suchman 2007). However, the constraining power of normative conventions can be viewed more as a “tendency to bind” than as a matter of normative determination of action (Heritage 1984, 304, emphasis in original). This tendency to bind is observable in how the participants’ interactive moves are structured and organized.

4.2.4 Monologue in the practice of TMTO meetings

Sacks (1995/2005) notes that in casual conversation the dominance of one speaker would raise questions about the division of interactional opportunities. In occasions of institutional communication, such as meetings, however, the dominance of one party seems, however, to be easily taken as a taken-for-granted and “acceptable” feature. During the TMTO meetings, the monological mode of communication was a distinguishable feature during the orientation period, and employed primarily by the GD. Thus, it was not established as a permanent and frequent discursive practice in the overall meeting practice. Meetings during the orientation period did show variation in respect of discursive practices employed; however, monologue and targeted dialogue, discussed in detail in Chapter 4.3, were characteristic in particular to meetings in the opening phase of the new TMTO.

While monologue serves as an efficient method to disseminate information, it does not facilitate mutual knowledge creation as it does not involve multiple participants in the interaction. In the monological mode of talk, the role of the dominant speaker is emphasized both in setting the agenda and in providing interpretations of issues on the agenda. Fay, Garrod and Carletta (2000) note that, in the case of serial monologues in group discussions among peers, the participants are most influenced by the dominant speaker. It is obvious that this effect is amplified by the hierarchical position of the dominant speaker, as is the case in the present study.

As an exclusive discursive practice, monologue also amplifies the established asymmetric power positions and hierarchical roles between the participants. In the case at hand these power positions were reflected and sustained in the interaction, but they also had a more wide-ranging effect on

how the meeting practice developed and how the TMTO perceived their task, role and boundaries of authority. The frequent use of non-reflexive and exclusive discursive practices, such as monologue (and targeted dialogue), send the directors a powerful message about their actual latitude in the management and decision-making in BioCorp. Explicit control of the interactive opportunities and the frequency of monologues during the orientation period forcefully communicate the directors' boundaries of authority.

4.3 Setting metrics through two-party discussions

During the orientation period, the singular most tangible and important task for the TMTO was the setting of key performance indicators (i.e. metrics). Metrics, or performance indicators, are managerial tools that are considered to be useful in directing organizational attention on, and measuring developments in, the identified focus areas that, in turn, are connected to the performance of an organization (Thomas 2007, Hammer 2007). In BioCorp, the process of defining metrics involved the derivation of a set of variables in the identified focus areas, and setting a feasible target level for each variable. These variables (metrics) comprised factors considered to contribute to the success and development of fluent processes. Overall, key performance indicators represent a general and frequently employed managerial tool (*ibid.*).

While the discussion about the metrics spanned the whole orientation period, two meetings in particular were devoted to discussing proposals for metrics in each operational area. During these discussions, the GD and the respective manager went through each of the directors' proposals for the metrics in turn until they agreed on a feasible set of metrics. These discussions were tightly focused on the issue under discussion and involved just two discussants; the GD and the respective manager. Therefore, I call this discussion type targeted dialogue due to the distinctive structure of these discussions and the tight focus on the issue.

Linell (1998) regards dialogue as a linguistic (or symbolic) interaction between two or more individuals who are mutually co-present, and who engage in interaction with equal speaker rights and opportunities of participation and topic development. In Linell's view, "dialogism" is, thus, - juxtapositioning to "monologism", an approach that subscribes to the transfer theory of communication, to the code model of language structure, and to the information processing theory of cognition and the mind. In the present case, however, the term dialogue refers to a conversational practice fundamentally involving only two discussants. In contrast to Linell's dialogue, the

conversational opportunities and obligations in targeted dialogues in the present study are to a great extent unevenly distributed, and the discussions also often display interactional asymmetries. Targeted dialogue is, thus, a particularly focused form of two-party conversation, which is characteristic especially of discussions concerning metrics between the GD and each director during the orientation period. The occasional sequences of two-party discussion subsequent to the orientation differ in nature and were intertwined with other discursive practices. The following chapters will examine targeted dialogue during the orientation period, after which I will briefly discuss the two-party discussions subsequent to the orientation period.

4.3.1 Turn-taking organization in targeted dialogues

During the orientation period, targeted dialogues feature each manager in turn presenting their proposal for feasible metrics in their respective organizations, and the GD discussing and commenting on these proposals. The mode of discussing the metrics between just two participants begins when the GD invites each director in turn to present the outcomes of their analyses. The structure of the communicative sequences in these targeted dialogues follows a general conversational structure typical of two-party discussions, the *ababa* sequence. In these two-party conversational sequences, the turns are taken in alternating order; *a* refers to the one speaker, and *b* to the other (Schegloff 1968, 1076).

Targeted dialogue in the meeting context is emphasized in this case as two-party conversations are carried out in a multiparty setting, that is, a meeting with eight participants in total. In addition, although occasional sequences of two-party conversations may be common in group discussions, in the case at hand the targeted dialogue was the most pervasive and durable discursive practice in two consecutive meetings. This has implications on the overall discussion dynamics as well as on participants' opportunities to contribute to meeting discussions, as the organization and structure of the interaction efficiently reflects and constructs participant roles in the interaction.

Extract 10 shows how the interactions during the targeted dialogues are structured and organized. The extract stems from the fourth meeting during the orientation period. In this discussion, Paul is presenting to the GD his suggestion for the metrics in the Logistics organization.

Extract 10. Meeting 4, orientation period.

Meeting time 00:16:50

1 PAUL: (inaudible) (7). Then, shall we go to the next?

2 GD: Doesn't, erm, ((metrics))-metrics come to here?

- 3 PAUL: ((metrics))-metrics, ye:es.
 4 So there are these, (2) ((metrics)), and then ((metrics)) (3)
 [secretary coughing]
 5 GD: I don't want that (cough) for Christmas. (3)
 6 PAUL: And then there's scrapping. (3)
 7 GD: And then also current assets are counted in this.
 8 PAUL: Right, ye:es, then or. (2)
 9 GD: This is a pretty central thing, in our (1) world.
 10 You see how many (metrics) are related to it.
 11 Good, let's move to the next then. (1½)
 12 PAUL: Then other central points we had, targets for the inventory turn-over
 13 as a separate point (inaudible) ((operative process)), but erm (.)
 14 GD: You can put it=
 15 PAUL: =It's one or our=
 16 GD:= So it's more like a sub-item of yours here or?(.)
 17 PAUL: Mm (.)
 18 GD: Production planning is a measure clearly.
 19 Let's use the ((operative process)) categorization. (3)
 20 Put it there as a measure, this is more like a bigger entity.
 21 And then there are these, smaller entities of iss-, measures. (4)
 22 And then the launch of ((process)) obviously or what are you after with it?
 (cont.)

In Extract 10, Paul introduces the metrics from an outline (on paper, reviewed by Paul only) prepared beforehand, and the GD then comments²⁶ on Paul's presentation. Looking at the overall organization of interaction shows that the meeting team is divided between two active participants and a group of hearers. The interaction between the discussants in targeted dialogues, as exhibited in Extract 10 is organized in an *ababa*-sequence, in which the conversational *opportunities and obligations* are differently available to the parties. The concept of adjacency pair is useful for highlighting this division. The first adjacency pair, or first pair part, (FPP) is a question, request, offer, invitation, summons, or an announcement, and the second adjacency pair, or second pair part, (SPP) is a recognizable response to it (Schegloff 1990, 59). In Extract 10, the GD's utterances in lines 2, 7, 10, and 16 function to elicit responses (answers), and thus form the FPP in the discussion. Paul's

²⁶ In fact, Alice, the secretary, is the third actor in the situation, whose presence is first indicated in line 4. Alice makes a memorandum on metrics (projected on the screen with the help of a dataprojector) at the dictation of the discussants (see the GD's explicit orders, e.g. in line 14). Longer pauses in the talk mostly indicate occasions when the discussants wait for Alice to complete her writing.

utterances, in turn, provide recognizable responses, the SPP in the discussion. This examination reveals how the discussion dynamics during the sequence under examination is organized. The discussion is explicitly taken forward by the GD in line 10 (Good, let's move to the next then), and the conclusion of the discussion is drawn by the GD in line 19. During the discussion, items introduced by Paul are reviewed, assessed, revised, and finally, approved by the GD.

The pervasiveness and long duration of the two-party mode of discussion – it was the dominant mode of communication in two consecutive meetings – make it easy to observe the turn-taking structures characteristic to targeted dialogues. These structures are also visible in the Extract 11 illustrating the fourth consecutive targeted dialogue during the orientation period, now between the GD and the Director of Gadgets, Peter (Lines 10-14 omitted).

Extract 11. Meeting 4, orientation period.

Meeting time 1:28:00.

1 PETER: Then, there's some overlap here, because the next one is quality

2 which is kind of related to the customer requirements and (½)

3 I don't know, should we put it there?

4 GD: Well yield is a good example of quality for you.

5 But is it of the process quality, what's the ((metrics))?

6 PETER: Ye:es. Its yield, or ((metrics))

7 it really is. And then, my focus area is then

8 in totality cost of poor quality above all,

9 components (.)

13 And then there are our ((activities)), now mostly these,

14 (to the secretary) just put ((activities)) there.

15 And in particular, that we will move the production of units to ((countries)).

16 GD (to the secretary): Put there that ((metrics)), no, not ((metrics)),

17 ((metrics)), no what is it, ((metrics)) plus that ((process)).

18 PETER: Ye:es. Well that's ye:es (½)

19 GD: This is=

20 PETER: =in principle it's ((metrics)) in here.

21 GD: ((process))-section is more important for you.

22 PETER: Ye:es.

23 GD: So you also have some ((metrics)), but if you locate

24 ((process))-opportunities, then you are an ace in that.

25 So that's probably your, that ((process)), ((process))

26 and ((process)) are your challenges=

27 PETER: = Ye:es.

28 Alice: (inaudible)

29 PETER:=Ye:es, outsourcing, I'd say unit outsourcing, to ((country)).

30 That goes to that ((process)), ((process)) lot.

31 GD: Did you just write it down, it's not, we can formulate them then.

Similar to Extract 10, Extract 11 illustrates the two-party mode, the *ababa*-sequence and a similar division of interactional opportunities and obligations: the GD initiates the discussion in line 4, Peter starts to respond in line 6, and in line 16, the GD seeks to confirm the outcome of the discussion. The GD forcefully brings forward her formulation of key performance indicators; Peter's affirmative comments in lines 22 and 27 are responses to the GD's utterances.

The nature of the communicative sequences during the interactions in targeted dialogues shows that the participants are oriented to the situation in particular ways. The turn-taking model in the targeted dialogues resembles the instructional triad, variously termed initiation-response-feedback (I-R-F) or question-answer-comment (Q-A-C) generally employed in school classrooms (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010, 34). The targeted dialogues reflect the instructional triad in the division between participants of interactional roles. During these interactive sequences, the GD evaluates and comments on "answers" produced by the directors, and, as illustrated in Extracts 10 and 11 the directors' suggestions are tentative until approved by the GD. The *final (correct) answers* are produced by the GD, and the directors find minimal room to elaborate or reconsider points explicitly stated by the GD. The two-party discussions are also tightly focused on metrics and the rationale for suggesting just these particular metrics, which makes the discussion coherent and tightly focused on the substance of the matter.

The speaker selection system (Sacks et al 1974) during metrics discussions is sustained by selecting the recipient of the communication through the pronoun usage, which is particularly well highlighted in Extract 10 in lines 14, 16, and 20 and in Extract 11 in lines 21, and 23-26. This type of exclusiveness distinguishes targeted dialogues from occasional dyadic exchanges in other types of interactive situations. Similar asymmetries in interactional opportunities are recorded in other forms of institutional interaction, such as in court practice (Drew 1992), job interviews (e.g. Button 1992, Llewellyn & Spence 2009, Llewellyn 2010), and in doctor-patient interactions (e.g. Drew & Heritage 1992, Suchman 2007). The clearly defined participant roles reflect, construct, and sustain differentiated interactive opportunities and obligations.

Consequently, there is minimal variation in the turn-taking dynamics, as the communicative structure is based on two-party mode of interaction. The dyadic discussion dynamics is also sustained by interactive strategies that restrain other participants' opportunities to enter the discussions; discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

4.3.2 Participant roles in targeted dialogues

The persistence of the targeted dialogue draws attention to the participant roles, which, as noted earlier, are shown as asymmetric interactive opportunities. The discussants' orientation to the organizational identities of others is manifested in the interaction (Rawls 2006, Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010), and shown in how they respond to each other's interactive contributions. The character of these sequences and the division of roles becomes perhaps most obvious when imagining the possibility of reversed interactions between the participants (see Llewellyn 2010, 88). For anyone observing these particular interactions *then and there*, it is clearly unimaginable that roles between the participants in the targeted dialogues might be reversed. This is also displayed in the analyses of the extracts in Chapter 4.3.

However, despite the asymmetric division of interactional opportunities and obligations the directors find, however, room to pursue their own views. To probe in more detail into the discussants' roles, I return in Extract 12 to a snippet from Extract 11 in the previous chapter, which represents a case in point.

Extract 12. Meeting 5, orientation period.

Meeting time 1:28:47

13 PETER: And , then there are our, ((activities)), now mostly these,

14 (to the secretary) just put ((activities)) there.

15 And in particular, that we will move the production of units to ((countries)).

16 GD (to the secretary): Put there that ((metrics)), no, not ((metrics)),

17 ((metrics)), no what is it, ((metrics)) plus that ((process)).

18 PETER: Ye:es. Well that's ye:es (½)

19 GD: This is=

20 PETER: =in principle it's ((metrics)) in here.

21 GD: ((process))-section is more important for you.

22PETER: Ye:es.

23 GD: So you also have some ((metrics)), but if you locate

24 ((process))-opportunities, then you are an ace in that.

25 So that's probably your, that ((process)), ((process))

26 and ((process)) are your challenges=

27 PETER: = Ye:es.

28 Alice: (inaudible)

29PETER: =Ye:es, outsourcing, I'd say unit outsourcing, ((country)).

30 That goes to that ((name of process)), ((process)) lot.

31 GD: Did you just write it down, it's not, we can formulate them then.

In extract 12, Peter works to establish ownership of the issue, the particular metrics for his organization, shown especially in line 14 when he orders the secretary to record the metrics he has chosen (*just put ((name of activities)) there*). However, in her next address, beginning in line 16, the GD overrides Peter's order, and gives the secretary other orders. At this moment, the contest between differing views on this particular matter becomes apparent. The disagreement is amplified by the GD's reformulation in lines 16-17; it is not presented as a suggestion, but rather as a command. However, with constrained room to manoeuvre, Peter manages to express his opinion in a manner that enables him to continue the discussion beyond the GD's command (announced decision). First, Peter's response in line 18 (*Ye:es. Well that's ye:es*) signals hesitation and incomplete agreement with the GD's view. In addition, Peter's mitigating expression in line 20 (*in principle*) provides him with further resources to express his reservations on the matter. His interactive strategy proves effective; during the next seven turns Peter and the GD ultimately engage in crafting a joint solution on how to rephrase the selected metrics. The *contest between views* is settled, and the GD's final comment in line 31 is one of mitigation: "what is written down can later be brushed up." Despite her original, strict view – expressed unambiguously as a decision – the GD, thus, takes notice of Peter's subtle resistance, and in cooperation with him, seeks an acceptable consensus.

Extract 13 illustrates another occasion when a director was able to employ the restrained frame of interactional opportunities and create more room to manoeuvre.

Extract 13. Meeting 5, orientation period.

Meeting time 1:34:05

1 GD: So because of that I'd say that we especially,

2 since we don't have our own research,

3 so we should be able to create such a network,

4 so that we can continuously sensor what's going on in the world

5 So I'd add that there.

6 MARYANN: Ye:es. And an issue related to this is, what we've discussed,

7 that we don't, in practice, have a lot of university co-operation, for example.

8 Or anything like it, so it's quite minimal.

9 GD: Ye:es, it's one thing for sure=-

10 MARYANN: = It's a thing, where we could build up

11 and gain resources and to that direction.

12 So it's, a lot is being done inside these wall.

13 GD: Ye:es, for sure.

In the above example, MaryAnn employs the GD's point as a tool for elaborating and underlining a point of her own. In line 6, MaryAnn reformulates and elaborates on the point introduced by the GD, and after this turn the dynamics of the discussion changes. The GD's next turn in line 9 is a confirmation of MaryAnn's point, which, however, is interrupted as MaryAnn continues to elaborate on it. Again, the GD's next turn in line 13 is a confirmation of MaryAnn's comment. This extract shows that the initiative taken by MaryAnn enables her to build a point of her own based on the GD's point, and also to elaborate beyond that. The GD's affirmative comments acknowledge the validity of the points made by MaryAnn, and provide her with a firmer foothold in the discussion. Compared to discussion dynamics in Extracts 9 and 10, the discussant roles in Extract 13 are renegotiated to provide MaryAnn with a more active role in the discussion, and more latitude in terms of topic handling.

The extracts in this chapter are illustrative of how actors produce themselves as organizational subjects moment by moment (Llewellyn 2010, 92) and how the roles of the participants are constructed in a turn-by-turn fashion. In addition, the extracts show that, despite distinctive asymmetries in the division of interactional opportunities during targeted dialogues, the directors are on occasion able to create and employ novel opportunities of influence. Extracts 12 and 13 illustrate how the members make use of ethnomethods, the tacit knowledge on when to take a turn or "let pass" (Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 147, quotation in original). Creating opportunities of influence during targeted dialogues, and overall, during the orientation period was, however, a challenging communicative endeavour that could not be accomplished by all actors in a similar manner.

Targeted dialogues create distinctive and clear-cut participant roles, not only between the speakers but also between the speakers and the non-speakers. For non-participatory observers, their role as the "audience" of the targeted dialogues was somewhat problematic. The task description of the TMTO encouraged directors' expectations about a participatory meeting practice. In general, the expectation in group discussions, such as this, is that mutual participation is possible, even desirable. However, it proved difficult for others than the two discussants to participate in targeted dialogues. Extract 14 illustrates the complications involved in joining the two-party conversations.

Extract 14. Meeting 4, orientation period.

Meeting time 00:36:30

1 GD: (inaudible). Good (.). Has anyone, any comments to Paul?

2 PAUL: Is something missing?

3 IRIS: Well when I see that you have a lot of them (metrics).

4 Do you think you'll be able to monitor everything? (1)

- 5 PAUL: Well by God, it's a must!
 6 They're not that bad, if you look at them, these are our metrics.
 7 So there are not that terribly many =
 8 IRIS: =Well okay, okay=
 9 PAUL:=it may appear so, because there 're the success factors and
 10 where it affects and what the measure is. It may appear maybe a little (.) =
 11 GD: =Some of the focal areas are linked with the same metrics anyway.
 12 It's linked through various activities.
 13 Good, this looks good.
 14 Thank you. Next.

Extract 14 exhibits the end of a sequence of two-party talk. Signalling the termination of the interactive sequence the GD, in line 1, invites comments from the other participants. Directly after this, in line 2, Paul reframes the GD's question by narrowing it down to "if something is missing". At this time, Iris enters the discussion attempting to link her comment to the GD's earlier talk on limiting the quantity of different metrics. This attempt proves, however, unsuccessful. Iris' question (beginning in line 3) is first rejected by Paul (line 5), and, finally by the GD (in line 11). Any opportunity for further discussion is cut off as the GD swiftly wraps up the discussion and moves ahead by inviting the next speaker in line 14. The options available to those who have helped shape the topic differ from the options of someone who has only observed others talk, and here these restrictions become explicit to Iris, as well as to other participants (see Gibson 2010).

Extract 14 is illustrative of difficulties in penetrating the dyadic mode of interaction in sequences of targeted dialogues. The example shows how the interactive strategies of discussants, in this case Paul and the GD, actively sustain the exclusive nature of the targeted dialogue by rejecting potential enquiries. Subsequent to this, no additional invitations to engage other participants or attempts to facilitate mutual discussion were initiated in this particular meeting. It followed that the *open floor* was minimally utilized overall, even when the directors were explicitly asked for comments. Extract 15 demonstrates how this was shown in the interaction.

Extract 15. Meeting 4, orientation period.

Meeting time 1:19:20

- 1 GD: (inaudible) .Ye:es and you'll complement that,
 2 and put those metrics there.
 3 MARYANN: Ye:es, well I, I've had this,
 4 I thought (.) We did go through them
 5 partly already last time, so is it worthwhile going through now-
 6 GD: = No no, just put them there. I think they're pretty good.

7 MARYANN: Ye:es.

8 GD: But you could still take a look at the measures, what,

9 because they're really mutual, so it's good to know what everybody's doing.

10 MARYANN: Ye:es.

11 GD: Anything to comment to MaryAnn's (4)?

12 Where shall we go next?

In Extract 15, the sequence of a targeted dialogue between the GD and MaryAnn is coming to an end. In lines 1, 2 and 6, the GD confirms the outcome of the discussion, and assigns an additional task to MaryAnn in lines 8 and 9 (defining the measures required for achieving the metrics); subsequently, in line 11, the GD announces open floor. At this time, the opportunity is not taken by any of the other participants, and after a pause of 4 seconds the discussion is closed, and the GD initiates a new targeted dialogue (line 12).

Extract 15 shows how invitations to ask questions or comment after sequences of targeted dialogues are ultimately taken by the participants as token invitations (Deetz et al 2007) or as ceremonials (Sacks 1995/2005). The manner in which occasional interactive contributions of the other participants were treated (exhibited, for example, in Extract 13) signalled preference for a restricted participation, and contributed to their understanding of the invitations to comment primarily as symbolic or ceremonial actions. In this case, the lack of response to the GD's invitation to comment is, thus, the proper "return ceremonial" (Sacks 1995/2005, 18-22). In fact, restraint from commenting, exhibited here in Extract 15, lucidly shows how the actors render their interactional strategy appropriate and fitting to a situation by employing their ethnomethods and knowledge to assess the situation, and thereby identify the most feasible strategy. In this case, it is clear that the most feasible strategy was to restrain from asking questions and commenting on discussions during the targeted dialogues. Ultimately, therefore, the interactive mode of targeted dialogue was not only sustained by the discussants themselves, but also by the non-participants who refrained from the interaction. The members' methods and understanding of the boundaries of feasible communicative action are public and witnessable, and, therefore, open to analysis.

Interactions in the mode of targeted dialogues continue almost uninterrupted for two consecutive meetings, until the *ababa* sequence is penetrated by the participation of a third discussant. Extract 16 displays how this is accomplished in a latter dialogue concerning metrics.

Extract 16. Meeting 5, orientation period.

Meeting time 1:43:10.

- 1 AMANDA: So to productivity, this is a difficult squeeze,
 2 so the biggest change to that that we're just overheads and =
 3 GD:=So you are, you're just (a batch of) costs (½)
 4 AMANDA: And that means developing our own activity, and
 5 processes and the way we work and obviously there's a lot
 6 to be done there (2) We discussed, we had these particular (½)
 7 which was suggested that this should be intervened with and this.
 8 One was the stability testing which should be reviewed and get some (½)
 9 But it appeared to be a thing that can give or take (inaudible)
 10 It's pretty difficult so say that somewhere it's possible sort of (½) that
 12 somewhere you can reduce and that in another area you should increase.
 13 PAUL: But, erm, just this stability testing,
 14 so it, in my opinion, affects productivity quite essentially =
 15 AMANDA: = Mm, Ye:es (inaudible), yea, yea =
 16 PAUL: =which in turn does not, I don't know
 17 how much money we'll have to waste
 18 in packaging work, packaging materials and shipping =
 19 AMANDA: =Yea, yea.
 20 GD: And scrapping too, because our (inaudible) =
 21 AMANDA: = Yea, yea.
 22 It was one, which turned out (inaudible) =
 23 GD: =This has got a huge impact.
 24 PAUL: It's got a huge impact on that.

In the above extract, Paul joins the discussion (line 13) to comment on an issue raised by Amanda. In his address, Paul explicitly links the issue under discussion (stability testing) with other factors influencing productivity. Paul's intervention brings him into the discussion. Through her affirmative comments in lines 15, 19, and 21 Amanda labels Paul and his comments valid with regard to the discussion. Paul's point is elaborated further by the GD (lines 20 and 23), who thereby also acknowledges Paul as a valid participant to the discussion. After these interchanges, the discussion is driven forward by Paul and the GD (shown only partly in the extract); differences between responses to Iris' comment in Extract 14 and Paul's comment in Extract 16 are noticeable. Overall, the Extracts 12-15 illustrate that opportunities for interaction can sometimes be created whereas, at other times, any attempts to contribute to interaction are futile. As Samra-Fredericks (2003a, 151) points out, knowledge, experience and "know-how" may provide for potential

advantage in interaction, but in order to make use of it an ability to deploy it appropriately and at the right time is required (quotation in original).

In addition to the power relations reflected in the situated interactions and the interactive strategies that restrained their participation, the directors' involvement in the discussions was hampered by their lack of knowledge and expertise in their managerial tasks and the TMTO practice. The asymmetry of knowledge (Heritage 1997) stemmed from unlevelled access to the knowledge and an unequal level of expertise. It was difficult for the directors to comment on two-party discussions as they were often closed without a clear summary or an explicit conclusion. During interviews held directly after the orientation period, many directors indicated that a variety of elemental issues relating to their new roles and tasks had remained unclear to them. They found that showing hesitation or lack of knowledge and inexperience was not a feasible option in management team meetings; some of them referred to their reluctance to ask questions in meetings "by not wanting to disclose their ignorance and lack of knowledge". Therefore, it becomes evident that also asymmetries of knowledge and, at least to some extent, the directors' image management strategies helped to sustain the discussion in the exclusive dyadic mode.

4.3.3 Two-party interactions in the practice of the management meetings

Similar to monologue, targeted dialogue was characteristic of specific dyadic discussions on metrics between the GD and the directors during the orientation period. Thus, subsequent to the orientation period, two-party discussions appear as brief and temporary features of interaction, entwined with other discussion practices. Consequently, the organization, role, and function of two-party discussions following the orientation period differ from targeted dialogues during the orientation period. The two-party discussions carried out in the latter meetings primarily are occasional and brief, and often serve to clarify or explain various details relating to the ongoing group discussion. Extract 17 highlights a typical exchange between two participants in the *shaping period*. Here, Peter and MaryAnn engage in a short dyadic discussion during a financial reporting discussion, which deals with reports on scrap inventory.

Extract 17. Meeting 11, shaping period.

Meeting time 1:17:25.

1 PETER: One comment to MaryAnn relating to the clearing out .

2 MARYANN: [Yes.].

3 PETER: [I] know, that your bunch will have things to say,

4 but I'll throw away five truckloads of junk from that end of the building (½)

5 MARYANN:(inaudible)=

6 PETER: =including ((foreman))'s stuff.

7 ((foreman)) knows=.

8 MARYANN: = A-ha. So from the Gadgets' income inspection.

9 PETER: Yes there are those old electronics components.

10 MARYANN: Ye:es.

11 PETER: Sorry, I didn't have time to ask from anyone else (inaudible) =

12 MARYANN: =Ye:es I (½) Ye:es, I'll just inform him,

13 that they're there, that they're being cleared out.

14 PETER: Ye:es he knows, but the other people there surely (½)

15 MARYANN: Okay, aa, okay. So if ((foreman)) knows, then it's ok. (1½.)

16 KAREN: And then to the mock audit. (cont.)

The above two-party discussion functions, above all, to clarify an issue that relates primarily to the two discussants. Peter explicitly addresses his comment to MaryAnn; the discussion is marked as a two-party interaction by the explicit selection of the recipient in line 1 (One comment to MaryAnn ---). During the discussion, the issue is elaborated by the two discussants. Similar to Extract 17, these types of two-party discussions often deal with particular small questions or short briefings.

Extract 17 illustrates how the turn-taking structures and discussion dynamics during these two-party interactions differ from the targeted discussions during the orientation period. Here, the discussants jointly contribute to the discussions, and mutually elaborate on the topic. The discussant roles are *symmetric* in the sense that the same conversational opportunities are available for both discussants. The ample use of affirmative utterances in lines 10, 12, 14, and 15, and the immediately *latching* addresses signal (for example, in lines 5, 6, 7, and 8) mutual involvement with the issue. The latching utterances also contribute to a dynamic conversational development, and indicate mutual agreement on the issue. MaryAnn's final comment in line 15 confirms the issue as settled. The two-party mode of communication is then adjourned as Karen, after a short pause, makes a shift in the discussion topic in line 16.

In the settling period, Peter, as the chair, would occasionally employ these types of brief two-party conversations as tools with which to elaborate on

particular issues, or for clarifying, or emphasizing particular points. Extract 18 gives a glimpse of particular conversational dynamics during a particular two-party sequence of interaction. The extract stems from a meeting that took place approximately a year after the TMTO was established. Iris has been giving an operation-specific report on the latest developments and news in her organization, in particular on inspections relating to an ongoing process of improving quality in the *Liquids* operations. The two-party sequence is begun in line 4 by Peter's utterance. The strip of interaction raises multiple interesting points, not only concerning the organization of interaction during these exchanges but also regarding what the utterances *do* in the interaction.

Extract 18. Meeting 25, settling period.

Meeting time 1:54:30.

1 IRIS: (inaudible) I think it'll take some time

2 before it shows (inaudible)

3 to get things cleared out.

4 PETER: What if, now, if I understood correctly at all, the idea Rebecca

5 held about this was that through these ((quality processes)) we'd be able to

6 optimize the [resource use]

7 IRIS: [Ye:es] so but no (½). The message coming strongly

8 from each line is that they don't have enough people.

9 And there's a terrible rush there all the time that it has not been realized

10 as [hoped for].

11 PETER: [Ye:es], but it's the same like asking to raise a hand

12 who in this room has too little work, so (.)

13 (mild laughter)

14 IRIS: Yes.

15 PETER: Terry is an exceptional person (in this respect)

16 TERRY: [mmm]

17 PETER: [but] obviously it'll not be realized-

18 IRIS:[No, no]

19 PETER: [through these](refers to the increase of work force)

20 IRIS: No. So it should, we should be able to radically change then

21 quite what, how the work is done, what, how we produce our products =

22 PETER: =But how can we initiate such a discussion?

23 IRIS: Well we can't just change it completely.

24 Then we should change our products (inaudible)

25 PETER: yes, it's [not]

26 IRIS: [Ye:es.]

27 PETER: its' a kind, that's why I said "discussion"

28 because it's a long way anyhow.

29 IRIS: Ye:es.

30 TERRY: Can I open my mouth again?

31 IRIS: Well you'll do it anyway so –

32 (general laughter)

Beginning in line 4, Peter's utterance is particularly interesting as it is designed to accomplish more than simply elicit additional information or clarify points reported by Iris. Peter begins his address with a question, but quickly reformulates his utterance to involve *the GD as a lever* to reframe the issue. While Iris had just described the improvement project on a general level, Peter now pushes her to elaborate on particular outcomes of the project, and more specifically, on how these outcomes are to be realized. Peter's question, formulated by utilizing the GD as a lever, enables Peter to reframe the context (see also Heritage 2003, 64-66) in such a way that the importance and the strategic relevance of the topic is immediately enhanced. Peter's involvement of the GD as the *principal* of his utterance is subtle, but effective. A principal, according to Goffman (1981, 144) is "someone whose position is established by the words that are spoken, someone whose beliefs have been told, someone who is committed to what the words say." Indeed, the GD appears in Peter's address in this capacity, and the immediate effect can be observed in the interaction. The multifaceted speaker roles provide for Peter an additional interactive resource to enhance the institutional importance of his question. This is reflected in Iris' responses throughout the extract. The efficiency of Peter's "*mild interrogation*" (Llewellyn 2010) is illustrated in the discussion dynamics (e.g. as interruptions and latching), the turn design, and participant roles. Therefore, the use to which questions can be put hinges not only on the type of activity, but also on the social relations between the participants (chair vs. other participants; supervisor vs. subordinate) (Levinson 1992, 81). In line 27, however, Peter offers his assistance to Iris by elaborating on her previous turn, and also seeks to facilitate the entry of other participants. After a few short turns, Terry joins the discussion and the two-party sequence comes to an end.

Extract 18 emphasizes also particularly well the *performative force of questions* (Steensig & Drew 2008). Questions generally imply an answer of a sort, and are therefore powerful interactive tools. Peter's institutional role and power position as Director of Operations and chair of the TMTO are, in this case, exceptionally well emphasized. Iris is compelled to produce responses to Peter's utterances, and bound by the situated interactional obligations, which are further strengthened and emphasized by the use of the GD as the principal. These effects are recognizable when Extract 18 is compared with the extracts of interactions in Chapter 4.5.2.

Overall, however, the two-party discussions after the orientation period were based on *ostensibly* more levelled power relations, and more equal interactional opportunities and obligations than the targeted dialogues in the orientation period. As will be shown in Chapter 4.5, the established general mode of communication in the TMTO meetings developed to participatory and accessible group discussion.

After the orientation period the TMTO would, thus, occasionally engage in brief sequences of two-party discussions in particular to make clarifications on a specific issue or to make short remarks on issues of limited interest. Therefore, while the targeted dialogues formed an easily recognizable and a pervasive discursive practice during the orientation period, the occasional sequences of two-party interaction in the meetings after the orientation period were transient and brief, and laminated with other types of conversational practices, such as reporting and free-flowing focused discussions.

4.4 Reporting discussions

The practice of TMTO developed to its established form during *the shaping period* that spanned over eight months. The GD had established a rotational chair practice, which involved directors taking turns at chairing the meetings for three months (a quarter). The shaping period marks, thus, also the beginning of the TMTO's independent work.

The meeting interaction began to get organized in a distinctive manner from the very first meeting of its independent operation. Reporting was one of the forms of interaction that became characteristic of the meetings. In this study, the term reporting refers to meeting discussions in which one participant introduces previously prepared presentations on organizational issues, often supported by visual materials, to the other participants. From the point of view of the organization of turn-taking and turn-taking structures, reporting resembles a monologue as the floor and agenda are momentarily dominated by one speaker, and the participation of others is more or less restrained. However, reporting differs from monologue in various important aspects, particularly in how opportunities to contribute to the discussion are constructed by, and available in, the interaction. In addition, supported by (visual) representations of *data*, reporting is factual and thus based on informational (rather than *ideological*) content, which makes it also distinguishable from monologue. Overall, characteristic to reporting as a communicative practice is the clear-cut division of participant roles, as the topic development, timing, and management of participation in the interaction are observably in the hands of the dominant speaker. The other participants'

interactive contributions are, thus, largely reactions to content produced by the dominant speaker.

Reporting, as a type of meeting talk, generally addresses issues such as financial reports, completed or planned projects, future events, and organizational changes (see e.g. Schwartzman 1989, Poncini 2004, Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008). Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) note, in their study on university TMT meetings that the meeting practice of *administrative discussion* occurred across all meetings in their data on 51 meetings. Administrative discussions dealt with existing and previously agreed strategic items that were unlikely to occasion variation in strategic orientation, and they can, according to Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) description, be likened to reporting. An interesting observation in Jarzabkowski and Seidl's study is that in all meetings *the first agenda items involved administrative discussion*. Furthermore, Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) find that more than 50% of all strategy meeting conduct in their studied meetings involved administrative discussion. Jarzabkowski and Seidl's (2008) study indicates that this type of a discussion mode is, thus, a pervasive feature in managerial meetings.

In the case at hand, I identified two types of reporting practices: *financial reporting* and *operation-specific reporting*. These reporting practices share common features, but they also differ in some important respects. Their role in the meeting practice also develops differently over time. Each reporting practice will be discussed in turn, beginning with the financial reporting.

4.4.1 Establishing financial reporting as a key discussion practice

Financial reports and calculations are generally thought to reflect and communicate the success of an organization, customarily viewed in the light of its financial affluence. In other words, an organization's success is constructed financially (see Herakleous 2006). The financial reports and *numbers talk* often dominate managerial work and, consequently, the financial aspect is usually also well-presented in managerial meetings (see e.g. Roberts, Sanderson, Barker & Hendry 2006). Numbers make things governable, and their ostensive objectivity gives them legitimacy (Denis, Langley & Rouleau 2006). In their various roles within organizations - controlling, legitimating, and sense-making - numbers provide a common language for comparison (ibid.). In the present case, numbers talk also develops into a distinctive and pervasive discussion practice during the TMTO meetings.

Financial reporting became established as a pervasive and a permanent feature of the meeting practice during the first meetings in the shaping period. The next two extracts illustrate how this took place. The extracts stem from

the beginning of the two first meetings in the shaping period. In both extracts Paul, the chairperson for the first quarter, opens the meeting by introducing the first agenda item. The discussants in the Extracts 19 and 20 are Paul and Anthony, the chair and controller respectively.

Extract 19. Meeting 7, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:01:00

1 PAUL: What if we start by looking at that (metrics) first, what we have now=

2 ANTHONY: = Shall we first look at the financial figures or (1)(inaudible)(1)

3 PAUL: Let's go through them if there is something particular there.

Extract 20. Meeting 8, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:03:20

1 PAUL: Right. Let's start ploughing through, was it, metrics first, right?

2 ANTHONY: Metrics or financial figures²⁷?(2)

3 PAUL: What if we go through the financial figures first?

(Anthony begins to go through the income statement, and talks for 2:30 minutes until the first interruption)

Examining the interaction in the above extracts by employing the concept of adjacency pair allows for analyzing what takes place during these brief sequences of interaction. In extracts 19 and 20, the first adjacency pair, Paul's introduction of the first agenda items in the form of a question (line 1), already implies a preferred second adjacency pair, an acceptance or a confirmation (see e.g. Francis & Hester 2004). Instead, however, Anthony interrupts Paul to make a counter-proposition, shown in line 2 that is accepted after a brief moment of hesitation. Consequently, the meetings begin with a review of financial figures instead of discussing the metrics. Anthony's interactional strategy and persistence pays off in the situation at hand and in the long term, as it then becomes an established and a taken-for-granted, practice to commence meetings with Anthony's reporting.

The above sequences of interaction are, thus, consequential not only to the immediate interactive situation, but to the meeting practice at large. At a minutiae level, the extracts illustrate how power and influence are interactively constructed and variously negotiated between the discussants (Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 2003b; Clifton 2009). Anthony's responses to Paul inform the participants, and the analyst alike, that the roles and power positions within the team are open for negotiation and active shaping by the

²⁷ A members' term.

participants. Fundamentally, the ostensive hierarchical position of the participants would suggest that the directors of operations (Paul, Peter, Iris, Amanda, MaryAnn, and Terry) represent the more senior officers, and consequently the more powerful actors within the TMTO. Karen, the personnel manager, and Anthony, the controller, represent the supporting functions, Human Relations management and Financial Services respectively. Instead of acknowledging the *hierarchical power (under construction)* and the institutional role of Paul as chair and senior officer, Anthony seeks, and succeeds, to negotiate anew *both* the power relations *and* the order of agenda items. The precarious position of *temporary chairpersonship* and the *yet-to-be-developed* agenda of the TMTO create a power vacuum that leaves room for shaping the social order anew. Consequently, by opening the meetings with reports on financial figures *and* by actively sustaining the communication in a reporting mode, Anthony acquires control over the topic development, direction of the communication, and concrete management of the meeting discussion for a substantial amount of time in each meeting.

Thus, the practice of management meetings and the roles of the participants are fundamentally shaped by opening the meetings with financial figures, as the order of agenda items also substantially has an influence on who gets to talk, when they get to talk, and for how long they get to talk. A common and universal feature in meetings is that the first agenda items generally receive more time than consequent items. One can also speculate on whether beginning meeting discussions with a metrics review would have helped to establish another communicative mode that might have enabled a more levelled division of interactional opportunities between the participants, and a more participatory and engaging meeting discussion. This idea is supported by further analyses of the meeting interaction, as subsequent discussions on key performance indicators (metrics) *did allow* directors slightly better access to the discussions, as will be shown in the extracts in the following chapters. Thus, based on my analyses of the TMTO meetings I argue that the way the first meetings during the *shaping period* got started had a significant impact on how the practice of financial reporting developed to be managed and led by one actor.

The practice of starting the meetings with Anthony's reports on financial key figures becomes a permanent and a taken-for-granted feature in the meetings. The next extracts stem from meetings during the settling period. At this time, Peter has recently been appointed as the Director of Operations and by the same token, as chair of the TMTO.

Extract 21. Meeting 23, settling period.

Meeting time 00:01:38.

1 PETER: All right, hey, shall we get a swift [start]

2 AMANDA: [mmm].

3 PETER: So ((nick for Amanda)) will head to another meeting in between and

4 Iris may come and let's see how this goes.

5 What if we allow Anthony a kind of a short address

6 and take a brief look at our financial issues.

7 ANTHONY: Yep.

8 PETER: But before that so in my opinion at least

9 I took a quick look, and really now, if you look for on purpose

10 you might find something to comment on (.)

11 but yes the numbers are really good now.

12 ANTHONY: They're quite good now. (cont.)

Extract 22. Meeting 27, settling period.

Meeting time 00:04:00.(pre-meeting chat about 4 minutes)

1 PETER: Shall we first look at the sales-

2 JANICE: =[Ye:es.]

3 PAUL: [Let's look].

4 PETER: (inaudible) situation.

5 ANTHONY: Ye:es. You've also got the sheets (financial reports)?

6 PETER: Ye:es. I've not gotten to know what's in them.

7 ANTHONY: Ye:es.

8 PETER: Have you?

9 ANTHONY: Not that much. I can give an overview of the situation.

10 (pause for 10 seconds while the report is retrieved from the data system)

11 Well if we first take a look money-wise then (1/2)

12 I actually only took these Q-figures, the figures from the quarter. (cont.)

Extracts 21 and 22 raise and emphasize two points in particular. First, they illustrate how starting the meeting with financial reporting is jointly accomplished by Peter, the chair, and Anthony. In both extracts, Peter makes an explicit shift in the conversational mode from pre-meeting talk to financial reporting. On some occasions, the shift from pre-meeting chat to *business at hand* would even be made by Anthony, who, by making a remark on the content of his report, indicated the beginning of the meeting.

