



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Aalborg Universitet

Nye relationer mellem kendte aktører

Gjerding, Allan Næs; Schulze, Pernille

Publication date:
2013

Document Version
Accepteret manuscript, peer-review version

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Gjerding, A. N., & Schulze, P. (2013). *Nye relationer mellem kendte aktører*. Paper præsenteret ved Hvordan gør ledelse en forskel? , Odense, Danmark. <http://www.det-danske-ledelsesakademi.dk/2013/program2013.html>

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal -

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at vbn@aub.aau.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Institut for Økonomi & Ledelse
Fibigerstræde 2, DK-9220 Aalborg Øst

Allan Næs Gjerding

Lektor

ang@business.aau.dk

+45 9940 8245 / +45 22556 7935

Pernille Schulze

Ph.d.-studerende

pschulze@business.aau.dk

21. November 2013

Paper præsenteret på konferencen ”Hvordan gør ledelse en forskel?”, Det Danske Ledelsesakademi, Syddansk Universitet, Odense, 2.-3. december 2013.

Nye relationer mellem kendte aktører

Dette paper analyserer udviklingen af relationer i et regionalt initiativ, der samler et universitet, et universitetshospital, de regionale myndigheder, kommunerne inden for regionen og forskellige virksomheder. Formålet med initiativet er at styrke den forskningsbaserede innovation og forretningsudvikling. Det skal ske ved styrke forskningskompetencerne på universitetet og universitetshospitalet og bygge bro mellem forskningskompetencerne og erhvervslivet. Det er samtidig hensigten, at den samlede region, herunder også kommunerne, skal kunne fungere som en stor test site for medicinsk og for teknologisk behandling. I den forbindelse satser initiativet på at tiltrække udenlandske virksomheder.

Initiativet startes op via et projekt med en række arbejdsplaner, som støttes af Den Europæiske Regionalfond. Opstarten er vanskelig, fordi ansøgningen ikke opfylder forskellige formelle krav, og fordi deltagerne ikke er helt på plads. I udgangspunktet er det et universitetsdrevet initiativ, men langsomt engagerer Regionen sig mere og mere. Midtvejs i projektperioden, der løber oktober 2010 – december 2014, falder bevillingen endeligt på plads, og en styringsgruppe med aktører fra de involverede parter begynder at fungere permanent. Samtidig er der etableret en administrativ kobling mellem Universitetet, der har bevillingen, og Regionen, der har et tilsynsansvar, sidder for bordenden i styregruppen og er sygehusejer. Det er på dette tidspunkt, at forfatterne af dette paper kommer ind i historien.

Side 1 af 2

Forfatterne har valgt at dykke ned i casen ud fra to forskellige vinkler. De to vinkler spilles ud gennem to selvstændige bidrag. I det første (engelsksprogede) bidrag af Allan Næs Gjerding anlægges et systemorienteret perspektiv på udviklingen af konsensus i styregruppen, hvor styregruppen opfattes som kernen i en triple helix konstruktion. I det andet (danskspøgede) bidrag af Pernille Schulze anlægges et processuelt perspektiv på, hvordan relationen mellem to centrale parter i initiativet – Universitetet og Regionen – udvikler sig gennem perioden, hvad angår den administrative kobling mellem de to parter. Mens det første perspektiv er socialkonstruktivistisk inspireret, er det andet perspektiv funderet på social konstruktionisme.

Selv om de to bidrag i deres færdige form vil blive helt selvstændige publikationer, har vi valgt at fremsende deres nuværende udgave samlet, fordi vi er inde i et eksperiment. Eksperimentet består i, at vi fra hver vores teoretiske ståsted er fælles om at generere kvalitativ empiri, som vi analyserer sammen, og hvor vi bruger hinanden til at udfordre og forstyrre den teoretiske vinkel, som vi hver i sær anlægger. Det er et konstruktivt møde mellem forskellige paradigmer, der benytter sig af hvert sit analytiske sprog. I den fælles analyse af det empiriske materiale udfordrer vi hinandens sprog, men er endnu langt fra at kunne bruge et fælles sprog. Derfor trækker vi os efter den fælles drøftelse tilbage og udarbejder hver vores bidrag til forståelsen af casen.

Casen, dataindsamlingen og arbejdsdelingen er nærmere beskrevet i afsnit 1 i det engelsksprogede bidrag.

Indhold

Allan Næs Gjerding

Familiar actors in new organizational roles. A case of triple helix development

Pernille Schulze

Den relationelle etableringsproces blandt kendte aktører



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Department of Business & Management
Fibigerstræde 2, DK-9220 Aalborg Øst

Allan Næs Gjerding
Associate Professor
ang@business.aau.dk
+45 9940 8245 / +45 22556 7935

Conference Paper, "Hvordan gør ledelse en forskel?", Det Danske Ledelsesakademi, Syddansk Universitet, Odense, 2.-3. december 2013.

Familiar actors in new organizational roles

A case of triple helix development

Abstract

The present paper analyzes the case of a triple helix initiative within life science, focusing on how a consensus evolves among the core actors at the steering committee of the initiative. Inspired by the concept of an Innovation Organizer as an organizational role which can enhance the efficiency of a triple helix initiative (Etzkowitz & Ranga, 2010), the paper discusses the type of potentials for conflict and challenges faced by the steering committee, and analyze how they are resolved. The main focus is on processes of rationalization in the form of suppressing, opposing and adjusting responses (Jarzabkowski et al., 2013) leading to an arresting moment (Greig et al., 2012) that reconfigures the paradigmatic foundation of the initiative. Finally, the paper summarizes the findings and makes recommendations for triple helix initiatives, emphasizing the need for effective organizational set-up, conscious group development, and awareness of power differentials among core actors.

Keywords: Triple helix, regional development, relational management

1. Introduction: The case of the life science initiative

By October 2010, a major triple helix initiative in a Danish region was established, comprising a university, a university hospital, regional government, the municipalities within the region, and representatives from life science companies. The purpose of the initiative is to bridge research and business development within life sciences, leading to improved therapy, increased economic activity, and new jobs within the region. The initiative is not solely focused on collaboration between partners within the region, but also aims at attracting foreign companies, especially foreign companies with a potential and inclination for locating within the region. One way of doing this is to expand the opportunities for collaboration between research and private business beyond the research capacity of the university and the university hospital by integrating the fields of hospital therapy within the region and home care within the municipalities into a regional based clinical test site for new products, methods, and solutions for diagnoses, treatment, habilitation and home care. In effect, the initiative comprises both pharmaceutical and technological development within life science.

At the outset, the initiative was slow to take off. It was primarily driven by an action oriented milieu at the university which was trying to round up partners for the project. Partners were slow to get onboard as they had difficulties in comprehending what the university was trying to accomplish with the initiative and how outside partners could benefit. Furthermore, activities were slow in progressing because the university failed to meet the rigorous standards of application for the EU funding which was supposed to be the main source of financial support, and the final EU administrative approval of the project did not come through until two years of the four year project period had passed. During these two years, the steering committee met infrequently, and the partners were still struggling to arrive at a common understanding of the purpose and means of the initiative. Especially, the university hospital found it difficult to identify the benefits they could get from the initiative and was inclined to proceed with business as usual, i.e. conducting projects of their own. Furthermore, the regional authority, which is also the owner of the hospital, was worried that objectives, milestones, and performance measures sufficient to satisfy the EU project standards were not being formulated. Eventually, the regional authority took a firm chairmanship of the steering committee, and, simultaneously, joint administrative procedures interfacing the university support structure and the regional administration were established. This meant that the initiative gained momentum, especially as the university hospital felt inclined to support the policy of its owner and devote more attention and activities to the initiative.

During April-May 2013, interviews with six of the main actors were conducted in order to gather background knowledge on the initiation and present state of the initiative. Four of the interviewees were members of the steering committee, representing the university, the university hospital, and the regional authority, while two of the interviewees were the main administrative responsible from, respectively, the university and the region, especially in charge of the interfacing procedures. Subsequently, as the steering committee began to meet regularly, observations were made at the three steering committee

meetings in the remainder of 2013, which took place at the end of May, mid-September and early October of 2013. Finally, the two administrative interviewees were re-interviewed by the end of October 2013. While the first round of data formation comprised interviews aimed at establishing background knowledge and basic understanding of the initiative, especially regarding take-off and alignment of perspectives among partners, the second round of data formation comprised observations at the steering committee meetings focusing on the emerging process of creating shared meaning. Finally, the third round of data formation by re-interviewing focused on how the administrative key persons perceive the present state of affairs within the initiative.