Extracts 21 and 22 also illustrate the taken-for-granted nature of starting the meeting with the review of the financial reports. Starting the meeting with Anthony's reporting on the realized financial performance forms, thus, the

basis for developing and establishing a new discursive practice in the TMTO meetings, namely financial reporting. As a means for *managing the past performance* in the light of the income statement, combined with the subsequent metrics review, financial reporting establishes the structural backbone of the TMTO meeting practice.

4.4.2 The organization of turn-taking during financial reporting

Starting the TMTO meetings with a report on financial figures becomes, thus, an established practice in the meetings. Excel sheets comprise the income statement from the past month (and later, also the past quarter) and form the basis for the financial reporting, which is subsequently, with only a few exceptions, always taken as the first agenda item in the TMTO meetings.

The financial reports are compiled by Anthony prior to the meeting, and in the meeting Anthony retrieves the reports from the company intranet and projects them onto the screen with the help of a data projector. Anthony also compiles a report on key performance indicators (metrics), and as soon as the income statement has been discussed, he seamlessly continues to present the metrics reports. Combined, reporting on the financial figures and the subsequent metrics review form the basis for *the discursive practice of financial reporting*.²⁸

Management of the tasks of compiling, projecting, and presenting the reports provides Anthony with a key role in the financial reporting discussions; his control of which is particularly distinctive in meetings during the shaping period. Extract 23 illustrates the structuring of interaction during financial reporting in the shaping period.

Extract 23. Meeting 17, settling period.

Meeting time 00:04:50

- 1 ANTHONY: Okay, so it was not a huge month.
- 2 We didn't sell almost anything, and we had a lot of expenses.
- 3 ((sum)) million of sales, when we thought it might have been ((sum)).
- 4 It wasn't quite realized.
- 5 Manufacturing costs so, really, ((sum)) over but (½)
- 6 Maybe still nothing too alarming (½).
- 7 So we didn't quite manage, them (.),
- 8 didn't accomplish the savings we wanted. Maybe that level (inaudible).

²⁸ Quite recently, financial reporting as an organizational and social practice has attracted increasing interest, for example, within the field of accounting studies (see e.g. Robson, Young & Power 2011).

- 9 Indeed our target for the first month was a bit tough (½)
 10 PAUL: Has there been any review on where we exceeded (the plan)?
 11 ANTHONY: Ye:es I'll return to it =
 12 PETER: =So there aren't any bigger one-time?
 13 ANTHONY: Well there was one, which was bigger (cost pool) so like (½)
 14 There was this, what were they external services or what was it
 15 so there was one, something like seventy-grand
 16 which was fifty-grand over budget.
 17 And it's comprised of pretty little, in fact pretty little things
 18 one lot of twenty thousand (1)
 19 But otherwise they (inaudible).
 20 TERRY: So ((cost pool)) that's ((manager))'s [location]
 21 ANTHONY:[Ye:es]
 22 TERRY: I know that the estate unit is still receiving invoices from last year,
 23 account-
 24 ANTHONY: =so I thought that might be a similar,
 25 so I don't know. (cont.)

Extract 23 shows how the use of various interactive strategies enables Anthony to manage the turn-taking during the financial reporting. These interactive strategies include, for example, defending ones turn (line 11) and cutting in (lines 21 and 24). Interruptions are found to be an effective tool for gaining influence in interaction. Öhlschlegel and Piontkowski (1997, 446) note that the more turns speakers gain through interruption, the more influence they appear to accrue. By interrupting the speaker, the interrupter demonstrates a degree of indifference and dominance to her/him (*ibid.*).

Anthony's strategy for postponing his response to Paul's question in line 11 (yea I'll return to it) is not completely successful as Peter, assisted by Terry, manages to keep the topic "alive" for a while. However, in line 24, Anthony successfully regains his turn, and is able to continue reporting despite the interruptions. Similar discussion management strategies and discussion dynamics are illustrated also in Extract 24, taken from another meeting during the shaping period (Lines 6-10 and 22-27 omitted from the transcript).

Extract 24. Meeting 8, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:03:10.

- 1 PAUL: Right. Let's start ploughing through, was it, metrics first, right?
 2 ANTHONY: Metrics or financial figures²⁹? (2)
 3 PAUL: What if we go through the financial figures first?

²⁹ A members' term.

- 4 ANTHONY: You did receive this, or this profit and loss account
 5 you received it at least. Pretty low sales again or really low.
 6 Let's get back to the sales again in more detail.
 11 Absorption of costs was pretty poor, in other words ((sum)),
 12 under absorption. But scrap for example is right on target a bit less in fact
 13 that ((sum)) with overhead is a pretty decent sum.
 14 PAUL: Ye:es.
 15 IRIS: But isn't that absorption, it's under 'cause we didn't sell to the target?
 16 ANTHONY: Exactly. And that's what's driving these pretty much is driving
 17 these, so that's pretty complicated. But as I said last time, it's also linked to
 18 that maybe we should, in our standard (pricing) take it into account a bit.
 19 IRIS: (inaudible) you have to be a little, conservative.
 20 ANTHONY: Right. Well ye:es (.) Let's get back to these again but, (cont.)

Anthony's interactive strategies, illustrated in extracts 23 and 24, are effective in the sense that, despite of the occasional interruptions and questions from the other participants, he is successful in getting the discussion *back on track* and in regaining his turn. The effectiveness of Anthony's interactive strategy is highlighted in extract 24, particularly in lines 16 and 20, as he postpones the discussion on a topic raised by Iris, and ensures the preferred order of issues and control over progress of the discussions.

Anthony's control over the development of the discussions is supported by the fact that the reporting sheets are designed by him, and that he compiles the data for the reports. He is, therefore, more intimately acquainted with the substance matter and, consequently, better equipped to discuss the data contained in the reports. In addition, the artefacts employed in reporting, the excel sheets, reports, and PowerPoint presentations, provide Anthony with powerful resources with which to manage the topic and timing of the discussion, as these types of materials and texts efficiently direct attention, and discipline actors' activities (see e.g. Kuhn 2008, Kaplan 2011). Furthermore, controlling the display of the visual materials provides Anthony with additional resources also for managing the interaction; his "moving" in the report and "turning" pages in the presentations provides him with the opportunity to focus on specific issues while ignoring others.

Thus, as shown in the extracts above, control over the artefacts allows for managing and organizing the content, order, and pace of the reporting discussions, as well as the participation in the discussions (see Nielsen 2012, Kaplan 2011). This is illustrated particularly in financial reporting discussions during the shaping period, as shown in Extract 25 (Lines 5-16 omitted).

Extract 25. Meeting 8, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:20:32.

1 PAUL: Ye:es. Let's proceed.

2 ANTHONY: Ye::es. well ye:es, really that ((sum))

3 manufacturing costs at the same time. But over.

4 This month so (½)

17 And if we now look at your (.) operations so the Gadgets

18 that's almost, almost right on budget.

19 Salary costs for ((Gadgets' organization)) there some ((sum)) over.

20 They had received, have you taken any look at that

21 that production material, which was there this bigger credit?

22 PETER: Oh there's that minus ((sum)) (inaudible).

23 ANTHONY: No it looks like (½)

24 Well ye:es well, in principle it appears so but that (.)

25 PETER: That ((sum)) -

26 ANTHONY: =Yes=

27 PETER: =that is, we're, we have from the expense warehouse

28 returned back to, production warehouse -

29 ANTHONY: [yes yes]

30 PETER: [yes] so that credit was for that cost pool

31 where the expense warehouse is.

32 So that goods have been received from the refuse warehouse.

33 ANTHONY: Ye:es. We've received these from there

34 ((nick for Amanda))'s cost pool was, ((sum)) euros over

35 there too (inaudible) ((sum)) under.

36 Travel expenses half a grant under. Then there was

37 a bigger, some printing whatever it was in ((month)) it was really big.

38 It was something like ((sum)) over budget.

39 One might take a look at it a see what it might be?

40 AMANDA: It was (inaudible).

41 ANTHONY: Ye:es. That's what I saw also (inaudible)

42 AMANDA: Ye:es I'll take a look at it -

43 ANTHONY: =Ye:es. (cont.).

Extract 25 begins with Paul managing the closure of a short (free-flowing focused) discussion during Anthony's reporting. It is emphasized in the extract how Anthony utilizes the artefact, the financial report, both to manage the topic of the conversation and as a tool for speaker selection. The artefact is, thus, employed "to elicit certain social actions from the participants" (Nielsen 2012, 99). This is particularly well highlighted in how Anthony moves to the Gadgets operations in line 19, "warning" Peter of a forthcoming turn (Nielsen

2012, 101), and then addressing his question directly to Peter in lines 20 and 21. Anthony's question initiates an explanation from Peter. After the exchanges with Peter Anthony moves forward in the report signalling, in line 34, the next speaker, Amanda. In line 39, Anthony addresses an indirect (probing) question to Amanda, who is thereby selected as the next speaker. After Amanda's explanation, Anthony closes the exchange in line 43, and continues with further issues shown in the report.

Extracts 23-25 illustrate how the use of artefacts and the interactive strategies employed by Anthony contribute to the turn-design during reporting discussions. In these reporting discussions, the turn-taking dynamics reflect Anthony's addresses as the *key content* of the discussion to which the other participants contribute with replies and confirmations. Another distinctive feature relating to the turn-design is the length of turns during the discussions. In particular, during the *shaping period* Anthony's individual turns might last from one to three minutes at a time, whereas other participants' turns were substantially shorter as illustrated, for example, in Extract 24. The length of the turns also contributes to discussion dynamics, which, at that time, resemble monologues. The turn-design works to exclude, rather than invite, participation in the discussion, and therefore the discussion gains an exclusive character. Consequently, in a manner similar to discussions dominated by monologues (see Chapter 4.2), the discursive options of the other participants are significantly limited by their conversational latency; those who have fallen out of conversation for longer periods are susceptible to "alienation from topic" (Gibson 2010, 146-147). Therefore, the turn-design and turn-taking dynamics become taken-for-granted and "natural" features inherent to the financial reporting discussions. The reports, in the form of spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations, provide financial reporting with a more durable temporal dimension compared to other areas of managerial work that do not have such tangible and durable points of reference.

4.4.3 Developing participant roles in financial reporting

The pervasiveness of the financial reporting also raised concerns within the meeting team. It appears that as the participants became more aware of the characteristics of their discursive practices, they also became reflexive of the consequences of these practices (Giddens 1984). Consequently, the issue of the dominant role of reporting was raised in the third meeting during the shaping period and is illustrated in Extract 26.

Extract 26. Meeting 9, shaping period.

Meeting time 1:22:00

1 KAREN: Hey I have a question regarding the metrics review,

2 and dealing with the financial figures.

3 It's now 10.30.

4 We've dealt only and exclusively with the figures so far.

5 I understand that of course it's important.

6 But on the other hand we've not gotten to discuss at all

7 what we should now do based on these key figures =

8 PAUL: =mmm

9 KAREN: Should we a bit, like, develop this activity?

10 I think this is now not what it's supposed to be.

11 PAUL: Ye:es I'm a bit in the same opinion, quite a long time has passed now

12, in a way just looking at these figures [and] =

13 ANTHONY: [mmm]

14 PAUL: = of course it's important to understand where,

15 why the figures are and what they are =

16 KAREN: =Yes=

17 PAUL:=and that we can explain these in ((management review))

18 and in other occasions, but (½)

19 Really we should be able to go through also the metrics

20 more fluently, and to intervene with them, deviations=

21 ANTHONY: =Right you are. And that's important that there are activities

22 to ensure that (½) It's not helping much if we just look at (the reports).

23 KAREN: And when something is detected could we, like, look at that

24 like, who's going to [run] it

25 ANTHONY: [mmm]=

25 KAREN: =forward and what should be done and similar things so (½)

26 In my opinion this is not leading to what we're supposed to be able to do.

27 PAUL: Quite right.

28 And how we go through, through the financial figures and metrics

29 so should we rather take a quick look at the trend -

30 ANTHONY: =mmm=

31 so that if there's something in the trend, so we'll take a closer look and note

32 that well its going swell or we're heading to a better direction. Or that now

33 we're heading towards a bad direction what we need to start doing.

34 ANTHONY: Yes.(cont.)

In line 1, Karen achieves a shift in the focus of the discussion (Schegloff, 2007) and begins a new conversation on a new topic. Karen's "hey" is, thus, a method of signalling that she is not connecting her turn to what the previous

speaker was saying, but starting a new topic³⁰ (Sacks 1995/2005). Karen first frames the problem: too much of the meeting time is allocated to “looking at numbers”, with too little attention given to making conclusions concerning the data, as well as on decisions regarding relevant actions. Extract 26 demonstrates how the issue is elaborated first by Karen, and then Paul and Anthony (the discussion is eventually joined by all participants). The extract illustrates how the discussants *jointly adopt responsibility* for the problem by framing the issue as a mutual problem (indicated, for example, by the consistent use of the pronoun *we*), and by mitigating their critique by highlighting advantages of the financial reporting (lines 5 and 14). These interactive strategies also enable Anthony *to join in exploring the problem* instead of being forced or *obligated to defend* the practice of financial reporting.

At a practical level, the discussion deals with managing the share of time devoted to financial reporting, and also the shift of focus from reviewing the reports to making conclusions and deciding about proper responses in the form of activities. Below the surface, the discussion deals with *rearranging participant roles* during the financial reporting discussions. Thus, the initiatives for developing the practice of financial reporting in extract 26 also entail *a suggestion of a new division of the interactional opportunities and obligations*. While the review of financial figures is a practice that *tolerates* a more clear-cut division of speakers and hearers, making conclusions and decisions *as a group* requires the input and active participation of multiple actors.

The immediate practical outcome of the discussion that got started in extract 26 was that, for the duration of two meetings, time allocated to financial reporting was substantially reduced from more than a half to less than a third of the total meeting time. However, it soon proved difficult for the meeting team to constrain the time and attention devoted to financial reporting. Consequently, financial reporting quickly regained its status as the most time-consuming discursive practice in the meetings. The pervasiveness of numbers *and numbers talk* has also been documented in other studies on managerial meetings and organizational practices (see e.g. Iedema et al 1999, Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008, Denis et al 2006, Faure, Brummans, Giroux & Taylor 2010, see also Vollmer, Mennicken and Preda 2009).

However, while the taken-for-granted role and the pervasiveness of financial reporting in the TMTO meetings were maintained the practice of financial reporting evolved in time allowing for new discussion dynamics and the development of more versatile participant roles. The directors became

³⁰ Amanda’s use and the practical effects of “hey” are equivalent to Sacks’ “by the way”.

more engaged in the financial reporting discussions, and contributed more observations and conclusions concerning the data reported by Anthony. Consequently, discussions became more dynamic and they exhibited more variation in the turn-taking structures and the lengths of turns. The next extract shows how these developments were reflected in the turn-taking dynamics and the participation in the discussions during the settling period.

Extract 27. Meeting 18, settling period.

Meeting time 00:22:05

- 1 ANTHONY: [remained pretty nicely in budget]
- 2 PETER: [hey Anthony hey] so just to ask quickly how much they,
- 3 which you mentioned, so how much do they explain from that (.)?
- 4 ANTHONY: I'll get back [to that].
- 5 PETER: [yeaye][ye:es]
- 6 ANTHONY: [so erm] the absorption of our real estate costs
- 7 to our products, so that was kinda low now.
- 8 The reason is of course the sales absorbed them quite a little and
- 9 the stock, the overhead absorbed in the stock increased in any case
- 10 ((sum)), so it helped (.) (inaudible) it remarkably.
- 11 Then we did a kinda, in Jerry's (database application) there's-
- 12 this kinda in certain products this ((name of)) [factor]
- 13 PETER: [a-ha]
- 14 ANTHONY: so we fixed, which is like, it increased our product cost (½)
- 15 Something like (.) There's this multiplier.
- 16 Jerry knows it better.
- 17 Anyway we fixed it so it had an ((sum)) euros' impact on stock value,
- 18 ((correction of the sum)) euros' impact, meaning that the stock value
- 19 was decreased. That much, and like, so, I'm not quite sure
- 20 what the share of the fixed costs from that was,
- 21 but something like about ((sum)) euros
- 22 it decreased our absorption.
- 23 If it weren't for that, which is like a one-time thing,
- 24 we would've certainly been (½) Over budget (.) there erm (½)
- 25 IRIS: Which lines?
- 26 In ((product line)) it was at least taken off.
- 27 Did you go through all the lines (½.)? or (.)
- 28 ANTHONY: As a matter of fact I don't know, I didn't have the energy
- 29 to concentrate too much on which products it was done with.
- 30 Jerry brought a list, I can surely take [a look]
- 31 IRIS: [ye:es]
- 32 JANICE: But it was all where they had [it].
- 33 ANTHONY: [All] where they had it.

34 IRIS: [(inaudible) that it was] found, that it could be detected

35 where the ((name of)) factor was and then that [inaudible]

36 JANICE: [ye:es (inaudible) that kind of] (inaudible)

37 It was supposed to be shown as better primes (margin)

38 then in the coming months, right?=
 39 ANTHONY: =ye:es, yes yes.

The discussion in Extract 27 addresses cost entry practices and particularly entries of specific costs in the income statement. The technical aspects of how entries are made are important as they have an impact on BioCorp's result, which, in turn, reflects its success and competence to Corporation. The causal relationship of the technical execution of cost entry and (profit) margin is illustratively captured by Janice in lines 37-38 (*And it should be shown as better primes in the coming months, right?*).

The directors' more active engagement in the financial reporting discussions is achieved, first, by the use of questions. The "performative force" (Steensig & Drew 2008) of questions is shown in how they, by implying an answer, help establishing passages of turn-taking. (Sacks 1995/2005) In the discussion exhibited in Extract 27, joining the discussion proves first, however, to be somewhat challenging; Peter's first question in lines 2 and 3 is tackled by Anthony employing *postponing* as an interactive strategy in line 4. Finally, in line 34, Iris succeeds in establishing a shift of turn and a change in discussion dynamics, and from there on the issue is elaborated and discussed by multiple participants.

The improvement of the directors' skills and knowledgeability on how to manage and interpret the financial reports was, thus, reflected as their increased participation in financial reporting discussions. Consequently, the asymmetry of knowledge (Heritage 1997), produced by the unlevelled access to the data and the original unequal level of expertise between Anthony and the other participants, was alleviated over time. This helped to develop financial reporting to a more participatory discussion practice. However, despite the increased mutual involvement in interactions during financial reporting, the original framework of Anthony managing and "chairing" the reporting discussions remained a standard practice throughout the whole observation period.

4.4.4 Operation-specific reporting

In addition to the presentation of financial reports and metrics, reporting was a discussion practice employed in the TMTO for the directors' operation-

specific presentations. Originally, the idea was for the directors to provide briefings on their *forthcoming key projects*. However, during the first half of *the shaping period*, the TMTO adopted a format of “highlights and disappointments analysis”³¹, which entailed discussing the main developments in each operation from the past month *and* a briefing on the forthcoming key projects and challenges. Reports were compiled and presented to keep the TMTO informed about the key developments in each area.

The interaction dynamics, turn-taking structures, and division of speaker-hearer roles reflected in operation-specific reporting resembled the respective features in financial reporting. Similar to financial reporting, the floor and the development of interaction during operation-specific reporting were momentarily dominated by the speaker, and this had an obvious impact also on the overall discussion dynamics. For the duration of the operation-specific reporting, the group was divided to one speaker and a group of hearers.

A number of the operation-specific reports convey un-debated administrative information, which requires little mutual processing. They, therefore, bear some resemblance to the administrative discussion in Jarzabkowski and Seidl’s (2008) classification, operation-specific reporting discussions. Reports on maintenance and the “investment portfolio”³², for example, dealt with the administration of existing non-contentious items. These types of reportings did mainly not elicit much mutual discussion, so the reporting of these issues would only infrequently be punctuated with remarks and comments.

The next extract displays some of the routine issues dealt with in the operation-specific reports. In extract 28, Paul reflects both on issues in the past and on key priorities in the immediate future.

Extract 28. Meeting 29, settling period.

Meeting time 2:30:45

- 1 PAUL: Ye:es, the end of the year went well (.) At least I haven’t heard (.)
- 2 of any complaints from the field
- 3 or from the customers (½) Of those days we were, though,
- 4 almost one and a half weeks closed (½)
- 5 The freight cost for the whole year, a bit less than ((sum)) cents per kilo
- 6 year ((year)) we delivered with less cost than year ((the previous year)).
- 7 As such a pretty good achievement (½)
- 8 so in general the fuel costs and such (½)
- 8 have increased quite a lot during ((year)) (½)

³¹ The format was suggested by Karen, and it was already employed in some other meeting teams.

³² A members’ term.

- 9 but we've rationalized (.) which freighter to use to which purpose (½)
- 10 ANTHONY: Was the volume in kilos increased a lot?
- 11 PAUL: I didn't compare the years, but it remained pretty much the same (.)
- 12 a bit over ((sum)) kilos shipped ((year)) (½)
- 13 A disappointment in ((month)) was (.) ((metrics)) in Gadgets, there were
- 14 still those ((product)) and (inaudible) standard ((product)) (½)
- 15 ((Metrics)) remained under ((figure)), the main reason being ((product))
- 16 and (inaudible) ((product)) as the biggest ones (½)
- 17 The ((metrics)) (inaudible) remains continuously notably under target (½)
- 18 So does (inaudible) inventory turn-over (½)
- 19 we're pretty far from the target (½)
- 20 And as a priority in the beginning of the year we have
- 21 ((operative process)) and getting it ahead (½) in different focus areas.
22. The testing of the barcode application in our dispatchers (½.) is going on
- 23 and we've probably got the 5th version from our software supplier,
- 24 who comments that "you've got a pretty complex world there"
- 25 AMANDA: (laughs)
- 26 Paul: So at least they've never before made a system (.) as complex as this
- 27 anywhere in ((country)), so it's a unique opportunity and experience.
- 28 TERRY: [inaudible]
- 29 [overlapping talk, inaudible]
- 30 PETER: Opportunity to learn (inaudible)
- 31 MARCIE: Do you get discount because it's such a wonderful opportunity
- 32 for them (inaudible)?
- 33 PAUL: Perhaps we'll have to pay a little extra (½)
- 34 because we didn't realize to specify everything from the start.
- 35 (a quick laugh)(cont.)

In his report, exhibited in Extract 28, Paul sums up the current situation with some key indicators of organizational performance. Paul's report displays the typical informative content of operation-specific reports in the TMTO. In his report, Paul first provides *evaluations* of the performance, and then shortly explores causes for the realized performance. Beginning in line 7, Paul explains the good outcomes (being able to keep the freight costs in control) by *good internal performance*. The brief pause in Paul's reporting in line 9 is employed by Anthony to make a shift in turn. Anthony's question in line 10 receives a short answer from Paul, who then continues with the disappointments of the previous month. The weak development in specific metrics (line 13) is explained by *external factors* outside Paul's control, notably the operations in Gadgets' organization. Moving to key priorities in the immediate future, Paul (line 20) briefly mentions the deployment of an

interorganizational operative process linked closely also to the performance measuring practices employed by the TMTO. After that, in line 22, Paul takes up a concrete ongoing project, the barcode application, already discussed in a number of previous TMTO meetings. Similar to other issues raised by Paul, this project is also closely linked to the operational performance of BioCorp.

Extract 28 shows that the operation-specific reports were employed to create continuance in the managerial work of the TMTO. By reflecting on the past and envisioning the future, the directors could, thus, make a connection between past and future activities. The operation-specific reports enabled them to coordinate and follow up the development of activities and, thus, bring continuity, permanence, and stability to the management.

A number of other operation-specific reports addressed issues that evoked more discussion and mutual interest than others. Thus, although the most salient role of the operation-specific reporting was informative, reports on strategically important interorganizational issues, in particular, elicited questions, remarks, and discussion. MaryAnn's reports on R&D operations were among those that evoked further discussion. In Extract 29, MaryAnn reports on current developments in her area of responsibility, after which a mutual discussion on issues evoked by her report takes place. Lines 3-31 and lines 47-50 are omitted from the extract to preserve the clarity of presentation.

Extract 29. Meeting 22, settling period.

Meeting time 00:07:50

1 MARYANN: And then maybe, because that ((product line)) is my area
2 so I can probably say a few words about it.

32 That's all about what's going to take place in ((product line)) pretty much.

33 PETER: Paul will get good savings from that ((product)), a ((sum)) at least
(inaudible)

34 PAUL: Personal [inaudible]

35 PETER: [ye:es]

36 TERRY: Can we get that by e-mail?

37 PETER: I'll send it, sure.

38 MARYANN: Ye:es, I can send this pipeline, for example (½)

39 As a matter of fact, I can put, I can maybe save this

40 in the common area (intranet), now those updated pipelines,

41 we'll go through them in the site coordination meeting

42 but since everyone is not participating, it's good.

43 PETER: I'm wondering a bit about your and ((manager))'s comments

44 about that ((str. initiative)), that how come that ((tollgate)) is the last we're in?

45 MARYANN: Well, so the reasoning was that the design needs to be ready

46 in all respects then in ((tollgate)) four, that was in fact,

51 that's being target-oriented, so that the design would be ready.

- 52 JANICE: And then if you wait for something, like I thought,
 53 so if you wait for somebody else's decision than our decision,
 54 to have them -
 55 PETER:=Yea yea, but there are already, part of the personnel is already
 56 there, involved, between ((tollgates)) four and five.
 57 MARYANN: Yes, absolutely, yes yes.
 58 [overlapping talk]
 59 JANICE: (inaudible) [doing it] may be from someone else than us.

Starting from line 1 (including omitted lines 3-31), MaryAnn's operation-specific report continues almost uninterrupted for approximately ten minutes. The key content during the reporting is naturally provided by MaryAnn, but as soon as her reporting is complete, she paves the way for a more participatory discussion. This is indicated in line 32 when MaryAnn signals that her report is nearing an end, and prepares for a passage towards more participatory discussion. Peter's question in line 43 opens a discussion on the resourcing of various phases over the R&D process (shown only partly here). The discussion dynamics allows for unrestrained participation in the discussion that is shown, for example, in the interactions between Peter and MaryAnn in lines 43-45, and between Janice, Peter, and MaryAnn in lines 52-57. In particular, the turns in lines 52-57 are reflexive of the previous turns, and illustrate how the topic is mutually elaborated.

By engaging in free-flowing focused discussions, participants become involved with the substance matter of the reports. During the discussion exhibited in Extract 29, the discussants generate a mutual, shared understanding on how particular phases over the product development process are resourced. Consequently, *information* provided in the report is through mutual discussion refined to *knowledge*, which can be elaborated and progressed further.

As a frequent and permanent feature in the TMTO meetings, the operation-specific reporting represented an interactive practice that enabled the dissemination and elaboration of information, and for the integration of past issues to current and future activities.

4.5 Free-flowing focused discussions

Discussions in institutional settings, such as meetings and debates, are often organized on particular turn-taking features, for example, pre-ordained turns³³ (Sacks et al 1974, Arminen 2001). However, less formal institutional interaction often exhibit features of common, everyday conversations (Zimmerman & Boden 1991, Drew & Heritage 1992). These features include that the distribution of turns happens ad hoc, turns are taken in alternating order, and that the length of the turns varies (see Sacks et al, 1974). All of these features are exhibited in free-flowing focused discussion, which was established as the generic mode of communication in the TMTO meetings.

No formal chairing practices were employed in the TMTO meetings. Instead, the practices for managing the turn-taking were informal and more implicit, and these practices were employed both by the chair as well as by other participants. Free-flowing focused discussion is an apt example of a discursive practice, constructed and sustained by the active participation and cooperation of the participants.

Thus, in the absence of formal chairing practices, participants were able to more freely join the meeting discussions and contribute to the overall meeting practice. The dynamic character of talk is reflected in the overall dynamics of the discussion, particularly in how turns during the conversation are taken in an alternating and self-organizing order. Shifts in turns during free-flowing discussions are frequent, with participants producing addresses that are moderate in length, thus sustaining dynamic, participatory, and forward-moving discussion. The dynamic nature of the discussion is also reflected as frequent overlaps, interruptions, and pauses within and between addresses. Compared to discussion practices with more limited participation, such as targeted dialogue and reporting, free-flowing focused discussion allows for unrestrained access to an engaging and participatory meeting discussion.

Earlier research on interaction in management meetings suggests that the level of formality and dynamism of the discussions correspond with and influence participation in a meeting discussion (see e.g. Iedema et al 1999). Meetings with less informal turn-taking structures and more dynamic talk are, thus, more likely to involve multiple participants and activate more mutual knowledge creation. In their study on university meetings, Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008, 1404) note, for example, that free discussion enabled participants to engage in spontaneous, unstructured comments and responses. In their case, free discussion had two particular implications. First, the self-organizing

³³ For example, debate, in which the duration of each address is pre-ordained and the same (Sacks et al 1974, 701).

character of free discussion enabled participants to experiment with new ideas that potentially challenged the status quo. Furthermore, spontaneous interaction among participants enabled elaboration on suggestions and variations introduced to the discussion through free discussion. In other words, free discussion enabled the participants both to bring up new ideas and develop them in ways that increased their organizational receptivity, and was therefore a strategically important meeting practice in destabilizing and challenging the existing strategic orientations.

Despite the self-organizing turn-taking dynamics, the free-flowing discussions in the present case are coherent in that they remain in relatively tight focus on the issue under discussion. Also, discussing issues *at a level adequate* to top managerial meetings differentiates free-flowing focused discussion from other practices of multi-party talk, such as drifting and micro-mining (discussed in Chapters 4.6 and 4.7). Free-flowing focused discussions, thus, deal with issues and topics generally relating to the TMTO agenda, and with issues relevant to the participants in their more general managerial tasks.

During the observed TMTO meetings, free-flowing focused discussions are established as the main conversational practice, employed both to deal with the more mundane managerial issues and issues of more strategic importance. These include, but are not limited to, issues relating to operative performance, such as arrangements of production and personnel (e.g. discussions on lay-offs; union negotiations; recruitment), forthcoming events, such as audits from certification authorities, strategy meetings, and visits from Corporation. Free-flowing focused discussions serve also as a means for discussing issues that require mutual sense-making and exploration, such as organizational changes and their implications, new production and R&D platforms, and strategic developments (e.g. acquisitions; adoption of new technologies) within Corporation.

4.5.1 Initiating free discussion in the orientation period

The exclusive discussion practices (monologue and targeted dialogue) employed in the orientation period contributed to establishing clear-cut divisions between the participants (the GD vis-à-vis other participants), which was reflected, for example, as low overall participation in the meeting discussions. This was acknowledged also by the GD, who employed a particular interactive technique to facilitate broader participation in the discussions. The next extract shows how the GD utilizes this interactive technique to elicit contributions and facilitate more participation. Extract 30

shows how a shift from a monologue mode of communication to a more participatory discussion is achieved.

Extract 30. Meeting 2, orientation period

Meeting time 03:07:15

- 1 GD: Hey, what do you think, what do you want,
- 2 where will you find the metrics for the next year
- 3 and for the future, metrics that will measure our capacity to respond to this?
- 4 So how can we respond to what you're promising here? (2)
- 5 TERRY: So adding to that it's in principle the ((process)) all over (3)
- 6 So the size of our motor needs to be adjusted
- 7 to what the business is forecasting.
- 8 GD: But doesn't it come through this then? =
- 9 TERRY: = It does.(2)
- 10 GD: [inaudible] mm (½) So we can't have this many metrics
- 11 and now I'd like us to come up with a few key metrics.
- 12 TERRY: To the customer requirements but what's the next one then?
- 13 GD: Shall we take quality next then? (2)
- 14 MARYANN: There's some overlap here.
- 15 GD: So there is (.)
- 16 PETER: ye:es=
- 17 AMANDA: =mmm
[overlapping talk]
- 18 GD: It doesn't really matter because we can just combine them. (2)
- 19 PETER: Shall we just track down ((quality metrics)) somehow then? (2)
- 20 GD: Well we're talking about the metrics for the whole house. (cont.--)

Extract 30 illustrates the use of *probing questions*, combined with more direct questions, to facilitate participation in the discussion. In her opening address in line 1, the GD achieves a shift in pronoun usage (from *you* to *we*), which includes herself as a participant in the consideration of methods to measure the competence of the organization. By leaving open multiple potential options for a suitable “correct” answer, the GD paves the way for other participants’ easier entry to the discussion. The next turn can be characterized as “anyone’s chance”, which refers to speaking at a point when no one has been selected as the next speaker (Sacks 1995/2005, 707). In line 5, Terry takes “anyone’s chance”, and rather than answering the question directly, first examines whether he moves in the right territory. The GD’s next turn in line 8 signals that this kind of an approach is acceptable. Open and probing questions work as invitations to the discussion (Llewellyn 2008, Sacks 1995/2005), as the purpose is to generate discussion rather than provide precise answers to clearly defined questions. The overall carefulness and

consideration to the interactive situation at hand is reflected as frequent pauses between addresses.

In line 10, the GD re-specifies the issue by rephrasing her idea. The following turns then explore approaches for discussing the issue. Overall, the probing questions exhibited in Extract 30 were used as tools for mapping out a feasible approach. As illustrated in this extract, probing provides the participants with better opportunities to fit their own interactive contributions to the discussion. In addition, the GD's use of the pronoun *we* further helps to facilitate a discussion, in which the parties "can be seen as part of a cooperative and reciprocal relationship (Poncini 2004, 129).

Steensig and Drew (2008) note that questions possess a particular "performative force". With the exception of rhetorical questions, they generally imply an answer. Apart from their use for interrogation purposes, for casting doubt or to challenge and accuse questions can also be used as suggestions or invitations to contribute to the conversation, as in Extract 10. Open questions, in particular, operate as invitations to discussion (Sacks 1995/2005, Llewellyn 2008). By implying an answer, open and probing questions operate, thus, as interactive devices both to stimulate the discussion and to move it ahead. As such, questions also effectively rearrange interactive obligations between participants.

Open, or probing, questions also permit more latitude in developing responses (Heritage 2003, 60), as they leave open more options for the "fitting" next address, thus reducing the risk of saying something "stupid" (i.e. un-fitting to the discussion). Therefore, use of open and probing questions effectively facilitates participation in group discussions. Extract 30 also illustrates that as more participants join the discussion (MaryAnn in line 14 and Peter in line 16) they also adopt a similar *probing mode*, which allows for smooth development of discussion. Thus, the GD's lead to a facilitative discussion style is immediately adopted by other participants.

Facilitating participation in the meeting discussions was particularly important during the orientation period, as the meeting discussions were, at this stage, difficult for the participants to access. At that time, therefore, the GD's interactive contributions were key to establishing *open floor* and in facilitating access and participation in the discussions. After the orientation period discussions were more characteristically taken forward in a self-organizing manner. Overall, however, facilitative techniques, such as open questions and probing accounts, were generally employed for opening discussion on decision-items or to facilitate shifts in discussion topics, and they became the default practice for furthering discussion and for moving free-flowing focused discussions forward.

4.5.2 Turn-taking dynamics in free-flowing focused discussion

Characteristic to the overall free-flowing dynamics in the TMTO discussions is also that discussions, their initiation and closure, and shifts from one topic to another are loosely managed. Moving from one discussion topic to the next happens often almost *organically*; topics are discussed at length and closures are variously achieved by the speakers themselves or other participants – not always necessarily by the chair. The liberal treatment of openings and closings in the meetings was typical to the meetings both during the shaping period with a rotational chair, and to the meetings after Peter was appointed Director of Operations and chair of the TMTO (the settling period).

Tracing the development of discussion dynamics and the participation, contribution, and interactive strategies of the discussants during free-flowing focused discussions is best accomplished by analyzing extracts from a longer sequence of interaction. The next extract, Extract 31, as well as the subsequent three extracts (Extracts 32-34) stem from the same meeting during the shaping period as Extract 30 in the previous chapter. Analyzing one specific sequence of interaction allows for tracing how the discussion evolves from a mutually acknowledged and a relatively neutral issue to a more sensitive issue evoking territorial defences, and how the issue and the topic of discussion are mutually elaborated, and how viewpoints and arguments are crafted. The analysis brings out the participants' opportunities to gain influence while also making visible the boundaries of their authority.

The meeting in Extract 31 is chaired by Iris who, after Anthony's financial reporting, opens discussion with personnel issues. In the discussion Karen, the personnel manager, follows the lead of Paul and Terry, who first raised topical issues on their respective managerial fields, and introduces another, more multifaceted issue.

Extract 31. Meeting 12, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:50:20

1 KAREN: One more thing, returning to the issue with the production line,

2 to the foremen in the production line [so]

3 ANTHONY: [Rookie academy]

4 KAREN: the need for foremen is huge.

5 IRIS: Ye:es and, [inaudible]

6 KAREN: [we have to] find a feasible solution.

7 The more there's working in shifts, the less acceptable it is,

8 that one foreman is responsible for the job (.) During both shifts (.)

9 It's just not a feasible equation.

10 IRIS: ye.es, and in my opinion there's not (½)

11 they're like, they're not developing there. It's (.)=

- 12 KAREN: =At the moment it's dried out (inaudible) (.)
 13 IRIS: Ye:es, so it's a bit of a problematic situation.
 14 So I anticipate that we'll have to recruit from outside (.)
 15 From you (.) We'll have to recruit them (.)
 16 PETER: We've got [inaudible]
 17 IRIS: [if] we start working in two shifts in multiple lines,
 18 then we'll start fishing a bit more [then].
 19 PETER: [No it's] ok to have them from us.
 20 KAREN: (addressing Amanda) If you have someone,
 21 who's interested in supervising challenges, take the message forward,
 22 because the need is acute.=
 23 AMANDA: =Ye:es.

In Extract 31, Karen elaborates on the previous discussion and introduces a critical issue, lack of skilled managerial personnel in Liquids production lines, to discussion. Overall, personnel issues align with critical managerial issues in BioCorp, as the fluency and accuracy of operative processes rely heavily on human workforce and the fluency of their work processes. The complexity and sensitivity of processes, for example, in R&D, quality assurance, and manufacturing, set high demands and tight guidelines on specialized professional personnel at almost all organizational levels in BioCorp. In particular, this challenge is emphasized when internal demand for specialists in given fields suddenly increases or in situations in which tension or conflict builds within work teams. Therefore, the issue taken up in Extract 31 is immediately acknowledged as relevant and important by Iris and Peter, who are the obvious discussants as the issue falls within their respective areas of managerial authority³⁴. Iris' repeated affirmative openings in lines 5, 10, and 13 (*ye:es*) especially confirm the importance of the discussion topic. Peter's participation and suggestions further legitimize the issue.

The mutual orientation to the issue at hand is reflected in the coherence of consequent addresses; the next speaker acknowledges what has just been said, and builds her/his own next turn on that. During the exchanges participants build common ground (Poncini 2004) by elaborating the issue and linking their addresses to the common theme. The next utterance offers also an interpretation of what was said before (Rawls, Mann & Garcia 2008, 4) while simultaneously taking the conversation forward. Coherence is, thus, reflected in the relatedness, consistency, relevance, and order in discussion, and achieved interactionally (Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris, 1997).

³⁴ Anthony's random comment in line 2 is related to the previous discussion.

Examining pronoun use during the exchanges brings out how Karen in line 6 labels the problem (shortage of foremen on the production line) as a *mutual problem* (*we* have to find). Iris, in turn, first maintains a distance from the issue under discussion by referring to it as the problem *there*. In line 17, she finally claims ownership to the issue (if *we* start). It is obvious that the negotiation between *I* and *we* in a business setting is an everyday matter involving tactical choices, both conscious and unconscious. For middle management, in particular, the shifting positions not only reflect and define their relationships within the group but also refer to their positioning within the wider sense-making processes of the organization (Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris 1997).

In line 20, Karen opens the discussion for mutual participation; by attempting to involve Amanda in the discussion, Karen includes her as a concerned party. The free and dynamic organization of the discussion is exhibited as unrestrained turn-taking dynamics. In fact, the discussion is dynamic to the extent that addresses frequently overlap or latch onto others, which also further corroborates the salience of the issue. The consequent discussion (not shown in full length in the extracts) involves all participants except Paul and Anthony.

Whether an issue is raised in discussion and acknowledged as a legitimate discussion topic in TMTO meetings depends on multiple aspects. In Extract 31, Karen successfully links her opening address with the previous discussion topic and, as such, achieves a smooth transition in the discussion. Following the initiation, the weight of the subsequent speakers' actions is emphasized, as their turns can effectively enhance the relevance of the topic and constitute its importance. In other words, linking the issue to a generally acknowledged theme improves the opportunities of other participants to recognize and acknowledge it as relevant. Thus, by engaging in a mutual discussion of issues, the discussants acknowledge and *label* them as legitimate and significant discussion topics, as shown in Extract 31. Alternatively, the next speakers can also reject or challenge either the legitimacy of the issue or the opinion held by the previous speaker. The issue can also be reframed by the next speakers to emphasize specific aspects while fading others out, as illustrated also by Samra-Fredericks (2003a). In the case at hand unrestrained turn-taking and free-flowing discussion dynamics allows for more versatile and easier use of these types of interactive moves than had turn-taking been administered by more formal chairing practices. Thus, free organization of discussion fosters the process of mutually constructing relevance of the discussion topic. This observation expands traditional notions on how managerial agenda is formed and how management identifies issues as salient and (strategically) important.

The next extract shows Karen elaborating on the issue discussed earlier in Extract 31, and indicating a more pressing and persistent problem in one of the production lines, the poor workplace atmosphere. The discussion that follows, shown partly in Extract 32, is illustrative, first, of the freely organized discussion's turn-taking dynamics and, secondly, of how the sensitivity of the issue leads to competing interpretations and evaluations on the causes and potential solutions to the problem.

Extract 32. Meeting 12, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:54:10

1 KAREN: (cont.). But then when nothing is done to them (.) it will escalate,

2 and personal conflicts will occur and (½)

3 IRIS: Should we then divide it in two? Have them quite separately,

4 ((product line)) for one foreman.

5 Then to another person (.) This ((product line))?

6 KAREN: And then we arrive at the question that

7 where do we get the foremen in the first place? (gives a quick laugh)³⁵

8 IRIS: Ye:es but-

9 KAREN: =Or then Peter (inaudible).

10 IRIS: Ye:es, but like erm.(3)

11 KAREN: But that [inaudible]

12 IRIS: [Well because] I also don't know that is it personal chemistry,

13 that's bugging (.) or completely (½) or what is it then.

14 KAREN: Well lately they've also been giving the message that,

15 the job description is terribly unclear (.)

16 that people don't know what they're supposed to do

17 and what they're responsible for (½)

18 Partly it's certainly a managerial problem,

19 but because I don't understand the process, so would someone happen to

20 have a better answer to if there's something that can be done there?

21 TERRY: So, is, like, ((employee)) a foreman?

22 KAREN: [Ye:es]

23 IRIS: [Yes:es]

Extract 32 shows that introduction of a topic contributes to addressing a participant in the meeting (here, Iris), and selecting her as the next speaker (see Sacks 1995/2005, 665, Svennevig 2012). Karen's description of the problem, in lines 1 and 2, is met with a probing suggestion for a solution by

³⁵ Karen's laughter can be interpreted as an attempt to mitigate the mounting tension in the discussion (Kangasharju & Nikko 2009).

Iris. Iris' suggestion in line 3, in turn, is met with Karen's counter-argument in line 6. Looking at how interaction in the discursive sequence in Extract 32 is organized illustrates how the shifting turns, pauses, overlaps and immediate latching of turns, as well as the occasional louder voice, add to the dynamism of the discussion. The period of interaction exhibited in Extract 32 is thick with arguments, counterarguments, reformulations, and elaborations. Iris' virtual *hands up* statement in lines 12 and 13 (Well because I also don't know) evokes a similar response from Karen in line 19 (but because I don't understand the process). These types of statements can be interpreted as requests for assistance from other participants. Thus, even though Karen's earlier attempt to involve Peter in the discussion in line 9 was unsuccessful, in line 21 Terry eventually joins the discussion, and begins to investigate the issue further.

In Extract 32, Karen faces the challenge of ratifying a topic raised by her as a problem. Angouri and Bargiela-Chiappini (2011, 211) note that "who says what" within the context of problem-solving meetings is subject to "who is entitled to what" according to the meeting participants' understanding (quotation in original). Extract 32 illustrates that influence is a relational process continuously negotiated as it is exercised on a turn-by-turn basis (Clifton 2009, 76), and intimately relates to local realities (Angouri & Bargiela-Chiappini 2011). During interaction, parties make claims and seek to have them acknowledged, and also acknowledge, reject, or dismiss claims made by other party(-ies). However, during interactions exhibited in Extract 32, neither of the parties gains enough influence to persuade the other(s) of their view. Finally, the situation is resolved by the entrance of a third discussant, Terry. Extract 33 shows how the discussion proceeds after that.

Extract 33. Meeting 12, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:57:23

1 KAREN: But we'll never get it included in the worker agreement

2 within ((trade union)), engineers as workers-

3 TERRY: = No, no no, not in the worker agreement (.)

4 We should accept the fact (.)

5 that people in the production have various occupational back[grounds]

6 KAREN: [Mm]

7 IRIS: [Mm]

8 AMANDA: [Mm]

9 IRIS: =Because it's not necessary for them to (.) be so much skilled

10 because if there's a problem, in the line, there's always this product (.)

11 process support [specialist]=

12 AMANDA: [ye:es]

13 TERRY: [Right]

- 14 IRIS: =and then there's quality assurance
 15 AMANDA: [mmm]
 16 IRIS: [who] respond to these,
 17 problems related to products =
 18 KAREN: =Which is an issue which you'll then have to go through
 19 with ((foreman)) and ((foreman)).
 20 Because at the moment there are specifications about what's required
 21 similarly as we talked about the foremen, so they've sort of
 22 updated it kind of, [what]
 23 IRIS:[Ye:es]
 24 KAREN: waiting and recruiting wrong kind of people there then.
 25 IRIS: ye:es.
 26 KAREN: But it's worth thinking over [then]
 27 TERRY: [ye:es]
 28 IRIS: [Ye:es]
 29 KAREN: and then when the broader frames (.) (cont.)

During the three minutes between Extract 32 and Extract 33, the discussants (Karen, Iris, Terry, and Amanda) have not only elaborated the discussion topic to the professional backgrounds and skill bases of the foremen, but also have moved to a consensus in their views. This is illustrated in two specific ways. First, the discussants produce a large number of affirmative sounds and expressions that communicate unanimity, such as “*mmm*” in lines 6-8, and 15, and “*ye:es*” in lines 12, 13, 23, 25, 27, and 28. In addition, the speakers *laminates* their utterances to what the previous speaker has said, almost as if their turns were subordinate clauses to what was said by the previous speaker. This feature is particularly well emphasized in line 9 (Iris starting her utterance as a subordinate clause to what had just been said by Terry) and by Karen, line 18. These utterances are tied together to demonstrate that the idea is constructed collaboratively (Sacks 1995/2005, 145-152). The discussion is, thus, taken ahead by mutual communicative work.

The discussion dynamics and organization of turn-taking typical to free-flowing focused discussions both reflect and construct a situation, where participants have latitude on deciding whether to join the discussions or not, and when and how to do this. By contrasting strips of interaction exhibited in Extracts 32 and 33 with Samra-Fredericks' (2000b, 2003b) studies of management meeting interactions (see Chapter 2.2.4) it is possible to identify some similarities and some major differences between the interactive situations in each of the managerial meetings. In both cases, discussants employ a range of interactive strategies to formulate and reframe the issue, and to persuade each other on their view. In Samra-Fredericks' case, however,

the dominant speaker *forces* the other discussant to defend himself against skilfully crafted accusations, and ultimately to legitimize and persuade the other managers of his view on the past and the future. In the case at hand, in turn, Iris successfully *fends off* Karen's attempts to address the issue by labelling it as a *problematic issue to address*. This was achieved by *distancing herself from the issue*, for example, by pronoun usage (that; there) and by denying liability (Well because I also don't know). The practical consequence of Iris' interactive strategy was that Karen's attempts to probe the issue further proved futile.

For the meeting team to continue with the discussion, the discussants need to *reframe* the issue in a manner for it again to become *discussable*. This is pursued and accomplished by Terry (and also by others) who refocuses the issue on the professional skills of foremen, and thus distances the issue from Iris' leadership. The discussion that ensues, exhibited in part in Extract 33 shows that this reframing was successful; multiple participants again elaborate the discussion.

During the shaping period with a rotational chairing practice, the directors were *de facto* peers, whereas in Samra-Fredericks' case the meeting team included a senior officer (Managing Director of the company). This is an important difference between these meeting teams as it has a significant influence on the intra-group dynamics. The presence of a senior executive essentially increases subordinates' pressure to "perform", that is, to act in ways that signal managerial competency. It also contributes to the (perceived) importance of issues under discussion. This is reflected, for example, in how actions and discussions of individuals and groups of top management are customarily and fluently labeled as "leadership" (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000) or "strategic" (Carter, Clegg & Kornberger 2008, Geiger 2009). In Samra-Fredericks' case, the dominant speaker was able to employ the presence of the Managing Director to gain leverage to his accusations and enforce his point, to the effect that it was almost impossible for his counterpart to *disregard the accusations*. In the present case, however, neither of the discussants had, at this point, similar authority over the meeting team or each other. This, therefore, provided them latitude to choose which issues to pursue, and to consider whether to engage in discussing them without similar pressures concerning potential effects on their image as competent managers or the threat of overall organizational sanctions.

The free organization of a meeting also imposes particular obligations on participants. As the treatment of any topic requires the input of multiple discussants, as shown in Extracts 32-34, participants are also required to work for an alignment on the discussed issues, shown particularly in Extract 34. In the case at hand alignment is pursued by mutual effort to pre-empt potential

conflict. Discussion exhibited in Extract 34 is illustrative of how closing is mutually accomplished.

Extract 34. Meeting 12, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:59:15

1 KAREN: But now we're not talking about foremen, but we're talking about
2 do we have to accept workers there (.) whether we should recruit people
3 with engineering education to clerical positions =

4 AMANDA: [right]

5 PETER: [right [inaudible]

6 KAREN: [which] has to be displayed in the recruitment application,
7 like for what purpose.

8 TERRY: YeaYea.

9 IRIS: Ye:es. I =

10 TERRY: = And of course, I'm counting there,

11 that a person with engineering education,

12 can on the other hand work as a foreman if needed.

13 There's no need to separate the role of a supervisor in all situations (½)

14 in some it's feasible. (2)

15 So it's a great opportunity for persons who are young, virile, and eager

16 and in addition, work like crazy (½)

17 these are the people we need (2)

18 KAREN: How did Rebecca walk: head in the clouds, feet on the ground

19 (gives a laugh) [inaudible]

20 PETER: [inaudible] smiling brightly (½) I think it's a good suggestion (.)

21 AMANDA: Exactly, I think so too. Yes. (1)

22 IRIS: Okay, any other personnel issues?

Subsequent to Karen's acknowledgement that the topic has changed from the problem of workplace atmosphere and foremen to addressing the educational background of foremen (line 1), the discussants engage in mutual interactive work to bring the discussion into closure. The discussants affirmative comments signal consensus (lines 4, 5, 6, and 9), and alleviate the tension introduced by the sensitive nature of the original topic (managerial problems in one of the production lines, and Iris' role as director of these particular operations). Closure is achieved as a stepwise shift from the debate (on problems in the production line) to an alignment on the skills requirement of foremen in the production line, and *sealed* by reference to the GD's definition of "right spirits". By introducing the GD into the discussion as principal (Goffman 1981), Karen legitimizes the closing sequence, in which she also encourages Peter and Amanda to engage. Karen's formulation is factually implicative of topic closure (Clifton 2009) to the effect that the

acting chair (Iris) announces the topic closed by “okay” and achieves passage to next issue in line 22. Extract 34 shows, thus, how accountability for the interactive situation is mutually adopted. “Participants, (--), are obliged to look not so much for ways of expressing themselves, as for ways of making sure that the vast expressive resources of face-to-face interaction are not inadvertently employed to convey something unintended or untoward. Motivated to preserve everyone’s face, they then end up acting so as to preserve orderly communication.” (Goffman 1981, 19).

Generally, extracts in this chapter are illustrative of how discussion dynamics and the structure and organization of turn-taking during free-flowing focused discussions are shaped by mutual participation. The extracts also illustrate how interactive opportunities and obligations during free-flowing focused interactions are shared between participants. This type of discussion dynamics developed during rotational chairing over the shaping period, and formed the generic mode of communication in the TMTO meetings. While free and unrestrained turn-taking can be taken as an indication of low power distances and low hierarchies typical of northern European countries, free-flowing dynamics also constructs a situation in which participants have levelled opportunities and obligations to contribute to the interactive situation. Thus, extracts in this chapter are also illustrative of how meeting agenda is mutually crafted by framing and re-framing issues as relevant (Extract 30) and discussable (Extract 31) or non-discussable, and how actors engage in mutual work to identify solutions and achieve closures. This mutual accountability was made possible by free-flowing dynamics, fostered by informal and relaxed chairing practices. The difficulties and challenges involved in illustrating talk-in-action in writing and within the space limitations of a research report are particularly clearly highlighted here. While the ten minute long discussion on this particular subject was accessible to all parties present, and in which the majority participated (except for Paul and Anthony), the extracts here cannot quite do justice to how interaction during the whole sequence was organized and structured, and participated. While some extracts show only a few discussants participating in the discussion, it was in reality accessible to and participated in by multiple participants³⁶. Nevertheless, the analysis allows for observing how the issue and topic are jointly taken forward and elaborated during free-flowing focused discussion. The mutually accomplished closure allows for the discussants to exit the topic “with dry feet”.

³⁶ Two-party discussions and their characteristics are discussed in detail in chapter 4.3.

4.5.3 Participation in free-flowing focused discussions

As illustrated in the previous chapter, free-flowing dynamics encourages dynamic talk, during which participation in the discussion varies and the topic is mutually elaborated. In the absence of formal chairing practices the next speaker is often *self-selected* so that discussions are joined by those participants who have a point to make. In other words, free-flowing discussion dynamics sustains “anyone’s chance” in turn-taking (Sacks 1995/2005, 707). Therefore, participants are able to take turns in contributing to the discussions from their particular perspective and within their area of expertise.

Consequently, free-flowing focused discussions are particularly well-suited to exploring solutions to issues of mutual interest. Extract 35 demonstrates how this takes place in a meeting during the settling period.

Extract 35. Meeting 21, settling period.

Meeting time 00:49:54

1 PAUL: How’s how about the turn of the year (½) Have we decided,

2 that on December 23 we’ll pack it up? (1)

3 ANTHONY: [yes how will we]

4 PAUL: [Those persons], who work only and exclusively with

5 (database application) so (½) Dictated flex or (.)?

6 if there’s nothing sensible to do such as filing or something similar?

7 MARCIE: All areas are possible to be cleared out then.

8 PAUL: mmm

9 IRIS: What did you, how long did you think 23 slash- (½)?

10 PAUL: Was it then the 5th of January? =

11 PETER: =The 5th of January =

12 Alice: = The 6th is then the 12th Night.

17 PETER: Seventh. But that Saturday the twenty-seventh

18 that’s a question mark. And Sunday the 28th (½)

19 That’s the question mark.

20 PAUL: Yes, so now it depends on ((foreman)) (.) [Depends]

21 [joint laughter]

22 whether we come then (.)

23 MARCIE: In what sense?

24 PAUL: So that will we come to take a look at if we’ve received orders

25 and can we do anything anymore.

26 (overlapping talk)

27 if people are away for many days and there’s nothing ready

28 (overlapping talk).

29 AMANDA: no, no no there’s not.

30 PETER: Why don’t we agree, that we’re closed the 24th slash 4th.

- 31 PAUL: [inaudible]
 32 PETER: [and if] the need arises then we'll just change it?
 33 ANTHONY: You mean we'd be closed [inaudible]?
 34 JANICE: [Surely will be, if we don't decide otherwise]
 35 [overlapping talk]
 36 PETER: It's a terribly expensive weekend to come to work.
 37 ANTHONY: That's right. But there will be a panic again
 38 to generate sales.
 39 PAUL: But Liquids, around the 23rd will be the last shipments,
 40 that's for sure (½) It deals with the few gadgets then that we could =
 41 PETER: =But is deals then only with a small bunch of people.
 42 PAUL: mm.
 43 JANICE: mm.

The interactive sequence exhibited in Extract 35 begins as Paul (re-)opens³⁷ the discussion concerning organization of the Operations' workforce over New Year. The issue has been touched upon already in previous meetings, and will be discussed again. The interdependency of operative processes in BioCorp requires that the decision concerning workforce management at the year's end is reached jointly. The issue is of particular interest to Paul whose Logistics organization provides services for other operations. It is, therefore, natural that he should raise the topic. By the pronoun use (*we*), Paul labels the issue as mutual and invites contributions from the discussants.

During the discussion exhibited in Extract 35, discussants first engage in framing and exploring the issue (lines 1-29), thus confirming its relevance. The issue is then iterated on a turn-by-turn basis and simultaneously categorized as one that concerns the practical organization of work in the Operations, BioCorp's delivery capacity, and ultimately BioCorp's financial result (costs vs. sales income) for the year. Paul's initial suggestion is supported by Peter, who reaffirms Paul's suggestion in line 30 (why don't we decide that we're closed between...). The view promoted by Paul and Peter is challenged by Anthony, lines 37 and 38; Paul and Peter respond by providing further justifications.

During consequent freely organizing turns, discussants frame, elaborate, rephrase, confirm, contest, and defend their perspectives. Simultaneously, urgency of reaching a joint decision concerning the issue becomes apparent. However, it also becomes obvious that a decision cannot be reached at this

³⁷ The issue had already been touched upon briefly a month earlier in the previous TMTO meeting, and would be returned to again in a subsequent TMTO meeting.

time. After a couple of minutes' discussion, the participants begin the closing sequence exhibited in Extract 36.

Extract 36. Meeting 21, settling period.

Meeting time 00:54:11

1 PETER: We can't get engaged in any production activity then [anyway]

2 MARCIE: [So there's no use in taking]=

3 PETER: =so they can't do absolutely anything. (2)

4 IRIS: I dare not say anything now (.) because I'm not (½)

5 I can't force anyone on flex.

6 PETER: [inaudible]

7 IRIS: [Our] economic situation doesn't require that people stay home.

8 PETER: In Gadgets, when you're doing transfers from the warehouse

9 in any case, so you can't produce that product

10 IRIS: [ye:es]

11 PETER:[so] it's virtually impossible to be at work. (1)

12 PAUL: Shall we agree on how to do this next Friday?

13 IRIS: Ye:es.

14 PETER: Ye:es.

15 ANTHONY: Ye::es =

16 IRIS: =So it's just that one week there (½)

17 ANTHONY: Ye:es, really, for Gadgets ((sum)) of backlog,

18 we're lagging ((sum)) behind [inaudible].

Extract 36 shows how the discussants engage in achieving a closure on the discussed issue for several minutes. First, discussants again reframe and reiterate their views. Peter's (lines 1, 3, 6, 8-9, and 11) and Iris' (lines 4 and 7) perspectives conflict the most, and it becomes obvious that no decision can be reached at this time. In line 12, Paul suggests returning to the issue next week, a suggestion immediately mutually accepted by Iris (line 13), Peter (line 14), and Anthony (line 15).

As previously stated, free and unrestrained participation in crafting solutions can be regarded as an indication of low power distances and low hierarchies typical of northern European countries. Free-flowing dynamics also helps sustain levelled interactive opportunities, which in Extracts 35 and 36 are illustrated as an opportunity to *not make* a decision.

Similar to Angouri and Bargiela-Chiappini's (2011) observations, problem-solving exhibited in Extracts 35 and 36 takes place in stages and is an incremental process, constituted by a series of interrelated episodes that take place in and beyond the meeting (or any one specific communicative) event. Thus, decision-making activities are not necessarily clearly identifiable in the ongoing problem-solving action, but are embedded in various work practices

(Alby & Zucchermaglio 2006). Even though agreement and decision were not achieved at this time, the free participation facilitated mutual discussion and stimulated the exploration of ideas and synthesis of existing concepts. During the discussion, participants began by jointly elaborating the issue, moving to commitment to action (see Wodak et al 2011).

Being the generic communicative mode in the TMTO meeting practice, free-flowing focused discussion was employed to identify and frame issues, to craft solutions, and to make decisions. Free-flowing focused discussions were also important for making sense of issues that were “consequential to the success and survival of the firm” (Jarzabkowski 2004), such as organizational changes. Over the period of my observation, BioCorp experienced two major organizational changes. Establishing the TMTO was a concrete outcome of the first change process. The second major change took place approximately a year after the first meeting. This change comprised changes in BioCorp’s role in some of its markets, and ultimately in its product portfolio. Organizational changes are often reflections of, or initiatives to, a strategic change. The scope and depth of the change, and the outcomes and consequences of the process bring about uncertainty and doubt. For BioCorp, issues to be made of sense of comprised both external (competitiveness in the market) and internal issues, such as survival among other Corporation subsidiaries, and the types of threats and opportunities that were introduced by new situations. These were the concerns addressed in the discussion exhibited in Extract 37.

Extract 37. Meeting 18, settling period.

Meeting time 00:07:30

- 1 IRIS: In a hypothetical situation like if you’re imagining
- 2 then (½) it’s quite possible that the directors in the (headquarters) then (½)
- 3 if our prices are high they can start looking where to purchase.
- 4 AMANDA: [well this exactly has been also my -]
- 5 ANTHONY: [Well no if you] think at his profit and loss calculation (½)
- 6 But that transfer price will not affect it in any way.
- 7 IRIS: But if they just conclude that (½)
- 8 Well (product)) for example they’ve continuously complained that
- 9 they’re too expensive let’s have multiple of them ((products)) tendered (.)
- 10 ((products)) per sales area (.) So, there’s no way of stopping [him]
- 11 ANTHONY: [But really so]
- 12 IRIS: that he’d purchase from somewhere and=
- 13 ANTHONY: = (inaudible) if our (.) Basically, if his
- 14 P&L is against ours, if we’ve got too much (.)
- 15 costs are too high then=
- 16 IRIS: =more overhead there then (.)
- 17 PETER: Well then there are the business teams who can prevent it

18 of course (½) That's the only one. But on the other hand if you're thinking
 19 like of us, us or ((market area)) or ((market area))
 20 so, basically we need nothing from ((headquarters))
 21 as (market area) that is.
 22 IRIS: No we don't need sales there or I mean =
 23 PETER: =Yes but from there to here we don't need anything.
 24 But ((CEO)) needs in (headquarters)) our products for their own [clients]
 25 ANTHONY:[so it's not like]
 26 PETER: So I see no way how we as ((subsidiary))
 27 could lose in this configuration.
 28 ANTHONY: mmm.
 29 IRIS: We can lose so that our prices are too high.
 30 PETER: But that's not going to happen (½)
 31 AMANDA: Yes and as far as I know this is exactly
 32 what they've been looking for here that they're squeezing us,
 33 more efficiently. I can see that this is it.
 34 (overlapping speech, laughter)
 35 TERRY: (inaudible) and it's like a natural -
 36 AMANDA:= and this is it and it's this all the way.
 37 IRIS: That we lose, is there, so that because (2)
 38 AMANDA: [mmm]
 39 IRIS: Just not that competitive (½) So this is what I've been hearing
 40 from ((business manager)) and ((business manager)) all the time
 41 about the pricing with this ((product)) so (½)
 42 We're too expensive.
 43 AMANDA: mmm.
 44 ANTHONY: Does it mean that the margin is too low then.
 45 IRIS: yes or we're too, ye:es (½)
 46 AMANDA: Right (.)
 47 IRIS: So since they have the requirement for the margin and
 48 once they put it in place it's too expensive. They've got big facilities and-
 49 PAUL:=but that-
 50 IRIS: =we've been charging the product for their big new facilities.
 51 ANTHONY: Of course.
 52 PAUL: But why would they price-(.) Where do the transfer prices then (.)
 53 do they come (.) is that just a defect in that ((calculation formula))?
 54 ANTHONY: Ye:es-
 55 PAUL: . =and then there's just an area-specific surplus or discount.
 56 Which then forms the transfer price.
 57 ANTHONY: =ye:es and-
 58 PAUL: =And all these transfer prices from the market

59 they come towards the site. (cont.)

The discussion begins with a debate on transfer prices, and their treatment in the profit and loss calculation. However, these routine (operative) issues gain strategic importance and meaning when discussed in the context of a recent organizational restructuring that has just been announced. At this time, there are many questions concerning the scope and long term effects of the change.

In the discussion exhibited in Extract 37, the rule “not more than one person speaks at a time” (Sacks 1995/2005, Sacks et al 1974) is explicitly set aside and the conversation becomes highly dynamic. Frequent overlaps, immediate latching of turns, interruptions, and fending off interruptions signal of the dynamism of the discussion, which in this case can also be taken as an indication of (mild) interpersonal power struggles (see Schiffrin 1993). During the discussion, a number of directors formulate and reformulate their concerns and defend their views regarding the position and role of BioCorp in Corporation (Iris in lines 1, 7, 12, 16, 22, 29, and 37; Amanda in lines 4, 31, and 43; Terry in line 35), whereas others contest these views and provide alternatives (Anthony in lines 5, 11, 13-15, and 25; Peter in lines 23, 26, and 30). Consequently, the discussants are divided into two parties, with Iris, Amanda, and Terry expressing concerns, and Anthony and Peter contesting and playing down potential threats of the new organizational situation.

Extract 37 displays “a collection of people trying to make sense of what is happening around them” (Weick 2001, 5). The discussants provide competitive interpretations of the situation and the future, and during the discussion each director seeks to legitimize their linguistically invoked “interpretive schemes” (Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 320). However, neither of the discussants is at this time successful in persuading others of their perspective, and following almost ten minutes of discussion Peter pursues to close the discussion. The next two extracts (Extracts 38 and 39) show how this is accomplished.

Extract 38. Meeting 18, settling period.

Meeting time 00:16:45.

1 PETER: But hey let's just focus on doing [the thing]

2 IRIS: [mmm.]

4 AMANDA: [mmm.]

5 PAUL: [mmm.]

6 [we're doing]

7 ANTHONY: [Well yes] I'd say that our situation will not change one bit.

8 Or maybe the atmosphere might change a bit, but this hasn't

9 as such no effect whatsoever. (cont.)

Extract 39 Meeting 18, settling period.

Meeting time 00:18:25

1 ANTHONY: yes, and external sales and all this stuff.

2 And this is what we'll have to, like, sort out with him (CEO of Corporation) (5)

3 AMANDA: Hey about personnel issues one thing

4 how's the industrial relations negotiations, what about the consequences?

5 PETER: Maybe we've now discussed the general issues

6 so let's allow Karen to talk.

7 KAREN: Yea, so, the negotiations were completed on Wednesday

8 and we decided to take measures right away. (cont.)

Extracts 38 and 39 exhibit the challenges involved in closing a free-flowing focused discussion. Extract 38 shows how Peter seeks to close the issue by “drawing together” the discussion and by labelling the issue under debate as a practical issue of *getting things done*. “Hey” is employed here as an “interrupter’s term” (Sacks 1995/2005, 158) that aims at a closure on the topic at hand. The closure is, however, not successful right away, as Anthony’s comment, beginning in line 7 (Extract 38), ignites a new round of discussions. Finally, in Extract 39, Amanda, after a few minutes discussion, gives a helping hand by targeting practical issues relating to the organizational change; namely, the implications to personnel (lay-offs). Amanda’s shift of topical emphasis in line 3 of Extract 39 is similarly achieved by employing “hey” as a topic-changing marker. This enables Peter to complete the shift of topic by pointing out Karen, the personnel manager, as the next speaker.

Ultimately, the long discussion, lasting more than ten minutes, regarding concerns and speculations on issues influencing the future success and survival of BioCorp is, thus, closed by framing the issue as a case of *practical coping* (Chia & Holt 2006). Arminen (2001, 244) suggests that closure might be treated as an index of the outcome of an interaction. Therefore, closure might gain a strategic position for understanding the sense of interaction as a whole. In institutional settings, in particular, closure might be designed to exhibit a speaker’s understanding of the practical outcome of interaction (ibid.). Consequently, Peter’s closing address does not redress or summarize the concerns expressed during the discussion, but instead shifts focus to the practical aspects of the TMTO’s managerial tasks. Wodak et al (2011, 611) note: “(---) the recursive cycling through topics and sub-topics (---) enables participants to feel *as though they are being involved* and that progress is being made, so that accord is reached”. The discussion gives the participants opportunity to express their concerns, but instead of exploring these concerns in more depth, Peter, assisted by Anthony, plays down the threats and redirects

the team's attention to practical issues. Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) note that controlling the expression of potential questioning and challenging addresses helps to sustain the existing (strategic) orientations, or status quo. Thus, by regulating the types of interactive contributions, the chair can also effectively manage the outcomes of the meetings (ibid.). In the present case, directors are free to express their concerns but, ultimately, their interventions had little practical relevance to the structural and strategic aspects of management. For Peter, discussion on concerns relating to organizational changes and internal competitions is useful as it enables him to identify issues that need to be dealt with and informed about in more detail.

Extracts 37-39 also illustrate how Peter's *situated and relevant identity* as the Director of Operations and chair of the TMTO is evoked as he employs the authority provided to him by his role in these positions. Clifton (2009, 64) notes that "at any time that the chairperson performs an action and has that action ratified by the other participants as an accountably expected action (such as mediating turns and opening or closing topic) that is category-bound to the identity, that category (chairperson) becomes procedurally consequential to the interaction". Thus, despite the low intra-group hierarchies and levelled interactional opportunities and obligations, fed by free-flowing communicative mode, the actors' differentiated hierarchical positions are *there*, reflected in, constructed by and sustained through the interaction.

4.5.4 Facilitating and managing free-flowing focused discussions

The extracts throughout Chapter 4.5 illustrate how free-flowing focused discussion allows for elaborating discussion topics in a turn-by-turn manner. Thematic and interactional coherence is readily identifiable in the discussion in how the discussants advance the treatment of the topic by reflecting on the issue from their own perspective, and how they iterate and elaborate the issue through each consecutive address. During the discussion, participants are engaged in interpreting organizational cues, and in exploring and assessing the viability of various courses of action. This interpretative work is public and observable in the interaction.

By inviting and encouraging contributions from others, the chair can foster a participative interactive situation. In their analysis of board meeting interactions Pomerantz and Denvir (2007, 34) note: "When Harry (the chairperson) introduced the topic and led up to initiating discussion, he did so in a way that invited the participants' input on the procedure for the discussion". In Pomerantz and Denvir's case, the chair's facilitative chairing enabled him to balance between the competing goals of ensuring productive

dialogue and respecting the contributions of important organizational members. Encouraging participation in meeting discussions has also been found to promote better consensus building in managerial meetings (Wodak et al 2011). The next extract demonstrates how Peter, through his focused interventions, elaborates on points raised by the previous speaker and, in this manner, facilitates a participatory free-flowing focused discussion.

Extract 40. Meeting 22, settling period³⁸.

Meeting time 00:20:10

1 PETER: How's the situation in the Liquids (½)

2 do we have precise information that we'll be able to function

3 and which development projects we'll have

4 or where do we get the info?=[coughing].

5 IRIS: =Well, first, I'd see what we need first help with

6 is to get the ((quality procedures)) closed

7 and all these, and once they're cleared out then

8 there will probably be more ((quality procedures)) since the first one(.)

9 MARYANN: Was it so that the ((quality procedure))-persons

10 who have been assigned to do this from R&D so their department managers

11 know that their people are assigned to deal with the ((quality procedures))

12 or is there a memo or something, this is what we talked about

13 during the previous coordination meeting?

14 AMANDA: ye:es, where did (employee) have one as well

15 because now that we've changed the reporting it'll automatically appear

16 on the agenda always in each meeting.

17 MARYANN: Yes, yes, like in the future, yes (½)

18 Because I was just thinking that there might be a risk

19 that people are not quite aware of which all ((quality procedures))

20 their people are involved with (inaudible) [overlapping talk].

21 JERRY: In the Gadgets I've taken care of that

22 because there is a limited amount of ((quality procedures)), easier to control

23 MARYANN: [right]

24 AMANDA: [I think] [that this]

25 MARYANN: [It's not that] my people were involved, you know,

26 but because I don't know if they're involved with ((quality procedures)).

27 JERRY: No there are none I (inaudible) that (business unit) has somehow

28 invested more (-).

29 And I've apparently been doing some work

³⁸ This meeting represents one of the few meetings that began with other agenda items than financial reporting. MaryAnn had only half-an-hour before she had to leave, so she got to start with her operation-specific reporting.

30 for example for what you're doing.

31 MARYANN: Ye:es, really good. [laughs] Continues on the positive side.

32 TERRY: You'll also get that allocation.

33 MARYANN: Not bad at all.

34 PETER: But really, before everything is decided and closed, how could we

35 get a kind of a check and balance to that?

In most meetings, various discussion practices shift and alternate with each other, and sometimes blend as in the meeting exhibited in Extract 40. Prior to the discussion exhibited here, MaryAnn has given a brief *organization-specific report* on the latest developments in her organization, a section of R&D operations in BioCorp (see Extract 28). Her presentation focused particularly on two issues: a new product development platform and new organization structure in her organization. Building on MaryAnn's report, Peter, in line 1, initiates a sequence of free-flowing focused discussion. First, he links these issues to issues in the Liquids organization, thus selecting Iris as the next speaker. The consequent discussion, beginning in line 5, deals with identifying, correcting and preventing errors in the Liquids organization's manufacturing process. The quality process in question is strategically important, as failures in the process can lead to compromising the performance and success of the organization. During the discussions, the directors recognize and construct a need for more precise definitions and decisions on particular issues relating to particular quality process and other critical issues.

Examining these situated interactions from an ethnomethodological perspective highlights how the participants contribute to its accomplishment in multiple ways. MaryAnn's share of the total 13 turns is high (5), as the discussion relates to her presentation. Her addresses actively move the discussion forward. Other participants (Iris, Amanda, Terry, and Jerry) have coordinated and unrestrained access to the discussions, whereas Peter has a less visible, although important, role in facilitating the discussion at the beginning and end of the sequence. Consequently, the discussion is progressed by the input of all participants.

During discussions illustrated in Extract 40, as well as subsequent discussions, Peter employs facilitative chairing practices, which enables him to pick up and explore particular aspects in MaryAnn's presentation, and make connections with these and other operational areas. By reformulating "members'" prior talk in a neutral fashion and asking open questions consistently, Peter builds a constructive communicative climate (Samra-Fredericks 2000a). Through his probing addresses, Peter directs the other participants' attention to these issues. By use of the pronoun *we*, Peter labels the issue mutual and invites contributions from the other participants. During

the interactions that follow, Iris, MaryAnn, and Amanda mutually probe and elaborate the issue, and bring forward relevant new aspects through their interconnected and partly overlapping addresses. Following the mutual discussion, Peter draws attention back to decisions concerning concrete actions on how to proceed.

At a practical level, the discussions revolve, for example, around quality processes and how to develop inventory management practices, which appropriately belong to the key operative challenges in all manufacturing companies. However, on a broader level these types of issue relate to the financial return of BioCorp and, therefore, to BioCorp's strategic position in Corporation. Thus, defining policies and making decisions concerning such operative issues gains strategic significance when considered in a broader frame. As BioCorp's performance was constantly and relentlessly regarded as the basis of its operational efficiency by Corporation, these types of issue were of substantial significance.

Joint participation in discussing and solving the issue is important for multiple reasons. First, the discussions have a very salient practical edge; solutions need to be based on a broad variety of relevant perspectives on the issue. The issue and the potential solutions need, thus, to be explored jointly as the problem spans multiple operations. Secondly, by addressing the issue mutually, participants achieve commitment to action to reaching the goals (Wodak et al 2011). According to Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008), developing proposals through free discussion also increases their overall organizational receptivity. Wodak et al (2011, 612) note, in turn, that an egalitarian leadership style positively influences the formation of consensus within a team, and increases the likelihood of a durable consensus being achieved.

The downside of free-flowing focused discussion is that, while it is a participatory and engaging discursive practice, it is also prone to fragmentation and loss of focus, to drifting and micro-mining discussions, which will be discussed in detail in Chapters 4.6 and 4.7, respectively.

4.6 Drifting discussions

“Getting off the subject” is identified as the number one problem in meetings and a significant contributor to why meetings are perceived as unproductive and wasteful (Romano Jr. & Nunamaker Jr. 2001). Keeping the meeting discussions focused on the issue belongs, thus, to one of the major and universal challenges in meetings (Seibold 1979). Although getting off the subject is a commonly acknowledged problem and a source of frustration in meetings, it is seldom analytically addressed by studies on meetings and

meeting interaction. Instead, meeting talk is usually depicted as purposeful, goal-oriented, and focused (see e.g. Bargiela-Chiappini & Harris 1997, Poncini 2004, Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008, also Sacks 1995/2005). Consequently, little is known about the features and characteristics of such sequences of meeting interactions when the discussion gets off the subject.

While getting off the subject may refer to discussions that *drift* from the original (formal) topic to topics that are not directly linked with previous topics and interactions, getting off the subject may entail discussing an issue on a *too detailed or on a too mundane level*. During meeting interactions in BioCorp's TMTO, both of these discussion types can be identified. The data allowed for me to examine them and their characteristic features in detail. Thus, instead of grouping the discursive practices into a mutual category of "getting off the subject", each type is analyzed and discussed in turn. First of these is *drifting discussions*, and the second is *micro-mining*. Drifting discussions will be addressed first in this chapter, while Chapter 4.7 focuses on micro-mining.

Research on coherence, cohesion, and topic development in talk has long traditions in the field of linguistic studies (Öhlschlegel & Piontkowski 1997). Linguistic studies examine, for example, the topic and focus, as well as the thematic structure and progression, of a *clause or a sentence* (see e.g. Ping 2005 for an extensive introduction on this type of research). Linguistic analysis, thus, focuses more on structural features of clauses instead of examining how progressions in interaction take place and to what effect. In the present study, I focus, however, particularly in looking at how members construct and employ the interactive practices in use in TMTO meetings, and therefore selectively draw from the linguistic studies to this purpose.

In general, internal coherence of episodes of interaction is thought to be produced by the topical content of the interaction; this *aboutness* constitutes topicality (Linell & Korolija 1997, Downing 2000). The term topic is, however, loose and difficult to define (Heritage 2003); topicality is not only a matter of content, but constituted in part through the procedures employed by the discussants to display understanding and to achieve the proper fit of a turn with prior turns (Maynard 1980, 263). Topics can also be regarded as ideationally coherent stretches of talk that range from a single sentence to a couple of paragraphs (Todd 2011, 252). Thus, coherence resides not simply in *what* participants say, but *how* they say it, and *when* they say it (Schegloff 1990). In sum, coherence in conversation is a collaborative achievement (Downing 2000, 32).

Topic shift and drift can be considered as two differing types of topic management practices or forms of topic organization (Gómez González 2010). During discussion, topics often accrue by way of stepwise progression while,

at other times, participants create more abrupt shifts with clear boundaries (Linell & Korolija 1997, 167). In the latter case, continuities are disrupted (ibid.). In contrast to the deliberately managed and strategic nature of the stepwise movement from topic to topic (Sacks 1995/2005) topic drift is aimless and less controlled (Downing 2000). Thus, it might take place in conversation that each segment coheres with the preceding and following segments, although these might soon bear little or no relation to earlier and later topics (Downing 2000, 46). This development in discussion is called *topic drift* Hobbs (1990). Thus, while speakers generally take measures, deploy contextual resources, and cue their “topical shifts” to secure a degree of coherence across boundaries (Linell & Korolija 1997, 199), *drifting* in conversations takes place when preceding and following interactions are topically incoherent.

In the present case, the detailed analysis of meeting interactions over a long period enabled observing how drifting took place in the meeting discussions, and for analyzing *the use to which members put it*. Thus, while the analyses in previous chapters have taken the structural and organizing features of the various discursive practices as their starting points, the analysis in this chapter will focus primarily on the use and the social functions of drifting as a discursive practice. Simultaneously, however, also the structural features of drifting will be discussed.

Similar to the majority of other discursive practices in the TMTO meetings in the present case, also drifting and its immediate effect on the interactive situation were identified by the participants themselves, thus corroborating their nature as a members’ method (Garfinkel 1967). This makes drifting an even more interesting and significant discursive practice.

4.6.1 Transition to drifting

During the orientation period, the GD encouraged the TMTO to discuss issues on a broad perspective as a means of “thinking out of the box”. Discussing issues on a broad frame was perceived as a feasible way of exploring a variety of viewpoints. The counter-effect of these broad-ranging discussions was, however, that discussions occasionally digressed far from the original topic and began to drift.

The change in the mode of conversation and the discussion dynamics were particularly noticeable when drifting occurred in the middle of a more focused discussion. The next extract displays a shift from a more focused discussion to drifting during the orientation period. A few minutes earlier, the group had discussed and considered metrics relating to Human Resources (HR) management and personnel issues, particularly those issues relating to the

development of personnel skills and know-how. During this discussion, multiple discussants pointed out to the challenges of measuring human performance and the development of HR measures. Consequently, the GD seeks to continue the discussion, and harvest reflections on the representability of the discussed metrics from another angle. However, her question ignites a discussion that begins to drift and travels farther from the original issue, the HR metrics.

Extract 41. Meeting 3, orientation period.

Meeting time 1:12:55.

1 GD: What's the key problem with the personnel at the moment?

2 TERRY: May I think out loud?

3 GD: Yes.

4 TERRY: To get more speed to the current lot.

5 The lot is good and skilful, but there's a certain type of phlegmatism in it

6 all the time. So more speed, more morale [inaudible]

7 [joint laughter].

8 IRIS: Just you add church there.

9 (overlapping talk, laughter)

10 TERRY: No, no, absolutely not!

11 Sort of, when you take a look at the departments,

12 that we have, there's good capacity there.