The interviews were carried out as an open dialogue in which the interviewee was encouraged to narrate the initiative, and where the interviewer gradually engaged in dialogue during the interview. Consequently, although the interviewee was the driving force of the interview, a certain degree of collaboration in production of meaning took place between the interviewee and the interviewer. According to Alvesson & Ashcraft (2012), this is a *romantic* approach as opposed to the *neo-positivist* approach which considers interviews to be a “modified oral instrument through which ‘softer’ forms of objective and generalizable knowledge can be discovered” (ibid., p. 241). The main challenge of the romantic approach is that the collaboration in production of meaning may sacrifice analytical distance. In the case of the present author, this would most likely be a challenge since the author has a previous career in regional policy and university management, which has led to long term relationships with all of the interviewees. In order to minimize this problem, the interviews and observations were made and recorded by ph.d. student Pernille Schulze who had had no previous dealings with the interviewees, with the present author only having access to the recordings. Subsequently, the interviewer and the author have worked independently on interpreting the recordings before meeting in order to discuss and interpret their findings. Finally, they have approached documentation of the research from different angles, respectively a process-oriented social constructionist point of view and a system-oriented, social constructivist point of view.¹

The present account of the case study is based on the system-oriented, social constructivist angle. The ensuing analysis will focus on the data gathered during the second round of data formation, i.e. the three steering committee meetings during May-October 2013, while the first round will serve as back-

¹ The case study will become part of Pernille Schulzes ph.d. dissertation at the Department of Business and Management, which is supervised by the author assisted by associate professor Mette Vinther Larsen (same department). Furthermore, Pernille Schulze is producing independent accounts of the case, as is the author of the present paper. The basic idea of this division of labor is to explore how differently a case can be studied by researchers sharing data and exchanging analysis and views. This way of co-working is supplemented by another case study of radical organizational change and management learning processes within a university hospital, where data formation will occur through four successive rounds involving 36 interviews and 4 focus group meetings which will be carried out by the ph.d. student and the supervisor in conjunction, thus providing another kind of data formation as basis for a division of labor similar as the one in the present case study. Conjoint activities will serve as an alternative to the data formation process of the present case study, and is, furthermore, aimed at stimulating a process of management learning among the interviewees where reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action will lead to transformative learning.

ground information for understanding the process before the steering committee meeting in May and grasp the foundation for the interaction taking place at the three steering committee meetings. The point of departure is that the initiative is a triple helix construction where the actors need to develop a common understanding of how the initiative should be carried out, and, in relation to this, joint interpretations of actions and reactions. Up to the point where the steering committee meeting in May took place, a common understanding seemed to be far from established, and as the project period was mid-life the three steering committee meetings in question were essential for the success of the initiative. The next section discusses how a triple helix construction and its foundation for consensus may be understood, following by a section which outlines the major challenges faced by the triple helix actors in the life science initiative. The discussion of triple helix and its foundation for consensus will mainly take place from a university point of view, as the life science initiative was initiated by university actors. Subsequently, the three steering committee meetings are analyzed in order to point out how and to which degree joint interpretation evolves during the course of the meetings. Finally, the findings are summarized, and lessons for triple helix practice are derived.

2. The consensual foundation of university engagement in triple helix

During the after war period, universities have increasingly been engaged in entrepreneurial activities focused on generating new avenues of income to the university and the society at large. To some extent, this development has been stimulated by government policy giving more priority to commercially oriented research, thus providing both a political and a financial impetus to activities bridging basic research and commercial endeavors. In effect, the academic world has witnessed the advent of “academic capitalism” (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) in terms of a growth of university activities and support structures aimed at generating new streams of revenues and changing the allocation of resources between basic and applied research. Concomitantly, large parts of the academic community have gone through a transition from a Humboldt-inspired autonomous society characterized by governance structures based on the endorsement of democratic decision making among peers to an institutional setting where external stakeholders in terms of national and regional policy making, labor market and industrial interests exert influence facilitated by centralized decision making informed by the notion of universities as service providers and knowledge generators (Olsen, 2005; Maassen & Olsen, 2007).

The academic capitalism envisaged by Slaughter & Leslie (1997) led them to talk about the entrepreneurial university, a notion which simultaneously was investigated and subsequently elaborated by Clark (1998, 2004). In both lines of research, a concern for university autonomy was aired, but while Slaughter & Leslie (1997) called for a general increase in public funding in order to reestablish university autonomy, Clark (2004) advocated a pathway based on bottom-up activities which channel the way in which external factors influence the directions of research. Thus, as opposed to Slaughter & Leslie

(1997), Clark (2004) in effect refrained from the wish that university autonomy might be restored by increased public funding for basic research and instead embraced the increasing influence by external stake holders as a means of finding pathways for university autonomy as a source of social and economic development. To some extent, this was a defensive position which was stressed as a necessity in order to avoid situations where entrepreneurial activities became directed by top-down state-led entrepreneurship. However, as implied by Gjerding et al. (2006), the position might not be all that defensive, because the quest for autonomy can be assisted by the fact that entrepreneurial activities often evolve bottom-up and involve an element of intrapreneurship which is important for the ability of large organizations to be entrepreneurial (Hitt et al., 2002).

Whichever is the case, universities are not likely to escape the challenge of academic capitalism unless the academic society finds some way to reverse the course of history. According to Etzkowitz (2003, 2004), the advent of the entrepreneurial university reflects that universities have added (or being forced to add) responsibility for economic and social development to their portfolio of research and education. This constitutes a “second academic revolution”, the first revolution being the inclusion of research “in addition to the traditional task of teaching” (Etzkowitz, 2003, p. 110), and it involves a third mission (economic and social development) alongside the first (education) and second (research) missions (Leydesdorff & Etzkowitz, 1996; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). While the third mission is a central issue for formal negotiations and the establishment of policy schemes as part of the interplay between universities, government and external stake holders at high managerial levels, it is, however, mainly driven at subordinate levels by research groups (to some extent assisted by support structures) which adopt a business-minded approach to cooperation with external stake holders. The way in which cooperation is organized varies, depending on circumstances and contexts, thus yielding a kind of hybridization (Etzkowitz, 2004; Clark, 2004) which reflects that organizational differentiation within universities is required in order to engage with a complex environment. Consequently, hybridization is likely to imply that academia has some strongholds in maintaining autonomy because the capacity to differentiate endows universities with the capacity to act and change in complex circumstances (Etzkowitz, 2004; Gjerding et al., 2006).

The inclusion of the third mission has been phrased in terms of the “triple helix” model, coining an activity-based university-industry-government² collaboration which stimulates innovation in the fields where collaboration takes place. However, the triple helix must not be confused with an innovation system in the sense of national or regional innovation systems (Lundvall, 1992; Nelson, 1993; Edquist, 2005), but rather understood as providing “a model of the structure and dynamics underlying the innovation system functioning at various levels” (Leydesdorff & Zawdie, 2010, p. 789), adding “to the meta-biological models of evolutionary economics, the sociological notion of meaning being exchanged

² “Government” in this case is a paraphrase for societal stake holders, i.e. the term represents national, regional and community interests and actors in a broad sense.

among the institutional agents” (ibid., p. 798). This implies that the parts of the triple helix are seen as “co-evolving sub-sets of social systems, which are distributed and unstable” (Etzkowitz & Ranga, 2010, p. 5), where meaning is created by negotiations and translations at the interfaces between the constituent parts. Inspired by Mohrman et al. (2001), it may be argued that this requires the ability of the actors to mutually taking perspective, e.g. by forming joint interpretative forums. In order for a triple helix to become effective in its pursuit of the third mission, Etzkowitz & Ranga (2010) stress the importance of establishing leadership in a way which respects the processes and motives of the collaborating institutional actors, implying “a mix of top-down and bottom up processes to create leadership through collaboration rather than diktat” (ibid., p. 17). In their view, this requires the establishment of some neutral ground where the collaborating actors “can come together to generate and gain support for new ideas promoting economic and social development” (ibid., p. 18). In effect, they suggest the formation of an institutional role as Innovation Organizer “who enunciates a vision for knowledge-based development and who has sufficient respect to exercise convening power to bring the leadership of the institutional spheres together to aggregate and commit resources to implement a project emanating from what becomes a shared vision if and when the process takes on momentum” (ibid., p. 19).³

From a university perspective, the engagement in the third mission is highly sensitive to the degree in which universities set up institutional arrangements for collaboration with external partners, especially in order to deal with funding and administrative tasks, but it also relies on the degree to which core academic actors adopt an entrepreneurial ethos (Clark, 2004; Gjerding et al., 2006). The adoption of an entrepreneurial ethos is sensitive to the way in which an academic career is achieved, and since documented research plays a crucial part in career formation, researchers will be more likely to engage in the third mission if it involves opportunities for publishable activities. However, this is not the only condition determining the willingness of researchers to engage in collaboration with industry and government. Besides the importance of having a sufficient research budget, researchers seem to be more inclined to triple helix activities if they are focused on user needs and able to set up strategic networks with external partners, and, furthermore, are experienced and highly productive (Belkhdja & Landry, 2007). These attributes seem to be enhanced by collaboration with extra-university partners (Campbell et al., 2004), so within an effective triple helix construction, they need to be observed.

In recent years, the triple helix concept has gained increasing political attention as policy makers have focused on the contribution which academic research can make to economic and social development. To an important extent, this has been associated with the ability of universities to engage in patenting, licensing and commercial spin-offs. However, as argued by Jacobsson & Vico (2010), these indicators

³ The aim of Etzkowitz & Ranga (2010) is to develop a definition of triple helix equivalent to the notion of innovation systems as comprising components, relationships and attributes. In order to elaborate on the attributes of the system, they suggest the concept of triple helix spaces encompassing a knowledge space, an innovation space, and a consensus space. The present paper abstain from a discussion of the concept of spaces, but takes inspiration from the idea that a consensus space, physically and virtually, must be created in order to make a triple helix effective.

does not necessarily capture “the diversity in the channels through which academic research is made socially useful and the many types of effects accruing from academic research” (ibid., p. 780). Reviewing a large amount of literature and case studies on the subject, they suggest that academic research has an impact on especially knowledge development and diffusion, resource mobilization, and entrepreneurial experimentation, and, in effect, it appears that the main focus of much policy-informed performance schemes does only capture one of the main effects of academic research, i.e. the proliferation of entrepreneurial activities within the economic sphere. This is an important finding for the way in which consensus is build and maintained within a triple helix construction as it suggests that the consensus must be based on a broader concept of how the third mission can be accomplished.

3. Essential challenges for the life science initiative

The life science triple helix initiative, which are studied in this paper, is significant in the sense that it was originated at the university which engaged in various networking activities with the explicit aim to form a long term strategic network comprising all important regional actors within the field. The networking activities emanated from an environment of highly experienced and productive researchers which had based an academic career on focusing on user needs and how user needs can be fulfilled through successful collaboration with external partners, including both industry and government. Furthermore, the networking activity was supported by an administrative structure highly experienced in such activities, especially within the field of life science. In essence, at the outset the initiative comprised most of the features needed for a successful university engagement in a triple helix construct.