13 But that, how can you get people to do the things,

14 so that it moves like a train, that you shouldn't need to supervise (½)

15 Some of them a drifting to anything and a-ha =

(illustrates an imaginary way of wandering around)

16 IRIS: =I think it's not just drifting,

17 instead I think there are too many fires burning, people just can't get=

18 TERRY: =Or they don't know what they should be doing!

19 GD: But what's the issue then? (.)

20 It's a leadership issue! (cont.)

Extract 41 demonstrates how the GD attempts to increase the speed of the discussion concerning HR metrics by encouraging the exploration of problems relating to managing human resources, the personnel. Her aim appears to be the preparation of the ground for the HR metrics discussion by first inviting discussion on issues that the new metrics will help solve. Instead, however, the GD's question triggers an engaging and dynamic debate on problems relating to personnel. As a consequence, the metrics approach is discarded, and discussants begin introducing their personal perspectives and opinions on problems with personnel. The more empathetic perspectives expressed during the discussion emphasize that employees are swamped with tasks and

therefore unable to attend to every task (*many fires burning, people just can't get*), whereas the more cynical and authoritative views blame the personnel and call for solutions "to make them do what you want" (*so that it moves like a train*). The GD, in turn, attempts to frame "the problems with the personnel" as a leadership issue. Successive contributions in the 13-minute discussion initially involve practically all participants, who contribute to the discussion by introducing their opinions on "the problem with the personnel". Neither of the expressed perspectives is explicitly and observably linked to the GD's original topic, the HR metrics. Finally, the discussion is closed by the GD, shown in Extract 42.

Extract 42. Meeting 3, orientation period.

Meeting time 1:26:00

1 GD: Good, let's move ahead, we've been talking philosophy.

2 But is there (½)? In my opinion, despite of everything

3 this gap-analysis fill rate³⁹,

4 I want it, that we have it

5 and let's have a look at it once in six months.

6 And we'll still measure occupational accidents and the rotation of personnel,

7 they're surely suitable metrics, for this level.

8 If you're kind enough to mark the yellow ones (inaudible) (to the secretary).

The closing sequence of the drifting discussion, exhibited in Extract 42, identifies multiple interesting observations. First, by the particular use of words (line 1), the GD identifies and labels the previous discussion as a drifting discussion (we've been talking philosophy). Thus, by labelling the discussion as "philosophical" as opposed to "practical", the GD effectively frames it as less relevant from the management team meeting practice perspective. Secondly, the points raised in the GD's closing address in lines 3 and 6 (gap analysis fill rate; occupational accidents; personnel turn-over) relate to issues discussed *before* drifting began. Thus, the drifting discussion is not drawn together *per se*, but rather terminated (Line 1: Good! Let's go ahead!). Thus, there are no attempts to link the GD's original topic, the HR metrics, and the issues raised in the group discussion. As an indication of the speakers' sense and understanding of the practical outcome of the interaction (Arminen 2001), the closing sequence, thus, suggests that the approximate 15-minute discussion is both removed from the previous topic and has little relevance to the agenda and discussion in the TMTO meetings.

³⁹ Gap analysis fill rate is a metric that reflects the gap between a person's current skills and the skills required in the task.

Linell and Korolija (1997, 197) believe that familiarity among participants in unrestrained; spontaneous interaction and the loose agenda contribute to the multiplication of abrupt topic shifts in conversation. These notions are supported by the findings of this study. First, analysis of the drifting sequences of interaction in the TMTO meetings shows that drifting discussions often deal with the participants' personal opinions and views and issues that are not tightly linked to the "official" or formal managerial agenda. Consequently, as illustrated in Extract 42, drifting discussions seldom lead to conclusions, actions points, or decisions. During drifting discussions the participants, thus, often *abandon* the matter-of-fact approach. Free-flowing focused discussions were particularly prone to drifting and fragmentation of focus, as free-flowing dynamics encourage active participation and expression of personal viewpoints and opinions. Unrestrained and free-flowing dynamics encourage participation in discussions, and make them accessible and, simultaneously, prone to drifting.

The analysis of drifting sequences of interaction showed that various types of drifting discussions have differing roles in the discussions. These roles will be discussed in more detail in the next two chapters.

4.6.2 Off-topic-discussions

Drifting discussions have similar turn-taking structures and dynamics to, for example, free-flowing focused discussions. However, the difference between free-flowing focused discussions and drifting discussions is illustrated by free-flowing focused discussions on a topic being progressed through shifting turns of multiple speakers, whereas drifting discussions exhibit less connection to the previous topic. Therefore, the local coherence of the discussion, achieved by taking up the last mentioned topic of the preceding utterance, is compromised when there is a sudden shift in topic and when there is little or no relation between early and later topics (Öhlschlegel & Piontkowski 1997, Linell & Korolija 1997, Downing 2000).

Free-flowing discussion dynamics and informal and relaxed chairing practices encouraged exploring issues freely and, simultaneously, made them prone to drifting. Extract 43 displays how a shift to an off-topic discussion takes place when the TMTO adjourns a discussion concerning personnel adjustments as a means to make cuts to the expense budget.

Extract 43. Meeting 11, shaping period.

Meeting time 00: 22:22

1 KAREN: And then, if you are able, from your own point of view,

2 to prioritize them according to the criticality.

3 (1½)

4 PETER: You have my three.

5 KAREN: Ye:es.

6 PETER: Nothing else.

7 KAREN: You (all) could, hey, add them to

8 the LOR calibration–list directly,

9 so that I have them at my disposal, in ((HR director)'s,

10 ((CEO of BioCorp))'s and Rebecca's disposal

11 (3)

12 TERRY: How about something like thirty-seven and a half

(referring to the age of the employees considered to be laid off)

13 KAREN: (inaudible) (laughs)

14 (3)

15 PETER: Let's, ((nick for Terry)) do like that, really,

16 that we review the males born in 1970

17 restructure them [out]

18 AMANDA: [gives a laugh]

19 PETER: Right?

20 TERRY: Let's offer them a five year's salary,

21 a good idea.

22 (laughter, overlapping talk)

23 AMANDA: Looking content with yourselves.

24 (laughter)

25 TERRY: C'mon, didn't that ((name of a CEO)) in his time

26 make a good deal with ((name of a mobile phone company)),

27 but there was time to review it (the deal) of course and so.

28 Was it year –89 or when was it?

29 He was in the picture for a year,

30 and was then replaced by ((name of a CEO)).

31 Ever since ((name of a company)) has paid him

32 his salary, that was part of the deal.

33 AMANDA: Ye:es

34 MARYANN: Not bad.

35 TERRY: Not bad at all. (cont.)

In the beginning of Extract 43 (lines 1-8), Karen and Peter bring the discussion concerning personnel adjustments to a closure. The three second

pause in line 12 indicates a passage and a shift to a new topic. However, in line 13, Terry continues with the topic of restructuring, but in a humorous mode, which then initiates a drifting sequence of interaction. During the following turns, the humorous and dynamic discussion flows from the age of the personnel to be considered for restructuring (lines 10-19) to corporate leaders' benefits in another well-known domestic company (26-35).

Extract 43 identifies some of the most characteristic features of drifting discussions. The discussion is highly dynamic and exhibits overlapping talk and laughter; it is engaging, participatory, and involves majority of the participants. In this case, the drifting mode of discussion is sustained by Terry in particular, but also by other participants. Consequently, the obvious drifting off-topic from official, purposeful TMTO agenda is not sanctioned in any way. The discussions that follow the drifting sequence exhibited in Extract 43 move to the exploration of "personnel days" and travel guidelines for business trips in great detail (micro-mining).

The drifting discussion in Extract 43 functions as a mechanism for *venting* and as a brief *time-out* from the heavy and stressful discussion on adjusting the expense budget by releasing employees. Decisions that compromise the livelihood of subordinates are obviously difficult to make, and put the respective directors under a large amount of emotional stress. By engaging in mutual joking, the directors distance themselves from their managerial duties for a brief moment; they allow the discussion to drift to disconnected, humorous talk, where releasing ordinary employees is ironically compared with the *golden parachutes* of some top directors.

Although drifting to off-topic discussions in the manner described above was relatively easy to identify from the meeting data, drifting was, however, only an occasional and briefly settled phenomenon in the studied TMTO meetings. Thus, it was rather a temporarily employed means to gain some distance from the purposeful managerial agenda for a brief moment, a time out.

4.6.3 Resistance through drifting discussions

During interaction, actors engage in visible mutual work to construct and sustain a mutually intelligible world (Garfinkel 1967, Sacks et al 1974, Rawls 2008b, 7). The pursuit to sustain coherence and intelligibility of interaction is common both to situations of everyday talk and to occasions of institutional interaction (Sacks et al 1974, Schegloff 1992, Llewellyn 2010). Major disruptions in the coherence of interaction signal, therefore, that the pursuit has, at least momentarily, been abandoned. If incoherence is intentional it can

be regarded as an indirect message, which then needs to be explored in context (see e.g. Rahtu 2011).

Öhlschlegel and Piontkowski (1997) suggest that violations of coherence can be taken as attempts to dominate an interaction. By violating the local (topical) coherence of interaction, the violator gains control over topic development and time allocated for its discussion. I identified in the meeting data that, on occasions, multiple discussants employed drifting as a means for *rearranging the discussant roles* to gain a foothold in the discussion, and as a *means of resistance*. The analyses in this chapter focus, thus, on looking at drifting discussions from this perspective.

The clear-cut participant roles constructed by financial reporting in TMTO meetings were often disrupted by sequences of free-flowing focused discussions and micro-mining, and also by drifting discussions. Extract 44 exhibits a situation in which Anthony's financial reporting has continued with few interruptions for a number of minutes. Terry's question concerning cost deductions sparks a drifting discussion regarding a leaking roof in one part of BioCorp's office, and manufacturing facilities.

Extract 44. Meeting 22, settling period.

Meeting time 1:12:05

1 TERRY: Just a minute.

2 There's a reduction of ((sum)), rent charge, and it's a deduction

3, so the rental cost on top of that and its ((sum)) [inaudible]

4 ANTHONY: [Ye:es] I don't know,

5 I'll have to check it first, why it is, but that's the kind of a sum there's been

6 utilities, they've been ((sum)) under and real estate repairs ((sum)),

7 the rest of it are actually under.

8 TERRY: Can I say here (.) The roof of BioCorp three is leaking,

9 we'll have to do something [about it]

10 ANTHONY: [Ye:es]

11 IRIS: The roof is leaking!

12 TERRY: The roof is leaking.

12 IRIS: But it's quite new.

13 TERRY: Not the roof.

14 IRIS: Oh the roof was not fixed? Where does it leak to?

15 TERRY: Almost to the laboratory facilities, something needs to be done soon

16 (funny voice). (somebody gives a laugh)

17 IRIS: So it's leaking through the vents there all the way down?

18 TERRY: I don't know the spot exactly

19 other than it's near the firewall somewhere.

20 IRIS: So it's leaking to the office space?

21 TERRY: Possibly, I don't know.

- 22 I haven't taken a look, I know people who have.
- 23 IRIS: How many square feet is it? The roof, it's an even roof?
- 24 TERRY: It's, no it's not an even roof, it's a bit (inaudible).
- 25 IRIS: So how much does it cost? ((sum))? When you fix it?
- 26 TERRY: Dunno.
- 27 JERRY: Do we have to rebuild the whole roof?
- 28 TERRY: =no we don't, we can fix it.
- 29 PAUL: I can bring a tube of fixture there (.)
- 30 (joint laughter)
- 31 JERRY: Right.
- 32 IRIS: Would you like to try? [laughs]
- 33 TERRY: Paul's fixing services.
- 34 (joint laughter)
- 35 ANTHONY: Ye:es if we now quickly take a look at your functions,
- 36 so then Iris' people ((sum)) under budget and most of it is salaries. (cont.)

In extract 44, Terry first asks a question regarding the financial reports, to which Anthony responds in lines 4-7. In line 8, Terry employs Anthony's previous utterance as a *springboard* to a transition in discussion topic, and informs the meeting team that a roof in one of BioCorp's facilities is leaking. Iris catches Terry's "pitch" on a new topic, and during the next turns Iris and Terry alternate in elaborating the issue through a rapid two-party conversation. By repeating each other's utterances in lines 11, and 12, Iris and Terry add to the humorous nature of the conversation. The quickly shifting turns in lines 11-26 comprise a dynamic conversation, which elicits a quick laugh from an unidentified participant in line 16. Paul's comment in line 29, elaborated by Iris in line 32 and Terry in line 33, adds more humorous tone to the discussion, and elicits mutual laughter. After this short sequence of drifting, Anthony takes the discussion back to business-at-hand – the financial reports in line 35 (*Ye:es if we now quickly take a look*).

By sustaining the discussion about roof repairs, the discussants take advantage of the situation to create a temporary sequence of *time out* from financial reporting led by Anthony. The incidental rearrangement of interactive opportunities and roles takes place by a drifting conversation, and facilitates a temporary lead for Iris and Terry in the discussion.

In addition to control over the topic and the direction of interaction, violations of local coherence have other roles and effects on the interactive situation. Drifting was employed to express indirect resistance in one specific meeting during the shaping period. Theo, the financial director, joins this particular meeting as a "messenger on behalf of Rebecca" to discuss adjustments to the cost expense budgets in the Operations' organization. The

issue of adjusting the budget had been touched upon on various occasions during meetings in the previous two months. However, until now there had been no precise information on the exact level of required adjustments. Now, however, it was time to get to the actual cost-cutting measures.

Theo's agenda and his role in the meeting had been announced at the beginning of the meeting. It was therefore noticeable from the beginning of the meeting that the discussants engaged in activities to resist the initiatives "imposed" on them by BioCorp. Extract 45 is a lengthy snippet from a sequence of approximately five minutes long drifting discussion during which the discussants systematically stretch their discussion on various agenda items and, thus, postpone discussing the *real* topic of the day, the cost-cutting measures. The extract shows how the drifting mode of discussion is discursively accomplished in a mutual manner.

Extract 45. Meeting 14, shaping period.

Meeting time 00:44:08.

1 ANTHONY: Does it somehow assist in getting the sick leave,

2 that you've injured yourself at work, or what is this,

3 why, is there some kind of an incentive in this

4 that you have to report it as an occupational accident?

5 PETER: If it's an occupational accident the company will pay for everything.

6 ANTHONY: Oh yea yea. Ye:es it did sound quite terrific (½)

7 that report. It has required some character, to be able to write it like that.

8 AMANDA: Ye:es=

9 TERRY: =Come on, my people do this quite professionally (gives a laugh)

10 ANTHONY: But(-)

11 TERRY: = Must investigate.

12 PETER: But it was well-written, the report.

13 ANTHONY: It was, it was, it was.

14 PAUL: What's here then (.)?

15 AMANDA: But can you do it like that, like to notice three days later that

16 yea, it actually happened three days ago.

17 PETER: Yes, but see, if you, by that time, have a doctor's statement

18 what can you do then.

19 PAUL: Yes what does the doctor's statement say,

20 can such an accident happen while you're getting up from a chair?

21 [overlapping talk]

22 Alice: Isn't there a time line within which you should go to the doctor?

23 PETER: Well now, it's not possible to say that it couldn't happen like that.

24 AMANDA: I really don't [understand].

25 ALICE: [inaudible]

26 ANTHONY: Yes but just that.

- 27 No, because also in workplaces like this your knee might (inaudible)
 28 IRIS: Oops [laughing] (inaudible)
 29 [overlapping talk]
 30 ANTHONY: Now, it feels a bit silly to make statistics of things like this.
 31 TERRY: Yes but the actual message behind this all is
 32 as was stated in the report
 33 that does the employer have opportunity to organize substituting work.
 34 AMANDA: Ye:es.
 35 TERRY: So the question is that if your ass is on the bench
 36 you still have the possibility of doing all kinds of things.
 37 IRIS: But wasn't Rebecca,
 38 I remember we talked about this earlier,
 39 so Rebecca was pretty much against it?

Extract 45 shows how the discussants occupy the “air time” by filling the meeting time with trivial issues, and by maintaining an almost nonsensical discussion concerning occupational accidents to the effect that discussions on Theo's agenda are postponed. While these activities signal low commitment to the ideas promoted by Theo and disengagement to the process of cost-cutting, they can also be taken as an indication of resistance (Prasad & Prasad 2000, Herakleous 2006, Laine & Vaara 2007). Resistance in the form of drifting discussions is constructed mutually in situ, and is manifested as a type of *counter-discourse* that is mobilized to safeguard not only the resources of the respective directors (money and employees), but also their identity and self-worth (Herakleous 2006, Prasad & Prasad 2000, Laine & Vaara 2007).

In the present case, therefore, resistance takes the form of drifting discussions, which are aimed against attempts to impose cuts in the costs in the Operations' organization. The resistance is, in particular, directed at *how* the requirement to adjust the cost budget is communicated – attempts to dictate trigger resistance (see Laine & Vaara 2007). During these drifting discussions the participants show awareness to the temporal frames (Boden 1997) and to the temporally bound nature of their activities by designing their drifting discussions to occupy long stretches of the total meeting time.

Öhlschlegel and Piontkowski (1997) note that violation of local coherence to a particular speaker can exclude him/her from communications for shorter or longer periods of time. Extract 46 illustrates how this takes place in the same meeting, and how attempts to bring the discussion “back on track” are jointly discarded.

Extract 46. Meeting 14, shaping period.

Meeting time 1:12:10

1 TERRY: (inaudible) .And, and then the question is that can we cut off

2 a third from our ((error reports)).

3 [laughter].

4 My justification is that I'm looking at, I talked,

5 I'm listening to my people running around the house

6 checking alarms because we've built such a jungle

7 during ((quality system) (inaudible) that we're monitoring everything.

8 So the question is, can we agree

9 to follow only a third of what we've been monitoring thus far?

10 AMANDA: This can easily be suggested because no one is doing [it]

11 TERRY: [Ye:es]

12 AMANDA:= and then if they don't try to do it, like once I tried

13 to get something done and didn't get any help in doing it=

14 TERRY:=ye:es=

15 AMANDA =I didn't get any answers.(-)

16 TERRY: =ye:s as an example is this, this is by far the only positive thing now

17 that these ((product)), their calibration is done only once a year,

18 instead of six months, in Gadgets production, once this is passed [this].

19 AMANDA: [mmm]

20 IRIS: But another example of this running around

21 is a good example that if there are

22 overdrafts in the production facilities, temperature overdrafts.

23 The suggestion was that we take a piece of paper to one of them mail boxes

24 and from there, the foremen go and [check]

25 TERRY: [ye:es]

26 IRIS: =so that it's not possible to send even an e-mail about

27 whether the temperature has been exceeded or not.

28 THEO (inaudible) these factual, real, when a person is no longer employed

29 and a new person is not hired, these should be removed from,

30 I mean from the budget. Or in the case that you have both the current (old)

31 one and the new one there to remove the old one,

32 if it is likely that he'll not be there anymore.

33 TERRY: Two years.

34 THEO (inaudible)

35 PETER: =should we double-check it with ((HR director)) because I hear

36 a mixed message here. Concerning what's really going to happen, [I mean]

37 AMANDA: [mmm]

38 [5]

39 TERRY: So, can I (inaudible) without [any]

- 40 [overlapping talk]
 41 AMANDA: °If I just ask quickly°. If you have both the old one and the new
 42 one so you won't probably get a new one if the old one hasn't left or?
 43 PETER: When they represent the direct workforce I either produce the goods
 44 and get the people. Or there won't be any products.
 45 AMANDA: My question is if you have both the new one and [the old]
 46 PETER: [Irrespectively] of that (-)
 47 AMANDA: = so if the old won't go, can you take a new one to replace him,
 48 or can you take the new one if the old won't go?
 49 PETER: But they're not connected to each other in any way. Okay?
 50 IRIS: But because the old one doesn't do what he's supposed to do.
 51 PETER: Yes the old one is doing the wrong work.
 52 AMANDA: Okay (smiley voice)
 53 [bursts of laughter].
 54 PETER: And he (½) He can't do the job he's supposed to [do].
 55 IRIS: [And that, it-]
 56 ANTHONY: [It's a game of give and take]
 57 AMANDA: But you should tell to the old one that (inaudible) [laughs].
 58 ANTHONY: Didn't we just talk about [forcing] (inaudible (smiley voice))
 59 IRIS: [(inaudible)]
 60 PETER: = (inaudible) skills [(inaudible) finished].
 61 PAUL: [Force] him to be able to do it, now you really must know how!(!.)
 62 [cynical laughter]
 63 AMANDA: Ye:es that's the other alternative (laughing).
 64 IRIS: Oh my [(inaudible)]
 65 PETER: Oh [my] God!

Extract 46 displays a lengthy snippet of a discussion during which the participants are first ostensibly engaged in a matter-of-fact discussion on potential sources for savings. However, Terry's first comment in line 1 is a "joke", appropriately acknowledged by the other participants as such, and greeted with joint laughter. Terry elaborates his "suggestion" in lines 1-9, engaging first Amanda, and then Iris in the discussion. Terry's comments can actually be understood as critique of current work practices, some of which stem from the (quality) regulations and stipulations of various authorities. Thus, while the cost-cutting discussions target the Operations' organization at this time, Terry suggests that the root cause of current costs (in the form of personnel) stems from outside the Operations; from forces beyond their control.

In line 28 Theo pursues to straighten out the discussion and bring it back on track. Theo's address in line 28 reflects organizational rationality-in-action

(Boden 1997): he seeks to gain a foothold in the discussion by resorting to the rhetoric of rationalization and legitimation with reference to the goals and employment of institutionalized social action; here, budget adjustments (Van Leeuwen 2008). While Terry's and Peter's successive comments are somewhat disconnected from Theo's comment, his attempt to bring the discussion back on track gains relative success through Amanda's comment in line 41. Soon, however, the discussion becomes fragmented and less intelligible as the discussants start spinning around the issue of "old (current) employee" vs. "new employee". During the partly overlapping addresses beginning in line 54, participants elaborate the issue by adding remarks, which then elicit frequent bursts of laughter. Kangasharju and Nikko (2009) note, however, that laughter in the workplace might not necessarily be associated with humour, and that humour can be employed as a means of exclusion. In this case, resistance is, thus, also manifested through (indirect and cloaked) satire and humour (Heracleous 2006). The participants show increasing awareness to the ironic and satiric aspects of the interaction near to the end of the sequence (see Iris' and Peter's exclamations in lines 64 and 65 respectively).

The observable direct effect of this drifting discussion is that Theo is efficiently excluded from the discussion. His attempts to join the discussion and return it back to cost-cutting measures are repeatedly dismissed by the other participants who fill the meeting time with prolonged periods of drifting discussions.

Drifting, as exhibited in Extract 46, can be perceived as a type of counter-discourse, shaped by what it opposes; positioned against the themes and effects of the dominant discourse (Heracleous 2006) and mobilized by Theo's attempts to impose external directives to cut expense budgets. The functions of this type of drifting discussion in this social context comprise expressing dissatisfaction, letting off steam, and safeguarding identity and self-worth (Heracleous 2006), and also showing responsibility and accountability. By opposing short term cost adjustments that might jeopardize organizational performance and objectives in the long term, the directors can be viewed to manifest themselves as responsible and independent actors who understand their accountability and responsibilities. By opposing and resisting "hasty" or "forced" cost-cutting measures, the directors' opposition can be interpreted as concern for the success and survival of the company. This interpretation is supported by the fact that, within a couple of days, the directors assembled among themselves to discuss and decide on adjustment measures to the budget. While they would still make occasional bitter remarks concerning the cost-cuts, the overall tone of discussion remained business like, and stayed focused and coherent, and ultimately, the team would agree on a list of measures to be taken to achieve the appropriate budget level.

Similar to the case described by Prasad and Prasad (2000, 393), resistance through drifting discussions did not represent a constant or pervasive feature of the organization's dynamics. In this case, these actions were spurred on by an external "threat" to the sovereignty of the group, and as soon as they regained their latitude to work the issue out among themselves the resistance was resolved. As described in this chapter, however, drifting discussions represented a characteristic and observable discursive practice in TMTO meetings; they occurred occasionally, and were often intertwined with other discussion practices, such as free-flowing focused discussions and financial reporting. As an occasional and short term conversational practice, drifting discussions offered a temporary time out or a channel for letting off steam, and would not, with the exception of the cost-cutting meeting, substantially disrupt meeting discussions. However, micro-mining represents a more pervasive and distinguishable discussion practice during managerial meetings in the present case, and is discussed in the next chapter.

4.7 Digging into the details through micro-mining

As noted in Chapter 4.6, there is no clear definition in the meeting literature as to what "getting off subject" entails in meeting discussions. It might well be that the general notion of "getting off the subject" means, in fact, the type of discussions that focuses on overly minute details. Whatever the case, the literature on meetings and meeting interaction has not, to date, examined the phenomenon of *digging into details* analytically. However, it is likely that the challenge of keeping managerial discussions "on subject" is more widespread than currently acknowledged.

"Digging into the details" was acknowledged in BioCorp as a characteristic and problematic feature in the meeting practice during the orientation period. Micro-mining was regarded as a feature characteristic to specialist organizations, in which core processes are complex and intertwined, and in which functionality of the organization is dependent on a vast amount of highly specialized knowledge. While micro-mining was perceived as useful, in that participants gained important knowledge through these detailed discussions and learned about issues that affected their respective areas of responsibility, it also was perceived as problematic. People would lose the "big picture" when delving in the minutiae of issues that could be addressed by other people on other occasions, or that provided information at an overly detailed level.

The ambivalence relating to micro-mining was shown by it being acknowledged as a problematic and unproductive meeting practice; however,

it was simultaneously labeled as a feasible discussion practice *by its very performance*. Extract 47 shows the GD reflecting on the problematic nature of micro-mining during the orientation period through a monologue (lines 7-15 and 25-35 omitted for clarity).

Extract 47. Meeting 2, orientation period.

Meeting time 3:14:00

1 GD: But it's just because (.) Let's think about it. I don't know your areas.

2 I'm even not going to learn because you have (inaudible).

3 So I don't even want to know

4 and I'll have to accept that, I'll trust that

5 Paul will take care of that. He'll know how to do it

6 and that Iris knows the Liquids and is familiar with these things

16 But it's just this, a funny feeling that we expect

17 everybody to be a specialist on every field.

18 And this is the difficulty is specialist organizations (inaudible)

19 people who are new in the organization (inaudible)

20 it's impossible for these people to understand what a sufficient level is.

21 Because, like, if everyone always aims at gaining more detailed knowledge

22 more and more and up-dating you all the time

23 then we'll all be in burn-out soon

24 because we can't control everything.

36 This goes a bit in another direction, off the topic but so (½)

37 So it's probably this zeal and passion that (½)

38 I regret to have to confess that I'm such a technically-oriented person

39 that I intervene with completely wrong issues sometimes

40 And I can take a good look in the mirror in this matter.

41 I shouldn't be intervening in any details.

42 But it's just so much fun (½)

43[overlapping talk]

In her monologue in Extract 47, the GD addresses the controversies and problems inherent to managing a specialist organization, and provides an apt illustration of the problem relating to micro-mining. Simultaneously, the GD self-identifies her turn as drifting (line 36). In her address, the GD brings forward the challenge of managing complex technologies and maintaining a balance between various forms of expertise. Her account is contradictory in that she first labels the practice of getting involved with the details of specialist work (such as Paul's and Iris') as an unfeasible practice (lines 1-17), but then engages in justifying this very practice (starting in line 37). The GD's account also illustrates how the double-bind of communication (Bateson, Jackson, Haley & Weakland 1963) contributes to establishing organizational practices. A double-binding communicative situation is formed when the

communication consists of two contradictory messages and when the opportunities to clarify the communications are blocked or unsuccessful (Dopson & Neumann 1998, 57). Thus, while labelling micro-mining as a *problematic practice*, the GD simultaneously, through her own activities and accounts, frames it as an understandable and *feasible* practice. Thus, not only is micro-mining acknowledged as an intrinsic feature of BioCorp's managerial practice, it is also *labelled as a feasible meeting practice* by its very performance.

4.7.1 Turn-taking dynamics and participation in micro-mining

Micro-mining discussions in the TMTO meetings focus particularly on operative processes and practices in BioCorp, and on issues that relate to areas such as, for example, production, accounting, and maintenance. The discussion topics range from mundane and practical issues such as, for example, legal agreements regarding dry cleaning services, cost entries for office supplies, the amount of parking spaces in the car park, or bio-chemical processes and technical issues that require highly-specialized expertise.

Similar to other group discussion practices, micro-mining is a mutually sustained discussion practice. It is a particularly engaging discursive practice, as many of the discussion topics relate closely to the directors' daily work and respective areas of expertise. Most importantly, these are issues that the directors have a say in and that they can influence. In many ways, micro-mining discussions make visible the members' daily work and its challenges.

Extract 48 displays a micro-mining discussion in one of the last meetings during the observation period. Until now, the discussion has revolved around suggestions on how to follow-up activities and develop the TMTO work. The discussion concerning quality measures in BioCorp takes a new twist as Iris' operation-specific report spurs a micro-mining discussion on quality problems and related issues.

Extract 48. Meeting 31, settling period.

Meeting time 00:14:45

1 IRIS: But it's just, that we've been going through in some of these [meetings],

2 TERRY: [inaudible]

3 IRIS: that the criterion is a bit different for (.) for example ((product)).

4 At that stage, when they arrive from the packaging line, they'll inspect them

5 and at that point not all the trash is visible, if there even is any trash.

6 TERRY: Ye:es.

7 IRIS: But then, after they've swung it around, it's possible that

8 some trash appears (½) there, later.

- 9 And then again, when they're inspected, there's no trace of trash
 10 so it's not completely-
- 11 AMANDA: =yes but it's not, yea-
- 12 IRIS: =not right, that what they find in there, is away from others.
- 13 TERRY: =But-
- 14 AMANDA: =But the situation won't improve by someone picking from there=
 15 IRIS: =No-
- 16 AMANDA: =from the production line the faulty ones,
 17 but instead you'll have to remove-
- 18 IRIS: =that-
- 19 AMANDA: =cause, [why]
- 20 IRIS: [So]
- 21 AMANDA: =the bad ones appear there in the first place.
- 22 TERRY: =Right.
- 23 AMANDA: so that's (inaudible)
- 24 IRIS: =ye:es, but then we'd have to clean the whole area=
 25 AMANDA: =Right right =
- 26 IRIS: =so it's not -
- 27 AMANDA: =(inaudible)-
- 28 IRIS: = it's been just recently built, so if we're not able to invest anyway (½)
 29 so there are a lot of these surfaces (.) there, near the ceiling, these surfaces,
 30 where trash, dust, and others can land (.)and fall down
 31 from there, so it's not even a proper (.) production facility (½)
- 32 TERRY: =(inaudible)
- 33 AMANDA: (coughs) =But surely one could at least go and see,
 34 what can be done (.)
- 35 PETER: Well I took a look at the ((production line)) that's there and (.)
 36 I'm sorry, but I almost fell on by ass because (.)=
- 37 TERRY: =You took a look up=
 38 PETER: =I took a look in the corners, and they had -
- 39 IRIS: = ter::ribly -
- 40 PETER: =it's just so (.) I mean it's nowhere near a clean space.
 41 IRIS: Well no.
- 42 PETER: Not to mention that it's nowhere near a clean space either (½)
- 43 JERRY: And then we have that fancy corridor, and there it's so strict that
 44 you have to step over the line.
- 45 IRIS: Ye.es.
- 46 AMANDA: Ye.es.

Extract 48 displays a micro-mining discussion during which the discussants engage in mapping out and exploring a problem that, in fact, might better be addressed elsewhere by other people. Iris' description of the problem in lines

1-10 invites Amanda to comment on the points raised by Iris, and soon Terry, Peter, and Jerry participate in the discussion, and elaborate it further to production facilities and their conditions, and later (not shown Extract 48) to the neglect of particular work practices, and safety precautions and equipment. This particular micro-mining discussion has, thus, a *drifting character*; the original topic is elaborated and taken forward on a turn-by-turn basis.

What takes place during this sequence of interaction is eloquently described by Linell (1998, 77): “The conversationalists develop topics jointly, speakers appropriate words and concepts from each other and complete each other’s utterances and thoughts (-)”. The micro-mining discussion, exhibited in Extract 48 is, thus, the joint product of a *reciprocal and mutual* discourse (ibid.). The importance and feasibility of the issue is jointly constructed by dynamic turns in talk, and the discussion topic is iterated further to involve topics on which everyone has an opinion. The dynamics and self-organizing character of micro-mining discussions resemble free-flowing focused discussions, as turns are taken without explicit turn-taking practices or facilitation, and participants contribute to the discussions at will. As various types of interactive contribution are possible, the discussion is easy to access.

Micro-mining discussion exhibited in Extract 48 continues in the following extract (Extract 49), and now the topic has evolved from quality issues and work practices to the employees’ “indecent behaviour in the workplace”. Extract 49 illustrates also how this discursive practice is identified by one of the discussants, Anthony.

Extract 49. Meeting 31, settling period.

Meeting time 00:16:28

57 PETER: =they even have the girly calendars there, they’re always there
58 only after they’ve lost like five of them, then they won’t buy a new one.

59 AMANDA: Ye:es.

60 ANTHONY: Are the girly calendars as well -

61 PETER: =They are they are-

62 ANTHONY: =in the clean production facilities?

63 PETER: No. This is now another thing (.) going on-

64 TERRY: =(inaudible)-

65 AMANDA: =ye:es, I also think, that it’s not (inaudible).

66 ANTHONY: Is this some kind of a good old-fashioned morality campaign
67 going on there or (inaudible)?

68 TERRY: I think it’s for the well-being of all of us (funny voice)

69 ANTHONY: Alright. Alright (.) But isn’t this going a bit to the direction of
70 micro-management or the like?

71 IRIS: No but really (inaudible)-

72 AMANDA: =No but (inaudible)

- 73[overlapping talk, many participants 4]
 74 IRIS: No no (inaudible).
 75 But really, [inaudible]
 76 AMANDA: [inaudible] No but (inaudible)
 77 [overlapping talk 4]
 78 IRIS: No no. I -
 79 AMANDA: We need to actively do something,
 80 It'll not decrease by not [inaudible]
 81 IRIS: [inaudible] actively doing-
 82 ANTHONY: =Ye:es ye:es [inaudible].
 83 AMANDA:[inaudible] something, because it'll not decrease [by way of]
 84 PETER: [No].
 85 AMANDA: =we can't do anything.
 86 TERRY: In a way that trash discussi- -
 87 IRIS: =And these measures will get some speed to these things.
 88 TERRY: This trash discussion so what kind of trash is it in your opinion?
 89 Are they-?
 (cont.)

Between Extracts 48 and 49 the discussion has evolved to address not only employees' violations of work practices and safety regulations (discussed in detail by Peter), but also their violations of decent behaviour in the workplace (in the form of sexually suggestive materials in the production facilities). Anthony participates in the discussion in line 66 by asking about the girly calendars. Beginning in line 69 he seeks, however, to disrupt the discussion by indicating its nature as *micro-managing*. The exchanges that follow are illustrative of the extent to which the discussants are unaware of the discussion's content. Anthony's remark in line 69 ignites a discussion that becomes highly dynamic with frequent interruptions and overlapping talk signalling that the discussants find the topic relevant and important. During the interchanges that follow, the importance of the discussion topic is mutually constructed and defended. The drifting of the discussion and marginality of the topic to TMTO work goes unnoticed. Anthony's "orientation to the normative requirement of "sticking to the agenda" (Svennevig 2012, 62, quotation in original) does not receive a response from other participants.

Altogether, the discussion exhibited in Extracts 48 and 49 lasts for more than 13 minutes. Thus, depending on the topic, micro-mining discussions might stretch to cover relatively long sequences in meetings. On some occasions micro-mining discussions led to decisions and conclusions, which are then also recorded in the minutes of the meeting. At other times, issues are predominantly addressed discursively and often also revisited in future

meetings. The topic of clean facilities had, for example, last been discussed approximately six months earlier, in meeting 21. On this occasion it was initially decided that a new meeting was required, with participants from various departments in BioCorp. Therefore, the micro-mining discussions also had an effect similar to that observed by Schwarzman (1989); they generated new meetings.

4.7.2 Micro-mining as a method of managing complexity

In BioCorp, the complexity, sensitivity, and interrelatedness of employed technologies and processes provided organizational actors with huge cognitive challenges in their daily work. Consequently, to obtain and sustain a sufficient knowledge-base, actors were obligated to continuously incorporate new specialized information with what they already knew. In managerial meetings these challenges were reflected, for example, as frequent difficulties in maintaining the focus of discussions on managerial issues (as opposed to technical and scientific issues), and at a sufficient and adequate level.

The criticality of technical issues was emphasized on occasions when disruptions occurred in production. On these occasions the managerial perspective gave way to discussing and clarifying the technical details involved. Extract 50 is an apt example of a technical micro-mining discussion in TMTO meetings (lines 6–17 omitted to preserve the confidentiality and the clarity of the presentation.).

Extract 50. Meeting 8, shaping period.

Meeting time 1:53:00

1 TERRY: May I say a few things about the technical aspect?

2 So ultimately (inaudible) as you know about the cutting phase.

3 This is the cutting blade, we renewed it, (draws on the flip-chart)

4 the blade was renewed because the cutting force increased too much

5 for such an even cut to be functional so (inaudible)

18 So it hangs on just a few millimetres (inaudible) (draws on the flip-chart)

19 IRIS: So you think that the best place for the ((equipment))

20 would be in the front edge?

21 TERRY: If that ((equipment)) slides here sort of, (shows in the chart)

22 I'll just draw it here (draws on the flip-chart).

30 PAUL: And what have you controlled, take the plate off

31 so we have absolutely no idea how many of those plates we have

32 that how (inaudible)-

33 IRIS:= We've carried out the final inspection.

34 So we should be clear about the situation.

35 PAUL: Ye:es. Okay.

36 IRIS: (inaudible) (3)

37 PAUL: Anything else regarding this thing (inaudible)?

The discussion in Extract 50 addresses the technical details in one of BioCorp's production lines. Terry explains the technical aspects to others with the aid of a flip-chart. Iris and Paul (and also others in an earlier discussion) comment on Terry's accounts. Micro-mining discussion is, thus, mutually sustained and participated. The discussion is also topical and coherent in the sense that parties develop topics in relation to their own and others' talk (Downing 2000). However, micro-mining discussions are often not explicitly chaired or sanctioned although, on this occasion, Paul, as the acting chair, explicitly adjourns the discussion, by initiating closure in line 37.

The issue being discussed from various perspectives is characteristic of discussions regarding this incident (disruption in the process) in previous and forthcoming TMTO meetings. Thus, not only are organizational and managerial implications and actions relating to the incident discussed, but also fine-grained technical details, which clearly belong to the responsibilities of other people, to be discussed in other occasions. Extract 51 is another illustration of the engaging nature of the discussion on technical particulars.

Extract 51. Meeting 21, settling period.

Meeting time 1:21:39

1 IRIS: Well in (product), what we put on the surface of the (ingredient)

2 is this long a part of (ingredient).

3 In (another product) is only this kind of a short stretch,

4 so that you get that much more precisely (.)

5 what you're looking at, but, on the other hand, the prospect of error

6 is more direct than (.) if it's short, it's not that specific (½)

7 GD: This is exactly how I planned to explain it (humorous tone)

8 (bursts of laughter)

9 GD: This is how it was explained to me as well,

10 as I tried to inquire about (product technology) (inaudible)

11 (Employee) told to me constantly that we have to have the specific (.)

12 in other words that we should have the specific stretch

13 which is for particular uses but that we also should have

14 the stretch so that we'll be able to look into the wider (product substance).

15 JERRY: So who's an expert in here this or where do we get the expertise? =

16 IRIS: = Not us at least.

17 GD: Not in the (product line), I mean we do have some expertise.

18 TERRY: I can't (audible).

19 IRIS: First we try doing it and then look

- 20 if we get someone to tell us how to do it.
 21 GD: In principle, we do have expertise.
 22 (laughter, overlapping talk)
 23 PAUL: [Who's got those-]
 24 GD: [Well in principle there is an (product line) expert]
 25 (laughter, overlapping talk)
 26 PAUL: Who's there-(inaudible), where do we then or where do then sell this?
 27 GD: Which one?
 28 PAUL Well, these (product line).
 29 (laughter, overlapping talk)
 30 TERRY: We'll take a bucket and -(laughs) (cont.)

Extract 51 displays a micro-mining discussion on a minutiae process detail relating to a highly complex BioCorp product. The discussion exhibited in Extract 51 is a snippet from a longer conversation dealing with forthcoming products and the technologies in use. The technology discussed in Extract 51 falls to Iris' area of expertise. Other participants, including the GD, are less familiar with this detailed level of treatment. The reactions to Iris' account concerning the technology in lines 1-6 show that the technical details provided by Iris are, in fact, perceived as too complex and overwhelming. Frequent bursts of laughter and overlapping talk (in lines 8, 22, 25, and 29) by other participants serves as a type of "hands-off" statement; the discussion is impenetrable for the others. As Iris and the GD discuss the details of the product technology, Jerry and Paul (lines 15 and 23, respectively) seek to ask relevant and focused questions concerning organizational implications, such as required expertise and prospective customers for the new product. Terry's comment in line 30 begins a new round of laughs and overlapping talk that circles around the details of the prospective new technology.

Extracts 50 and 51 demonstrate how complex technological aspects in BioCorp's operations also penetrate TMTO discussions and agenda. By highlighting and over-emphasizing particular aspects, TMTO meetings are framed as a suitable arena for discussing exactly these issues. By allocating time and attention to issues such as technical details and medical particulars, the directors label these issues relevant and central. The labelling of discussion topics and discursive practices is achieved, thus, by their very inclusion.

However, while technical particulars overpowered managerial attention, issues that were not explicitly related to the operations, and particularly those that the directors of operations could not directly influence, were easily omitted from the TMTO agenda. Thus, the company's strategy, let alone the strategy of Corporation, business development, customers, and markets, was less frequently addressed by the TMTO. Micro-mining discussions, thus, both

directed managerial attention to issues less central from the managerial point of view, and occupied and exploited the “air time” of more strategic issues. In this respect, micro-mining discussions also reflect the TMTO’s perception of their role, with all issues relating to BioCorp’s operations, be they big or small, managerial or operative, belonging to the TMTO agenda.

4.8 Summary of the findings

4.8.1 Recap of the study

Chapters 4.2–4.7 present the findings of analysis of discursive practices employed in Top Management Team of Operations (TMTO) meetings. The findings are based on close scrutiny of meeting talk from managerial meetings in one case organization, BioCorp (pseudonym). The study provides a detailed analysis of distinctive structuring and organizing features of interaction, and develops a more refined understanding of managerial interaction in management meetings. Thus, the study represents TMTO meetings as a managerial practice organized through and around the interactive practices in use.

The aim of the study was to examine particular organizing and structuring features in meeting discussions, and to look at how these features are exhibited in various modes of interaction. The aim was also to study how these variously organized interactive practices were constructed and sustained. In addition, the study aimed to examine how the practice of management meeting was shaped by, and established around, the discursive practices in use.

Observations, and audio tapings of interactions, obtained from 35 managerial meetings, represent the primary data of the study. Observations made during the fieldwork were also recorded in a field diary. Supplementary data comprise discussions with the participants and various kinds of written materials. During data analysis, I examined the empirical materials with analytical tools and concepts drawn first, from the ethnomethodological (EM) and conversation analytical (CA) approaches, and, secondly, from literature on managerial interaction (discussed in detail in Chapters 2 and 3.6). Based on these analyses, I found that the interactive sequences were different in regard to a number of characteristic features, such as the overall structural organization, features and organization of turn-taking, speaker-hearer roles, and the dynamics and focus of talk. Identified discussion practices each occupy various roles in the meeting practice, and provide varied interactional opportunities and obligations. As such, the discursive practices in use also shape the practice of management meetings.

Identification of the discursive practices is, however, not only based on the analysis of the above mentioned structuring and organizing features of interaction. Many of the identified discursive practices were, in fact, first identified by members themselves. This was illustrated, for example, in extracts 4, 26, 47, and 49. It follows, therefore, that examining how *members themselves* treated their interactions also worked as an important method of verifying my observations, particularly the identified discursive practices and their effects. By orienting themselves to these discursive practices the members marked and framed them relevant for their current practice – the management team meeting. The features and characteristics that distinguished particular modes of interaction were, thus, relevant for, and oriented to, by the practitioners, as shown throughout the analyses in Chapter 4. This is an important notion, which confirms that the analytical categories are not based on a priori theoretical hypotheses, but instead drawn by close and detailed observation and analysis of members' methods for producing order.

The identified discussion practices comprising monologue, targeted dialogue, free-flowing focused discussion, reporting, drifting, and micro-mining, have particular characteristic features, which make them individually distinguishable. In the next chapter, I will first discuss the discussion practices according to their characteristic features, and, subsequently, display how they are featured in the different time periods during the fieldwork.

4.8.2 Characteristics of the discussion practices in TMTO meetings

As noted in Chapter 4.1, the first and main structuring feature of the identified discussion practices relates to *who gets to talk*. Accordingly, the identified discussion practices can be grouped into practices involving multiple discussants, such as free-flowing focused discussions, drifting and micro-mining, two-party discussions (the targeted dialogues), and discussion practices dominated by one speaker (reporting and monologue). Table 5 exhibits these discussion practices.

Table 5 Discussion practices according to participation

Group discussion participated by multiple speakers	Discussion dominated by one speaker	Discussion participated by two speakers
Free-flowing focused discussion	Monologue	Targeted dialogue
Drifting discussions	Reporting	-
Micro-mining	-	-

Table 5 shows that the discussions in management meetings vary remarkably in participation. In studies on meetings, the aspect of how interactive sequences in meetings are variously organized with regard to who takes part in the discussion, and who does not, has generally not been addressed analytically. This study brings out that discussion practices in multi-party contexts are not necessarily participatory, but instead can be exclusive, and create and sustain distinctive, clear-cut participant roles.

The identified discussion practices, thus, differ from each other in respect of participation, but they also differ in other respects. An exploration of the data identified additional features of interaction to which participants oriented, and that were, thus, marked as relevant to both the situation at hand and the managerial practice at large.

The list of the main organizing and structuring features comprise the following elements:

- turn-taking features of interaction;
- organization of turn-taking (shifts in turns, length of turns);
- speaker-hearer roles and participation in the discussions;
- focus and coherence of the talk;
- dynamism of the talk (e.g. overlaps; interruptions; pauses within and between addresses).

Table 6 draws together the findings of the study and illustrates the distinctive characteristics of the identified discussion practices according to their main organizing features. In the table, features of interaction are presented in the left column. In the six columns to the right, each discussion practice is described in relation to these features.

Table 6 Features of discussion practices

Feature	Multi-party discussion practices				Discussion practices dominated by one participant		Two-party discussion practices
	Free-flowing discussion	focused discussion	Drifting discussions	Micro-mining	Reporting	Monologue	Targeted dialogue
Turn-taking	Participants produce unrestrained and unstructured turns. Discussions initiated and managed variously by participants, often by the chair. Variation in turn-taking.	Participants produce unrestrained and unstructured turns. Variation in turn-taking.	Participants produce unrestrained and unstructured turns. Variation in turn-taking.	Participants produce unrestrained and unstructured turns. Variation in turn-taking.	The speaker holds the floor, controlling and managing the agenda. Questions, comments, and observations provided by other participants.	The speaker holds the floor, and manages turn-taking.	Turn-taking controlled by the dominant speaker, who initiates and closes the dialogue, and manages turn-taking.
Speaker-hearer roles	Discussions accessible and participated by all. Discussion may be facilitated by the chair/ dominant speaker.	Discussions accessible and participated by all. Discussions not chaired or sanctioned by the chair.	Discussions accessible; participation depends on the issue at hand. Discussions mainly not chaired or sanctioned by the chair.	Discussions accessible; participation depends on the issue at hand. Discussions mainly not chaired or sanctioned by the chair.	Clear-cut; dominant speaker manages the discussion. Other participants in a less active role.	Clear-cut; one participant speaks and the others listen.	Clear-cut; two participants discuss, while the others listen. Roles and participation managed by the dominant speaker.

Dynamism	Dynamic talk; invites participation; participants produce overlapping talk; interruptions frequent.	Dynamic talk; invites participation; participants produce overlapping talk and interrupt each other frequently.	Dynamic talk; invites restricted participation; varies in participation in time.	Non-dynamic talk; does not invite participation; interruptions rare and brief.	Non-dynamic talk; does not invite participation; interruptions rare and brief.
Length of turns	Participants mainly produce short turns, but the length varies.	Participants mainly produce short turns, but the length varies.	The speaker mainly produces long turns, punctuated by brief questions from other participants.	The speaker produces long turns.	Participants produce relatively short turns; the dominant speaker may produce longer turns.
Issue/topic	Facts, and/or detailed operative/strategic issues; opinions; experiences.	The topic drifts from managerial issues to seemingly marginal issues.	Issues specific and targeted to the task at hand; information; facts.	Issues vary from strategic to mundane; information; opinions; experiences.	Issues specific and targeted to the task at hand; information; facts.
Focus and coherence of talk	Focused; discussion inherent to the managerial task at hand.	Disconnected from the managerial agenda.	Focused; task-oriented.	Varies from focused to fragmented /drifting.	Focused; task-oriented.

Table 6 exhibits the essential organizing features of interaction and emphasizes their distinctive characteristics. The discussion practices do not represent strict and rigid categories, but characterizations of yielding classes. The essential characteristic and organizing features of each discursive practice, discussed in detail in Chapters 4.2–4.7, are displayed in each column.

Next, I will shortly discuss the most distinctive characteristics of the discussion practices vis-à-vis each other.

4.8.2.1 Turn-taking and participant roles

The organization of *turn-taking* is reflective of participant roles and interactional opportunities of those involved in TMTO meeting discussions. Control over turn-taking enables managing who participates in the discussion, and when. *The multi-party talk* (free-flowing discussions, drifting discussions, and micro-mining) was minimally chaired, and therefore facilitated free and unrestrained turn-taking. Therefore, during multi-party discussions, the participants produced unrestrained and unstructured turns that were initiated and managed variously by the participants. Consequently, there was variation in who got to speak and when they got to speak. This variation was, thus, also reflected as levelled participant roles.

During *reporting discussions*, participant roles were differentiated in the sense that the dominant speaker (the one giving the report) talked while others listened. Reporting-types of discussion practices, financial and operation-specific reporting, exhibit, thus, more restrained turn-taking and more clearly defined participant roles.

During *monologues* the speaker holds the floor and controls the topic, single-handedly dividing the group to one active speaker and a group of hearers. Alternatively, in *targeted dialogue*, discussant roles are distinctive in that one party manages the interaction to which the other party can then contribute. The dominant speaker, thus, controls the two-party discussion by initiating and closing the targeted dialogue, and by managing turn-taking. For hearers, both monologue and targeted dialogue create an exclusionary role as the audience.

4.8.2.2 The dynamics of the interaction

Discussion dynamics is shown, first, as variation in the pace of interaction, in turn-taking and in the length of turns, and, secondly, in how dynamic the talk is in regard to interruptions and overlapping talk during the conversation.

The multi-party talk (free-flowing focused discussion; drifting discussion; micro-mining) in the TMTO was dynamic in that turns in the conversation shifted frequently, and participants produced turns of variable length. The free character of the discussion allowed for making spontaneous, unstructured comments and responses. During multi-party talk, the participants acknowledged and showed reflexivity to each other's interactive moves. Multi-party talk in the TMTO was often *laminated* in the sense that turns followed each other seamlessly or even overlapped. Similar to free-flowing focused discussions, drifting and micro-mining were also dynamic discursive practices that allowed for spontaneous and unrestrained participation.

Reporting sequences of talk, in turn, contain lengthy periods of one-party talk. Discussion during reporting was taken forward primarily by the dominant speaker; in financial reporting by Anthony, and in operation-specific reporting by the respective director. Consequently, other participants' contributions to the discussion often took the form of brief questions and remarks, reflected as low dynamism of discussion. However, in time, the dynamism of reporting discussions increased when reporting sequences became increasingly meshed with, and interrupted by, sequences of more engaging multi-party talk.

The differentiated participant roles in both *monologue and targeted dialogues* are reflected also as *low dynamism in the meeting talk*. As both of these discussion practices invite only restricted participation, individual turns of the dominant speaker are long, and interruptions are brief and less frequent. In targeted dialogue, the dynamics of the discussion can be characterized as a *tennis match*, where the topic moves between the GD and the respective director in a manner that practically excludes the participation of any additional discussants. Monologue, in turn, is the least dynamic and reflexive of the identified discursive practices as the talk is primarily produced by one speaker.

4.8.2.3 Issue and the focus of talk

The features discussed above mostly relate to how interaction and participant roles are *organized and structured*, whereas the discussion topic (issue), and the coherence and focus of talk both relate to the *content of the discussion*. The term topic is, however, problematic as it is loose and difficult to define, and therefore employed in a broad and flexible sense (Sacks 1995/2005).

Topical discussions are focused, coherent, and linked to a relevant issue. Thus, drifting in conversations takes place when the preceding and following interactions are topically incoherent. Multi-party discussions, free-flowing focused discussion, drifting discussions, and micro-mining differ from each

other in particular with regard to the focus of talk, coherence of the talk, and centrality of the topic to the managerial agenda. *Free-flowing focused discussions* deal with issues that are closely connected to managerial tasks and relevant from the perspective of the purpose of TMTO meetings. Issues and topics during free-flowing focused discussions were, thus, inherently linked to the management and organization of BioCorp. Issues on the managerial agenda often required the input of multiple discussants. Consequently, participants were also required to work for an alignment on the discussed issues, which, in turn, increased participation in the discussions. The unrestrained turn-taking and free discussion dynamics also allowed for introducing topics to the discussion, thus shaping the managerial agenda.

The counter-effect of free-flowing dynamics is, however, that freely organized and minimally chaired discussions are prone to drifting and fragmentation of focus, as free-flowing dynamics encourage active participation and the expression of personal viewpoints and opinions. *Drifting* in conversations takes place when the local coherence of the discussion is compromised due to abrupt changes in topic, and when a new discussion topic exhibits little relation to previous topics. Thus, the preceding and the following interactions are topically incoherent, both removed from the previous topic and with little relevance to the agenda and discussions in the TMTO meetings, or when the discussion topic is irrelevant or only loosely connected to the formal managerial agenda. Thus, during drifting discussions, participants often *abandon* the matter-of-fact approach and, instead, engage in incoherent or off-topic discussions.

Micro-mining discussions, in turn, are coherent and topical in that discussants develop topics in relation to their own and others' talk (Downing 2000). The problem with micro-mining is, however, that it addresses either trivial practical issues or highly complex technical details that could be addressed by other parties, elsewhere. Micro-mining is a particularly engaging discursive practice, as the discussions centre on issues close to the participants' work. Micro-mining discussions make, thus, the members' daily work and its challenges visible and concrete. Similar to drifting discussions, various types of interactive contributions are possible in micro-mining, and therefore the discussion is easy to access.

Issues addressed in *reporting* discussions are specific and targeted to the task at hand. Reporting talk is, thus, topical and coherent. Visual materials and artefacts provide support in managing the topic progression and the timing of the discussion.

Targeted dialogues concentrate on dealing with key performance indicators, and were therefore highly focused and coherent. Discussions were coherent

and informative to the extent that there were few opportunities to discuss issues beyond the suggested metrics.

Topic progression during *monologues* was managed by the GD, thus content varied from issues relating to managerial agenda to more specific issues of a particular (often technical) nature, and to venting their concerns and chit-chat. Thus, discussion topics during monologues ranged from strategic issues to mundane operative issues.

The summary provided in Chapter 4.8.2 displays how discussion practices are similar or different with regard to their characteristic features. Next, I will briefly discuss the occurrence of discussion practices during the fieldwork.

4.8.3 Occurrence of discussion practices during the observation period

Analysis of the longitudinal observational data also enables recognition of how the role and weight of the identified discussion practices varies across the observation period (see Chapters 3.2.3 and 3.3). Some discussion practices appear mainly in specific periods and less at other times, whereas other discussion practices represent more enduring elements in the meeting practice. Longitudinal data allows for recording these developments and for looking at how various discursive practices appear during the observation period.

The temporal dimension of the identified discursive practices is exhibited in Figure 4. The figure does not aim to provide a pinpoint anatomic description of the discursive practices at various times, but rather to provide a broad interpretive display of the temporal appearance of the identified communicative practices during the fieldwork.

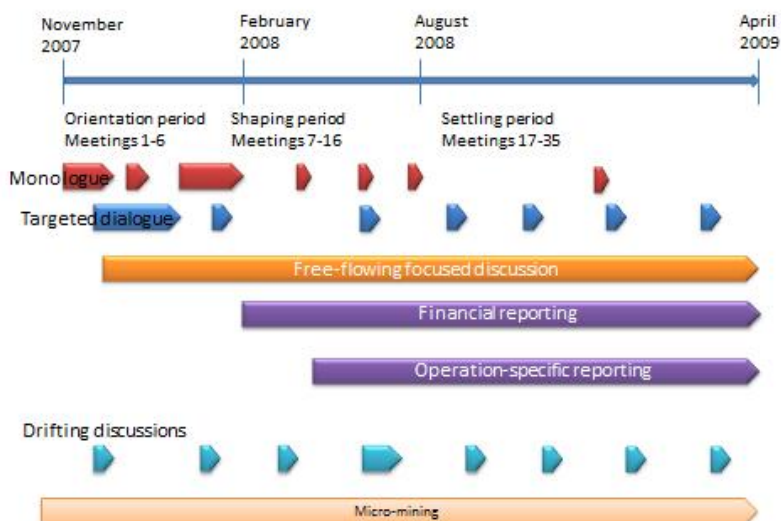


Figure 4 Discussion practices during the observation period

As discussed earlier, the TMTO of BioCorp experienced various changes that were also reflected in meeting interactions, and which mark three distinctive time periods over the one-and-a-half year's observation period. These periods, *the orientation period*, *the shaping period*, and *the settling period*, are characterized by changes in the composition and roles of participants (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.2.3).

Figure 4 displays the occurrence of discussion practices at various times over the observation period. Each discussion practice is presented as an arrow-shaped strip. The lengths of the arrows indicate the durability and weight of each discussion practice during various periods in the time frame of the observation. Some of the identified discursive practices are characteristically more easily detectable and appear mostly at certain times. These include, among others, monologue and targeted dialogue during the orientation period, and reporting discussions starting from the shaping period. Similar to conversations in general, however, different modes of interaction during the meetings were not sharply defined and clear-cut. Instead, the discursive practices varied and intertwined with each other. For example, reporting discussions would increasingly get meshed with free-flowing focused discussions, and operation-specific reports would be punctuated both by episodes of free-flowing focused discussions and micro-mining. Drifting and micro-mining could, in turn, take place in the middle of more coherent free-flowing focused discussions or reporting discussions (as shown, for example, in extract 44).

In assessing the weight and role of each of the identified discursive practices throughout the meetings during the observation period I employed the results of my iterative qualitative analysis. Printed transcripts of meeting discussions contained my taggings, markings and analytical comments of the various modes of interaction, among other, and by examining these I could assess which discursive practices were employed in various times in the meetings.

Figure 4 illustrates, thus, the role of the identified discursive practices in the TMTO meetings at various times. *Monologues* were conducted by the GD, and this discursive practice appeared mostly during the orientation period. At this time, topic development and participation in the discussion was, therefore, unequivocally managed by the GD. However, monological sequences of talk became less pervasive during the orientation period, allowing for occasional comments and questions from the other participants. After the orientation period, the TMTO began their independent work, and during the shaping period the meetings were chaired by each director in turn. Thus, following the orientation period, the GD only paid occasional visits to the TMTO meetings. In the shaping period, multi-party talk, and free-flowing focused discussion in particular, was established as the predominant mode of communication. However, occasions of increased one-party talk are indicated as short arrows in Figure 4.

Targeted dialogue was the main conversational practice, particularly during two meetings in the orientation period as the GD and the directors engaged in setting metrics (key performance indicators) for the Operations organization. The directors did not engage in similar targeted dialogues in subsequent meetings during the shaping and settling periods, although they occasionally employed short two-party discussions to briefly address details relating to the ongoing group discussion, indicated in Figure 4 with short arrows (as described in chapter 4.3.3).

While multi-party discussions during the orientation period were characteristically more restrained and probing in nature, they became more participatory and engaging during the shaping period. Consequently, *free-flowing focused discussions* became the default discursive practice in the TMTO meetings, shown in Figure 4 as a long arrow extending across the whole observation period. Free-flowing focused discussion is therefore a discursive practice characteristic to the whole meeting practice. Unrestrained turn-taking and opportunity to freely contribute to discussions characterize BioCorp's TMTO meetings. The participants' knowledgeability of their unrestrained interactional opportunities was shown by the fact that the multi-party discussions became dominant during the shaping and settling periods.

Financial reporting and operation-specific reporting were established as permanent features of the TMTO meetings during the shaping period. Financial reporting had been introduced from the first meeting, and operation-specific reporting soon afterwards. The substantial amount of time alone allocated to reporting warrants for calling it a dominant discursive practice in the TMTO meetings; however, this was also acknowledged by the practitioners themselves, as demonstrated, for example, in the reflective discussions about the feasibility of financial reporting exhibited in extract 26. Consequently, reporting practices represented enduring and frequent modes of discussion in the TMTO meetings throughout the observation period, appearing practically in every meeting.

Drifting discussions represent an occasional, although regular, feature in the TMTO meetings. The short arrows in Figure 4 indicate that even though the meeting discussions occasionally began to drift drifting was not a pervasive and highly problematic discursive practice in the TMTO meetings. The longer arrow at the end of the shaping period indicates the meeting (meeting 14) in which budget adjustments were discussed.

Similar to free-flowing focused discussion, micro-mining is a typical feature of the whole TMTO meeting practice. It is a discussion practice characteristic to BioCorp's communicative culture. Micro-mining was, however, not a dominant and pervasive discussion practice, but rather a mode of discussion that would occasionally appear in the TMTO meetings.

Altogether, these differing modes of discussion form the managerial practice of TMTO meetings. Participants each get to speak at various times and influence the issues discussed, as well as on the abstraction level of the discussion and, ultimately, on the outcomes of the discussion.

The overall interactive "micro-climate" was, during different time periods, influenced by the most pervasive and frequent discussion practices in use. For example, the orientation period was distinguished by the use of exclusive discursive practices and the GD's charring, whereas the independent work was geared more towards mutually inclusive discursive practices, such as free-flowing focused discussion and other multi-party talk. The formal aspects of managerial meeting work were, however, emphasized by the overall central role of reporting in TMTO meetings.

In the next chapter I will move to discussing the conclusions of this study.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

“Outcomes are what everyone is interested in (...). Actual interaction, through which something more durable is fashioned seems to be routinely ignored but only through placing interaction centre-stage, can the “how” surrounding the accomplishment of outcomes be answered” (Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 151-152, quotation and emphasis in original).

The general aim of Chapter 5 is to elaborate on how the research questions have been addressed in the analysis. The purpose is also to review how different parts of the analysis are linked together and how they contribute to the whole.

The longitudinal research setting in the present study enables observing how the identified discussion practices contribute to the overall development of the managerial practice of the Top Management Team of Operations (TMTO) meetings. Things, such as issues, ideas, events, and practices, gain their meaning in particular circumstances and situations. Therefore, the purposes and functions of any practices or issues need to be discussed in relation to the situations in which they occur. Discussed in the broader frame of literature on managerial practices and interactions this analysis allows for drawing wider conclusions, and providing more comprehensive understandings of the role of discursive practices in managerial meetings.

In this chapter I will first address the identified discussion practices in relation to the formal purposes and roles of managerial meetings. In Chapter 5.2 the theoretical and methodological contributions of the study are discussed. Chapter 5.3 addresses the quality of the study. Finally, chapter 5.4 provides managerial implications based on the findings.

5.1 Discussion practices vis-à-vis their role in the management meetings

In this chapter I discuss the identified discussion practices vis-à-vis the *formal purposes* of meetings. The formal purposes of meetings are drawn from the extant literature on (managerial) meetings and meeting interaction (e.g. Schwartzman 1989, Boden 1994, Iedema et al 1999, Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008, Asmuss and Svennevig 2009, Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 2010, Nielsen

2009, Clifton 2009, among others). The purposes of meetings comprise: disseminating information; exchanging ideas and creating new knowledge; learning; solving problems; negotiating agreement; making decisions; developing policies and procedures, and strategizing. Furthermore, meetings are also found to occupy a role in organizational validation and legitimation, and the management of symbolic meanings. These purposes will be discussed in the next four chapters, beginning with purposes that relate to dissemination of information and the creation of new knowledge.

5.1.1 Disseminating information and constructing new knowledge

The informative function of meetings is undisputed; the dissemination of information and creation of new knowledge adhere to the most important functions of meetings. Creating new knowledge requires learning, and therefore meetings also serve as important occasions for learning. As Nielsen (2009) notes: the organizational dictionary of relevant categories, concepts, and practices is not *just there* for the organizational actors to use, but rather needs to be acquired and established. This study shows that variously organized and structured discursive practices have differing roles in informational and knowledge-creating activities.

In the TMTO meetings, the more exclusive discussion practices of monologue and reporting, and to some extent also targeted dialogues, provide for efficient transmission of information, as the speaker can set and control the agenda (topic of discussion) and deliver information with a minimal amount of interruption. These types of exclusive communicative practices are widely employed, for example, in academic and other types of presentations, and on specific institutional occasions, such as debates and court hearings (Sacks et al 1974, Goffman 1981, Rendle-Short 2005). However, as these discussion practices are so strongly geared towards delivering information, as opposed to creating new knowledge, their usefulness in managerial work is compromised if they are not combined with more participatory discussion practices. This is particularly critical in situations where the information is new or less familiar to the participants, as was the case particularly at the beginning of the TMTO work.

The deficiencies of informational discussion practices were shown also in the meeting discussions in the present case. When people did not participate in the meeting discussion for longer periods of time, they became “alienated from the topic” (Gibson 2010). Long sequences of one-party talk also had a more durable effect on the interactions; participation of the other discussants declined for a time, as shown in data extracts in chapter 4.2 and 4.3. Also, if

one-party talk was not followed by a more participatory discussion, conclusions and summaries concerning *what the information meant to the team* were less explicit. Consequently, important issues would sometimes remain only partly addressed. Among these issues was, for example, the strategic dimension of the TMTO, taken up in more detail in Chapter 5.1.3. Therefore, in order to filter, frame, and render information into a form that is relevant for them in their practice, the members of the TMTO are required to engage in mutual interpretative discussions.

Managerial work is a collective accomplishment (Tengblad 2012) requiring continuous learning, knowledge-creation and negotiation of meaning. Efficient delivery of information needs, thus, to be complemented with practices that facilitate mutual negotiation of the meaning of words, concepts, actions, and artefacts (Gherardi, Nicolini & Odella 1998, 274). The opportunity to participate in these activities is central in knowledge creation (Nicolini, Gherardi & Yanow 2003). In the TMTO meetings, freely organizing multi-party talk stimulated the exploration of ideas and synthesis of existing concepts, and facilitated and encouraged active elaboration of information to new knowledge. These discussions were facilitated not only by the chair, but also by other participants. In the TMTO, team members each had specialized knowledge and expertise that they employed both in initiating and facilitating these discussions. By participating in the discussion and by elaborating on issues under discussion, team members mutually framed and labelled them as discussable and important. Mutual participation in the meeting discussions also provided the directors with opportunities to actively shape the topics and, as such, to participate in forming the agenda of the TMTO meetings.

Free-flowing focused discussions, illustrated in chapter 4.5, concentrated on issues relating to managerial work, whereas the micro-mining discussions in chapter 4.7 dealt either with details of mundane practical issues or the specifics of complex technical and medical issues. Thus, while micro-mining discussions were informative and stimulated the construction of new knowledge, and in-depth exploration of issues, it was a somewhat problematic discussion practice as it concentrated on issues less central to managerial work. Many of the issues could have been addressed at a lesser level of detail or by other people on other occasions. Focusing on *the managerial implications* of these issues would have been beneficial from the knowledge creation point of view. Free organization of interaction, thus, did not necessarily ensure that discussions generated knowledge that was central to TMTO work.

Role of artefacts was highlighted particularly in reporting discussions; especially financial reporting discussions were supported by the use of spreadsheets, charts and PowerPoint-presentations that, particularly for the

author, provided resources with which to manage the topic and the timing of the discussion. Similar to earlier studies, the findings of this study show that visual materials and artefacts provide support for maintaining the structure and organization of meeting discussions (see e.g. Poncini 2004, Nielsen 2012). Especially financial reports, but also operation-specific reports, were employed as tools for topic management, and the use of visual materials also enabled managing and controlling the pace of reporting discussions as well as participation in the discussions (see e.g. Kuhn 2008, Kaplan 2011). Financial reporting discussions, in particular, gain durability from visual materials as they provide tangible points of reference and a *permanent record of realized measurable outcomes*. Reverting to these records enables movement on various temporal dimensions.

Ryle (1949/2009) makes a distinction between *knowing of* and *knowing how*. Knowing of is related to informational knowledge, whereas knowing how is *knowledge of practices*. Indeed, knowledge is inseparably bound to the circumstances of its practical use (Mäkitalo 2003, Chia & Holt 2008). This study demonstrates how learning what to do, how to do it, and when to do it is fundamentally a practical accomplishment (Gherardi, Nicolini & Odella 1998, 274). Knowledge of practices is not a conceptual or cognitive knowledge, but rather an embodied knowledge; it only comes from engaging in practices in a concerted co-presence with others (Rawls 2006, 5). In the TMTO meetings, participants collectively and interactively engaged in creating knowledge by rendering issues understandable and meaningful for just these actors in just this emerging practice. In these interactions, the salience of unrestrained participation and the importance of active meaning-making were emphasized.

Organizational actors' capacity to contribute to meeting discussions has been found to be influenced by their professional expertise and knowledge (see e.g. Iedema et al 1999). Asymmetries of knowledge between parties stem from differential experience of organizational practices and differences in their specialist knowledge, language, and vocabulary that they are able to invoke (Heritage 1984, Hindmarsh & Llewellyn 2010). In the TMTO, increased knowledge and alleviated asymmetries of knowledge were reflected as their improved *competence-to-act* (Gherardi & Nicolini 2000). The participants' contribution to the discussions was, thus, increased over time as their competence improved.

5.1.2 Solving problems, developing policies and making decisions

Managerial meetings as recurring organizational events enable issues to be elaborated and revisited, and, therefore, represent arenas for incremental

problem solving and decision making. In this study, analysis of the longitudinal data allows for observing how topics and issues were addressed and redressed during meeting discussions (see, for example, discussions exhibited in chapter 4.5.3). Solving problems, developing policies, and making decisions took place during interrelated episodes of talk, often over a series of meetings. During these episodes of talk, participants dealt with a variety of issues ranging from mundane to strategically consequential issues.

In general, issues on managerial agenda often occupy a ratified “known in advance” status as acknowledged problems. The findings of this study complement this perspective, and illustrate how *the social process of rendering issues as problems* takes place in meetings. By linking issues to established, and acknowledged key themes, such as efficiency or competitiveness, the participants raised awareness on issues and promoted for their importance.

Thus, constructing problems as such was accomplished by the mutual work of the TMTO members who, by participating in exploration for solutions to a problem, would adopt mutual accountability for the problem, shown, for example, in free-flowing focused discussions in chapters 4.4.3 and 4.5.3. Through exploring and elaborating an issue jointly, team members would ratify it as a problem and simultaneously contribute to its solution. When formulating a problem and its potential solutions, the directors reflected on the past, the present, and the future, and through their elaboration, paved the way for decisions as commitment to future action (Huisman 2001). The recursive treatment encouraged an appreciation of the issue and contributed to forming more durable consensus (Wodak et al 2011). The levelled communication also enabled actors with less formal authority to create and exploit opportunities to influence problem-solving and decision-making activities (see Clifton 2009).

The social and participatory character of labelling issues as problems was also displayed in drifting and micro-mining discussions. Through mutual work participants sustained the discussion, and addressed issues that were not on formal managerial agenda. These activities were variably employed both to focus attention on issues mutually rendered as important and to draw attention away from issues that the team did not want to discuss. When majority of the team labelled an issue as problematic and sustained the discussion, single actors could not persuade them otherwise, as was demonstrated in drifting discussions in Chapter 4.6.3 and in micro-mining discussions in Chapter 4.7.1. These occasions forcefully demonstrate the power of group dynamics in institutional multi-party interaction.

Freely organizing and levelled interaction in TMTO meetings also allowed for providing contesting interpretations and for challenging views expressed by others. Thus, even the criticality of issues and their status as problems

could be challenged during meeting discussions. Unrestrained turn-taking allowed for the liberal use of various types of interactive strategies. Individual participants might, for example, refuse to discuss particular issues as problems and, if the issue was also not acknowledged by a sufficient number of other team members, it would be virtually impossible to continue discussing it, as was demonstrated by examples in Chapter 4.5.2. Instead, participants were required to reframe the issue differently to achieve closure.

Some members of the TMTO were, however, more successful than others in making claims and persuading them of their views. Differences in the participants' skills in using interactional strategies and tools were, thus, also reflected in their relative success in raising awareness on issues and in framing them as problems. Linguistic skills and knowledge of how to create and take advantage of interactional opportunities belong to critical managerial competencies (Samra-Fredericks 2003a). During discussions, the participants could variously create and employ a repertoire of interactive strategies that provided opportunities to resist, to make counter-arguments, introduce competing interpretations, and to frame as relevant and emphasize particular aspects. These observations highlight the social nature of activities that relate to identifying and solving problems, and emphasize the importance of interactional skills in gaining mutual response and support in these activities.

In this study, as in ethnomethodologically (EM) oriented studies in general, issues of power and influence are taken as matters internal to the dynamics of situated action. Therefore, influence and power are rendered relevant if and when they are displayed and oriented to in the interaction (see e.g. Rawls 2006). Influence of the actors' authority and hierarchical position was reflected in problem-solving and decision-making activities; for example, in how the General Director (GD) during monologues and targeted dialogues, was able to frame and label issues as problems. However, the problem-solving activities also required the input of other participants. In the absence of mutual input problems identified by the GD, such as the under-developed meeting practices, were not solved in practice. These findings corroborate the observations made, for example, by Clifton (2009) that solving problems requires the complicity of the other members in the team.

This study also shows how the chair's situated identity provided Peter with category-bound rights to define issues as problematic or non-problematic. This was illustrated, for example, by his authority to make influential interpretations concerning the effects of organizational restructuring (see Chapter 4.5.3). Despite the explicitly expressed competing views, Peter successfully emphasized the status quo and the importance of focusing on maintaining stability. Without explicitly sanctioning a discussion on the issue, he managed the discussion in a manner that muffled opposing views. By

controlling the expression of potential questioning and challenging addresses, Peter, thus, contributed to sustaining existing (strategic) orientations. The interactional resources that hierarchical power provides for actors are, thus, illustratively shown on occasions where there is a conflict of views. “Who says what” within the context of a problem-solving meeting is, thus, subject to “who is entitled to what”, according to the meeting participants’ understanding (Angouri & Bargiela-Chiappini 2011, 211, quotations in original).

The longitudinal data allowed for recording how issues were addressed and redressed in a series of meetings, and how problem-solving and decision-making activities stretched over a long period of time. Not all problem-solving discussions resulted, however, in verified and explicitly announced decisions (recorded in the minutes of the meeting). Instead, many problem-solving and decision-making activities spread across various contexts, and were joined by various organizational actors. However, as the focus of this study was on examining interactions in the TMTO, problem-solving and decision-making activities beyond the TMTO meetings were not traced.

5.1.3 Strategizing

The strategic role of middle management and specialists has lately been acknowledged particularly by researchers employing the strategy-as-practice (SAP) approach. These studies highlight the middle managers’ involvement in shaping strategy (e.g. Laine & Vaara 2007, Mantere & Vaara 2008), in making interpretations of strategy (e.g. Kaplan 2008, Mantere 2005) and in communicating strategy (e.g. Rouleau 2005). Their lack of involvement in strategy, in turn, has been found to decrease the quality of strategy work and to create problems in its execution (see e.g. Balogun & Johnson 2004, Laine & Vaara 2007, Mantere & Vaara 2008).

The strategic dimension of the new TMTO was also recognized and addressed particularly at the beginning of its work. The new managerial team’s role in the competitiveness of BioCorp (pseudonym) and in “finding the strategy” was emphasized during the orientation period by the GD. Explicit links to company strategy were pursued during metrics discussions in particular; however, subsequent to the orientation period, the TMTO was not fed with strategic input. Consequently, links from the TMTO’s work and talk to strategy remained thin, and the TMTO meetings did not establish an active and visible role in BioCorp’s formal strategy.

Conceptions regarding participation in strategy work are discursively reproduced and legitimized (Samra-Fredericks 2003a, Mantere & Vaara 2008). The role and the identity of the TMTO with regard to strategy were also

reflected and mutually constructed in meeting talk. As shown throughout the study, issues were labelled and framed as discussable and relevant through the mutual interactive work of the participants. On the other hand, various issues, such as many issues of formal strategy, were also framed out of TMTO meetings and, as such, were not dealt with in the meetings. Framing strategic issues out of TMTO meeting discussions was, on occasions, accomplished by the chair utilizing her/his authority to label issues as out (see e.g. Chapter 4.5.3). Mostly, however, framing-out was accomplished mutually. Sometimes framing-out was explicit, whereas at other times it was more implicit. The fine-grained analyses of the meeting interactions reveal the subtle dynamics by which this was achieved in interaction. The discussants' consequent actions revealed to the previous speaker, and other participants alike, how their "identified action" had been interpreted (Rawls 2006, 78, quotation in original). The discussants might, therefore, casually ignore issues of potential strategic relevance by not acknowledging them during the conversation. The influential role of mutual interactive work in assembling the managerial agenda is, thus, demonstrated also in *how issues are framed out from the agenda*.

The participants' explicit characterizations of the team's strategic role during my one-to-one-discussions with them also showed that they did not regard the TMTO as a potential and influential participant in BioCorp's formal strategy. Rather, the role of measurement systems in strategy was emphasized, and strategy was depicted as a top-down process, managed by the top management of Corporation (pseudonym), and communicated through formal press conferences and official strategy documents. In the absence of organizational practices to facilitate the TMTO's more active involvement in BioCorp's formal strategic activities and strategy process, the TMTO adopted a relatively detached role towards the formal strategy.

The pronounced role of financial reporting in TMTO meetings sustained discussions focused on past performance. Instead of exploring and planning for the future, the team's attention was, thus, more directed at explaining and *managing* the past in the light of realized financial results. The need for a more future-oriented approach was acknowledged by the TMTO, and also by Rebecca, the GD, who urged the TMTO to shift the focus from reporting on past performance to envisioning future actions in their Management Review reports. The absence of overall strategy discussion was also acknowledged in TMTO meetings, and the need to connect its work to other functions that had more direct links to strategy was raised on occasions. However, no major improvements in these aspects were achieved during the time of my observing of TMTO meetings.

Observations regarding the detached and peripheral role of the TMTO in the formal strategy of BioCorp show that its strategic role, as well as its intraorganizational strategic connections and links, needed to be systematically and consciously established. In the absence of these activities, the TMTO's connection to strategy was reduced to trimming the operative efficiency and performance. Obviously, operative performance adhered to BioCorp's key strategic competences, so in that respect the TMTO's work had a strong strategic bearing. However, the link of the work of the TMTO, and thus the operative competences to the formal strategic goals and activities were not made explicit.

Even though free organization of interaction and un-restrained turn-taking in meeting discussions generally facilitate and encourage participation in strategic activities and discussions (see e.g. Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008), in this case facilitating strategic discussions and establishing an acknowledged strategic role in the TMTO would have required additional measures. These measures include putting strategy visibly on the managerial agenda and establishing explicit and concrete links between the TMTO's work and overall strategic practices and activities within BioCorp.

5.1.4 Validation, legitimation, and symbolic meaning

Meetings are important for organizational legitimation and validation as they generate an *appearance* that reason and logical processes are guiding discussions and decisions (Schwartzman 1989; emphasis in original). Formal practices and artefacts, such as reports, memoranda, and other written records, help to reinforce the cultural norms of the organization, and provide durability and stability (see e.g. MacEachern 1998).

The TMTO also had symbolic meaning. As Islam and Zyphur (2009) note, establishing a new organizational group, such as a managerial meeting team, can be interpreted as symbolic action and, for example, as a sign of organizational renewal. Founding the TMTO communicated to various internal and external (Corporation) stakeholders that the management of operations in BioCorp was strengthened. However, as this study focuses on interaction in TMTO meetings, broader organizational considerations are left aside. Instead, I will next focus discussing aspects of validation, legitimation, and symbolic meaning with regard to interaction in meetings.

Van Leeuwen (2007) lays out four strategies of legitimation in discourse, of which two are relevant here. *Authorization* refers to legitimation by reference to the authority of tradition, custom, and law, and of persons in whom institutional authority is vested; *rationalization* refers to legitimation by

reference to the goals and uses of institutionalized social action, and to the social knowledge that endow them with cognitive validity (*ibid.*, 92).

As discussed earlier, in order to successfully frame issues as important and/or problematic, participants required the compliance of others. Free and unrestrained turn-taking provided good opportunities to contribute to this requirement. Competency to legitimize particular views and ideas was, on the one hand, based on specialist knowledge, which was a valuable asset in the discussions. The frequency of micro-mining discussions can, thus, at least partly be explained by the character of BioCorp as a specialist organization. On the other hand, the participants' increasing knowledge and expertise and their improved competence in deploying this knowledge, improved their abilities to base their arguments on institutional rationalizations. Thus, participants' competencies to legitimize their views by rationalization hinged both on their knowledge on organizational practices and their expert knowledge, as well as on their interactional competence to deploy this knowledge.

Authorization by employing the GD as a principal in the meeting discussions was a particularly interesting legitimation strategy employed by almost all team members in appropriate situations. Rebecca was "someone whose position was established by the words that are spoken, someone whose beliefs were told, and someone who was committed to what the words say." (Goffman 1981, 144). The data illustrate how Karen (Chapter 4.5.2), Iris (Chapter 4.6.3), and Peter (Chapters 1.4, 4.3.3) employ this strategy, for example, to defend and legitimize their perspectives, to frame particular issues out of the agenda, and to close the discussion. This legitimation strategy was often employed as the final resort after other strategies of rationalization and legitimation had been tried. "Because Rebecca says so" provided extra resources and influence in situations when other legitimation strategies and the authority of the speaker had been expended (see Van Leeuwen 2007, 94).

5.1.5 Summary

To sum the discussion presented in Chapter 5.1 I conclude that the findings of this study display meetings as occasions of knowledge-creating activities, in which the importance of complementing informational discussion practices with freely organized discussions is emphasized. Meetings serve as arenas of learning; managers learn relevant concepts, vocabulary and lexis, and create new knowledge through engaging in interaction in concerted and reflexive cooperation with others. This new knowledge, in turn, is practical knowledge, and, thus, inextricably bound to the circumstances of its employment.

Detailed examination of situated interactions emphasizes the social process of defining problems as such, and sheds light on how problem-solving and decision-making are accomplished in action. This study shows that while formal managerial issues, and the financial aspects of management in particular, may form the crux of a formal agenda and the starting point for a meeting, the agenda is, in practice, ultimately and essentially shaped by meeting talk. This means that meeting *talk focuses on issues that are mutually constructed as relevant* and, more importantly, that the actors *can discuss*. This study also shows that the connection of the TMTO's work to the organization's formal strategy remained thin. Because formal strategy was mutually framed out of the TMTO's agenda, the TMTO's work remained disconnected to the formal strategic practices and activities of the organization. Findings of this study, thus, extend and complement the traditional perspective on how the managerial agenda is formed, and show the importance of identifying both the prerequisites and the potential impediments for addressing managerial issues in meetings.