However, the process of consensus-building within the initiative was initially impeded by the fact that not all actors were in place. It took some time to get the municipal representatives on board at the steering committee due to practical problems, and, furthermore, the university hospital was reluctant to engage in the initiative on a full scale as the relevant actors at the university hospital found it difficult to understand how benefits could be derived from the initiative. In addition, it proved difficult to the university to finalize an application for EU funding which meet all criteria for a successful application, especially regarding mile stones and measurable effects. This meant that the EU funding did not arrive until after the first two years of the four year project period had passed, and caused considerable tensions between the university actors and the regional authority actors. Finally, the steering committee met infrequently during the first half of the project period, which meant that the above mentioned problems were not really resolved and the joint perspective of the project was reluctant to appear.

Consensus-building was actually at the essence, because the project is extremely broad. It comprises six work packages aimed at strengthening a regional based collaboration on business development, especially driven by clinical testing, cross-disciplinary life science and technological research, and innovation. The work packages cover the development of research competencies, clinical trials and tests,

register based research, knowledge dissemination and branding, and administration of initiatives and spending. The spread of activities implies, at the outset, that the initiative is ripe with potential conflicts due to the presence of different logics of activities and governance, an implication which has been validated during the first round of data formation.

First, there is a clash between time horizons across activities. Research activities and the development of research competencies imply a long term perspective, while clinical trials and tests are characterized by a medium term perspective, and knowledge dissemination and branding are more like punctuated activities scattered across the life span of the project. *Second*, it is difficult to align the success parameters of the project. The *raison-d'être* of research activities is a continuous production and exchange of knowledge, while innovation is directed towards specific and tangible results in a commercial context, and the conditions of the grant emphasize measurable effects within the project period, e.g. in the form of increased economic activity and the creation of new jobs within the region. *Third*, the triple helix construction needs to bridge different logics of governance. On the one hand, the involved research and knowledge milieus are used to having an action oriented open mind to collaboration, implying an aversion to excluding partners which might have something to offer and preferring to avoid rules that restrain activities. On the other hand, the administrative framework of the funding implies severe administrative documentation and strict rules on how and when to utilize financial resources, especially in order to avoid that some actors are favored at the expense of others and that competition is not distorted. In addition, the involved actors need to balance dissemination of knowledge against the opportunities for utilizing knowledge commercially. *Fourth*, and finally, the spatial dimension of the initiative is not clearly defined. The funding is conditioned by a demand on the initiative to contribute to the development of local and regional competencies, business, institutions, and jobs, and this is one of the premises on which the initiative is linked to regional policy and authorities. One of the pathways stressed by the initiative is to attract foreign companies which are interested in the activities within the initiative, preferably companies with a potential for locating units within the region. However, creating or developing firms and attracting foreign companies within life sciences have become part of a nation-wide collaboration involving all regions where the individual region is supposed to facilitate collaboration between a company and other regions. There is a potential risk that economic activity and jobs created by the initiative may be located outside the region, and the actors need to observe a sensitive balance between regional and national development.

In order to cope with these potential conflicts, the life science initiative actors must meet two challenges in their quest for triple helix consensus.

The first challenge is about trust. The actors must be confident that actions and decisions within the initiative contribute to the success of the project, even in situations where the actors have conflicting interests. Trust is based on experiential collaboration (Håkansson & Snehota, 1995) where actors over time develop insights into how collaborators act and react in a variety of situations. At the outset, the

life science initiative actors have a history of collaboration in various settings, and there appears to be a solid foundation of trust among them. However, the present context is new, and the actors are divergent in their perception of what the initiative might achieve and how it may be achieved. In effect, the individual actor cannot *á priori* be sure that his previous experiences with the other actors lend themselves to translation into the new context. Furthermore, as the potential conflicts in the project may place the actor himself in new situations, he will be required to deliberate on action and reaction while acting and reacting. Thus, the actor will have to engage in retrospective sense making as he goes along, re-experiencing the meaning of previous actions, sometimes even in a setting where retrospection takes place almost simultaneously with action and reaction (Weick et al., 2005).

The second challenge is about diversity of thought. The life science initiative actors collaborate on the basis of different professional identities, potentials for influencing the course of events, and perceptions of what the project must achieve and how it can be achieved. They represent different thought worlds or interpretive schemes which they must bridge in order to facilitate collaboration (Baunsgaard & Clegg, 2013). Some of the actors will focus on how the project activities contribute to research and create research opportunities, while others will focus on increases in therapeutic efficiency, economic activities, and job creation, or compliance with administrative and political guidelines. Each of these interpretive schemes represents a singular rationality which must be tested against each other in order to arrive at consensus. As rationality is contextually embedded in functional and political interests, and in opportunities for influencing the course of events, the interplay between rationalities will be a process of rationalization invoking certain purposes, decisions and actions backed by the degree of influence of the actor in question (Flyvbjerg, 1998). The process of rationalization will be critical to how collaboration evolves and joint interpretations flourish.

4. The first steering committee meeting

The first steering committee meeting opens by the presentation of a telecare project supplemented by a video film designed for describing and branding the project in question. The presentation is actually item 4 at the agenda for the meeting, but has been put forward. The presenter is a university researcher who has been invited to the steering committee meeting for that purpose. The way in which the project is presented is very much focused on the research processes and results involved in the project. The project is met by appraisal from the university hospital, the representative of which underlines the importance of branding the life science initiative and the regional authorities in a way where the telecare capabilities within the region appear as outstanding. In general, the mood at the meeting appears cheerful and optimistic, and the participants join forces in elaborating on how the branding can be improved. At one point of time, the chairman of the steering committee who is also an influential representative of the regional authorities emphasizes that the video film also mentions two additional projects of national

interest and calls for a more balanced video presentation with less emphasis on research processes and results. While this causes some demur on behalf of the presenter, the chairman continues to emphasize the job creating obligations of the life science initiative, and the presenter replies by telling about ongoing interactions between researchers and companies within her project. The chairman concludes the presentation by returning to item 1 which is about the progression of the life science initiative.

An experienced and productive researcher who is in charge of the daily running of the initiative and the utilization of funding gives an account of what has happened so far during 2013. He describes the progression of the initiative as steady and promising and, furthermore, pays credit to the administrative liaison between the university and the regional authorities. A specific project is widely discussed by the attendants at the meeting, mostly out of interest. Subsequently, an exchange of opinions is opened. The university hospital representative, who is also in charge of the research policy and programming at the university hospital, is not impressed by the progression so far and feels that the university hospital is a net contributor to the initiative, and that most of the activities are projects which are being attributed to the initiative without benefitting from the initiative. By and large, he fails to see what the initiative actually is achieving. Some discussion with the researcher in charge emanates, and the university hospital representative is backed by the university representative (a Dean) who emphasizes that the partners in the initiative need to form a joint understanding of what the initiative is about. Subsequently, the chairman calls for attention on how to improve collaboration which involves private companies. The university hospital representative describes how milieus at the university hospital, when cooperating with private companies, continuously are asked by the private companies how and with what the life science initiative can contribute to the development of the projects and the companies, and an administrative liaison officer from the regional authorities supportively tells that the regional authorities share this experience. The chairman airs his concern about the progression of collaboration with private companies, and calls for the establishment of joint ownership of the life science initiative, which is supported by the university hospital representative. At this point, the discussion peters out, and the researcher in charge gradually turns to more neutral subjects. The attendants at the meeting gradually join in, and for some time a specific project is neutrally discussed in some detail. Subsequently, the nationwide collaboration with companies is addressed, and accounts of how it is used form the basis for exchange of ideas and viewpoints where all attendants are eager to be supportive. It all ends up with a suggestion that the contact information and opportunities of the nation-wide collaboration shall appear at the initiative's website. The researcher in charge is somewhat hesitant, as he fears that it may involve competencies being shipped out of the region, but this concern is kindly dismissed by the others. Item 1 is concluded by an administrative account of the conditions on which the funding of the initiative has been granted, and a status of the economic affairs of the initiative.

The rest of the meeting is quite calm. The attendants constructively discuss how the municipalities can be brought on board and involved in activities. Future activities are being addressed, and the chairman

concludes that the steering committee must meet more frequently in order to keep track of what is happening.

It appears that the guiding theme of the steering committee meeting is confusion and even conflicts on what the initiative is about, which benefits are involved, and how they come about. The initial presentation actually sets the agenda in the sense that it becomes the starting point for a discussion on the prioritization of collaboration with private companies. The first round of data formation indicates that centrally placed interviewees feel that there might be too much emphasis on long term research and too little attention paid to medium term research and collaboration with private companies. This is actually the theme that emanates from the discussion of the presentation and the subsequent exchange of views. It is quite clear from the discussion that the university hospital finds it hard to identify with the initiative, and that the regional authorities are dissatisfied with the prospects of economic development. The basic point of view underlying the various discussions is that joint ownership of the initiative has not been established, and this calls for more attention, backed by increased involvement of the steering committee.

5. In search for consensus and joint interpretive schemes

From a triple helix point of view, the role of the steering committee is that of an Innovation Organizer which may become an interpretive forum where partners can create meaning by negotiations and translations. This role is actually quite necessary, as one of the main problems occurring at the first steering committee meeting seems to be a lack of joint interpretation and thus joint ownership of the initiative. The lack of a common understanding is underlined by the fact that the focal attendants bring different agendas and roles to the meeting. The chairman needs to focus on the economic and social development to which the initiative can contribute, while the university hospital representative is inclined to focus on how the initiative can benefit medium term research, especially as the university hospital is heavily engaged in collaboration with private companies. The researcher in charge of the project has a long term research focus as his predominant point of departure, although he is also focused on collaboration with private companies, while the university representative (actually his Dean) feels inclined to focus on a more inclusive position. They all feel impelled to pursue their individual agendas while at the same time aiming for common grounds.

At a system level, we might describe the situation as one where an organization needs to be highly differentiated in order to cope with a complex environment, thus creating a need of integration (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). The integrative mechanism in the present case is the establishment of joint interpretation where content of meaning is externalized among attendants in order to become internalized through various processes of socialization and codification (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). The main obstacle to this kind of objectification process is that the attendants need to balance a diversity of agendas

in order to arrive at a “meta-agenda”, something which might not easily be arrived at without the exercise of rationalization based on power differentials.

During the first steering committee meeting, three types of power differentials occur. The chairman uses his position as chairman and important representative of the regional authorities to pursue the prioritization of an objective which he feels has not been sufficiently observed in the activities so far. In doing so, he employs both suppression and assertion at some points of time, however keeping a civil and balanced tone of voice. The university hospital representative is more direct, as he argues on the basis of the importance which the university hospital plays, both in terms of the amount of projects which may be part of the initiative and in terms of providing critical mass to testing, prototyping, and register based research. The university representative is more subtle, aiming at bridging conflicting point of views in a way which is loyal to both the researchers of the university and the extra-university partners. Together, these different approaches form a formidable pressure on the researcher in charge for aligning with the time horizons, success parameters, logics of governance, and spatial interpretations of the extra-university partners.

The process which takes place during the first steering committee meeting is endowed with actions normally occurring when managers have to deal with the type of potential conflicts described earlier. According to Jarzabkowski et al. (2013), such potential conflicts⁴ will be met by a mix of splitting, suppressing, opposing, and adjusting responses. A splitting response involves some kind of compartmentalization where opposing elements are confined within separate organizational spaces, while an adjusting response results in opposing elements being mutually accommodated. A suppressing response simply means that one side of the opposing elements is dominated or removed, while an opposing response involves direct confrontations leading to the maintenance of status quo. The first steering committee meeting had moments of opposing and suppressing response, especially at the beginning and during the middle of the meeting, but gradually developed into an accommodating mode, especially as the researcher in charge gradually focused more on meeting the extra-university partners on common grounds. However, issues were not resolved. Thus, the main impression from the first steering committee meeting was that the formation of an Innovation Organizer role was still incipient.

⁴ Jarzabkowski et al. (2013) discuss how various paradoxes are resolved, or not resolved, in organizations. They define a paradox as referring to “contradictory yet interrelated elements of organization that seem logical in isolation but inconsistent and oppositional in conjunction and yet persistent over time” (ibid., p. 245). Although the potential conflicts described in section 3 reminds of contradictory yet interrelated elements which seem logic in their own right, the term “paradox” does not seem to fit the present case, since it bears the connotation of something more complex and difficult to solve than the conflicts in question.

6. The second steering committee meeting

The second steering committee meeting is more dramatic and loaded with conflicts than the previous meeting. Once again, the meeting starts with a presentation of a project – this time a newly established spin-off – followed by an account from the researcher in charge on objectives and plans which have been revised and made more transparent and specific, and on successful activities which have occurred since the last meeting. He is supplemented by his administrative liaison officer telling that the onboarding of the municipalities within the region is eminent. It appears that the university drivers of the initiative are eager to show progress and accommodation on issues which were raised at the previous meeting. However, following upon an account of how funding has been spent so far, the university representative supported by the chairman raises extensive criticism on how the funding has been allocated to projects so far. The main line of criticism is that the principles of allocation and the administrative procedures carrying out allocation have not been transparent, and that the final allocation seems to benefit some research milieus more than others. Two lines of concern are raised, i.e. that the steering committee must be more involved in the guidelines for allocation, e.g. by forming an advisory board, and that the application procedures must not be more favorable to some than others. The researcher in charge takes a defensive stance, but eventually agrees to apply changes. During the discussion, it appears that a basic concern of the chairman is that a mid-term external evaluation of the project has taken place, and he expects the evaluation to come up with a number of recommendations regarding the necessity of more clear objectives and milestones focusing on success parameters within the project period, and criticizing the guidelines and procedures for allocating money among the projects. He argues that the steering committee must prepare corrective actions, and concludes that these actions must take into account that the members of the steering committee are not yet in agreement on the success parameters of the initiative. He calls for an increased focus on this issue, and it is clear that he expects corrective actions to be ready when the steering committee meets a month ahead in order to discuss the mid-term external evaluation. The discussion now cools down, as the meeting focuses on future plans which are calmly discussed, and where ideas are exchanged. However, even though the researcher in charge tries to avoid further discussion of the allocation of funding across projects, the discussion reappears when the chairman leaves the meeting in order to attend another meeting. This time the discussion is opened up by a representative of a large international corporation, who is a regular member of the steering committee, but was absent at the first meeting. He questions the success of the initiative so far and calls for more commitment on behalf of the university and the university hospital concerning collaboration with private companies. A detailed discussion on various examples of collaboration occurs, and the discussion takes the form of a committed exchange of ideas and experiences, and various pathways to enhanced collaboration. Gradually the discussion turns into how the initiative can be maintained after the project period has ended, to some extent stimulated by an account of a new plan for regional development which the regional authorities will release shortly. The meeting ends with a general agreement

among the attendants that the initiative is too important to stop when the project terminates, and all voice commitment to engage in activities which will carry the initiative on.

7. Consensus through conflicts and arrest:

The main impression from the first half of the second steering committee meeting is that the pressure on the part of the university in charge of the initiative for aligning with the extra-university partners continues in a fashion where opposition leads to accommodation. However, the most striking aspect of the meeting is that the nature of the meeting changes completely after the chairman has left. The impression from the recording of the meeting is that the chairman's very direct formulation of the ongoing disagreement on (or perhaps confusion about) the success parameters ignites a liberated and constructive discussion on how the initiative can be enhanced, and by what means the initiative can be brought to sustain after the project period has terminated. With inspiration from Greig et al. (2012), this may be described as a kind of disruption creating an arresting moment where the attendants engage in active and open reflection on how to create a joint background that opens up new opportunities.⁵ The arresting moment comes about as the existence of disagreement is openly addressed, to an important extent caused by an external event in the form of a critical external evaluation. In the present context, the external evaluation is a significant force of change since it is based on the conditions associated with the external funding which form a powerful heuristic for carrying out activities within the initiative.

The outcome of the arresting moment is very clear at the third steering committee meeting, which is devoted to a discussion of the external evaluation report, but also marks that the municipalities within the region finally are on board. Although the meeting opens with a number of defensive reactions to the report and the evaluation process, there is a general agreement that the steering committee needs to focus on strategic aspects which can support the initiative being sustained after the project period. The meeting is characterized by a constructive exchange of ideas and points of view, as the recommendations aired in the evaluation report is accounted for and discussed, and all attendants participate in showing how the partners they represent can be fully integrated in the initiative and the recommendations met on the initiative's terms. During this meeting, the steering committee gradually manifests itself as the Innovation Organizer necessary to bridge the inherent potentials for conflict and the main impression is that the discussions and exchange of ideas takes place in an atmosphere of trust-based relations across thought worlds, thus handling the two main challenges of the attendants described earlier.

⁵ Greig et al. (2012) are inspired by especially Cunliffe (2001), Shotter & Cunliffe (2003), and Chia & Holt (2008).

8. Conclusion

From the point of view that a triple helix initiative requires a clear commitment to a transparent purpose by the partners involved, the life science triple helix initiative analyzed in the present paper was slow to take off. Initially, it was primarily driven by an action oriented research milieu which had ideas of promoting research facilitated by creating a region-wide infrastructure of innovation which could result in new business opportunities and the attraction of foreign companies in order to stimulate social and economic development within the region in question. To some extent the means of stimulating social and economic development were also means of enhancing research funding and opportunities. At the outset, the partners needed were not really in place, and the partners who became involved had difficulties in grasping the foundation of the initiative and, furthermore, found it difficult to comprehend how the initiative would benefit them. In effect, a number of potentials for conflict were present, and the core actors faced challenges of establishing trust and bridging thought worlds. These tensions were aggravated as the project, which were supposed to be the financial foundation of the initiative, had difficulties in meeting the conditions of finance with the effect that funding was not really in place before the project was half way through its period of time. During an intense series of steering committee meetings, disagreements on the interpretation of the initiative became more and more open, and the potentials for conflict were handled by processes of opposing and suppressing response which gradually evolved into an accommodating mode, to some extent stimulated by the occurrence of power differentials. Gradually, the relationships within the steering committee approached an arresting moment caused by openness about the fact that the actors were in disagreement and by the advent of an external stimulus in the form of a powerful heuristic for how to continue the initiative. The arresting moment led the steering committee to an open and constructive reflection which laid the foundation for a consensus bridging conflicts and thought worlds. Besides reflecting that the actors gradually were taking in the perspective of each other, the evolution of consensus also reflected necessity, i.e. that consensus was needed in order to complete the project period successfully and to ensure the sustainment of the initiative.

Three lessons for triple helix practice may be learned from this case.

First, problems were caused because the full partnership and the paradigmatic foundation of the initiative were not in place before the project carrying the initiative was started. Initiation of the initiative became part of the project period, thus forcing the organization of the initiative to take place as a diverse set of activities were carried out by actors which acted more or less independently of each other. The obvious conclusion is that partners need to be in place before activities really take off, and that there must be a joint focus on benefits and achievements in conjunction with an effective administrative set-up.

Second, the actors involved must consciously be aware that even if a paradigmatic foundation of the initiative is in place, the group of core actors will still have to build trusting relations based on overt commitment. In the present case, the core actors were familiarized through previous activities and experiences, but still had to learn how to collaborate on the initiative in question. To some extent, the steering committee leading the initiative went through a process of group development where they had to perform while developing the norms guiding their performance and establishing their relative positions.⁶ The peak of this process occurred as an arresting moment evolved. In effect, building trusting relations based on overt commitment may be facilitated if the core actors consciously strive to create arresting moments that qualify the paradigmatic foundation of their activities. External evaluations may be used as occasions for creating arresting moments, which requires the core actors to approach evaluation as an opportunity for reflection and open exchange.