Huisman (2001, 70) notes that while decisions are often referred to as concrete "manifest" things that can be taken away as tangible outcomes of a meeting, identifying moments of decision-making in meetings is generally less straightforward. By focusing on the actual interactional practices of decision-making this study shows decision-making as an incremental, step-by-step activity during which organizational actors move their agendas forward (Boden 1994).

In this study meetings are, thus, displayed as mutually established and sustained interactional events, during which participants simultaneously construct and negotiate their situated identities. From this perspective, identities are not regarded as a priori relevant to the interaction: identity has to be achieved through mutual orientation to, and confirmation of claims of identity in subsequent turns at talk (Clifton 2009, 63). The situated identity of the chair, for example, becomes visible in the interaction when she/he resorts to her/his category-bound rights to define issues as problematic. Talk and situated identities are therefore reflexively linked, so that one's situated identity is consequential to the interaction as it influences the discursive resources available to the participants (*ibid.*). Identities are, thus, made relevant to interaction by the social activities through which sequences of talk are accomplished.

The present study complements the findings of recent studies on interaction in managerial meetings, and demonstrates how power and influence are interactively constructed and variously negotiated between discussants (see e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 2003b; Clifton 2009). The study shows that features of situated action can be mobilized by actors in ways that are

consequential to the opportunities of others (Rawls 2006, 53). The study also illustrates how members make use of their ethnomethods, the tacit knowledge on when to take a turn or “let pass” (Samra-Fredericks 2003a, 147; quotation in original). Creating opportunities of influence during meeting discussions is, however, a challenging communicative endeavour that might not be accomplished by all actors in a similar manner. Thus, how TMTD meeting interactions were organized, and the range of issues that might be addressed and discussed was influenced both by the participants’ know-how and expertise as well as their interactional competencies. Consequently, the boundaries of the actors’ practical competence and their authority that, in turn, set constraints on the meeting practice itself, became visible in the interaction.

5.2 Theoretical and methodological contributions of the study

This study is situated in the field of management and organization studies (MOS) and draws from ethnomethodology (EM) and studies of practice. It builds on the idea that managerial meeting is a socially accomplished practice based on participants’ interactive contributions. By investigating how actors communicate and interact in meetings it is, thus, possible to observe how organization and management are discursively constructed (Schwartzman (1989). This study challenges the supremacy of formal meeting practices in explaining managerial meetings as a social practice, and instead emphasizes meeting talk both as constituting and constituted activity (Schwartzman 1989, 35).

Traditionally, key questions in the field of MOS investigate the production of outcomes and the most efficient methods of organization and management. Generally, these issues have been approached from an organization-level perspective, and there are currently few studies on the issue from the perspective and level of social action and interaction (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh 2010)⁴⁰. The contribution of this study is that it represents a novel approach to the study on managerial interactions and practices as *in situ* accomplishments. In addition, it serves as an illustrative example of how managerial practices and particularly practices based on face-to-face interaction can be addressed analytically. These areas have been identified as key challenges in the field of practice-based studies in particular (Corradi et al 2010, see also Carter et al 2008).

⁴⁰ Linking this study to the discussion on other central approaches of MOS and leadership studies is identified a potential area for future research.

Ethnomethodologically informed studies, such as the study at hand, show that social activities are themselves orderly and organized, not only for analysts but for members (Llewellyn 2010, 93). The findings of my study demonstrate that the practice of management team meetings, as practices in general, is produced appropriately to fit the particular social situation at hand (see e.g. Rawls 2006, 2008b). Local order and orderliness are achieved by framing particular activities as *something* (see Goffman 1974, 1981). This framing is achieved intersubjectively, interactively, and locally.

The present study introduces EM as a fruitful approach and deposit of functional conceptual tools for the study on managerial work as live conduct. The study shows that, by employing the theoretical and methodological resources of EM, organizational researchers can be better equipped to respond to the call for a fuller use of practice-theoretical concepts, and for more consideration to the situatedness and contextuality of practices (see e.g. Balogun, Huff & Johnson 2003, Rasche & Chia 2009). Ethnomethodologically oriented approaches are found to provide precious resources for studying practices as “knowledgeable accomplishments”, and therefore represent the first way of “zooming in (Nicolini 2012, 218). “Zooming out”, which according to Nicolini (2012) entails expanding the scope of observation by tracing the connections between practices and their outcomes, is out of the scope of the current study. Nicolini (2012, 226) notes: “Zooming out of practice thus requires moving between practice in the making and the texture of practices which causally connect this particular instance to many others”. Consequently, “zooming out” involves multi-site ethnographic field work (such as shadowing), and requires various additional resources both in terms of conceptual and methodological tools as well as researcher resources.

By showing how practices are developed, and established, and by displaying how their development can be observed over time the study at hand also contributes to the discussion on *how practices come to be*. Previous attempts to describe and classify discursive practices (Iedema et al 1999), speech events (Poncini 2004) or meeting practices (Jarzabkowski & Seidl 2008) have largely considered meeting discussion practices as ready and stable patterns of interaction. This study takes an alternate perspective, and sheds light on how interactive practices are mutually developed and established over time. However, as the emphasis in the present study has not been on tracing the temporal development of the interactions, the temporal aspects are only briefly addressed, and rather identified as an area of further study.

The framework of discussion practices, presented in Chapter 4.8, draws together the key organizing features of interaction that distinguish various modes of discussion from each other. Thus, the findings of this study extend and elaborate on previous research findings, frameworks, and

conceptualizations of discursive practices in managerial meetings. Features and characteristics that distinguish particular modes of interaction are relevant for, and oriented to, by the practitioners, as shown in the analyses in Chapter 4. Many of the identified discursive practices were, in fact, first identified by members themselves. Thus, the classification not only sums up the relevant features and characteristics of the identified discussion practices, but also provides means for examining interaction in various types of contexts of group interaction.

This study demonstrates how participants' orientation to the institutional and socio-structural context of their interaction, and to the prevailing expectations and norms, can be observed in their interactions (see e.g. Rawls 1989, Wilson 1991, Schegloff 1991). Issues that the actors find appropriate and fitting in each situation are, therefore related to, and influenced (constrained) by, the norms regulating *what can be said, by whom, and when*. Thus, the actors' awareness and orientation to the ideological background knowledge (Fairclough 1985) is also reflected in interaction; for example, in how turns in talk are accomplished, how the topic is controlled and in how rights to ask questions and obligations to answer are achieved (ibid.). However, compliance with the normative requirements of a setting are not the unreflecting product of prior internationalization of norms, but rather it is contingent upon a reflexive awareness of how alternative courses of action will be analyzed and interpreted (Heritage 1984, 309). The practice of TMTO meetings is, thus, "an ongoing achievement of members' methods for producing it rather than the result of structures, cultures, habits, routines, power, or interests, as other theories assume" (Rawls 2008a, 709). This study illustrates how opportunities and constraints of action are acknowledged by actors and, thus, reflected in the interaction. As such, this study sheds light on, and helps to explain, why and how actors and groups of actors adopt and establish particular managerial practices.

The current study also illuminates the process through which interactive practices take shape and are established, and shows how these discursive practices contribute to the "the doing of organization" (Heritage 1984, Samra-Fredericks 2004) in the managerial meetings. Consequently, the study illustrates how the identified interactive practices are variously consequential not only to the current interactive situation but also to the meeting practice in general. Based on the findings of my analyses I argue that examining interaction in managerial practices allows for a better understanding on how and why actors and groups of actors work the way they do and produce the outcomes they do.

5.3 Quality of the study

It is currently widely accepted that the general criteria for research quality in quantitative research - rigor, validity, and reliability - are not, as such, directly applicable to qualitative research (see e.g. Lincoln & Guba 1985, Emerson 1981, Silverman 2010). When the interpretative perspective is adopted, as in much of the work based on ethnography, the generally accepted standards for writing and assessing its convincingness become increasingly difficult to apply (Golden-Biddle & Locke 1993, 595. Studies based on field work, such as ethnographic and ethnomethodological studies, are particular in this sense, and need, therefore, to be assessed according to criteria specific to the method (see e.g. Raley 2005).

Researchers conducting observational fieldwork are urged to detail and exemplify the procedures, analytical assumptions and interpretive devices employed in data collection, in making sense of it, and, finally, in communicating the findings (Emerson 1981, 362). Following Emerson's (1981) suggestion, I will next discuss the quality of my research in these three phases of the research process: data collection, data analysis and the report. In this pursuit I will rely on discussions of research quality in interpretive and ethnographic studies (e.g. Golden-Biddle & Locke 1993, Lincoln 1995, Raley 2005), and take into consideration the three dimensions central to the process of convincing: authenticity, plausibility, and criticality of the research report suggested by Golden-Biddle and Locke (1993). In my opinion this discussion is important particularly as this study employs methodologies that are less frequently employed in the field of management and organization studies.

5.3.1 Quality of the data and the analysis

Practices, such as interactive meeting practices, need to be studied *in situ* as "people cannot talk about the specifics of what they do outside the context of actually doing it" (Barley & Kunda 2001, 84). Thus, in order to learn about talk-in-action and practices-in-use it is necessary to rely on observing and recording these practices as they take place (Drew & Heritage 1992, Barley & Kunda 2001, Llewellyn & Hindmarsh 2010).

The quality of data thus obtained is often regarded as less artifactual than most other types of research data as the researcher observes activity that would take place regardless of the observation (Emerson 1981, Becker 1970). Wood and Kroger (2000) point out, however, that recording of discourses or interactions raises questions on whether the recording itself influences the interactions. In my case the participants were aware of me recording their

interactions, as I was present in most meetings and placed the tape recorder on the meeting table. I joined the meeting group at the same time with the others, and became thus “an observing member” of the meeting group from the very beginning. Also, only few participants knew each other at the time, and most importantly, they had not previously worked with each other or as a group. Therefore, my presence in the meetings did not present an addition to the existing practices but, instead, was introduced as a “normal” feature to the meeting practice from the start. In my opinion, these factors substantially alleviate the potential effect of the observation and audio taping on the interaction, and contributed to more “natural” interactions. In addition, the observation lasted for a relatively long time, one-and-a half years. As managerial meetings also play an important role in the management of the company, participants need to engage in “real” discussions in the meetings. It is therefore likely that the potential effects of the researcher’s presence in the meetings and the audio taping of the meeting discussions were mitigated by the length of the observation. Thus, while there is no way to eliminate or assess the effects of recording on the interaction (Wood & Kroger 2000), it is plausible that over time the participants become accustomed to the recording and the presence of the researcher or research team.

As ethnomethodological studies fundamentally are based on observation, the researcher’s competence in observing meaningful events is of great importance both in data collection and data analysis. Ten Have (2002 [abstract]) points out that in EM research, the researcher has to “understand” the practices under study before they can be analyzed. This “understanding” involves the researcher using her/his “membership knowledge” (ibid; quotations in original). Term “unique adequacy”, coined by Garfinkel (1967), reflects this understanding.

When assessing unique adequacy it is important to specify the exact practices studied, and the type of competency that is relevant in the case under study. In the present study the focus is on interactive practices in managerial meetings; therefore the relevant competency needs to be based on an understanding of these practices. In this case my competency was developed partly prior to the fieldwork, and partly during the fieldwork. Before my academic career I worked in various managerial positions for multiple companies in a variety of branches for over ten years. During this time I gained experience of various managerial practices, including managerial meetings. In these meetings, I functioned both as a regular member of the meeting group and as chair. My managerial experience provides me with a proper understanding of this particular managerial practice.

During the fieldwork, I sought to learn about the practices of the TMTO by carefully attending to the meeting discussions to understand the managerial

work and how participants oriented towards it. My understanding of the participants' managerial work was also gained during discussions with them and by studying the various written materials that were made available to me (e.g. history of the company; strategy documents; organization charts; e-mails; meeting materials).

David (2011)⁴¹ notes that the acquired competency may also be reflected in how the participants treat the researcher. For example, requests for assistance or help, or for an opinion on the practice at hand, can be interpreted as indications that the researcher is regarded as a (sufficiently) competent member of the community (David 2011, see also Emerson 1981). During the field work, I was asked, on a couple of occasions, for assistance and consultation on matters relating to the managerial practice. This, in my opinion, reflects that the participants *trust me understanding* their practice sufficiently in order for me to comment on it. Taken together I believe that the combination of my previous experience and the competency I was able to build over the one-and-a-half years of fieldwork provides me with an adequate understanding of the managerial practices in question, and secondly, about the interactive practices employed in business organizations in general, and management meetings in particular.

Competency and unique adequacy are, thus, intrinsically linked to the quality of the analysis. While the researcher learns about the community she is studying she gradually also learns to interpret her observations. Goodwin (1994, 606) notes that the ability to see a meaningful event is a socially situated activity accomplished through discursive practices. Accordingly, the selection of perspective is not a matter of being subjective or objective, but rather it involves a process of developing a professional vision. By this particular way of looking at empirical phenomena it becomes possible to see what they consist of and how they are constructed and sustained through interaction.

An additional significant issue that relates to the quality of the analysis in the study at hand is that the observations regarding distinctive features of the various modes of discussion and their effects were, in fact, provided by the participants. Many of the discursive practices were, thus, identified as *members' methods* by the members themselves. This is an essential point in assessing the quality of the analysis.

⁴¹ Personal communication 27.4.2011.

5.3.2 Trustworthiness and credibility of reporting

Quality of the report relates to issues of trustworthiness and credibility. In both ethnography and ethnomethodology the analysis is supported by extensive extracts from the data (Golden-Biddle & Locke 1993). The convincingness, and thus trustworthiness and credibility of the report can be enhanced by providing the reader with a sense of “being there” (ibid.). In the present study, extracts of meeting interactions and their minutely detailed analyses are complemented by the provision of ethnographic descriptions of the goings-on in the management meetings (see e.g. Samra-Fredericks 2000a, 2003a, 2004, 2005). This strategy allows for illuminating how interactions unfold in the situated practice of management team meeting over time and, simultaneously, invites the reader to engage in an active interpretative work. While primacy is given to the ethnomethodological analysis, the ethnographic description is required to render the analysis and the conclusions intelligible.

Maynard (1989, 131) notes: “With recorded data, the reader is invited to inspect the actual data along with the investigator, whose analysis can therefore be checked (---)”. In this data, the researcher and the reader alike are, thus, able also to see the participants’ orientations to patterns of interaction (Maynard 1989, Llewellyn & Hindmarsh 2010). This way, it is possible to observe and study how the participants analyze each other’s moves and continuously produce the characteristic features of their interaction (Maynard 1989, 131). However, the amount of transcribed data prescribes and restricts how much of it can be shown in the final report. Careful selection of data extracts supports the goal of illustrating phenomena that occur frequently in interaction, and helps to ensure the credibility of the report and avoid anecdotalism, a general flaw in qualitative studies (Silverman 2010).

Thus, I pursue also to respond to calls for authenticity and plausibility of the report (Golden-Biddle & Locke 1993). Authenticity of the report concerns the ability of the text to convey the vitality of everyday life, encountered by the researcher in the field setting. Plausibility relates to the text’s ability to convey to the readers a sense of familiarity and relevance, and a sense of distinction and innovation (ibid. 599-600). Finally, Golden-Biddle and Locke (1993, 613) note: “(--) the text must convey not only the vitality and uniqueness of the field situations but also build a case for the particular contribution of the findings to a disciplinary area of common interest.” Ultimately, assessment of how well I have been able to achieve this goal is left to the reader.

5.3.3 On generalizability

As interpretative and post-modern research approaches have become more firmly legitimized and established in the social sciences, the ready acceptance of traditional (positivist) aims of generalizability have been challenged. Thus, instead of placing emphasis on formal generalization, researchers are being advised to increasingly explore how “the force of example” can inform on features of a more general nature (see Flyvberg 2006: 228; quotation in original).

While studies on the ethnographic and ethnomethodological tradition *do not aim* at universal generalization, some fundamental structures and features of interaction, such as turn-taking and adjacency pairs, *are*, however, universal. At the same time, some other structures and the moment by moment developments of action, in particular, are more context sensitive and context dependent. This duality raises challenges in relation to the degree to which the findings represent universal vs. context-specific features that I pursue to address in this section.

Some forms and structures of interaction are distinctively context-specific. Peräkylä (2004), among others, observes that the opening of telephone conversations belong to such general interactive practices that differ between north European countries and the US. Conversely, studies on the conversation analytical tradition have identified some fundamental and general conversational structures that are universally exhibited in interaction. One of the most distinguishable structures in interaction relates, for example, to the structural organization of turn-taking and to adjacency pairs. Zimmerman and Boden (1991, 8) note, in turn, that while the organization of talk provides formal resources to accomplish interactional tasks, such as opening and closing encounters, asking and answering questions, making and granting or denying requests, these resources are, however, deployed in a manner that is sensitive to just these circumstances and participants – *locally*. The shape of talk found at a specific site thus reflects the context-sensitive (and thus particularized) application of a more general, context-free (and thus anonymous) interactional mechanism (*ibid*).

An additional challenge is to demonstrate how the analysis relates to aspects beyond the materials at hand. I pursue to do this by linking the findings of my study to previous studies and literature. Reflecting on my findings *vis-à-vis* previous observations allows for theorizing on whether any given feature represents a more universal or more context-specific phenomenon. Analysis of the empirical materials with concepts drawn from the data and from theory allows for moving at a more universal level than local observations. Thus, as the conceptualization of discussion practices

provided in the study at hand is based on general and universal features of interaction (such as turn-taking and participant roles) it represents, in these respects, a starting point for analytical generalization (see Halkier & Jensen 2011). What kind of discursive practices and strategies are available and employed in any given situation is, however, a local matter. Generalizability will, thus, lead to “expectability” rather than predictability (Stake 1978).

Throughout this manuscript I also seek to provide the reader with an opportunity to assess the applicability and trustworthiness of the findings by showing the data and data analysis in an illustrative form. While the study is not replicable as such, it is possible to compare the observations with those from other situations and contexts. Similar to Samra-Fredericks (2000b, 319), I can “share some insights and findings, but not provide simple findings or prescriptions”. What a single case study of this kind can provide is to partake in “scientific development via generalization as supplement or alternative to other methods (Flyvberg 2006, 228).

5.4 Managerial implications of the study

This study examines interaction in the meetings of a new managerial team in a novel way, and displays meetings as ongoing social accomplishments. The longitudinal data also allow for examining how managerial interaction and the practice of TMTO meeting evolve and develop over time. There are currently few studies that closely examine how interactions in managerial meetings are organized and how the employed interactive practices shape the meeting practice. This study, thus, aims to fill this gap for its part.

Ethnomethodological and ethnographic studies, such as the study at hand, do not aim in generating unequivocal and normative suggestions on how meetings or meeting interactions should be organized. Practices are understood as situated and local accomplishments, and ethnomethodology’s primary task is to “uncover the seen-but-unnoticed practices by which people manage their practical circumstances, and the reflexive ties between such practices to the settings of their use” (Lester & Hadden 1980, 4). The close-up analyses of managerial interaction in the present study brings forward, however, observations that have implications to the managerial work. These are now taken up and discussed in turn.

First, the study shows that while the formal meeting agenda may be given from outside the managerial team, the actors will take up the issues they find important and that *they can discuss*. Consequently, not all issues in the formal agenda gain equal attention. In the TMTO of BioCorp’s complex technological aspects penetrate, and on occasions dominate the TMTO

discussions and agenda. Thus, the directors discuss of issues closest to their work. By allocating time and attention to issues such as technical details and medical particulars the directors frame the TMTO meeting as a suitable arena for discussing just these issues. In this respect, *the meeting discussions also reflect the managerial team's perception of their role*. Therefore, by examining the relation between the formal meeting agenda and the actual meeting discussions it is possible to identify areas of managerial work that need further consideration. The question to ask is: how are these practices feasible to these actors? The first thing is to examine how agenda items and issues on the formal agenda relate to the work of the participants. This is important, because people cannot sustain discussions about issues that are removed from their actual practice. If issues on the formal agenda do not relate to the actors work and their practices, it is not likely that they are able to address them in-depth.

The prevailing practices also reflect the actors understanding of the boundaries of their authority. Actors accommodate their actions to the perceived restrictions and opportunities, and learn to take them into account. Actors also become trained to see if these restrictions and opportunities can be re-negotiated. Therefore, an organization that seeks a more strategic focus for its management team needs to consider the prerequisites for this change of focus. In other words, if a managerial team with a peripheral role in the organization's formal strategy is to be more closely linked to strategy, the link to the overall strategic practices and activities needs to be purposefully established. Preferably the link would be established based on the managerial team's and individual actors' work practices. Naturally, support and assistance from superiors in interpreting and communicating formal strategy and in involving strategy in the work practices of the team are essential. Strategy work and strategy discussions cannot be pursued in isolation from the organization's overall strategic activities.

Second, the study emphasizes the centrality of interactional skills in managerial work. The criticality of interactive skills and the importance of communicational sensitivity are highlighted also in how actors can take advantage of the situated interactive opportunities that are continuously being constructed in talk-in-action. Identifying interactional opportunities and the importance of timing inhere to the essential communicational skills of organizational actors in general, and managers in particular. These aspects are seldom emphasized when speaking of managerial work.

The ability to employ the emerging interactive opportunities hinges also on the practitioners' knowledge and know-how. An important aspect in this respect is the participants' competence in employing relevant vocabulary and concepts. Asymmetries of knowledge that stem from unlevelled access to

knowledge and an unequal level of expertise create challenges particularly for organizational actors in new tasks and positions. This is a particularly important notion from the point of view of managerial learning, because concepts and practices cannot be learned outside the context in which they are used.

Engaging in public and collaborative sense-making making is, therefore, an important way of learning. “Collaborative sensemaking is not just something that happens when things break down; it is happening in every meaningful moment” (Rawls 2008b, 724). Managerial meetings are, thus, particularly important from the point of view of managerial learning, as relevant concepts and practices can only be learned *inside* the context in which they are employed.

Third, the salience of collaboration and mutual participation in managerial practices such as management team meetings are emphasized in the study. Dealing with issues in management meetings usually benefits from mutual participation to meeting discussions, as these issues generally require the input of multiple actors. In meetings with formal meeting conduct, participation is usually managed by the chair. In less formal meetings participation can be facilitated particularly by the chair, but also other by the other participants. For example, the use of open and probing questions effectively facilitates participation in group discussions. Probing questions permit more latitude in developing responses thus stimulating more spontaneous commenting. Also, by reformulating the previous accounts in a neutral fashion and by asking open questions consistently actors can contribute a constructive communicative climate that invites mutual participation. In the case at hand the unrestrained turn-taking and free-flowing discussion dynamics allowed for more versatile and easier use of various types of interactive moves than if the turn-taking had been administered by more formal chairing practices. During mutual discussions participants also acknowledge and *label* issues as legitimate and important discussion topics, and the free organization of discussion fosters the process of mutually constructing relevance to the discussion topic. This observation also expands traditional notions on how managers identify issues as salient and (strategically) important.

The study also illustrates other kinds of interactive strategies that are available for managers in the meeting context. For example, the ample use of pronouns contributes to the emotional appeal of communication. *We* is frequently employed to invoke an institutional identity over individual identity (Goffman 1981, Drew and Heritage 1992), and to build common ground (Poncini 2004, Clifton 2009). By the use of the pronoun *we* and by inviting contributions from others the actors label issues mutual and encourage joint problem identification and solving. Labeling problems as mutual allows for

the discussants to jointly adopt responsibility for the problem; instead of being forced or obligated to defend their views actors can join in exploring the problem and crafting the solutions. Simultaneously, actors build commitment to future action.

The longitudinal data allows for noticing how problem-solving takes place in stages and is an incremental process, constituted by a series of interrelated episodes that take place in and beyond the meeting. The fast pace in the current business life does not necessarily favour incremental problem-solving. However, it is important to recognize such organizational issues that require, and benefit from allowing more time to assess and decide.

Fourth, the study illustrates how recurring practices, such as financial reports and operation-specific reports gain and create continuance, permanence and stability to the managerial work. Overall, meeting discussions are easily geared towards measurable and hard (numeric) facts, whereas issues that are more abstract and less easily quantifiable, such as managerial and leadership practices, intra-organizational co-operation or human resource development issues are often more difficult to address. Visual materials and artefacts might help to structure and concretize discussing these issues, and consequently, contribute to their more visible role in the managerial agenda.

Fifth, the study shows how actors render *and repair* their practices appropriate and fitting to their particular circumstances by employing their ethnomethods and background knowledge. Practices are, thus, local and situated accomplishments that are quickly established to their more or less stable form (Rawls, personal communication 16.2.2011). These notions have important implications to organizational work, and to change management and organizational development, in particular. To pursue changing practices that are perceived useful and crafted by the the actors fitting to their particular circumstances is notoriously difficult. Rawls (2008b, 723) asserts: "There are good reasons why applications and innovations fail. Workers do not just "resist" change, but defend practices essential to their work." Therefore, changes in how work is done cannot successfully be imposed from outside. Understanding the trust relations, displays of competence and commitments relating to the practices are at least as important as it is to understand as the details of work (Rawls 2008b, 724). Rawls further notes: "It can be said in advance that when a company 're-engineers' a worksite in ways that violate the interactional requirements for trust, constitutive practice, and/or intelligibility, serious problems result." (ibid.). An increasing amount of studies of change projects and processes as well as news in the economic and financial media confirm that this remains poorly understood in organizations pursuing organizational change. A similarly neglected and ignored idea is that a change on the organizational level must involve a change in organizational

practices. Instead of starting the change process from the organizational level, it is useful first to take a look at work practices on local level, and to attempt to understand how these practices contribute to the organizational work, and to examine how they are organized and sustained. In this pursuit a perspective focusing on interaction is feasible, as most organizational practices are based on interaction. Practices that are situationally and locally appropriate may, from *the organizational viewpoint* be futile or even purposeless. However, instead of hurrying to discard and change these “futile” practices, attention needs to be paid to recognizing the local “realities” that make these practices appropriate and preferable.

The kind of knowledge provided by the study at hand as well as other ethnomethodologically oriented studies of work allows practitioners to become aware of the details of managerial practices and the ways in which managerial agenda is formed. By paying closer attention to *who gets to talk, when they get to talk and how they get to talk* it becomes also possible to think of ways to develop the communicative and managerial practices at work.

Rawls (2008b, 724) notes that it is necessary for researchers to learn by observing and participating. “There are a number of challenges for organization studies researchers: to meet the unique adequacy requirement by treating workers as experts and involving them in the research; investing the time to learn work from the worker’s perspective and taking seriously in doing so the need to look for order properties, not beliefs and values; remembering that while some aspects of order properties do hold across situations (the same ‘tools’ so to speak being used over and over again) they may be used differently on each next occasion.” (ibid.). However, as a researcher I am confident that through this kind of a research it becomes possible to increase our understanding of why and how particular actors adopt particular managerial practices, and consequently, why some organizational change initiatives fail. This study shows that managers establish practices that are appropriate and feasible for them in their current circumstances, and therefore these practices also inform about the perceived boundaries and restraints to the managers’ work. Thus, a detailed examination of interaction, such as the one presented in this study can assist in discovering opportunities for, and obstacles to, change. Furthermore, claims about the tasks and the role of managerial teams can be assessed by observing them while *doing management*.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Johtajat vuorovaikutuksessa – Keskustelukäytännöt johdon kokouksissa

Johdon kokoukset ovat eräs yleisimmistä ja keskeisimmistä johtamiskäytännöistä – merkittävä osa johdon työstä tapahtuu itse asiassa erilaisissa kokouksissa. Johdon kokoukset, kuten monet muutkin johtamiskäytännöt, perustuvat suurelta osin vuorovaikutukseen, jota toistaiseksi on johtamistutkimuksessa analysoitu varsin vähän. Käsillä olevassa tutkimuksessa johdon kokouskeskusteluja tarkastellaan johtamisen keskeisinä vuorovaikutuskäytäntöinä, jotka rakentuvat paikallisesti ja ovat toimijoiden tarkoituksenmukaisiksi tuottamia puheen tapoja.

Tutkimusaineisto koostuu yhden yrityksen johtoryhmän kokousten havainnointiaineistoista sekä nauhoitetuista ja litteroiduista kokouskeskusteluista 1½ vuoden ajalta (35 kokousta). Tutkimusaineistojen yksityiskohtainen ja tarkka analysointi etnometodologisen keskusteluanalyysin avulla tuo esille kokouskeskustelujen jäsentymisen omaleimaisiksi ja toisistaan erottuviksi keskustelukäytännöiksi. Nämä keskustelukäytännöt erottuvat toisistaan suhteessa siihen kuka puhuu, milloin puhuu ja miten puhuu. Tunnistetut keskustelukäytännöt on nimetty tutkimuksessa seuraavasti: monologi, rajattu dialogi, raportointi, vapaasti jäsentyvä asiakeskustelu, ajalehtiminen ja mikrokairaus. Ne heijastelevat ja rakentavat toimijoille erilaisia rooleja. Eri keskustelukäytännöt mahdollistavat eri asioiden käsittelyn, ja ne myös tarjoavat toimijoille erilaisia osallistumisen ja vaikuttamisen mahdollisuuksia. Esimerkiksi monologi on yksinpuhelua, joka antaa puhujalle mahdollisuuden tehokkaaseen yksisuuntaiseen tiedonvälitykseen. Rajattu dialogi puolestaan on kahden toimijan välistä, muut osallistujat poissulkevaa keskustelua. Pitkään jatkuessaan poissulkevat (eksklusiiviset) keskustelukäytännöt ovat ryhmätilanteissa ongelmallisia, sillä ne vieraannuttavat kuuntelijat käsiteltävästä aiheesta ja yhteisestä tiedonmuodostuksesta. Raportointi, erityisesti taloudellinen raportointi, muistuttaa monologia siinä, että yksi puhuja kontrolloi agendaa ja vuorovaikutusta muun kokousryhmän omaksuessa kuuntelijan roolin. Yksisuuntaista menneisyyspainotteista raportointipuhetta tasapainottaa osallistava vapaasti jäsentävä asiakeskustelu. Vapaasti jäsentyvässä asiakeskustelussa johtajat saattoivat tuoda tärkeäksi katsomiaan asioita yhteiseen keskusteluun, ja sen kautta johtoryhmä myös tunnisti asioita

tärkeiksi, tuotti päätöksiä ja sitoutui yhteisesti sovittuihin asioihin. Tutkitussa kokousryhmässä vapaasti jäsenyvä asiakeskustelu oli raportointipuheen ohessa keskeisin puhekäytäntö. Ajelehtiminen ja mikrokairaus ovat puhekäytäntöjä, joita yleisesti pidetään ongelmallisena ”asiasta eksymisenä”. Tutkimuksen kokousryhmässä ajelehtivalla keskustelulla saatettiin ottaa tilapäinen aikalisä ja sen avulla myös vastustettiin kokousryhmän ulkopuolisia pakotteita. Mikrokairaus-keskustelut olivat yhteisesti ylläpidettyjä ja osallistavia keskusteluja, joissa pureuduttiin yksityiskohtaisiin teknisiin ja operatiivisiin kysymyksiin.

Tutkimus myös tuo esille vuorovaikutusstrategioita, joiden avulla johtaja-toimijat yhtäältä luovat itselleen ja toisille mahdollisuuksia osallistua keskusteluun, toisaalta sulkevat toisiaan keskusteluista pois. Erilaisia vuorovaikutusstrategioita hyödyntämällä toimijat osoittavat joitakin asioita johdon agendalle kuuluviksi, kun taas toiset asiat osoitetaan agendan ulkopuolisiksi. Johdon kokoukset ja kokousagenda näyttäytyvät tutkimuksen valossa vuorovaikutteisesti rakennettuina ja neuvoteltuina. Johtamisen ja organisoinnin tutkimuksessa johdon kokoustutkimuksella onkin tärkeä ja keskeinen paikka.

Asiasanat: vuorovaikutus, johtoryhmän kokoukset, johtamiskäytännöt, käytäntölähtöisyys, etnometodologia, keskusteluanalyysi.

ABSTRACT

Managerial Interaction – Discussion Practices in Management Meetings

Managerial meetings are one of the most common managerial practices. In fact, a remarkable share of all managerial work is conducted in various meetings. Similar to many other managerial practices, management meetings are, to a great extent, based on interaction. To date, however, management and organization studies have rarely explored managerial interaction analytically. The present study presents a close-up analysis of the interaction in management meetings. Discussions in the management team meetings are viewed as locally constructed and sustained discursive practices that are produced by the participants (directors) to fit the particular social situation and circumstances.

The data in the current study comprises observations, and audio taped and transcribed meeting discussions from the Top Management Team meetings of one company during one and a half years (in total 35 meetings). A detailed and fine-grained ethnomethodological conversation analysis demonstrates how meeting discussions are structured and organized as characteristic and distinctive discussion practices. These discussion practices differ from each other in terms of who gets to talk, when they get to talk, and how they get to talk. The identified discussion practices comprise monologue, targeted dialogue, free-flowing focused discussions, reporting, drifting, and micro-mining. Each of these discussion practices reflects and constructs different roles and positions for the actors. Different discursive practices allow for addressing different issues, providing various opportunities to contribute to the meeting discussions. For example, monologue is one-party talk that provides the dominant discussant with efficient means for disseminating information. Targeted dialogue, in turn, is a focused two-party discussion that excludes others from the conversation. Exclusive discussion practices are problematic in that they alienate hearers from the discussion topic and, thus, from mutual knowledge-creation. Reporting talk and financial reporting in particular, resembles monologue in that one person controls the agenda and the floor while others assume the role of an audience. One-way reporting talk, mainly on past issues, can be balanced with participatory and freely organizing focused discussions, which allows the directors to raise issues that they consider important. During freely organizing discussions the participants

would also identify and label issues as important, make decisions and pursue commitment to mutually agreed decisions. In the management team in focus free-flowing focused discussion and reporting were the most pervasive discussion practices. Drifting and micro-mining are discursive practices that are generally considered problematic, and labeled as “getting off subject”. In the studied management team drifting discussions were employed to gain a temporary time-out, and as a resource for resisting sanctions imposed from outside the management team. Micro-mining discussions were mutually sustained and participatory discussions that probed into detailed technical and operative issues.

The study brings forward how participants employ various interactive strategies, on the one hand, to create opportunities for themselves and each other to contribute to the discussions, and on the other, to exclude each other from the conversation. Furthermore, the study shows how various interactive strategies are employed to label, or construct, some issues as relevant for the managerial work, while framing some other issues out of the managerial agenda. Ultimately, the study demonstrates that the managerial meeting agenda is interactively constructed and negotiated occasions where management actualizes and becomes alive. Therefore, analysis of managerial meetings has an utmost important role in management and organizational research.

Keywords: interaction, managerial meetings, practices, ethnomethodology, conversation analysis

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APPENDIX A. FINNISH ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPTIONS OF DATA EXTRACTS.

Näyte 1. Kokous 35, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:05:44.

1 ANTHONY: Joo(.) palkat ja sivukulut

2 kolkyt tonnia alle.

3 PETER: Mitä nää (salattu)-ihmiset nyt ku laitettiin pois

4 niin ne näkyy viel tän kuun niinkö?

5 ANTHONY: Ne näkyy tän kuun joo.

6 Mut ei, täst eteenpäin.

7 PETER: Joo.

8 JANICE: Paitsi ne jotka (epäselvä)

9 ANTHONY: =Siinä nyt oikeestaan niin,

10 me jäätiin kyl noist palkkakustannuksist

11 nyt niinku sanottu aikasemmin niin

12 noi mejän sivukulut on (epäselvä) laskettu.

13 Noi, niinku (epäselvä) kulut, (epäselvä) niin,

14 lähinnä noi koulutuskustannukset

15 ne jäi alle puoleen

16((summa)) tonnin budjetti,

17 jäi alle puoleen jäi melkeen ((summa)) tonnii. (jatkuu)

Näyte 2. Kokous 35, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:31:00.

1 JANICE: Eikä me niit vanhoi (kirjauksia) varmaan muuteta

2 mut, miksei siin vois olla koko

3 koska onhan täs muutenki

4 vaikka täs nyt puhutaan niinku operaatioista

5 niin onhan nää muutki tavallaan

6 koko talon. Et eiks siin vois olla koko talon ylityöt

7 ja koko talon nupit.

8 PETER: No jos Rebecca sitä kattoo

9 niin ei Rebeccaa kiinnostaa kenen porukan

10 ylitöitä se on.

11 ANTHONY: Niin ei se niinku,

12 se vois olla ihan hyvä se koko porukka.

13 Kuitenki se on käytännös varmaan

14 suurin osa operaatioist. (jatkuu)

Näyte 3. Kokous 35, Vakiintumisvaihe,

Kokousaika 2:00:02.

- 1 IRIS: (jatkuu) et siinä mielessä ollaan ihan hyvällä mallilla.
- 2 Sitte tää, pitää tehdä nää loput
- 3 disaster recovery planit eli tää ylätaso
- 4 ja sitte tarkemmin vielä siellä alatasoilla.
- 5 Ja sitte, ((osasto))ssa
- 6 niin siel on ihan hirveesti asioita
- 7 et siel on yli 40 projektia
- 8 ja niit on alle kymmenen henkeä
- 9 et ne kyllä aika hyvin, jonglööraa
- 10 niitä projekteja ja vie niitä eteenpäin.
- 11 Et siks esimerkiks se, ((työntekijän)) viesti
- 12 että siel ei oo (.) että (.) Siel on ihan vaan
- 13 et siel ei oo tarpeeks henkilöitä
- 14 viemään kaikkia, näitä mejän projekteja eteenpäin että(.
- 15 PETER: Sen näkyy noist ((johtajan))n pipelineista
- 16 ihan sama juttu=
- 17 IRIS:=Joo(.) Et kyl meil tekemistä löytyy.
- 18 Mul oli tossa se ((laatuprosessi)) tuolla highlighteissa kans
- 19 mut mä otin sen sit tänä aamuna pois
- 20 mä ajattelin että, kuitenkin siel oli muutama ostossa
- 21 josta joutuu vastauksia antaa niin(.).Niin ei, mun mielest
- 22 ihan niin puhtain paperein päästä läpi ku oisin toivonu mut (.)
- 23 Ihan hyvin(.
- 24 AMANDA: Mutta olisi voinut olla
- 25 paljon huonomminkin! (naurahtaa)
- 26 IRIS: Voisi olla pahempiki mut kyl me niinku,
- 27 yleisesti mun mielest se meni hyvin.
- 28 En mä nyt sitä hehkuttais (½)
- 29 PETER: Miten Iris tos me juteltiin aikasemmin siit,
- 30 siit ((manufacturin line)) ja
- 31 siel on nyt aika paljo tehty mut viel pienhköi muutoksii
- 32 jotta saatais ne, ((asia)) ynnä muut kontrolliin siellä(.)?(jatkuu)

Näyte 4. Kokous 1, Orientaativaihe.

Kokousaika 00:31:15

- 1 GD: (---) Mää ittelläni vähän sormet syyhyy tän asian kanssa
- 2 nähdä miten te lähдете toimimaan (ryhmänä).
- 3 En mä tiedä miten te ite koette, kyl.
- 4 Käyttäkää nyt joku muukin puheenvuoro,
- 5 ei mun tarvii tässä koko aika puhuu.
- 6 Jos me tehdään [kierros]
- 7 ANTHONY: [Henkilökohtasesti] ainakin hienoo
- 8 et mä oon mukana tässä.

Näyte 5. Kokous 1, Orientaatiövaihe.

Kokousaika 00:51:54

1 GD: se syntyy oikeestans tän kautta sitte.

2 Et tota et kun me saadaan nää strategiat ja muut selville

3 ja katotaan mitkä on meidän painopisteet ja mitkä on ne konkreettiset tavoitteet(.)

4 PAUL: mm.

5 GD: Mä en halua semmosta metriikkaavidiakkoo kun meil on ollu tähän asti.

6 Meidän on ihan turha raportoida semmosia mittareita mihin kukkaan ei tee mitään.

7 Eli otetaan mielummin harvempi ja otetaan keskeiset.

8 PAUL: Joo.

9 GD: =ja ne et mitkä on meidän prioriteettialueet ens vuonna,

10 mihin me halutaan erityisesti panostaa.

11 PAUL: joo.

12 GD: Mä on osan kansa teist teiän kans keskustellu jo

13 tuolku katotte tuolla Karenin pään yläpuolella=

14 PAUL: =A-ha=

15 GD: =niin siel on aika paljon lukuja.

16 Osaa lukuja me käytiin Antohynyn kans jo läpitte.

Näyte 6. Kokous 1, Orientaatiövaihe.

Kokousaika 00:54:12

25 GD: Eli mä toivon nyt(.)

26 en mä nyt halua niitä teille luetella mä haluan

27 et tää ryhmä ite(½) tietyl tavalla (.) Me löydetään ne.

28 Et mää voin tietysti antaa ne teille jos te ne haluatte,

29 mut se ei synny sillon teidän kauttanne.

30 Mä haluan et se strategia tulee teidän kautta (.) te ymmärrätte

31 mitkä ne isot kokonaisuudet ne tärkeet asiat on.

32 PAUL: Joo.

33 GD: ja sen jälkeen ku me ollaan (½)

34 täähän oli sillon kun me tehtiin, niin täällähän on nää meidän metriikat

35 ja muut vastaavat. Ja, mä haluan et se tulee (.)

36 ensin tulee tavallaan niinku ylätasolla,

37 mitkä on meidän yhteiset tavoitteet mihin me pyritään.