Finally, power differentials will come into motion as tensions occur and conflict arises. Unless recognized by the actors, the exercise of power differentials is bound to disturb the “mix of top-down and bottom up processes” which Etzkowitz & Ranga (2010, p. 17) describe as the foundation for the interpretative forum advocated in this paper. In effect, a triple helix initiative may function more successfully if a clear recognition among core actors of the existence of power differentials and the limits for their use enters the paradigmatic foundation of the initiative.

⁶ This may be compared to Tuckman’s idea of the forming-storming-norming-performing sequence of group development (Tuckman, 1965; Tuckman & Jensen, 1977; Bonebright, 2010), however with the qualification that the steering committee was continuously shifting among the stages, indicating that the stages do not appear as a linear sequence, but co-evolve.

References

- Alvesson, M. & K.L. Ashcraft (2012), "Interviews", ch. 14 in Symon, G. & C. Cassell (eds.), *Qualitative Organizational Research*, Bodmin: Sage.
- Baunsgaard, V.V. & S. Clegg (2013), "Walls or Boxes: The Effects of Professional Identity, Power and Rationality on Strategies for Cross-Functional Integration", *Organization Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 9, pp. 1299-1325.
- Belkhdja, O. & R. Landry (2007), "The Triple-Helix collaboration: Why do researchers collaborate with industry and government? What are the factors that influence the perceived barriers?", *Scientometrics*, Vol. 70, No. 2, pp. 301-332.
- Bonebright, D.A. (2010), "40 years of storming: a historical review of Tuckman's model of small group development", *Human Resource Development International*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 111-120.
- Campbell, E.G., J.B. Powers, D. Blumenthal & B. Biles (2004), "Inside the Triple Helix: Technology Transfer And Commercialization In The Life Sciences", *Health Affairs*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 64-76.
- Chia, R. & R. Holt (2008), "On managerial knowledge", *Management Learning*, Vol. 39, No. 2, pp. 141-158.
- Clark, B.R. (1998), *Creating Entrepreneurial Universities. Organisational Pathways of Transformation*, Oxford: Pergamon and Elsevier Science.
- Clark, B.R. (2004), *Sustaining Changes in Universities: Continuities in Case Studies and Concepts*, Maidenhead: Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.
- Cunliffe, A.L. (2001), "Managers as practical authors: Reconstructing our understanding of management practice", *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 351-371.
- Edquist, C. (2005), "Systems of Innovations. Perspectives and Challenges", ch. 7 in Fagerberg, J., D.C. Mowery & R.R. Nelson (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Innovation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Etzkowitz, H. (2003), "Research Groups as 'Quasi-Firms': The Invention of the Entrepreneurial University", *Research Policy*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 109-121.
- Etzkowitz, H. (2004), "The Evolution of the Entrepreneurial University", *International Journal of Technology and Globalization*, Vol.1, No.1, pp. 64-77.
- Etzkowitz, H. & L. Leydesdorff (2000), "The Dynamics of Innovation: From National Systems and 'Mode 2' to a Triple Helix of University-Industry-Government Relations", *Research Policy*, Vol.29, No. 2, pp. 109-123.
- Etzkowitz, H. & M. Ranga (2010), "A Triple Helix System for Knowledge-based Regional Development: From 'Spheres' to 'Spaces'", paper presented at the *Triple Helix International Conference*, organised by the Triple Helix Association, Madrid, 20-22 October.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (1998), *Rationality and power: democracy in practice*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gjerding, A.N., C.P.M. Wilderom, S.P.B. Cameron, A. Taylor & K.-J. Scheunert (2006), "Twenty Practices of an Entrepreneurial University", *Higher Education Management and Policy*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 83-106.
- Greig, G., C. Gilmore, H. Patrick & N. Beech (2012), "Arresting moments in engaged management research", *Management Learning*, Vol.4, No. 3, pp. 267-285.
- Hitt, M., R.D. Ireland, M. Camp & D. Sexton, eds. (2002), *Strategic Entrepreneurship: Creating a New Mindset*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Håkansson, H. & I. Snehota (1995), *Developing relationships in business networks*, London: Routledge.
- Jacobsson, S. & E.P. Vico (2010), "Towards a systemic framework for capturing and explaining the effects of academic R&D", *Technology Analysis and Strategic Management*, Vol. 22, No. 7, pp. 765-787.
- Jarzabkowski, P., J.K. Lê & A.H. Van de Ven (2013), "Responding to competing demands: How organizing, belonging, and performing paradoxes co-evolve", *Strategic Organization*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 245-280.

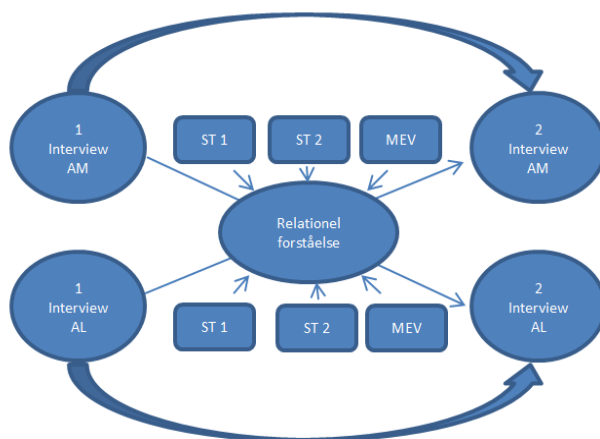
- Leydesdorff, L. & H. Etzkowitz (1996), "Emergence of a Triple Helix of University-Industry-Government Relations", *Science and Public Policy*, Vol. 23, No.5, pp. 279-286.
- Leydesdorff, L. & G. Zawdie (2010), "The triple helix perspective of innovation systems", *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, Vol. 22, No. 7, pp. 789-804.
- Lundvall, B.-Å., ed. (1992), *National systems of innovation: toward a theory of innovation and interactive learning*, London: Pinter.
- Maassen, P. & J.P. Olsen, eds. (2007), *University Dynamics and European Integration*, Dordrecht: Springer.
- Mohrman, S.A., C.B. Gibson & A.M. Mohrman Jr. (2001), "Doing research that is useful to practice: A model and empirical exploration", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp. 357-375.
- Nelson, R.R., ed. (1993), *National Innovation Systems. A Comparative Analysis*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Nonaka, I. & H. Takeuchi (1995), *The knowledge-creating company*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Olsen, J.P. (2005), *The institutional dynamics of the (European) University*, Working Paper No. 15, Oslo: Centre for European Studies, The University of Oslo.
- Shotter, J. & A.L. Cunliffe (2003), "Managers as practical authors: Everyday conversations for action", pp. 15-37 in Holman, D. & R. Thorpe (eds.), *Management and Language: The Manager as a Practical Author*, London: Sage.
- Slaughter, S. & L.L. Leslie (1997), *Academic Capitalism: Politics, Policies, and the Entrepreneurial University*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Tuckman, B.W. (1965), "Developmental sequence in small groups", *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 65, No. 6, pp. 384-99.
- Tuckman, B.W. & M.A. Jensen (1977), "Stages of small-group development revisited", *Group & Organization Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 419-27.
- Weick, K.E., K.M. Sutcliffe & D. Obstfeld (2005), "Organizing and the Process of Sensemaking", *Organization Science*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 409-421.

Den relationelle etableringsproces blandt kendte aktører

Mit fokus i denne del af paperet, er at undersøge muliggørelsen af indtrædelsen, i nye relationer set ud fra et socialkonstruktionistisk perspektiv. Fokus vil være på den relationelle etableringsproces mellem kendte aktører, i en ny organisatorisk kontekst og i dette tilfælde i Life Science Initiativet. Udgangspunktet tages i to af aktørerne fra organisationen, som jeg har valgt at betegne AL og AM, og ønsket er i denne del af paperet at illustrere og diskutere processen, aktørerne gennem det sidste årstid har gennemgået. En proces, hvor jeg har interviewet dem individuelt, og observeret dem på to styregruppemøder, samt i fremlæggelsen af midtvejsevalueringen for aktørerne i styregruppen, og afslutningsvis interviewet dem begge individuelt som en opsamling på processen.

Perspektivet i dette paper tager udgangspunkt i en pragmatisk fortolkning af praksis og teori, forstået på den måde, at fokus er rettet på at forstå begivenhederne, der udspilles i denne kontekst og dermed i den pågældende organisation. Der vil være tale om en konstruktionsproces, hvor de to aktører gennem kommunikation etablere forståelse for hinanden, deres rolle samt positionen, de hver især indtager og indtræder med, i denne organisation.

Figur 1 nedenfor, er med til at illustrere processen for den relationelle meningskabende etablering, mellem de to aktører AL og AM. Figuren illustrerer konstruktionen af forløbet, for denne empirigenerering:



Figur 1: Processen for empirigenereringen

ST 1, ST 2 skal forstås som Styregruppemøderne, hvor aktørerne AM og AL er blevet observeret. MEV betyder Midtvejsevalueringen, en evaluering af projektets opnåelse af egen og bevillingsbeskrivelsens målsætning for projektet. Til MEV mødet var Styregruppen samlet for at drøfte evalueringen og tilkendegive om der var enighed eller modstrid, mod udfaldet af evalueringen. Inden de to styregruppemøder er AM og AL blevet individuelt interviewet, og efter

MEV er denne proces blevet fulgt op med endnu et interview. Det tidsmæssige perspektiv strækker sig over en periode, på et års tid.

Casen

Styregruppen består af ti deltager, og jeg har valgt at rette et fokus på to af deltagerne som er centrale, i forhold til Life Science initiativet, ud fra deres position på universitetet og i regionen. Grunden til jeg har valgt netop at tage udgangspunkt i disse to aktører, er at de som udgangspunkt arbejder med en meget forskellig tilgang til Life Science projektet. Dels interessen og deltagelsen i projektet er af forskellig karakter, men også et tidsmæssige og prioriteringsmæssigt perspektiv, bære præg af vidt forskellig tilgange, muligheder og begrænsninger.

AL og AM kender hinanden fra tidligere relationer, og har dermed en forståelse og erfaring der er funderet og udspringer fra deltagelsen, i andre kontekster, diskurser, samt strukturelle vilkår. En relation der er med til at lette processen, men også en relation der medfører forskellig taget-for-givet forestilling om deres roller, samt forventninger til hinanden kompetencer og deltagelsen i denne organisation.

AL er tilknyttet projektet på fuldtid, hvorimod AM varetager opgaver for projektet samtidigt med, at AM skal løse en lang række opgaver i regionsammenhæng, som ikke har noget med Life Science projektet at gøre. AM er altså ikke beskæftiget med Life Science på fuld tid og må gang på gang ”finde projektet frem”, og springe ind i opgaverne på ny. AM har også en anden meget svær opgave, der består i at ”klæde” formanden for projektet på, til at varetage opgaven som formand. Dels er opgaven svær, fordi der er tale om en kompleks proces, hvor AM skal omsætte og oversætte viden til formanden, og svær fordi AM til tider har svært ved at skabe en forståelse for selve projektet.

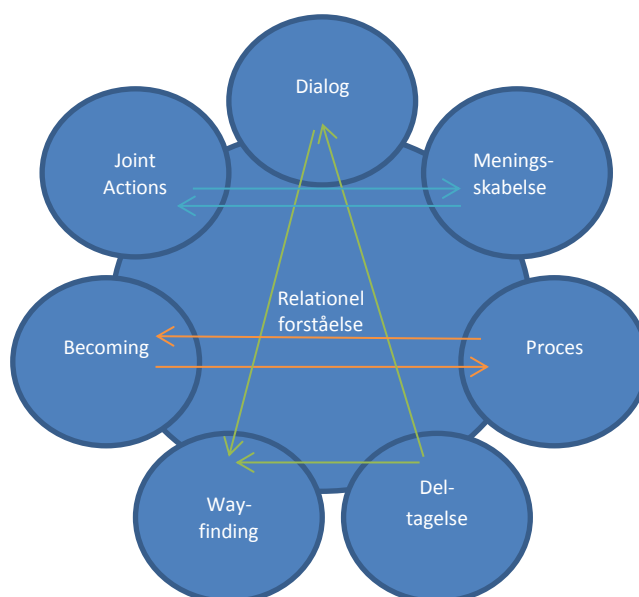
AL derimod er dybt involveret i projektet på fuldtid og til dels overtid. Life Science initiativet er til tider enormt omfattende og krævende. Dels har AL kæmpet en lang og sej kamp med at få alle bevillingsskrivelserne på plads, for at sikre projekts opstart. En bevilling der, jf. afsnit 1 Introduction: The case of the life science initiative, har været længe undervejs. I de første to år af projektperioden, har der været en konstant pres på at levere resultater der er afgørende for Life Science projektet i søgen på, at opnå de opstillede milestones. AL beskriver de første to år af projektperioden, som en lang og hård proces, der har været præget af afrapporteringer, evalueringer og etableringen af fundamentet for organisationen. Et fundament der er underlagt en konstant udvikling og derfor gang på gang må konstrueres ny. Dels fordi, der kommer ny aktører med i projektet – aktører for hvem, Life Science initiativet ikke umiddelbart giver mening. At få aktørerne engageret og involveret i projektet gennem deltagelse og forståelse for Life Science initiativet, er en opgave AL prioritere meget højt.

Men det er også en opgave der til tider er en lang og sej kamp – for hvorfor er det så svært at forstå hvordan denne organisation kan være med til at gøre en forskel og bidrage til erhvervsudviklingen i Nordjylland? Hvorfor er dette ikke indlysende for aktørerne fra universitetet, universitetshospitalet, kommunerne og regionen at Life Science initiativet er centrum for viden og udvikling? Hvorfor er det så svært at få forskellige organisationer til at arbejde sammen om et fælles projekt?

Jeg har valgt aktørerne AM og AL, dels grundet deres forskellige tilgange til projektet, men også grundet at de placeringsmæssigt befinder sig i hver deres organisation. AL på universitet og AM sidende i regionen. Kontrasten, forståelsen, involveringen og deltagelsen er af meget forskellig karakter, hvilket jeg finder interessant. Interessant fordi det kan være med til at tegne et billede af den kompleksitet der opstår når vi forsøger at finde vej sammen gennem dialog.

Den teoretiske ramme

Jeg ønsker at zoom ind på centrum i figur 1, for at undersøge hvad som der udspiller sig omkring etableringen af den relationelle forståelse. Til at kunne undersøge dette, knytter der sig en lang række begreber, som jeg med figur 2, ønsker at illustrere.



Figur 2: Relationel forståelse (inspireret af Larsen & Rasmussen 2013)

Jeg ønsker med figur 2, at illustrere den teoretiske begrebsramme der danner grundlag for denne diskussion og analyse af etableringen af relationel forståelse i organisationen. Jeg vælger at rette et specifikt fokus på *wayfinding gennem dialog* (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013). Til at analysere dialogen vælger jeg at inddrage begreber såsom; *centrifugal & centripetal*, *polyfoni & heteroglossi* (Bakhtin 1981, 1986), *fælles reservoir* (Bohm 1996), samt *ressourcefuldsamtalepartner* (Shotter & Cunliffe 2003) og *witness thinking* (Shotter 2005, 2010, 2011). At finde vej gennem dialogen forudsætter *deltagelse* og til at forklare denne har jeg valgt at anvende Etienne Wengers tanker om etablering af praksisfællesskaber, med særligt vægt på *deltagelse* gennem *gensidigt engagement* (Wenger 1998) og *joint actions* (Shotter 2005), der forudsætter en processuel *meningsforhandling* (Wenger 1998, Larsen & Rasmussen 2013, Gergen 2010, 2010, 2007). Det er mellem aktørerne at meningsforhandlingen og den meningsskabende proces relationelt etableres, som et udtryk for en sammenhæng mellem aktørernes handlinger og opnåede forståelse, når denne viden omsættes til de

efterfølgende handlinger. Der trækkes en relationel tråd, som kan trække spor tilbage til de forudgående handlinger. Spor der ifølge Tim Ingold (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013) kan betegnes *meshwork*.

Et centralt element som overordnede ramme for analysen, er den forståelsesmæssige tilgang der tillægges et *becoming perspektiv*, hvilket vil sige at organisationen forstås som noget der hele tiden er under udvikling. Der vil være tale om konstant konstruktion og rekonstruktion af organisationen, gennem relationel meningsforhandling og skabelse mellem aktørerne (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013, Chia 1995, Weick & Quinn 1999, Gergen & Thatchenkery 2004, Tsoukas & Chia 2002). En *proces* hvor aktørerne gennem meningsfulde handlinger, søger at forstå og realisere organisationens mål.

Begreberne i modellen er centrale i forhold til konstruktionsprocessen der går på at etablere relationer og forståelse i organisationer. Modellen illustrerer en dynamisk organisationsforståelse, som en proces der kontinuerligt udvikler sig, gennem de ændringer der må forekomme i hverdagens praksis, men også fra de omgivelser organisationen befinder sig i. Ændringer, forudsætninger eller vilkår der kan være med til at påvirke og skabe en ramme for organisationens medlemmer, at bevæge sig i.

Den første dialog

Jeg vil i følgende afsnit beskrive det første møde med de to deltagere AM og AL. Som tidligere nævnt, interviewede jeg dem individuelt, og gav dem begge mulighed for, gennem en semistruktureret interviewtilgang, at sætte egne ord på deres rolle i organisationen. Hensigten var at lade dem vise mig Life Science projektet, set ud fra deres synspunkt og ud fra de fortællinger som de fandt relevant at fremhæve. Jeg ønsker at lade fortællingerne beskrive mit første møde med AM og AL, samt den første indsigt i Life Science projektet.

ALs historie

AL tager imod mig i huset hvor Life Science holder til og fører mig til møderummet hvor kaffen er stillet frem. AL er meget imødekommende og vi springer hurtigt i gang med interviewet, hvor AL tager fat i at fortælle mig om projektets tilblivelse. I den guidede tour gennem Life Science verden, bliver jeg præsenteret for hele projektets grundtanke, hvordan tanken til dette projekt er opstået og hvorfor Life Science kan være med til at gøre en forskel og differentiere sig fra andre lignende projekter. Jeg fornemmer straks AL passion for dette projekt – det er som et hjertebarn AL skal beskytte, passe og pleje. Life Science en stor del af ALs identitet, dels fordi AL er tanken, grundlæggeren og stifteren, bag projektet men også fordi AL er involveret i alle processer vedr. dette projekt. For AL er projektets formål indlysende og det handler derfor om for AL at få Life Science til at fremstå lige så indlysende overfor de andre aktører der deltagerer i dette projekt. Dialogen med AL forløber let og AL er meget villig til at tale om Life Science, men jeg fornemmer samtidigt at der mellem AL og jeg ikke er etableret et tillidsforhold der gør til at dialogen tegner et overordnet billede af projektet. De "virkelige" udfordringer og bekymringer bliver ikke vendt i denne dialog, men dialogen forbliver på et plan hvor vi ikke sammen dykker ned i sagens kerne. Jeg går derfra med en god indsigt i projektets grundtanker, men de reelle udfordringer og bekymringer er i denne dialog ikke blevet berørt.