38 Ja sit jokainen kattoo sen omansa (½)

39 Haluattekste me käydään se niin et me käydään ne ylätasoyhdessä,

40 ja sit te käytte keskenänne jaatte niit tavoitteita?

41 Eiks se olis parempi niin et te porukassa vain mieltisitte sitä?

42 PAUL: hmm.

Näyte 7. Kokous 1, Orientaatiövaihe.

Kokousaika 00:54:12

25 GD: Eli **mä** toivon nyt(.)26 en **mä** nyt halua niitä **teille** luetella mä haluan27 et **tää ryhmä** ite(½) tietyl tavalla (.) **Me** löydetään ne.28 Et **mää** voin tietysti antaa ne teille jos **te** ne haluatte,29 mut se ei synny sillon **teidän** kauttanne.30 **Mä haluan** et se strategia tulee **teidän** kautta (.) **te** ymmärrätte

- 31 mitkä ne isot kokonaisuudet ne tärkeet asiat on.
 32 PAUL: Joo.
 33GD: ja sen jälkeen ku **me** ollaan (½)
 34 täähän oli sillon kun **me** tehtiin, niin täällähän on nää **meidän** metriikat
 35 ja muut vastaavat. Ja, **mä** haluan et se tulee (.)
 36 ensin tulee tavallaan niinku ylätasolla,
 37 mitkä on **meidän** yhteiset tavoitteet mihin **me** pyritään.
 38 Ja sit **jokainen** kattoo sen omansa (½)

Näyte 8. Kokous 3, Orientaatiövaihe.

Kokousaika 00:53:00.

- 1 GD: Overhead on 23 miljoonaa.
 2 Tää on (epäselvä). Mä ajattelin (epäselvä).
 3 Eli siit tulee 19, 23, mitä tosta tulee (½)
 4 Ja jos me katotaan niin, ihan selkeesti meillä on Liquidin puolella,
 5 meidän paineet on täällä overheadin puolella
 6 ja Gadgetit on materiaalipuolen, jos me ruvetaan tuottavuutta hakemaan.
 7 Meidän on ihan turha ruveta hakemaan tuottavuutta suorasta työstä.
 23 Ja siihen mä haluan teiät mukaan, et te ymmärrätte sen prosessin (.)
 24 Jotta te ymmärrätte miten ne tuotekustannukset sit muodostuu jatkossa (1)
 25 ANTHONY: Me on alotettu jo.
 26 GD: Joo, koska se on äärettömän tärkeetä. Se siitä (1½).
 27 MARYANN: Itseasiassa me vähän samantyyppistä harjotusta tehdään
 28 tuotekehityksessäkin, me tarkastellaan mikä maksaa [tuotteessa], mitä ne maksaa.
 29 GD: [joo]
 30 MARYANN: (epäselvä) siitä ei oo täyttä ymmärrystä.
 31 GD: = Toki Liquidissakin toi 14 miljoonaa on aika iso potti,
 32 ei se mikään pieni potti oo.
 33 MARYANN: =Niin ja kasvava. Se oli kaheksan, yheksän miljoonaa
 34 vielä ihan muutama vuosi sitten.
 35 GD: Volyymi kasvaa niin valtavasti. (1) Jes.

Näyte 9. Kokous 6, Orientaatiövaihe.

Kokousaika 00:08:10.

- 1 GD: Niin sit hei tehdään se paketti valmiiks tänään
 2 ja sit toinen asia minkä mä haluan et, me käsitellään tää agenda
 3 mitä me tullaan käsittelemään näis kokouksissa ja käydään läpi
 4 ja katotaan mitä ennakkotieto (½)
 24 Voidaanhan me kattoo tietyst viime vuottaki jos on tarvetta
 25 mut en mä tiedä onks siin tarvetta.
 26 Mä luulen et kaikki tietää jo aika hyvin,
 27 mis viime vuonna menttiin (10)
 28 Ja sit hei, me käydään nää läpi tää
 29 te saatte tulokset kaikki taseet
 30 tunnusluvut muut niin käykää omissa ohjausryhmissänne läpi ne.
 31 Samoin ku tavoitteet ja painopistealueet ja niin (½)
 32 Ensiks kerrotte ihan samat asiat omille porukoillenne
 33 ja sit, annatte riittävästi myöski tietoo heille.
 34 Eli et se vyöryy alaspäin (½)

- 35 Jos teil on sit viel alaisten alaisii
 36 niin kattokaa et se menee myös sitä kautta sit läpi.
 37 Yks vaihtoehto on et te pidätte kerran kuukaudes
 38 esimerkiks oman porukanne otatte kaikki,
 39 ja kerrotte siel sit koko porukalle jos haluatte
 40 et miten teijän oman organisaationne suhteen mennään.
 41 PETER: Mää on esimerkiks tehny niin joka toinen viikko
 42 omilla alaisil ja sit, taas joka toinen viikko sillai
 43 et on niin kaks tasoa.
 44 GD: Joo, se on ihan miten te ite näätte sen parhaaks.
 45 Tärkeintä on se että, et ei kukaan tuu sit sanomaan mulle
 46 ”etten mä saa tietoo mulle ei kerrota mitään”.
 47 Se on se tavote (½) et teil menee
 48 oman organisaation linjan kautta se tieto (4)
 49 TERRY: Siinäpä tavoitetta.
 50 GD: Joo (1)
 51 TERRY: Teemme parhaamme.
 52 (aivastus)
 53 GD: Terveysdeks [onks] meil kylmä tää? On vai ? (½) Ihan oikeesti?
 54: Alice: [kiitos].

Näyte 10. Kokous 4, Orientaatiovaihe.

Kokousaika 00:16:50

- 1 PAUL: (epäselvä) [7]. Sit mennääks seuraavaan?
 2 GD: Eiks tota, eiks tää ((metriikka))-mittari tuu tähän?
 3 PAUL: ((metriikka))-mittari, joo.
 4 Eli siellä on nää, (2) ((metriikka)), sit sit, ((metriikka)) (3)
 [sihteeri yskii]
 5 GD: Mä en haluu tota jouluksi. (3)
 6 PAUL: Sit on romutukset. (3)
 7 GD: Ja vaihto-omaisuuskin viel vissiin menee tähän piikkiin.
 8 PAUL: Niin joo, sit, tai no. (2)
 9 GD: Tää on aika keskeinen asia, nyt koko, meiän, (1) maailmassa.
 10 Näkee kuin moni mittari siihen menee.
 11 Hyvä, mennään seuraavaan sitten. (1½)
 12 PAUL: Sit muuta keskeistä, meillä oli omana toi
 13 varastokiertotavoitteet. (epäselvä) ((operatiivinen prosessi)), mut tota (.)
 14 GD: Voit sä sen=
 15 PAUL: =Se on yks meiän=
 16 GD: =Siis sehän on enemmän sit täällä yks alakohta oikeestaan varmaan, sulla? (.)
 17 PAUL: Mm (.)
 18 GD: Tuotannon suunnittelu on yks toimenpide puhtaasti.
 19 Käytetään sitä ((operatiivinen prosessi)) luokitusta. (3)
 20 Pistä siihen toimenpiteenä se siihen, enemmän tää on iso kokonaisuus.
 21 Ja siel on sit näitä, näit pienempiä asiakok-, toimenpidekohtii (4)
 22 Sit siihen ((operatiivinen prosessi))-luokituksen lanseeraus ilmeisesti vai mitä
 sä ajat takaa sillä? (jatkuu)

Näyte 11. Kokous 4, Orientaativaihe.

Kokousaika 1:28:00.

- 1 PETER: Sit, sit tää menee vähän päällekkäin, kun sit sielt tulee se laatu,
 2 joka tavallaan liittyy tohon asiakasvaatimuksiin ja (.)
 3 En mä tiä, pitäiskö se laittaa tohon?
 4 GD: No yeldi on hyvä esimerkki sul siit laadusta.
 5 Mut onks siit prosessin laadusta, mikä on se ((metriikka))?
 6 PETER: Joo. Se on yeldi ja, tai ((metriikka))
 7 se oikeesti on. Ja sit, joo se painopistealue on mul sit
 8 kokonaisuudessaan cost of poor quality ennen kaikkee,
 9 komponentit (.)
 13 Niin, siel on nämä meiän, ((aktiviteetit)), lähinnä nyt nää,
 14 (sihteerille) laita vaan et ((aktiviteetit)).
 15 Ja varsinkin se, et me siirretään valmistus yksiköiden osalta ((maihin)).
 16 GD:(sihteerille): Pistäs siihen toi ((metriikka)), ei kun ((metriikka)),
 17 ((metriikka)), ei kun mikä se on, ((metriikka)) plus se ((prosessi)).
 18 PETER: Joo. No se on joo (½)
 19 GD: Tää on=
 20 PETER: =periaatteessa se on ((metriikka)) täs.
 21 GD: Sulla on sit ((prosessi))-puoli tärkeempi.
 22 PETER: Joo.
 23 GD: Et sullakin on ((metriikka))a jonkin verran, mut jos sä löydät
 24 ((prosessi))-kohtii, et sähän oot huippu siinä.
 25 Niin sehän sun varmaan, se ((prosessi)), ((prosessi))
 26 ja ((prosessi)) on varmaan ne sun haasteet=
 27 PETER: = Joo.
 28 ALICE: (epäselvä)
 29 PETER:=Joo, ulkoistus, mä sanoisin et yksiköiden ulkoistus, ((maa)).
 30 Se kuuluu tohon (((prosessi)), ((prosessi))-porukkaan.
 31 GD: Kirjoitiksä siihen vaan, ei se, nit voidaan formaloida sit.

Näyte 12. Kokous 5, Orientaativaihe.

Kokousaika 1:28:47

- 13 PETER: Niin, siel on nämä meiän, ((aktiviteetit)), lähinnä nyt nää,
 14 (sihteerille) laita vaan et ((aktiviteetit)).
 15 Ja varsinkin se, et me siirretään valmistus yksiköiden osalta (maihin)
 16 GD:(sihteerille): Pistäs siihen toi ((metriikka)), ei kun ((metriikka)),
 17 ((metriikka)), ei kun mikä se on, ((metriikka)) plus se ((prosessi)).
 18 PETER: Joo. No se on joo (½)
 19 GD: Tää on=
 20 PETER: =periaatteessa se on ((metriikka)) täs.
 21 GD: Sulla on sit ((prosessi))-puoli tärkeempi.
 22 PETER: Joo.
 23 GD: Et sullakin on ((metriikka))a jonkin verran, mut jos sä löydät
 24 ((prosessi))-kohtii, et sähän oot huippu siinä.
 25 Niin sehän sun varmaan, se ((prosessi)), ((prosessi))
 26 ja ((prosessi)) on varmaan ne sun haasteet=
 27 PETER: = Joo.

- 28 Alice: (epäselvä)
 29 PETER: =Joo, ulkoistus, mä sanoisin et yksiköiden ulkoistus, ((maa)).
 30 Se kuuluu tohon (((prosessi)), ((prosessi))-porukkaan.
 31 GD: Kirjoitiksä siihen vaan, ei se, niit voidaan formaloida sit.

Näyte 13. Kokous 5, Orientaatiövaihe.

- Kokousaika 1:34:05
 1 GD: Eli sen takia mä sanoisin, et meil erityisesti,
 2 kun meil ei oo omaa tutkimusta,
 3 niin meiän pitäis saada semmonen verkosto luotua,
 4 et me pystytään koko aika sensoroimaan mitä tapahtuu maailmalla.
 5 Et sen mä lisäisin tohon.
 6 MARYANN: Joo. Toi yks, mikä siihen liittyen on keskusteltu, just tää,
 7 et meillähän ei oo käytännös kovin paljon yliopistoyhteistyötä esimerkiksi.
 8 Tai tän tyyppistä, et se on aika minimaalista.
 9 GD: Joo, se on varmaan yks asia=
 10 MARYANN: =Se ois semmonen, mis me voitais kasvattaa
 11 ja saada resursseja ja tän tyyppistä.
 13 Et se on, tehdään aika paljon täällä seinien sisällä.
 14 GD: Joo, varmaan.

Näyte 14. Kokous 4, Orientaatiövaihe.

- Kokousaika 00:36:30
 1 GD: (epäselvä). Hyvä (.) Onkos jolkul, jotain kommentoitavaa Paulille?
 2 PAUL: Puuttuuks jotain?
 3 IRIS: No kun mä nään, et sul on niin paljon niitä.
 4 Meinaaksä todella pystyä kaikkea seuraamaan? (1)
 5 PAUL: No herra jumala, se on pakko!
 6 No ei ne nyt kauheita oo, jos kattoo, tosa on meiän mittarit.
 7 Niin ei ne nyt niin hirveesti=
 8 IRIS: =No okei, okei=
 9 PAUL: =se ehkä näyttää tuo, kun siinä menestystekijät ja mihin se vaikuttaa,
 10 ja mikä on se mittari. Se näyttää ehkä vähän (.) =
 11 GD: =Siellä on samoihin mittareihin menee osa alueista kuitenkin.
 12 Se linkkiytyy eri toimenpiteitten kautta.
 13 Hyvä, tää näyttää hyvältä.
 14 Kiitoksia. Seuraava.

Näyte 15. Kokous 4, Orientaatiövaihe.

- Kokousaika 1:19:20
 1 GD: (epäselvä) . Joo, eli sä täydennät ton,
 2 ja pistät ne mittarit siihen.
 3 MARYANN: Joo, niin no mä, mulla on mennyt täs,
 4 mä aattelin (.) Osittain käytiin kyllä
 5 varmaan viime kerrallakin jo läpi, että kannattaaks ne nyt=
 6 GD: =Ei ei, pistä ne tohon. Mä luulen et ne on aika hyvii.
 7 MARYANN: Joo.

- 8 GD: Mut ne toimenpiteet sä voisit viel kattoo,
 9 mitä, koska ne on sit tosiaan yhteisii, niin on hyvä tietää, mitä kukakin touhuu.
 10 MARYANN: Joo.
 11 GD: Onks jottain kommentoitavaa MaryAnnin [4]?
 12 Mihis sit mennään?

Näyte 16. Kokous 5, Orientaatiövaihe.

Kokousaika 1:43:10.

- 1 AMANDA: No sit tuottavuuteen, tää onkin vaikee puristus,
 2 niin kuin se suurin muutos siihen siihen, et me ollaan overheadeja ja=
 3 GD: =Te oottekin, te ootte pelkää kustannus (½)
 4 AMANDA: Ja se tarkoittakin sitten oman toiminnan, ja
 5 prosessien ja oman toiminnan kehittämistä, ja siel
 6 varmaan onkin tekemistä (2) Me keskusteltiin, meil oli erinäisiä tämmösiä (½)
 7 mitä ehdotettiin, että tähän pitäis puuttua ja tähän.
 8 Yks oli stabiilisuustestaus mitä tarttis käydä läpi ja saada siihen (½)
 9 Mut se näytti olevan semmosta, et se voi ottaa ja se antaa (epäselvä)
 10 siit on vähän vaikee sanoa, että jossain tavallaan (½) että
 12 voidaan vähentää ja toisessa taas tarttis lisätä.
 13 PAUL: Mut tota, just tää stabiilisuustestaus,
 14 niin sehän mun mielestä vaikutti tonne tuottavuuteen aika oleellisesti=
 15 AMANDA: = Mm, joo (epäselvä), joo joo=
 16 PAUL: =mikä ei taas, mä en tiedä
 17 miten paljon me joudutaan hukkaamaan rahaa
 18 pakkaamiseen ja pakkausmateriaaliin ja lähettämiseen=
 19 AMANDA: =Joo, joo.
 20 GD: Ja romutuksiinkin, koska meiän (epäselvä) =
 21 AMANDA: = Joo, joo.
 22 Se oli yks, mikä ainakin tuli esille, (epäselvä) =
 23 GD: =Tällä on iso vaikutus.
 24 PAUL: Sillä on hirvee vaikutus tohon.

Näyte 17. Kokous 11, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 1:17:25.

- 1 PETER: Yks kommentti vielä MaryAnnille siihen siivoukseen
 2 MARYANN: [Niin].
 3 PETER: [mä] tiedän, et tulee teiän porukast sanomista,
 4 mut mä heitän viis trukkilavallista roinaa tuolt pääst pois(.)
 5 MARYANN:(epäselvä)=
 6 PETER: =mukaan lukien ne ((esimiehen)) jutut.
 7 ((esimies)) tietää=
 8 MARYANN: = Aha. Eli siis Gadgetin vastaanotosta.
 9 PETER: Niin siel on niit vanhoja elektroniikkakomponentteja.
 10 MARYANN: Joo.
 11 PETER: Sori, nyt en ehtinyt kysellä keltään mitään mut (epäselvä)=
 12 MARYANN: =Joo mä (½) Joo, mä ilmoitan vaan hänelle,
 13 et niit on siellä, siivotaan.
 14 PETER: Joo hän tietää, mut sit ne muut ihmiset varmaan (½)

15 MARYANN: Okei, aa, okei. No sit jos ((esimies)) tietää, niin ei siit sit mitään.
(1½)

16 KAREN: Ja sit vielä mock auditiin. (jatkuu)

Näyte 18. Kokous 25, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 1:54:30.

1 IRIS: (epäselvä) Mä luulen että tässä kestää jonkin aikaa

2 ennen kun se sitten näkyy (epäselvä)

3 asiat saatu hoidettua.

4 PETER: Mikä tota, nytten, jos mä nyt yhtään oikein ymmärsin, niin Rebecalla

5 oli se ajatus siinä takana, et noitten ((laatuprosessien)) kautta saatais

6 sitä resurssin käyttöö[optimoituu]

7 IRIS: [Joo] no mutta ei (½)jokaiselta linjalta on tullu se viesti hyvin vahvasti
8 että heillä ei ole tarpeeksi ihmisiä.

9 Ja siellä on hirvee kiire koko ajan, että se ei oo realisoitunu

10 niin kun [toivottiin].

11 PETER: [Joo], mut sit sama jos kysyis et käsi ylös

12 kenellä on täs huonees liian vähän töitä, niin (.)

13 (naureskelua)

14 IRIS: Niin.

15 PETER: Terry on ihan poikkeuslaatunen henkilö

16 TERRY: [mmm]

17 PETER: [mut] et se ei varmaan tuu realisoitumaan[

18 IRIS:[Ei, ei]

19 PETER: [näitten] kautta. (viittaa henkilöstön lisäyksiin)

20 IRIS:Ei. Et se pitäis, meiän pitäis pystyy radikaalisti muuttamaan

21 sitten ihan mitä, miten töitä tehdään, mitä, miten me tuotetaan meiän tuotteita =

22 PETER: =Mut miten me semmonen keskustelu saadaan aikaseks?

23 IRIS: No eihän me voida sitä täysin muuttaa.

24 Sit meiän pitäs muuttaa näitä tuotteita (epäselvä)

25 PETER: Niin, ei kun[se]

26 IRIS: [Joo.]

27 PETER: on semmonen, sen takia mä sanoin et ”keskustelu”,

28 et se on pitkä polku kuitenkin.

29 IRIS: Joo.

30 TERRY: Saaks taas aukoo päätään?

31 IRIS: No sä auot kuitenkin, niin-(naureskelua)

32 (yleistä naurua)

Näyte 19. Kokous 7, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:01:00

1 PAUL: Sit jos alotellaan, kattomaan tota (metriikkaa) mitä meil nyt on kasassa=

2 ANTHONY: =Katsotaanko ensin ihan taloudellisii lukuja vai (1)? (epäselvä)(1)

3 PAUL: Käydään ne läpi, jos niis on jotain ihmeellistä.

Näyte 20. Kokous 8, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:03:20

1 PAUL: Selvä. Lähdetään kahlaamaan läpi sit, olikse metriikka ensin?

2 ANTHONY: Metriikka vai talousluvut? (2)

3 PAUL: Jos käytäs talousluvut ensin.

(Anthony alkaa käydä läpi tuloslaskelmaa, ja puhuu keskeytyksettä 2:30 minuuttia ennen ensimmäistä muuta puheenvuoroa).

Näyte 21. Kokous 23, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:01:38.

1 PETER: All right, hei, lähetääks me nopeesti liikkee[lle]

2 AMANDA: [mmm].

3 PETER: Et (lempinimi; Amanda) menee toiseen palaveriin täs välis ja

4 Iris ehkä tulee ja katotaan, mitä täs käy.

5 Jos me annettais tolle Anthonylle sellanen pikanen puheenvuoro

6 ja katottais vähä meiän finahommii.

7 ANTHONY: Jes.

8 PETER: Mut sitä ennen niin mun mielest ainaki

9 mä nopeesti katoin, niin nyt kyl sit, jos oikeen hakemalla hakee,

10 niin sielt voi jotain sanottavaa löytää (.)

11 mut kyl nyt oli niinku tosi hyvät numerot.

12 ANTHONY: Nyt oli ihan hyvät. (jatkuu)

Näyte 22. Kokous 27, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:04:00.(alkurupattelua noin 4 min)

1 PETER: Katotaanko me ensin vähän myynti-

2 JANICE:=[Joo.]

3 PAUL: [Katotaan].

4 PETER:(epäselvä) tilannetta.

5 ANTHONY: Joo. Sullakin on laput? (fina-raportit)

6 PETER: Joo. Mä en oo näihin tutustunu.

7 ANTHONY: Joo.

8 PETER: Oleks sä?

9 ANTHONY: En mä sen enempää. Voin mä kertoo tän yleistilanteen.

10 [tauko noin 10 sekuntia kun raporttia haetaan tietojärjestelmästä]

11 No jos me katotaan näin rahamäärää ensin, niin (½)

12 Mä otin itse asias vaan tän Q-luvut, noi kvartaaliluvut. (jatkuu)

Näyte 23. Kokous 17, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:04:50

1 ANTHONY: Okei eli, ei ollu mikään huikea kuukausi.

2 Ei myyty paljon mitään ja, kuluja oli aika paljon.

3 ((summa)) miljoonaa myynti, ku meinattiin et se ois ollu ((summa)).

4 Se ei ihan toteutunu.

5 Manufacturing costit niin, oikeestaan niin, ((summa)) yli mut (.)

6 Ei nyt silti ehkä mitään hälyttävää (½).

7 Et ei sit ihan pystytty että sit niit (.)

8 säästöi tekemään mitä haluttiin. Ehkä toi taso (epäselvä).

9 Kyl toi meijän ensimmäisen kuukauden targetti oli vähän kova (½)

10 PAUL: Onko sitä yhtään katottu misä mentiin yli?

11 ANTHONY: Joo mä palaan siihen=

- 12 PETER: =Eikä siin oo mitään kertaluontosii isompii?
 13 ANTHONY: No siinä semmonen oli, mikä oli isompi ((kustannuspaikka)) eli tota (½)
 14 Siel oli tämä, mitä ne oli external servces tai mitä siellä oli
 15 niin siel oli, oli joku seitkyttonnii
 16 mikä on viiskytonnii yli budjetin.
 17 Ja se koostu aika pienist, itse asias aika pienist asioist
 18 joku yks kahdenkymmenen tonnin erä (1)
 19 Mut muuten ne (epäselvä).
 20 TERRY: Eli ((kustannuspaikka)) se on toi ((johtajan)) [paikkoi]
 21 ANTHONY:[joo]
 22 TERRY: Sen mä tiedän, että kiinteistöpuolel tulee edelleen laskui viime vuodest,
 23 tili=
 24 ANTHONY: =Niin mä aattelin et toi voi olla niinku samantyylinen,
 25 että en tiedä. (jatkuu)

Näyte 24. Kokous 8, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:03:10.

- 1 PAUL: Selvä. Lähdetään kahlaamaan läpi sit, olikse metriikka ensin?
 2 ANTHONY: Metriikka vai talousluvut? (2)
 3 PAUL: Jos käytäs talousluvut ensin.
 4 ANTHONY: Tehän säitteki tään, tai tuon tuloslaskelman
 5 ainaki säitte. Aika vähä myytiin taas, tai tosi vähä.
 6 Palataan siihen myyntiin viel tarkemmin.
 11 Absortio jäi taas aika huonoks eli ((summa))tuhatta,
 12 aliabsorbointia. Mut esimerkiks skräppi on ihan budjetis vähä alleki
 13 toi ((summa)) overheadillisena se on aika hyvä summa.
 14 PAUL: Joo.
 15 IRIS: Mut eiks toi absortio, se on alle koska me ei olla myyty tätä targettia?
 16 ANTHONY: Just näin. Ja sehän näis aika paljo aina ajaaki,
 17 et se on niinku hankalaa. Mut niinku viimeks puhuin niin, siihen liittyy myös se
 18 et ehkä mejän pitäs täs, mejän standardeis ottaa vähä huomioon sitä.
 19 IRIS: (epäselvä)e sun pitää olla vähä, konservatiivinen.
 20 ANTHONY: Niin. No joo (.) Palataan niihin viel mut, (jatkuu)

Näyte 25. Kokous 8, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:20:32.

- 1 PAUL: Joo. Mennään ettenpäin
 2 ANTHONY: Jees. No joo, tosiaan se ((summa))
 3 manufacturing costei samalla. Vaan yli.
 4 Täs kuussa niin (½)
 17 Sit, jos nyt teijän (.) funktioi kattoo niin Gadgetspuoli
 18 on ihan, melkeen tasan budjetissa.
 19 ((Gadgetin) palkat siel oli ((summa)) yli.
 20 Siel oli tullu, ooksää sitä, sen enempää selvittäny
 21 se production material, mikä siel oli semmonen isompi krediitti?
 22 PETER: Jaa tuossa näkyy tos toi miinus ((summa))(epäselvä)
 23 ANTHONY: Ei se näyttää (½)
 24 Niin no joo no, periaattees niinku vaikuttaa siltä mut et (.)

- 25 PETER: Toi n((summa)) -
 26 ANTHONY: =Niin=
 27 PETER: =se on, me ollaan siel expence varastosta
 28 palautettu takasin, tuotannolliseen varastoon-
 29 ANTHONY: [niin niin]
 30 PETER: [niin] se krediit oli sit taas niinku sitä kustannuspaikkaa
 31 missä expencevarasto on.
 32 Eliikkä hylkyvarastost saatu käyttöön tavaraa.
 33 ANTHONY: Joo. Siit on saatu tämä.
 34 (lempinimi Amanda)n kustannuspaikka oli, ((summa)) euroo yli
 35 sielläki (epäselvä) kymppitonin alle.
 36 Matkakustannukset sit oli puol tonni alle.
 37 Sit siel oli joku isompi joku printing-puoli mikä oli, ((-kuussa)) tosi iso.
 38 Se on joku ((summa)) euroo yli budjetin.
 39 Sitä vois kattoo mikäköhän se mahtaa olla?
 40 AMANDA: Se oli (epäselvä).
 41 ANTHONY: Joo. Näin mä katoin (epäselvä)
 42 AMANDA: Joo mä katon sen-
 43 ANTHONY: =Joo. (jatkuu).

Näyte 26. Kokous 9, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 1:22:00

- 1 KAREN: Hei mul on kysymys liittyen tän metriikan käsittelyyn,
 2 ja näitten fina-lukujen käsittelyyn.
 3 Kello on nyt 10.30.
 4 Me ollaan käsitelty tähän asti vain ja ainoastaan näit lukuja.
 5 Mä ymmärrän et se on tietysti tärkeitä.
 6 Mut toisaalt me ei olla viel päästy keskustelemaan yhtään siitä
 7 et mitä meidän pitäis nyt tehdä sit näitten tunnuslukujen perusteella =
 8 PAUL: =mmm
 9 KAREN: Pitäiskö meidän vähä niinku jotenki, kehittää tätä toimintaa?
 10 Mun mielest tää ei nyt oo ihan sitä mitä pitäis olla.
 11 PAUL: Joo mä olen vähä samaa mieltä, tässä nyt menny, aika pitkä aika
 12 tavallaan katottu näit lukuja [ja]=
 13 ANTHONY: [mmm]
 14 PAUL: = tietyst on tärkeä ymmärtää et mist,
 15 minkä takia ne luvut on mitä ne on ja=
 16 KAREN: =Kyllä.
 17 PAUL: =että me pystytään selittää näit, ((johdon katselmuksissa))
 18 ja muis tilaisuuksis, mut (1/2)
 19 Tosiaan vähä jouhevammin meidän pitäis käydä läpi nää mittaritkin
 20 ja puuttuu niihin, poikkeamista =
 21 ANTHONY: =Niinpä. Ja sehän on tärkeitä et niist niinku seuraa jotain touhuu
 22 että se ei paljo auta et me vaan katellaan.
 23 KAREN: Ja kun siel havaitaan jotain niin voitasko me niinku siin katsoo
 24 et no kuka, lähtee tätä [aja]maan
 25 ANTHONY: [mmm] =
 25 KAREN: =eteenpäin ja mitä pitää tehdä ja muuta vastaavaa et (1/2)
 26 Mun mielest tää ei nyt niinku johda ehkä siihen mitä meidän pitäis pystyy tekemään.
 27 PAUL: Ihan totta.

- 28 Ja miten me käydään tätä, talouslukujen metriikka läpi
 29 niin pitäskö mejän kattoo nopeesti trendi, enemmän-
 30 ANTHONY: mmm
 31 et jos siin trendis on jotai niin sit, poiketaan siihen ja todetaan
 32 et no hyvin menee ja parempaan suuntaan ollaan menos. Tai nyt mennään
 33 huonompaa suuntaan sitä pitää ryhtyä tekemään.
 34 ANTHONY: Niin. (jatkuu)

Näyte 27. Kokous 18, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:22:05

- 1 ANTHONY: [pysyttiin aika hyvin budjetissa]
 2 PETER: [hei Antti hei]niin sen verran vielä
 3 niin kuinka paljon nuo, kun sä mainitsit, niin kuinka paljon ne selittää tuosta (.)?
 4 ANTHONY: Mä palaan [tuohon].
 5 PETER: [joo joo][joo]
 6 ANTHONY: [niin tuota] tuo meidän kiinteistön kustannusten sitoutuminen
 7 noille meidän tuotteille, niin sehän nyt jäi aika alhaiseksi.
 8 Niitä syitä, että tietty myyntiin sitoutui hyvin vähän,
 9 ja varasto, varastoon sitoutunut overheadi kasvoi kuitenkin
 10 ((summa)), eli se auttoi (.) (epäselvä) sitä huomattavasti.
 11 Me tehtiin sitten semmoinen, Jerryn ((tietokantasovelluksessa))
 12 kun on tämmöinen tietyissä tuotteissa on tämmöinen ((nimi)) [factor]
 13 PETER: [a-ha]
 14 ANTHONY: niin me korjattiin, mikä niin kuin, se nosti meidän tuotekustannus
 (½)
 15 jonkun tämmöisen (.) Siellä on joku tämmöinen kerroin.
 16 Jerry tietää sen paremmin.
 17 Me kuitenkin korjattiin se, niin sillä oli varastoon ((summa)) euron,
 18 ((korjattu summa)) euron vaikutus, eli varaston arvo
 19 laski. Sen verran, ja tota noin, mä en nyt ole itse asiassa ihan varma
 20 mikä se kiinteiden kustannusten osuus siitä oli,
 21 mutta varmaan noin ((summa)) euroa
 22 se laski tuota meidän absorbtiota.
 23 Jos sitä ei nyt olisi ollut, mikä on tämmöinen kertaluonteinen,
 24 niin me oltaisiin oltu kyllä (½) Budjetin yli (.) tuossa tota (½)
 25 IRIS: Miltä kaikilta linjoilta?
 26 ((Tuotelinjalta)) ainakin otettiin pois.
 27 Käytiinkö kaikki linjat (½)? vai (.)
 28 ANTHONY: Itse asiassa mä en, mä en edes jaksanut niihin tuotteisiin
 29 nyt kovin paljon keskittyä mihin se tehtiin.
 30 Jerry toi semmoisen listan, mä voin kyllä [katsoa]
 31 IRIS: [joo]
 32 JANICE: Mutta se oli kyllä kaikki missä sitä [oli].
 33 ANTHONY: [kaikki][missä sitä oli]
 34 IRIS: [(epäselvä) että se] löydettiin, että pystyttiin etsimään
 35 missä oli ((nimi)) factor ja sitten se [epäselvä]
 36 JANICE: [joo (epäselvä) semmoinen] (epäselvä)
 37 Senhän pitäisi näkyä parempina praimena ((margin))
 38 sitten tulevina kuukausina eikö niin?=
 39 ANTHONY: =joo, kyllä kyllä.

Näyte 28. Kokous 29, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 2:30:45

- 1 PAUL: Joo, loppuvuosi meni hyvin (.) En oo ainakaan kuullu (.)
- 2 et olis tullu mitään valitusta kentältä
- 3 tai asiakkailta päin (½) Noista päivistä kyl me oltiin
- 4 puoltoista kaks viikkoo melkein kiinni (½)
- 5 Koko vuoden rahtikustannukset vajaa ((summa)) senttii per kilo,
- 6 ((vuosiluku)) vuonna toimittu halvemmalla kun ((edellinen vuosi)).
- 7 Sinänsä hyvä saavutus (½)
- 8 et yleisesti noi polttoainekustannukset ja muut (½)
- 8 on noussu ((vuosiluku)) vuoden aikana aika runsaasti (½)
- 9 mut me ollaan niistä rationalisoitu (.) mitä rahtarii käytetään mihinkin (½)
- 10 ANTHONY: Nousiko toi kilovolyyymi paljon?
- 11 PAUL: En mä verrannu nit vuosii, mut aika lailla samana (.)
- 12 vähän yli ((määrä)) kiloo lähetettiin vuonna ((vuosiluku)) (½)
- 13 Pettymyksenä ((kuukaudessa)) oli (.)Gadgetin ((metriikka)),
- 14 siellä oli edelleen noi ((tuote)) ja (epäselvä) ((tuote)) (½)
- 15 ((Metriikan)) puolel kans jäätiin alle ((tunnusluvun)), siellä oli noi ((tuotteet))
- 16 ja (epäselvä) ((tuote)) suurimpana (½)
- 17 Tää ((metriikka)) (epäselvä) edelleen huomattavasti alle targetin (½)
- 18 Samoin (epäselvä) varastokierto (½)
- 19 ollaan aika kaukana tavoitteista (½)
- 20 Ja prioriteetteina taas alkuvuodeks
- 21 ((operatiivinen prosessi)) ja sen edistyminen (½) eri osa-alueilla.
- 22 Toi meidän lähettämön viivakoodisovelluksen testaus (½) jatkuu
- 23 ja meillä on varmaan viides softaversio toimittajalta,
- 24 et toimittaja kommentoi, et ”teillä on aika kompleksi maailma”.
- 25 AMANDA: (nauraa)
- 26 PAUL: Et he ei oo ainakaan tehny yhtä (.) vaikeaa järjestelmää
- 27 mihinkään muualle ((maahan)), et vähintään ainutlaatuinen kokemus ja mahdollisuus
- 28 TERRY: [epäselvä]
- 29 [samanaikaista puhetta, epäselvä]
- 30 PETER: Mahdollisuus oppia (epäselvä)
- 31 MARCIE: Saaks sä alennuksii koska tää on niin
- 32 valtavan hieno mahdollisuus (epäselvä)?
- 33 PAUL: Ehkä me joudutaan maksaan vähän lisää (½)
- 34 kun ei ihan kaikkea olla huomattu speksata alun perin.
- 35 (naurahdus)(jatkuu)

Näyte 29. Kokous 22, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:07:50

- 1 MARYANN: Sitten on ehkä, kun toi ((tuotealue)) on mun alue
- 2 niin mä voin vissiin siitä nyt ehkä muutaman sanan sanoa .
- 32 Siinä on koko toi ((tuotealueen)) ens vuoden tekemiset kutakuinkin.
- 33 PETER: PAUL saa hyvät säästöt siitä ((tuotteesta)), ((summa)) kiloa , ainakin (epäselvä)
- 34 PAUL: Henkilökohtasta [epäselvä]
- 35 PETER: [joo]

- 36 TERRY: Saadaanks me toi meilillä?
 37 PETER: Kyl mä lähetän sen.
 38 MARYANN: Joo, mää voin laittaa vaikka tän pipelinen (½)
 39 Mä voin laittaa oikeestaan, tallettaa ehkä sinne
 40 yhteiselle alueelle ne nyt päivitettyt pipelinet,
 41 me käydään niitä siinä site coordination-kokouksessa
 42 mutta siellä ei oo kaikki mukana niin ihan hyvä.
 43 PETER: Mua jäi vähän nyt mietittyttämään ((päällikkön)) ja teidän kommentit
 44 siit ((strategisesta aloitteesta)), et miten niin ((Tollgate)) on viimenen mis me ollaan mukana?
 45 MARYANN: Niin no perustelu oli se, että design pitäis olla kaikilta osin valmis
 46 sit ((tollgate)) nelosessa, sehän oli itse asia,
 51 että nyt haetaan sitä tavoitteellisuutta sit siitä et se design olis valmis.
 52 JANICE: Ja sit jos siinä odottaa jotain niin kun mä ajattelin
 53 niin et odottaa jonkun muun päätöstä kuin meidän päätöstä,
 54 et pitäis ne -
 55 PETER:=Joo joo, mut siellä on kuitenkin jo osa henkilöistä on
 56 siel (tollgate) nelosen ja vitosen välissä vielä tekemisissä.
 57 MARYANN: On, ilman muuta, on on.
 58 [päällekkäistä puhetta]
 59 JANICE: [epäselvä] tehdään niin voi olla jostain muista kuin meistä.

Näyte 30. Kokous 2, Orientaatiovaihe

Kokousaika 03:07:15

- 1 GD: Hei, mitä te ite kuvittelette, mitä te haluatte,
 2 mistähän te luotte mittarit ens vuodelle
 3 ja tulevaisuuteen et millä mitataan mejän kyvykkyyttä vastata tähän?
 4 Et millä me vastataan mitä te lupaatte täällä? (2)
 5 TERRY: Siis tuohon lisää sillon periaatteessa se on ((nimi))-prosessii koko ajan (3)
 6 Eli mejän moottorin koko tarvii koko ajan olla
 7 se mitä bisnes ennustaa.
 8 GD: Mut eikse tuu tätä kautta?=
 9 TERRY: =Tulee.(2)
 10 GD: [epäselvä] mm (½) Siis mehän ei voida tämmöst määrää mittareita
 11 ja nyt mää toivosin et me tehdään muutama keskeinen mittari.
 12 TERRY: Sinne asiakasvaatimuksiin mut mikä se seuraava on?
 13 GD: Otetaanko me laatu sit seuraavaks? (2)
 14 MARYANN: Täs menee tietyt asiat päällekkäin.
 15 GD: Niin menee (.)
 16 PETER: joo=
 17 AMANDA: =mmm
 [päällekkäistä puhetta]
 18 GD: Ei se haittaa mittään koska sit me vaan yhdistetään (2)
 19 PETER: Mennäänkö me ((laatumetriikat)) sitten alaspäin jotenki sit ? (2)
 20 GD: No nyt puhutaan koko talon mittareist. (jatkuu--)

Näyte 31. Kokous 12, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:50:20

- 1 KAREN: Yks asia mikä, palaan tohon linjajuttuun vielä,

- 2 että linjavastaaviin[niin]
 3 ANTHONY: [Junnuakatemia]
 4 KAREN: linjavastaavien tarve on huima
 5 IRIS: Joo, ja [epäselvä]
 6 KAREN: [meiän] täytyy löytää joku järkevä ratkaisu.
 7 Mitä enemmän mennään vuorotöihin, niin ei käy laatuun,
 8 et yks linjavastaava vastaa koko tehtävästä (.)Molempien vuorojen aikana (.)
 9 Se ei vaan oo kestävä yhtälö.
 10 IRIS: Joo, ja siel ei mun mielestä oo (½)
 11 niin kuin, siel ei kasva niitä. Se on (.)=
 12 KAREN: =Täl hetkellä se on ehtynyt, (epäselvä) (.)
 13 IRIS: Joo, et se on vähän ongelmatilanne.
 14 Et mä nään et melkein pitää ulkoo täs nyt hakee (.)
 15 Teilt tulla hakemaan lisää niitä (.)
 16 PETER: Meil on [epäselvä]
 17 IRIS: [jos] me mennään useampi linja kahteen vuoroon,
 18 niin sit tullaan kalastamaan vähän enemmänkin [sitten].
 19 PETER: [Ei kun] meiltä vaan.
 20 KAREN: (osoittaen sanansa Amandalle) Jos teiänkin puolella on joku semmonen,
 21 joka on kiinnostunut esimieshaasteista, niin vie viestii eteenpäin,
 22 koska pula on huutava.=
 23 AMANDA: =Joo.