AMs historie

Jeg møder AM på regionen og vi går sammen op på AMs kontor. Inden da smutter vi en tur forbi kaffeautomaten, så er vi klar. Jeg spiller bolden til AM, der griber og går straks i gang med at fortælle historien. En historie der tegner et billede af en person med stor erfaring indenfor projektledelse og med fødderne solidt plantet i den nordjyske muld hvor AM gennem mange år har været, en del af den regionale udvikling. AM er ikke bange for at involvere mig i tankerne og frustrationerne for projekt Life Science. For der er ingen tvivl om at AM har svært ved at forstå rollen, positionen og bidraget, fra regionens side, til Life Science. Som AM ser det er grundlaget for projektet ikke klart defineret og det skaber problemer. Ikke blot for AM, men også for aktørerne fra universitetshospitalet og kommunerne, da de har svært ved at se hvordan de skal kunne drage nytte af og bidrage til projektet. AM efterlyser den manglende fælles forståelse og det fælles grundlag, samt en målsætning med hvor de sammen skal bære projektet hen. For AM er retningen ikke oplagt, da der er mange udfordringer der ikke er blevet taget i betragtning og overvejet. Ifølge AM er der for mange uafklaret ting der er med til at sløre vejen mod mål og en stor udfordring for AM er at finde ind i rollen og dette efterlade AM med følelsen af at selv skulle skabe den.

De to historier fra møderne med AL og AM, er med til at illustrere hvor forskellig to møder, med det sammen set up, kan udspille sig. Begge fik muligheden for at fortælle deres historie. Udfaldet, prioritering og fokusområderne for dialogen var meget forskellige. Jeg fornemmede en åbenhed og tillid ved besøget hos AM, der dykkede ind i projektet og pegede på konkrete udfordringer, ja så var billedet helt anderledes i besøget hos AL. AL var mere optaget af at ”forsvare og retfærdiggøre” projektet, som om jeg var en del af evalueringsudvalget, der skulle afsige en dom over Life Science. AL holdte under hele mødet kortene tæt til kroppen, og jeg gik derfra med en følelse af at AL skulle se mig an, før jeg blev lukket helt ind i sagens kerne.

Etableringen af relationen gennem deltagelse på ST1, ST2 og MEV

Første skridt på vej mod etablering af relationen indebærer deltagelse mellem AL og AM. En deltagelse som finder sted dels på styregruppemøderne (ST1, ST2 og MEV) men også gennem en række administrative møder mellem AL og AM. Men hvad vil det så sige at deltage i denne forbindelse? Møderne giver AM og AL mulighed for at være med til at konstruere organisationen, og dermed skabe bevidsthed for organisationen gennem handlinger. Handlinger der giver mening gennem deltagelse og gennem enactment (Weick 2005), hvilket vil sige at AM og AL, bliver deltagere i en konstruktionsproces, hvor de gennem sensemaking får mulighed for at skabe en sammenhæng mellem handling og mening (Weick 2005). Meningsskabelsen er en proces, hvor AM og AL i relation med de andre aktører i styregruppen relationelt skaber sammenhæng mellem de handlinger de bliver præsenteret for. En sammenhæng der giver AM og AL mulighed for efterfølgende at omsætte handlingerne til forståelige billeder, der kan være med til at koordinere handlingerne (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013).

Handling, sammenhæng og enactment (Weick 1995) er elementer i deltagelsesprocessen der netop finder sted på styregruppemøderne hvor både AM og AL deltagere. Deltagelse er både social og personlig, hvilket gør deltagelsen for AM og AL til en kompleks proces, der er indeholdt en kombination af dialog, tænkning, følelse og tilhørsforhold.

Ifølge Weick enacter individer det miljø som omgiver dem, ud fra et behov, der går på at finde en anden virkelighed, og indgå i denne virkelighed gennem forståelse. Set ud fra den mere relative tankegang, er enact en proces, hvor forløbet, og hvad der sker i forløbet, ikke er givet på forhånd, men formes og skabes løbende (Weick 2005). En proces hvor viden og erfaringerne deles, gennem dialog. En dialog, hvor AM og AL, bliver involveret og taget med på råd, hvor deltagerne i styregruppens meninger og holdninger bliver hørt. I styregruppen diskuteres der, hvad rent faktisk er muligt at udføre indenfor de givne rammer, vilkår og ressourcer i forhold til den bevillingsskrivelse som projektet er blevet tildelt.

Aktørerne i styregruppen deltager og enacter, hvor resultatet for udfaldet ikke er givet på forhånd, men der stilles et spørgsmål som aktørerne, gennem brug af hinandens viden og kompetencer på de gældende områder, søger at svare og finde løsninger på. Et spørgsmål, som ikke på forhånd har en brugbar løsning, for det handler om i styregruppen, at finde ud af, hvordan det er muligt, eller hvorfor det ikke er muligt, at føre de oprindelige overvejelser for Life Science initiativet, ud i livet.

Deltagelsens uformelle karakter kan blive upræcis, når underforståethed hæmmer koordinationen blandt aktørerne i styregruppen og mere specifik blandt AM og AL. Eller når lokaliteten er begrænset eller dens partialitet for smal, giver det mulighed for at tingsliggørelsen kan være med til at skabe mening og en fælles forståelse. Tingsliggørelsen som ifølge Wenger har betydning af en proces der former oplevelserne til objekter. Objekter der kan få oplevelserne i styregruppen til at stive i ”tingslighed” (Wenger 1998) og dermed skabe nødvendige fokuspunkter som meningsforhandlingen blandt aktørerne kan organisere sig om. Et fokus punkt der momentant giver AM og AL oplevelsen *collective mind*, og dermed fælles referencepunkter for den videre dialog som AM og AL drøfter uden for styregruppens fællesrum. Collective mind udspringer af handlingerne, der for aktørerne giver mening. Et begreb som kan kobles til Weicks begreb og tanker om *sensemaking*, der sammen med aktørenes måde at enacte i organisationen, er med til at skabe billeder af Life Science projektet (Weick 2005). *Enactment* er den forståelse – meningsdannelse, som præger den givne situation og i dette tilfælde styregruppemøderne, hvor dagsorden, evalueringsskrivelsen mv. har en afgørende betydning for konstruktionsprocessen som deltagerne er involveret og enacter i.

Weick peger på at:

”People create their environments as those environments create them”
(Weick 1995)

Hvilket vil sige, at Life Science ikke kan forstås på forhånd af AM og AL og de andre deltagere, og i den forbindelse kan Weicks tanker om begrebet enactment være med til at forklare, hvordan fortolkninger og handlinger muliggør og begrænser den mening, der kan skabes.

Enactment er ifølge Weick måden hvorpå vi agerer i verden, og den ageren er med til at tegne og beskrive de billeder som verden viser os, og det er individerne i relationen, der er aktive i skabelsen af omgivelserne (Weick 1995). Men det er ikke blot handlingerne, der er skabende af omgivelserne. Fortolkninger og forventninger blandt aktørerne har også en plads i den søgen på at opnå forståelse

og enact (Weick 1995). Netop forståelsen af enactment er derfor ikke kun et spørgsmål om at reagere på omgivelserne, da omgivelserne ligeledes bliver påvirket af reaktionen og relationen.

Meningsforhandlingen bliver en selvfølge i denne proces, for at sikre kontinuitet i meningerne gennem tid og rum. Det handler om AL og AM, at etablere en identitet, der er udviklet og konstitueret gennem deltagerrelationer med hinanden og med de andre aktører i styregruppen. Når AL og AM oplever gensidighed og denne gensidighed bliver genkendt i deltagelsen, så bliver de til en del af hinanden (Wenger 1998). Med gensidighed som begreb, rettes forståelsen mod en deltagelse i samtalen, baseret på en genkendelse af noget af dem selv, som de kan forholde sig til. Det er her gensidigheden kommer til udtryk, gennem den gensidige evne til at forhandle mening (Wenger 1998).

”Mening eksisterer hverken i os eller i verden, men i den dynamiske relation, som livet i verden udgør”
(Wenger 1998)

Deltagelse skal ikke misforstås og tolkes som samarbejde, men kan være mange forskellige former for relationer, som både kan være harmoniske, men lige såvel konfliktbetonede. Vi holder *ikke* holder op med at deltage, hvilket vil sige at forlades fællesskabet, forbliver vi en del af fællesskabet, da viden og forståelse generet er relationelt skabt og forbundet. Deltagelse rækker længere end, direkte engagementer i bestemte aktiviteter, med bestemte mennesker (Wenger 1998). Tilgangen til deltagelsen og viden der bringes ind i interaktionen, udspringer fra tidligere relationer. De tidligere relationer som AL og AM kender hinanden igennem, er derfor med til at skabe en forventning og forståelse for hinandens position, rolle og relationelle kompetencer. Relationelle kompetencer som AL og AM trækker på og bidrage med til projektet, og i sær når styregruppen er samlet og de indgår i dialogen hvor de sammen med den andre aktører, søger at etablere en fælles forståelse og skabe mening.

At finde vej og skabe mening gennem dialog

I de konstruktionistiske dialoger er fokuset ifølge Gergen, på relationer frem for det individuelle, for det som vi betragter som viden om verden, udspringer af relationerne og er ikke indlejret i individuelle bevidstheder og han peger på, at skabe forbindelse frem for isolation, og samhørighed frem for antagonisme (Gergen 2010). I søgen på at finde vej gennem dialog, ønsker jeg derfor at fremhæve begreber fra forskellige teoretikere, der kan være med til at illustrere AL og AM's dialog og meningskabelses proces i denne undersøgelse. Begreber der fremhæver interessante aspekter ved det at føre en dialog – for hvad er det rent faktisk der kan ske når AL og AM taler sammen og hvorfor er det indimellem så svært for dem at forstå hinanden? De taler jo det samme sprog, og kan vel godt blive enige om hvordan verden ser ud – eller kan de?