Näyte 32. Kokous 12, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:54:10

- 1 KAREN (jatkuu). Mut sit kun niille ei tapahdu mitään (.) niin se kärjistyy,
 2 ja sit tulee näit henkilöstiriitoja ja (½)
 3 IRIS: Pitäiskö se sitten jakaa kahteen? Et ottaa ihan erikseen,
 4 eri linjavastaavalle ((tuotelinja)).
 5 Sit eri henkilölle (.) Nää ((tuotelinja))?
 6 KAREN: Sit tullaan taas siihen, et
 7 mistä me saadaan ne linjavastaavat? (naurahtaa lyhyesti)
 8 IRIS: Joo mut-
 9 KAREN: =Tai sit PETER (epäselvä).
 10 IRIS: Joo, mut niin kuin (3)
 11 KAREN: Mut se et [epäselvä]
 12 IRIS: [Kun mä en kans tiedä, että onko se henkilökemia,
 13 joka siel tökkii (.) vai täysin (½) vai mikä siellä on sitten.
 14 KAREN: No nyt on tullut viime aikoina viestii myöskin siitä,
 15 et se tehtäväkuva on niin valtavan epäselvä (.)
 16 et ihmiset ei tiedä, mitä niitten pitää tehdä
 17 ja mist niitten pitää vastata (½)
 18 Osittain se on varmasti selkeesti johtamisongelma,
 19 mut kun mä en ymmärrä sitä prosessia, niin onks jollain
 20 parempi vastaus siihen, et voiko siellä tehdä jotain?
 21 TERRY: Eli, onks ((työntekijä)) esimies?
 22 KAREN: [Joo]
 23 IRIS: [Joo]

Näyte 33. Kokous 12, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:57:23

- 1 KAREN: Mutta ei me ikinä tulla saamaan ((ammattiliiton))
- 2 työntekijäsopimuksen piiriin työntekijäks insinöörejä-
- 3 TERRY: = Ei ei, ei työntekijäsopimukseen (.)
- 4 Meidän täytyis hyväksyy se tosiasia (.)
- 5 että meillä on myöskin tuotannossa eri ammatti[pohja]=
- 6 KAREN: [Mm]
- 7 IRIS: [Mm]
- 8 AMANDA: [Mm]
- 9 IRIS: =Koska eihän heidän kemialla välttämättä tartte (.) niin hirveesti osata,
- 10 koska jos joku ongelma tulee,linjalla, niin sit on tää tuote (.)
- 11 prosessituen [vastaava]=
- 12 AMANDA: [Joo]
- 13 TERRY: [Niin]
- 14 IRIS: =ja sitten on QA
- 15 AMANDA: [mmm]
- 16 IRIS: [jotka] vastaa näihin,
- 17 tuotteeseen liittyivistä ongelmista=
- 18 KAREN: =Mitkä sit on semmonen asia, kun sun täytyy käydä
- 19 sit ((esimiehen)) ja ((esimiehen)) kans läpi.
- 20 Koska täl hetkel tulee speksejä siitä, että mitä edellytetään,
- 21 niin kuin puhuttiin linjavastaavistakin, niin ne on sit
- 22 niin kuin päivittänyt tätä tavallaan, [mitä]
- 23 IRIS:[Joo]
- 24 KAREN: odotetaan niin haetaan vääränlaisii ihmisiä sit sinne.
- 25 IRIS: Joo.
- 26 KAREN: Mut et se kannattaa ehkä miettiä [sit]
- 27 TERRY: [Joo]
- 28 IRIS: [Joo]
- 29 KAREN: sitten kun, niin kuin suuremmat linjat (.)[jatkuu]

Näyte 34. Kokous 12, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:59:15

- 1 KAREN: Mut nyt ei puhutakaan linjavastaavasta, vaan puhutaan siitä,
- 2 että pitääks meidän ottaa työntekijöitä (.) vai otetaanks me
- 3 toimihenkilötasolle insinöörikoulutuksen omaavia henkilöi =
- 4 AMANDA: [Niin]
- 5 PETER: [Niin [epäselvä]
- 6 KAREN:[mikä] täytyy näkyä sit siin rekryanomuksessa,
- 7 et minkä takia.
- 8 TERRY: Kylläkyllä.
- 9 IRIS: Joo. Mä =
- 10 TERRY: = Ja tietenkin, mä lasken siinä,
- 11 että silloin jos on teknisen koulutuksen omaava henkilö,
- 12 niin toisaalta hän voi tarpeen vaatiessa toimia esimiehenä.
- 13 Ei tarvii eriyttää sitä esimiesroolia kaikis tilanteissa (½)
- 14 jossain se on järkevää. (2)
- 15 Niin sehän on kasvun paikka henkilöille, jotka on nuoria, viriilejä ja innokkaita

- 16 ja hullui tekee töitä viel (½)
 17 Juuri sellaisia tarvitaan (2)
 18 KAREN: Miten se Rebecca kulkee: pää pilvissä, jalat maassa
 19 (naurahtaa) [epäselvä]
 20 PETER:[epäselvä] hymyilee aika leveesti (½) Mä luulen et se on aika hyvä ehdotus(.)
 21 AMANDA: Niin, mä luulen kans. Kyllä (1)
 22 IRIS: Okei, onks muita henkilöstöasioita?

Näyte 35. Kokous 21, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:49:54

- 1 PAUL: Mites toi vuodenvaihde (½) ollaanks me päätetty,
 2 että kaheskymmenes joulukuuta pistetään pillit pussiin? (1)
 3 ANTHONY: [Niin mites me]
 4 PAUL: [Ne henkilöt], jotka tekee vain ja ainoastaan
 5 ((tietokantasovelluksen)) kanssa hommia niin (.) pakkoliukumille vai (.)
 6 jos ei ole mitään järkevää tekemistä, kuten arkistointia tai muuta?
 7 MARCIE: Kaikki rästihommat saa tehtyä pois siinä.
 8 PAUL: mmm
 9 IRIS: Miten sä meinasit, kuin pitkään? kaheskymmeneskolmas viiva (½)?
 10 PAUL: Oliko se sit viides ensimmäistä?=
 11 PETER: =viides ensimmäistä =
 12 ALICE: = kuudes on sit toi loppainen.
 17 PETER: seitsemäs päivä. Mut siis kysymysmerkki on lauantai
 18 kaheskymmenesseitsemäs. Ja sunnuntai kaheskymmeneskaheksas päivä (½)
 19 Se on se kysymysmerkki.
 20 PAUL: Niin, se on nyt siit ((esimiehestä)) kiinni (.) [Kiinni]
 21 [yleistä naurua]
 22 tullaanks sillon (.)
 23 MARCIE: Missä mielessä?
 24 PAUL: Et tullaanks sit mahdollisesti kattomaan, että mitä tilauksia on tullu
 25 ja pystytäänkö enää mitään tekemään.
 26 (päällekkäistä puhetta)
 27 jos on monta päivää pois eikä oo valmiiks rakennettuna.
 28 (päällekkäistä puhetta).
 29 AMANDA: ei, ei ole, ei.
 30 PETER: Miksei me sovita, että me ollaan kiinni kahdeskymmenesneljäs viiva neljäs.
 31 PAUL: [epäselvä]
 32 PETER: [ja jos] tulee jotain tarvetta niin muutetaan sit sitä?
 33 ANTHONY: Meinaatte että olis kiinni [epäselvä]?
 34 JANICE: [varmasti tulee, ellei muuta sovittais]
 35 [päällekkäistä puhetta]
 36 PETER: Se on ihan hirveen kallis se viikonloppu tulla tänne töihin.
 37 ANTHONY: Niin on. Mut sillon on taas semmonen paniikki
 38 saada myyntiä aikaan.
 39 PAUL: Mutta (Liquids), siinä kaheskymmeneskolmas päivä lähtee viimeset,
 40 se on ihan varma (½) Se on ne muutamat laitteet sit, mitä voidaan=
 41 PETER: =Mut se koskee sit ehkä kourallista ihmisiä.
 42 PAUL: mm.
 43 JANICE: mm.

Näyte 36. Kokous 21, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:54:11

- 1 PETER: Me ei voida siis mitään valmistustoimintaa tehdä [sillon kuitenkin]
 2 MARCIE: [niin sillon on turha ottaa]=
 3 PETER: =siis ne ei pysty tekemään yhtään mitään. (2)
 4 IRIS: Mä en uskalla nyt sanoa vielä (.) kun en mä nyt (½)
 5 Mä en voi pakottaa ketään lomalle.
 6 PETER: [epäselvä]
 7 IRIS: [Ei] meillä taloudellinen tilanne vaadi sitä, että on oltava pois.
 8 PETER: Gadgetissa on se, että kun sä teet varastosiirtoja kuitenkin,
 9 niin sä et saa sitä laitetta tehtyä
 10 IRIS: [joo]
 11 PETER:[niin] ei siellä vain voi olla töissä. (1)
 12 PAUL: Sovitaanks me ens viikon perjantaina mitä tehdään?
 13 IRIS: Joo.
 14 PETER: joo.
 15 ANTHONY: Jees =
 16 IRIS: =Eli se on vain sitten se yks viikko siinä (½s.)
 17 ANTHONY: Joo, Gadgetille tosiaan ((summa)) backlogia,
 18 ((summa)) ollaan jäljessä [epäselvä].

Näyte 37. Kokous 18, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:07:30

- 1 IRIS: Näennäisessä tapauksessa jos niinku ajatusleikkiä leikkii
 2 niin (.) voihan toi directoretti siellä ((maan)) puolella sitte (½)
 3 jos meil on korkeet hinnat niin ruveta katsomaan että mistä muualta ne ostaa.
 4 AMANDA: [no tää on ollu myös mun-]
 5 ANTHONY: [No ei jos sää] ajattelet hänen niinku tuloslaskelmaansa (½)
 6 Mut ei siihen tuo siirtohinta vaikuta mitenkään.
 7 IRIS: Mut jos he toteaa että (½)
 8 No esimerkiksi ((tuotteet)) nehän on tuolla koko ajan valittanu sitä
 9 et ne on aivan liian kalliit että kilpailutetaan useampia ((tuotteita))(.)
 10 ((tuotteita)) myyntialue (.) Niin, ei siinä mikään estä [että hän]
 11 ANTHONY: [Niin ei siis]
 12 IRIS: että hän sieltä jostain ostaisi ja=
 13 ANTHONY:=(epäselvä) jos mejän (.) Periaattees näin jos hänel on
 14 P & L vastoin mejän, meil on liikaa niin (.)
 15 kustannukset on liikaa niin=
 16 IRIS: =lisää overheadia siinä niin (.)
 17 PETER: No sit siel on tietenki nää bisnestiimit jotka voi
 18 sen estää (½) Se on se ainut. Mut sit toisaalta jos ajattelee
 19 niinku meitä niin, meitä tai nyt ((markkina-alueetta)) ja ((markkina-alueetta))
 20 niin, mehän ei sinänsä ((pääkonttorin maasta)) tarvita juurikaan mitään.
 21 Siis ((markkina-alueena)).
 22 IRIS: Ei me tarvitaan vaan myyntiä sinne tai siis niinku=
 23 PETER: =Niin mut sieltä tännepäin me ei tarvita ((markkina-alueena)) mitään.
 24 Ku ((pääjohtaja)) tarvii siel ((maassa)) meilt tuotteit heijän omiin [labroitten asiakkaille]
 25 ANTHONY:[niin eiks se oo niinkun]

- 26 PETER:Niin mä en näe niinku miten me voitas ((markkina-alueena))
 27 hävitä täs kuvios.
 28 ANTHONY: mmm.
 29 IRIS: Me voidaan hävitä sillai että mejän hinnat on liian korkeet.
 30 PETER: Eihän se tuu tapahtumaan (½)
 31 AMANDA: Niin siis täähän on mun ymmärtääkseni se
 32 mitä haetaan tässä että meitä puristetaan,
 33 tehokkaammin. Mää nään nyt tää on sitä.
 34 (päällekkäistä puhetta, naurua)
 35 TERRY: (epäselvä) ja se on niinku luonnollinen -
 36 AMANDA:= ja näinhän se on siis sitähan se on koko ajan.
 37 IRIS:Et menetetään sitte siihen niin että, me (2s.)
 38 AMANDA: [mmm]
 39 IRIS: Vaan niin kuin kilpailukykyisiä (½) Et se mitä mitä mä oon,
 40 ((johtajaa)) ja ((johtajaa)) koko ajan kuullu
 41 siitä ((tuote))hinnottelusta niin (½)
 42 Me ollaan liian liian kalliit.
 43 AMANDA: mmm.
 44 ANTHONY:Siis tarkottaakse et sen kate on liian huono sitten.
 45 IRIS: Niin tai me ollaan, joo (½)
 46 AMANDA: Niin (.)
 47 IRIS: Eli se ku heillä on katevaatimus ja
 48 ku he laittaa sen niin se on liian kallis. Heil on isot tilat ja-
 49 PAUL:=mut se-
 50 IRIS: =me ollaan laskutettu tuotetta siitä että heillä on isot uudet tilat.
 51 ANTHONY: Totta kai.
 52 PAUL: Mut miks he niinkun hinno-(.) Mist ne siirtohinnat nyt sit (.)
 53 tuleeks siellä (.) on niinku, se, se vika sivulla oo vain page crashing?
 54 ANTHONY: Joo-
 55 PAUL: .:=ja sit siihen lasketaan joku semmonen alueellinen lisä tai alennus.
 56 Ja siit muodostuu sit siirtohintaa.
 57 ANTHONY: =joo ja-
 58 PAUL:=Ja siel markkinoistahan nää kaikki nää siirtohinnat
 59 niin tulee tänne saittiin päin. (jatkuu)

Näyte 38. Kokous 18, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:16:45.

- 1 PETER: Mut hei eiks täs nyt kuitenkin vaan kannata keskittyä et [hoidetaan]
 2 IRIS: [mmm.]
 4 AMANDA: [mmm.]
 5 PAUL: [mmm.]
 6 PETER: [hommat]
 7 ANTHONY: [No kyl] mä siis mä sanoisin et saitin asiat ei juuri muutu miksikään.
 8 Tai tietysti ehkä henki voi vähä muuttua mut et siis, ei täl oo
 9 mitään sinänsä mitään vaikutusta.(jatkuu)

Näyte 39. Kokous 18, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:18:25

- 1 ANTHONY: Niin, ulkoset ulkonen myynti tai kaikkia tällasta.

- 2 Niin sit just et tässäki sit pitää hänen (pääjohtajan) kans niinku selvittää (5)
 3 AMANDA: Hei henkilöstöasioist viel
 4 miten YT, miten vaikutukset esimerkiks?
 5 PETER: Ehkä nyt tuli yleiset asiat käsiteltyy niin päätetäänkö toi Karen ääneen.
 6 KAREN: Juu siis, neuvottelut päätty keskiviikkona
 7 ja saman tien sitte päätettiin lähtee toimenpiteisiin. (jatkuu)

Näyte 40. Kokous 22, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:20:10

- 1 PETER: Miten Liquidsin puolella nyt se (½)
 2 onks meillä tarkkaan tiedossa et me pystytään toimimaan
 3 ja mitä kehittämisprojekteja me sit tehdään
 4 vai mistä se tieto saadaan?=[yskimistä].
 5 IRIS: =No ensinnäkin mä näkisin et ensimmäinen apu
 6 mihin tarvitaan on nää et ((laatutoimenpiteet)) saadaan suljettua
 7 ja nää kaikki, kun ne on kunnossa niin sen jälkeen
 8 varmaan tulee lisää ((laatutoimenpiteitä)) et ku se ensimmäinen (.)
 9 MARYANN: Meniks ne nyt niin että ne ((laatutoimenpide))-henkilöt
 10 jotka T&K:sta on nimetty hoitamaan niin niitten osastopäälliköt tietää
 11 et heidän henkilöt on nimetty hoitamaan ((laatutoimenpiteitä))
 12 tai joku memo tai joku, et siitähän me puhuttiin
 13 sillon viimeses saitti coordinationissa?
 14 AMANDA: Joo, missäs ((työntekijälläkin) oli semmonen nyt
 15 kun raportointi meillä on muutettu, niin se tulee automaattisesti agendalle
 16 aina niissä kokouksissa jokaisessa.
 17 MARYANN: Niin, niin kun jatkossa, joo (½)
 18 Kun mä ajattelin justii se, et siinä voi olla semmonenkin riski
 19 et ihmiset ei ihan edes tiedä että mis kaikis ((laatutoimenpiteissä))
 20 oma väki on mukana (epäselvä) [päällekkäistä puhetta].
 21 JERRY: Gadgetin puolella mä oon pitänyt siitä huolen
 22 kun ((laatutoimenpiteitä)) on sen verran vähän että, paremmin hallittavissa-
 23 MARYANN: [just]
 24 AMANDA: [Mä luulen] [että tosta]
 25 MARYANN: [Eihän mun] henkilöitä oo kiinni, tiedätkö, mut ku mä en tiedä
 26 et he olis ((laatutoimenpiteissä)) kiinni.
 27 JERRY: Ei tää oo, mä (epäselvä) että ((liiketoimintayksikköön)) on jotenkin
 28 panostettu paljon enemmän (-).
 29 Ja sit mä tein itte tuol noin teille töitä näköjään,
 30 esimerkiks se mitä te teette.
 31 MARYANN: Joo, tosi hyvä. [nauraa] Jatkaa plussalla.
 33 TERRY: Saat sen allokaation kans.
 34 MARYANN: Ei huono ollenkaan.
 35 PETER: Mut tosiaan niin miten me voitais se, ennen kun ne on kaikki lyöty lukkoon
 36 niin saatais semmonen check and balance siihen hommaan?

Näyte 41. Kokous 3, Orientaatiövaihe.

Kokousaika 1:12:55.

1 GD: Mikä meidän keskeinen ongelma tällä hetkellä on henkilöstön kans?

2 TERRY: Saaks ajatella ääneen?

3 GD: Saa.

4 TERRY: Saada lisää vauhtia olemassa olevaan porukkaan.

5 Porukka on hyvää ja osaavaa, mut siinä on tietty flegmaattisuus

6 koko ajan. Eli lisää vauhtia, lisää ryhtiä [epäselvä]

7 [yhteistä naurua]

8 IRIS: Vielä ku sä otat ton kirkon tohon.

9 (päällekkäistä puhetta, naurua)

10 TERRY: Ei ei, siis missään nimessä ei!

11 Tavallaan kun kattoo näitä osastoja,

12 mitä on olemassa, niin siellä on ihan hyvää osaamista.

13 Mut se, että miten sä saat ihmiset tekemään ne asiat,

14 että se menee kuin juna, että ei tarvi valvoa (½)

15 Osa haahuilee mihin tahansa ja a-ha =

(illustroi kuvitteellisen henkilön tapaa haahuilla)

16 IRIS: =Mä luulen, että ei se oo pelkkää haahuilua,

17 vaan mä luulen, että täällä on niin monta tulipaloa, että ihmiset ei ehdi!=

18 TERRY: =Niin tai ei tiedä, että mikä niistä on se, mitä pitäis tehdä!

19 GD: Mutta mistä silloin on kysymys? (.)

20 Se on johtamisen kysymys! (jatkuu)

Näyte 42. Kokous 3, Orientaatiövaihe.

Kokousaika 1:26:00

1 GD: Hyvä, mennään eteenpäin, me ollaan keskusteltu filosofiaa.

2 Mut onks tässä (½)? Mun mielestä, kaikesta huolimatta

3 tämä gap-analyysin fill rate,

4 mä haluan sen, et se on meil

5 ja me katotaan sitä sit vaikka kerran puoles vuodes.

6 Ja työtaturmat mitataan edelleen ja henkilöstövaihtuvuus,

7 varmaan on näitä mittareita, mitkä tulee tälle tasolle.

8 Jos viittisit merkata ne keltaset (epäselvä) (osoittaa sanansa sihteerille)

Näyte 43. Kokous 11, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00: 22:22

1 KAREN: Sit mielellään, jos voitte omasta näkökulmastanne

2 priorisoida sitte sen kriittisyyden mukaan.

3 (1½)

4 PETER: Sulla on ne mun kolme.

5 KAREN: Joo.

6 PETER: Ei muuta.

7 KAREN: Te voisitte lisätä ne hei sinne

8 LOR calibration-listaan ihan suoraan,

9 niin mulla on siellä sit

10 ((BioCorpin toimitusjohtajan)) ja Rebeccan käytettävissä.

11 (3)

- 12 TERRY: Käviskö joku 37 ja puoli?
(viittaa restrukturoidavien ikään)
- 13 KAREN: (epäselvä) (nauraa)
- 14 (3)
- 15 PETER: Tehdään ((lempinimi Terryille)) vaan sillain,
16 tosiaan, et katotaan –70 syntyneet miehet,
17 restrukturoidaan ne [ulos]
- 18 AMANDA: [naurahtaa]
- 19 PETER: Eiks vaan?
- 20 TERRY: Tarjotaan viiden vuoden palkka,
21 hyvä idea.
- 22 (naurua, päällekkäistä puhetta)
- 23 AMANDA: Tyytyväisen näköisiä.
- 24 (naurua)
- 25 TERRY: Älä nyt, kyllähän se ((toimitusjohtaja)) aikanaan
26 teki hyvän sopimuksen ((matkapuhelinyrityksen)) kanssa,
27 mut oli tietenkin aikaa päivittää ja näin.
- 28 Olikse –89 vuonna vai millon se oli?
- 29 Hän oli vuoden verran siinä kuvioissa,
30 ja sit tuli ((uusi toimitusjohtaja)) siihen tilalle.
- 31 Siit saakkahan ((matkapuhelinyritys)) on maksanu
32 hänelle palkkansa, se oli osa sitä sopimusta.
- 33 AMANDA: Joo
- 34 MARYANN: Ei huono.
- 35 TERRY: Ei huono, niin. (jatkuu)

Näyte 44. Kokous 22, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 1:12:05

- 1 TERRY: Hetkinen.
- 2 Täälä on tämmönen vähennys kun ((summa)) rent charge ja se on tää poisto-osuus
3 niin vuokratulot on päälle ((summa)) [epäselvä]
- 4 ANTHONY: [joo] Mä en tiedä,
5 mun täytyy kattoo mistä se johtuu, mut ton verran on kuitenkin siellä ollu,
6 utilitiesit siellä on ((summa)) alle ja kiinteistön korjauskulut ((summa)),
7 tosson oikeestaan toi loppu alituksia.
- 8 TERRY: Saako tähän sanoo (.) BioCorp kolmosen katto vuotaa,
9 meidän täytyy tehdä sille [jotain]
- 10 ANTHONY: [joo]
- 11 IRIS: Katto vuotaa!
- 12T S: Katto vuotaa.
- 12 IRIS: Sehän on ihan uus.
- 13 TERRY: Ei oo katto.
- 14 IRIS: Ai kattoo ei korjattu? Minne se vuotaa?
- 15 TERRY: Laboratoriotilaan lähes; on vähän kiire tehdä jotain
16 (lystikkäästi) (joku naurahtaa)
- 17 IRIS: Eli se vuotaa sieltä ilmastointien läpi sinne alas.
- 18 TERRY: En tarkkaan tiedä paikkaa muuta
19 ku et se on siinä rakennuksen palomuurin tienoilla.
- 20 IRIS: Eli se menee toimistotiloihin sillon?
- 21 TERRY: Mahdollisesti, en tiedä.

- 22 En ole käynyt katsomassa, tiedän porukkaa joka on ollu.
 23 IRIS: Kuin mont neliötä se on? Se katto, eiks se oo tasakatto?
 24 TERRY: Se on, ei se ihan tasakatto, se on vähän (epäselvä)
 25 IRIS: No mitä se maksaa? ((summa))? Kun sen korjaa?
 26 TERRY: En tiijä.
 27 JERRY: Pitääkö koko katto laittaa uusiksi?
 28 TERRY: =ei tarvi, kyllä sen saa paikattua.
 29 PAUL: Mä voin tuoda yhden Sikaflexi-tuubin sinne (.)
 30 (naureskelua)
 31 JERRY: Niin.
 32 IRIS: Haluiks sää mennä kokeilemaan? [nauraa]
 33 TERRY: Paulin korjauspalvelut auttaa
 34 (naureskelua)
 35 ANTHONY: Joo jos nyt nopeesti vielä teidän funktiotaso
 36 niin Iriksen porukka ((summa)) alle budjetin ja suurin osa on alle palkkoja.
 (jatkuu)

Näyte 45. Kokous 14, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:44:08.

- 1 ANTHONY: Edesauttaako se jotenkin sitä sairausloman saamista,
 2 et on loukannut töissä vai, mikä tää,
 3 miks, onks siinä joku insentiivi
 4 et se pitää laittanut tähän työtaturmaks?
 5 PETER: Jos on työtaturma, niin firma maksaa kaikki.
 6 ANTHONY: Niin niin joo. Joo, se oli aika huikeen kuuloinen (½)
 7 raportti. Sil se on vaatinut pokkaa, että on jaksanut kirjoittaa ne sinne.
 8 AMANDA: Joo=
 9 TERRY: =Älä nyt, mun porukathan tekee sitä oikein työkseen [naurahtaa]
 10 ANTHONY: Tota (-)
 11 TERRY: = Täytyy tutkia.
 12 PETER: Mut se oli hyvin kirjoitettu se raportti.
 13 ANTHONY: Oli oli, oli oli.
 14 PAUL: Mitä täällä sitten on (.)?
 15 AMANDA: Mut voikse oikeesti sillai, kolme päivää myöhemmin todeta,
 16 että joo, no itse asiassa tapahtui kolme päivää sitten.
 17 PETER: No mut kato, sit jos sulla on siin vaiheessa näyttää lääkärin lausunto,
 18 niin minkäs teet sit enää.
 19 PAUL: Niin mitä lääkärin lausunto sanoo,
 20 että voikse tapahtuu noustessa tuolista, semmoinen vahinko?
 21 [päällekkäistä puhetta]
 22 ALICE: Eiks siin oo joku aikaraja, minkä sisäl pitäis mennä lääkäriin..
 23 PETER: No siis, ei oo mahdollista sanoo, etteikö se voisi tapahtuu.
 24 AMANDA: Mä en kerta kaikkiaan [käsitä].
 25 ALICE: [epäselvä]
 26 ANTHONY: Niin, mut tietysti just se et.
 27 Et kyl se, niin kuin tämmösiskin talois on se polvi (epäselvä)
 28 IRIS: Ups [naurahtelee] (epäselvä)
 29 [päällekkäistä puhetta]
 30 ANTHONY: No joo, vähän tuntuu olevan tyhmältä tilastoida tämmösiä tänne.
 31 TERRY: Mutta se varsinainen viesti siellä taustalla on se,

32 niin kuin siin todettiin siinä raportissa,
 33 että onko työnantajalla mahdollisuus järjestää korvaavaa työtä.
 34 AMANDA: Joo.
 35 TERRY: Eli kysymyshän on silloin se, että jos perse penkissä
 36 niin voi tehdä monenlaista asiaa.
 37 IRIS: Mut eiks Rebecallalla ollut,
 38 mä muistan kerran aikasemmin juteltiin tästä,
 39 niin Rebecahan oli sitä aika paljon vastaan?(jatkuu)

Näyte 46. Kokous 14, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 1:12:10

1 TERRY: (-) .Ja ja, silloin kysymys on se, että voidaanks me leikata
 2 kolmasosa meiän ((vahinkoraporteista)) pois
 3 [naurua].
 4 Mä perustelen sitä sillä, että mä kattelen, kävin tätä keskustelua,
 5 mä kuuntelen sitä, et meiän porukat ravaa ympäri taloo
 6 tarkistamassa hälytyksiä, koska esimerkiksi me on rakennettu semmonen viidakko,
 7 ((laatu järjestelmän)) (epäselvä) aikana, et kaikkee seurataan.
 8 Eli kysymys on se, että voidaanks me lähtee siihen,
 9 et seurataankin vaan kolmasosaa siitä, mitä tähän saakka?
 10 AMANDA: Voidaan, ja sitä voidaan ihan hyvin ehdottaa, kun kukaan ei ees tee [sitä]
 11 TERRY: [joo]
 12 AMANDA: =ja silloin jos ei yritä tehdä sitä, niin kuin mä yritin saada
 13 sitä yhtä asiaa hoidettua, niin mä en saanut siihen apua=
 14 TERRY: =Joo=
 15 =mä en saanut vastauksia.(-)
 16 TERRY: =Joo eli esimerkkinä tästä, tää on nyt ainoo positiivinen asia, on se,
 17 et noi ((tuote))-laitteet, niitten kalibrointi tehdään enää kerran vuodessa,
 18 puolen vuoden sijaan, Gadgetin tuotannossa, kunhan tää nyt menee läpi [tää].
 19 AMANDA: [mmm]
 20 IRIS: Mut toinen tähän näin, justiin tähän ees taas ravaamiseen,
 21 niin hyvä esimerkki oli justiin se, että jos tuotannon tiloissa
 22 tulee ylityksiä, lämpötilaylityksiä.
 23 Ehdotus oli, että viedään yks paperilappu tonne yhteen postilaatikkoon
 24 ja sieltä linjavastaavat käyvät tarkista[massa]
 25 TERRY: [joo]
 26 et ei voinut edes sähköpostia laittaa siitä joku,
 27 että onko mennyt yli vai ei.
 28 THEO: (epäselvä) tämmöset todelliset, jossa ihminen tosiaan poistuu,
 29 eikä uutta tuu sit tilalle, niin otettas tuolta pois,
 30 siis budjetista. Tai siis siinä tilanteessa, että sulla on sekä uus että vanha siellä,
 31 niin sit se vanha pois, jos on kuitenkin hyvin todennäköistä
 32 että ei tuu olemaan siellä enää.
 33 TERRY: Kaks vuotta.
 34 THEO: (epäselvä)
 35 PETER: =Täytyskö vielä kerran tsekata ton ((HR-johtajan)) kans, kun mä kuulen
 36 vähän ristiriitaista viestii. Siis mitä tulee oikeesti [tapahtumaan]
 37 AMANDA: [mmm]
 38 [5]
 39 TERRY: Toi, saanks mä (epäselvä) ilman [muuta]

- 40 [päällekkäistä puhetta]
 41 AMANDA: °Mä vielä tähän kysyn. ° Jos sulla on sekä uus että vanha,
 42 niin et kai sä ututta saa, jos ei vanha oo lähtenyt, vai?
 43 PETER: Kun ne on suorii ihmisii, niin joko mä teen ne laitteet
 44 ja saan ne ihmiset. Tai sit niit laittei ei tuu.
 45 AMANDA: Mun kysymykseni on, että jos sulla on uus ja [vanha]
 46 PETER: [Riippumat] siitä (-)
 47 AMANDA: = niin jos se vanha ei lähde, niin saatko ottaa uuden tilalle,
 48 tai saatko ottaa siihen uuden, jos vanha ei lähde?
 49 PETER: Ne kun ei oo mitenkään sidoksissa keskenään. Okei?
 50 IRIS: Kun se vanha ei tee sitä työtä, mitä pitää tehdä.
 51 PETER: Niin vanha tekee väärää työtä.
 52 AMANDA: Okei (hymyilevällä äänellä)
 53 [naurunpurskahduksia].
 54 PETER: Ja se (½) Ja se ei kykene siihen hommaan, mikä pitäis [tehä].
 55 IRIS: [Ja toi, se-]
 56 ANTHONY: [Ei se anna jos ota]
 57 AMANDA: Mut sano sille vanhalle et (epäselvä) [nauraa].
 58 ANTHONY: Justhan puhuttiin [pakottamisesta] (epäselvä) (hymyilevällä äänellä)
 59 IRIS: [epäselvä]
 60 PETER: = (epäselvä) osaaminen [(epäselvä) loppuu].
 61 PAUL: [Pakottaa] osaamaan, nyt sun pitää pakosti osata!(.)
 62 [kyynistä naurua]
 63 AMANDA: Joo, se on se toinen vaihtoehto (nauraen).
 64 IRIS: Voi. [(epäselvä)]
 65 PETER: Voi [hyvä] jumala!

Näyte 47. Kokous 2, Orientaatiovaihe.

Kokousaika 3:14:00

- 1 GD: Mut se onki just se et ku (.) Mietitään et enhän mää tunne teijän osa-alueit.
 2 Mää en rupee edes opettelemaan ku teil on (epäselvä).
 3 Niin en mää haluakkaan tietää
 4e t mun täytyy itte ottaa se jo et hei mä luotan sen
 5 et Paul hoitaa ton homman. Et osaa sen
 6 ja Iris ossaa Liquidsin ja tuntee ne asiat
 16 Mut se, et tulee joskus semmonen olo et, me niinku odotetaan et
 17 kaikki on asiantuntijoi kaikilla alueil.
 18 Mut tää on vaan se asiantuntijaorganisaation vaikeus (epäselvä)
 19 siinä organisaatioon (epäselvä) uusien ihmisten on ihan mahdoton ymmärtää
 20 et mikä on riittävä taso.
 21 Koska niinku jos kaikki pyrkii aina siihen et haetaan niinku detaljitason tietoo
 22 enemmän ja enemmän ja pidetään sua ajantasalla
 23 niin kaikkihan me ollaan burn outis kohta
 24 koska ei me voida hallita kaikkea.
 36 Tää nyt menee hiukan toiseen suuntaan mut et, aiheen ulkopuolelle mut et (½)
 37 Niin kyl se on vaan into ja intohimo et (½)
 38 kyl mun täytyy valitettavasti todeta et mä oon itte niin tekninen henkilö
 39 et mä menen ihan väärin asioihin välil.
 40 Ja voin kattoo peiliin et teen väärin siinä asiassa.
 41 Ei mun kuuluis, mennä mihinkään yksityiskohtiin.

- 42 Mutku se on niin kivaa (½)
 43 [päällekkäisiä puheenvuoroja] (jatkuu)

Näyte 48. Kokous 31, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:14:45

- 1 IRIS: Mut siin on justiin se, mitä me ollaan käyty näissä muutamissa palavereissa [läpi],
 2 TERRY: [epäselvä]
 3 IRIS: niin nää kriteerit on vähän erilaiset (.) no esimerkiks ((tuotteiden)) kohdalla.
 4 Siinä vaiheessa, ku ne tulee sielt ((tuote))pakkauslinjalta, niin nehän katsoo ne
 5 ja sit kaikki ne roskat ei tuu näkyviin, jos siä sattuu jotain roskii oleen.
 6 TERRY: Joo.
 7 IRIS: Mut sitte ku tätä on heiluteltu, niin sit sielt pääsee tuleen (½)
 8 tulee roskia esille myöhemmin.
 9 Ja sitte taas, ku niitä katotaan, niin niist ei löydy enää mitään,
 10 et ei se ole täysin-
 11 AMANDA: =Mut ei se, joo-
 12 IRIS: =oikeinkaan, että mitä he sieltä löytää, niin on muilta pois.
 13 TERRY: =Tota-
 14 AMANDA: =Mut se tilanne ei parannu sillä, et joku poimii sielt=
 15 IRIS: =Ei-
 16 AMANDA: =linjalt pois niit huonoit,
 17 vaan sunhan pitää poistaa se-
 18 IRIS: =Se-
 19 AMANDA: =syy, [miks]
 20 IRIS: [No]
 21 AMANDA: =sinne tulee huonoja.
 22 TERRY: =Ni.
 23 AMANDA: Et sehän on (epäselvä)
 24 IRIS: =Joo, mut sittehän meidän pitäis lähtee koko se alue puhdistamaan=
 25 AMANDA: =Pitäis pitäis=
 26 IRIS: =Et eihän-
 27 AMANDA: =(epäselvä)-
 28 IRIS: = se ole rakennettu justiin, et jos ei me kuitenkaa pystytät investoimaan (½)
 29 niin sielähän on hirveesti semmosia (.) sielä katonrajassa näitä tasoja,
 30 minne pystyy roskat, pölyt, sun muut laskeutumaan (.)
 31 ja sieltä sit tippumaan, et eihän se ole tämmönen (.) kunnon tuotannollinen (½)
 32 TERRY: =(epäselvä)
 33 AMANDA: (yskähtää) =Mut varmaan vois käydä läpi ainaki ja kattoo,
 34 et mitä voi tehdä (.)
 35 PETER: Mä kun kävin kattoon siel ((tuote))linjalla ja siel ku on ni (.)
 36 Anteeks nyt vaan, mut meinasin persiilleeni lentää, ku (.)=
 37 TERRY: =Katoit sinne ylös=
 38 PETER: =mä katoin vähä nurkkiin, niin siel on-
 39 IRIS: = hirve::eesti -
 40 PETER: =se on niin (.) siis eihän se oo puhdast tilaa nähnykään.
 41 IRIS: No ei.
 42 PETER: Saati se laminaari, niin sekää ei oo puhdast tilaa nähny (½)
 43 JERRY: Ja sit meil on semmonen hienostelueteisaula siin, mis on niin tarkkaa,

44 et täytyy astua sen viivan yli.

45 IRIS: Joo.

46 AMANDA: Joo.

Näyte 49. Kokous 31, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 00:16:28

57 PETER: =tyttökaleritki viel siel, kunnes ne on aina,

58 ku ne on viis menettäny, niin sit ne ei enää osta uutta.

59 AMANDA: Joo.

60 ANTHONY: Onk tyttökaleritki -

61 PETER: =On on-

62 ANTHONY: =tuotannon puhdastilois?

63 PETER: Ei. Täs on nyt joku eri asia (.) meneillään-

64 TERRY: =(epäselvä)-

65 AMANDA: =Joo, mä luulen kans, et se ei oo (epäselvä).

66 ANTHONY: Onks meil joku perus((maalainen)) jeesustelu

67 siel meneillään (epäselvä)

68 TERRY: Mä luulen, et se on kaikkien yhteistä huomointia (lystikkäästi).

69 ANTHONY: Ihan hyvä. Ihan hyvä. (.) Joo, mut eik täsä mennä taas vähän

70 mikromanageroimiseen tai semmoseen?

71 IRIS: Mut tota, (epäselvä)-

72 AMANDA: =Ei mut (epäselvä)

73 [useiden puhujien päällekkäistä puhetta 4]

74 IRIS: Ei ei (epäselvä)

75 Mut tota, [epäselvä]

76 AMANDA: [epäselvä]Ei mut (epäselvä)

77 [päällekkäistä puhetta 4]

78 IRIS: Ei ei, mä-

79 AMANDA: meidän pitää aktiivisesti tehdä jotain,

80 et noihan ei vähene sillä, että [epäselvä]

81 IRIS: .[epäselvä] aktiivisesti tehdä-

82 ANTHONY: =Joo joo [epäselvä].

83 AMANDA: [epäselvä]jotain, ku noihan ei vähene sillä, [ettei]

84 PETER: [Ei].

85 AMANDA: =me tehdä mitään.

86 TERRY: Se tavallaan tää roskakeskus-

87 IRIS: =Ja noilla vois saada vauhtia ehkä enemmän näihin.

88 TERRY: Tää roskakeskustelu eli minkä tyypisii roskii ne teiän mielest on?

89 Onko ne- (jatkuu)

Näyte 50. Kokous 8, Muotoutumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 1:53:00

1 TERRY: Saanko mä sanoo pari sanaa teknillisestä taustasta.

2 Eli viime kädes (epäselvä) niinku tiedätte levynleikkausvaiheesta.

3 Täs on leikkausterä me uusittiin se, (piirtää fläppitaululle)

4 terä uusittiin sen takia että tää leikkausvoima kasvo niin suureks

5 että tuommonen tasaleikkaus ei toiminu niin (epäselvä)

18 Eli, pienestä kiinni kaks millii (epäselvä) (piirtää fläppitaululle)

19 IRIS: Eli sä näet että paras paikka ((laitteen osalle))

- 20 se olis siellä etureunassa?
 21 TERRY: Jos se ((laitteen osa)) valuu tavallaan tänne, (näyttää piirroksestaan)
 22 tänne mä piirrän sen tohon viel (piirtää fläppitaululle)
 30 PAUL: Ja mitä on tarkistettu, levy pois
 31 niin meil ei oo mitään tietoo kuin paljo niit levyi on
 32 et miten (epäselvä)
 33 IRIS: = Siit on pidetty loppukierto.
 34 Et pitäs olla tieto missä mennään.
 35 PAUL: Joo. Okei.
 36 IRIS: (epäselvä) (3)
 37 PAUL: Onks jottain muuta tän asian (epäselvä)?

Näyte 51. Kokous 21, Vakiintumisvaihe.

Kokousaika 1:21:39

- 1 IRIS: No ((tuotteessa)) se mikä siihen pistää sen ((raaka-aineen)) pinnalle on
 2 näin pitkä pätkä sitä ((raaka-ainetta))
 3 ((toisessa tuotteessa)) se on tämmönen pieni pätkä
 4 jolloin sä saat paljon tarkemmin sen (.)
 5 mitä siellä katsotaan, mut sit taas siellä on virhemahdollisuudet paljon
 6 suoremmat kun (.) se on niin lyhyt, se ei oo niin spesifi (1/2)
 7 GD: Tällain mäkin ajattelin siit just selittää.
 8 (naurunpurskahduksia)
 9 GD: Tällai se mullekin selitettiin kyl, (humoristinen äänensävy)
 10 mä yritin kysyy sitä (tuoteteknologian) (epäselvä).
 11 ((Tuotespesialisti)) koko aika sano mulle et meiän tarvii saada se spesifi (.)
 12 eli meiän tarttis saaha se tietty pätkä
 13 mikä on tiettyihin asioihin mut sit meiän täytyy saaha
 14 se pitkä pätkä myöskin et me saadaan siit katottuu se laajempi ((tuoteaine)).
 15 JERRY: Niin kuka tääl ny osaa sitä tai mistä ne asiantuntemus on?=
 16 IRIS = Ei ainakaan meillä.
 17 GD: Ei ((tuotealue)), tai siis on meil joku asiantuntemus.
 18 TERRY: En osaa (audible).
 19 IRIS: Tehdään ensin ja sitte katsotaan
 20 saadaanko joku tänne neuvomaan miten tehdään.
 21 GD: No kyl meil periaattees pitäis (epäselvä) osaamista.
 22 (nauraa, päällekkäistä puhetta)
 23 PETER: [Kenel on noit -]
 24 GD: [On siel joku ((tuotealue))-osaaja]
 25 (naureskelua, päällekkäistä puhetta)
 26 PAUL: Ketä siel (epäselvä), mihin me sit oikeen tai mihin me sit oikeen myydään tätä?
 27 GD: Kumpaa?
 28 PAUL: No näit (tuotealueita)
 29 (naureskelua, päällekkäistä puhetta)
 30 TERRY: Se valmistetaan se ämpäri ja - [nauraa] (jatkuu)

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