Det fælles reservoir

Bohms forståelse for begrebet dialog skal ses i et lidt bredere perspektiv og han tolker dialog som værende mening (Bohm 1996). Med denne tolkning af dialog, tillægger Bohm begrebet en forståelse for som værende meninger eller betydninger, der bevæger sig gennem noget der kan opfattes som,

en frit flydende strøm af meninger mellem mennesker. Det er gennem dialogen at AL og AM skaffer sig adgang til et større reservoir af fælles betydning (Bohm 1996). Det fælles reservoir af betydninger kan individet ikke få adgang til, da det ifølge Bohm, er helheden der organiserer delene, i modsætning til et forsøg på at trække delene sammen til en helhed (Bohm 1996). Dialogens formål er at komme ud over den enkeltes forståelse og dialogen muliggør, at de enkelte aktører opnår indsigt, der ikke vil kunne opnås individuelt. Det handler i dialogen derfor ikke om at vinde, for hvis vi gør det på den rigtige måde kan vi alle vinde (Bohm 1996).

Aktørerne er i stand til gennem reservoiret af fælles betydninger, at gennemgå en konstant og kontinuerlig udvikling og forandring. Formålet med dialog er, at afsløre det usammenhængende i vores tanker, så vi flytter os fra vores egen reference synspunkter til et fælles repertoire af forståelser, meninger og erfaringer (Bohm 1996). Med andre ord kan det siges, at gennem et fælles repertoire, kan AL og AM indhente de *slørede* eller *manglende* elementer i tankerne, og blive tryk med tankerne gennem en erkendelse heraf. Det er gennem dialogen at AL og AM kan blive iagttagere af deres egen tænkning ifølge Bohm. Samtidigt skal de være bevidste om at deres viden er funderet i et erfaringsgrundlag, samt formodninger og opfattelser som de gennem livet og i andre relationer, har etableret. Et erfaringsgrundlag der vil forsvare sig, når det bliver udfordret af andre syn og viden. Vi kan ikke lade være med at forsvare vores opfattelse af hvordan verden ser ud, når den bliver forstyrret og der bliver sat spørgsmålstegn herved. Billedet kan blive tillagt en ny betydning som måske nok kan syntes logisk i det umiddelbare, men betydningen heraf skal vi kunne forhold os til og omsætte den nye viden, før den bliver ”en ny måde at se verden på” og dermed en måde at tillægge den eksisterende viden en ny betydning (Bohm 1996).

Ytringen i dialogen er hos Bakhtin (1981 & 1986) yderst relationel, da den bygger på en forventning om en respons fra den anden part. Den responderende ytring bidrager til at forvandle samtalen fra at være en monolog til en dialog, i og med at ytringen betoner meningsskabelsen, der opnås gennem responsiv interaktion (Bakhtin 1986, Hersted, Svane & Schulze 2013).

For at samtalen mellem AL og AM kan opnå en karakter af dialog, betyder det, ifølge Bakhtin, at det der tale om, giver mening for samtalepartner. Det er dog ikke ensbetydende med, at de nødvendigvis er enige, men der vil være tale om en forståelse opnået gennem interaktionen. Forståelse, dels for ordenes betydning, og dels for at de fremførte ytringer ikke er endegyldige, men en fortløbende del af dialogprocessen mellem AL og AM (Bakhtin 1986). En proces, hvor meningen og forståelsen hele tiden skabes på ny og derfor ikke afsluttes med en endegyldig forståelse. Det handler om at skabe forståelse, og at meningen vokser frem i den responderende dialog mellem parterne med viden om, at de fremførte ytringer udspringer af tidligere relationer med andre samtalepartnere i andre kontekster.

Witness-thinking

Samtale og dialog er meget mere end udvekslinger af ord mellem AL og AM, samt aktørerne i styregruppen. Aktørerne i denne organisation er optaget af, at skabe gode relationer til aktørerne omkring sig, og kan udvikle relationelle kompetencer der er præget af tillid, nærvær og responsivitet. Det er gennem interaktionen mellem AL og AM at de skal søge indsigt i hinanden og på den måde etablere fundament for ’witness’-thinking. Witness-thinking kan være med til at

skabe et grundlag for AL og AM, til at blive ressourcefulde samtalepartnere (Shotter 2005, 2011, Shotter & Cunliffe 2003).

De mange stemmer i dialogen

Ifølge Bakhtin så kræver dialogen, at deltagerne er bevidste om, at deres syn og forståelser er i konstant forandring gennem interaktion og dialoger med andre (Jabri 2012, Bakhtin 1984). Dialogen mellem AL og AM vil være præget af heteroglossi, hvilket vil sige at dialogen vil blive konstrueret ud fra forskellige ideologier, tanker, værdier og den måde som AL og AM anvender sproget på (Bakhtin 1984). AL og AM skal ifølge Bakhtin ikke overbevise hinanden, men værdsætte heteroglossi i samtalen, da det kan være med til at skabe nye ideer og meninger, da heteroglossi vil indeholde centripetale (samlende) og centrifugale (spredende) kræfter. Kræfter som er i konstant interaktion og der vil være tale om en proces hvor ytringerne vil blive ping-ponget frem og tilbage og underlagt centripetale og centrifugale kræfter (Jabri 2012, Bakhtin 1981). Det vil med andre ord sige at i dialogen mellem AL og AM, vil deres ytringer konstant være med til at forme og omforme meningen, der opstår og udvikler sig gennem dialogen. Et andet vigtigt element i dialogen er den flerstemmighed – polyfoni, som AL og AM optræder med når de taler sammen (Bakhtin 1984). En polyfoni af stemmer som indeholder uoverensstemmende meninger og perspektiver der skal tages i betragtning. Stemmer der udspringer af omgivelserne og måske mere specifikt i AM tilfælde, fra formanden for styregruppen, som har en vis interesse i projektets søgen på at opnå succes, dels grundet det store beløb der er investeret i projektet, men også i forhold til at han søger svar. Så når AM går i dialog med AL vil det være med en flerstemmighed taler, og de spørgsmål eller kritiske øjne der rettes, udspringer fra stemmerne og meningene, omkring AM.

Joint-action

Shotter og Gergen retter fokus på det der opstår mellem mennesker i relationen mellem dem, hvilke vil sige at de begge indtager et becoming-perspektiv. Det vil med andre ord sige at meningen opstår i interaktionen mellem deltagerne og den koordinerede handling der etableres i interaktionen. Shotter betegner denne meningsetableringsproces som *joint-action*, da den udspringer af dialogen som der deltages i og hvor vi er med til at præge hinandens ytringer og identitet. AL og AM er ikke blot observatører af hinanden, men gennem dialogen og interaktionen er de med til at præge og påvirke hinanden. Så i stedet for at AM og AL betragter sig selv som værende isolerede individer lokaliseret i hver deres organisation – universitet og regionen, er de deltagere i sociale økologier der præges af dynamik og kompleksitet (Shotter 2005).

Vi kan forstå dialogens betydning og forudsætning, som værende afhængig af tillid og interaktion. Det er gennem tillid og dialogisk interaktion, at AM og AL kan åbne sig for hinanden og blive præsenteret for nye betydninger, nye syn og nye perspektiver i forhold deres allerede eksisterende viden. Tillid er med til at præge dialogens muligheder i en sådan grad, at uden tillid mellem AL og AM vil de ikke kunne åbne op for den andens meninger og synspunkter eller deres egne tanker og delagtiggøre den anden part heri.

Gennem dialogen kan AL og AM måske skabe en koordineret forståelse, men det bør ikke nødvendigvis være et mål, at de skal opnå enighed, da alsidighed og flerstemmighed – polyfoni, altid vil indfinde sig i en dialog og kan betragtes som forudsætninger for dialogen. Så i modsætning

til hvis der forsøges at overbevise hinanden om hvordan verden ser ud, set ud fra et mere individuelt perspektiv, kan indtrædelsen i relationen med bevidsthed om de relationelle perspektivers betydning være med til at AM og AL får mulighed for at nærme sig hinanden. Der vil være tale om en dialog, der kan være med til at skitsere verdensbillederne hvorfra erfaringerne hos AM og AL trækkes fra og dermed hjælpe til, at de sammen kan finde vej.

Meshwork og wayfinding

Netop erfaringerne, de daglige handlinger trækker spor og linjer med sig, hvilket kan betegnes som *meshwork* (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013). Meshwork er med til at illustrere den proces der ligger forud for handlingen, både fra de daglige opgaver, men også fra det erfaringsgrundlag som AM og AL trækker på. Ved at dykke ned og se nærmere på de spor og linjer som AM og AL relationelt har skabt, kan det blive muligt at skabe en forståelse for hvilken retning organisationen dagligt bevæger sig hen. Der er talen om en proces hvor AM og AL kontekstuel og relationelt finder vej (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013). Det vil være i processen, at AM og AL løbende skaber mening ved at være en del heraf, og ved at de bestræber sig på at forstå hvad der sker omkring dem, samtidigt med at de konstruere ny forståelse.

Ingold peger i denne forbindelse på at aktørerne i organisationen ikke følger en på forhånd fastlagt rute, men de ruten viser sig for dem imens de er på vej. Ingold anvender begrebet *wayfaring* til at skabe forståelse for denne proces (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013). Det er altså i processen at AM og AL konstruere viden om hvad det er som der sker i organisationen og hvordan de skal handle. Viden konstrueres relationelt gennem deltagelse og enactment i projektet og mening vil efterfølgende være med til, at udstikke en retning for aktørerne i Life Sciences, for de efterfølgende handlinger.

Verden omkring og verden i organisationen er kompleks og dynamisk, og kan derfor være meget svært at forudsige. Det handler derfor om *wayfinding* (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013). Life Science projektet bevæger sig ind i en fremtid som er ukendt for alle aktørerne, men undervejs i denne proces kan aktørerne gennem dialog, meningsskabelse og wayfinding skabe og konstruere brugbare billeder, der kan bruges kontinuerligt til at overbevise sig selv og aktørerne i styregruppen og omverden om, hvordan fremtidens verdensbillede ser ud for dette projekt (Larsen & Rasmussen 2013).

Den afsluttende dialog

Jeg ønsker at runde af med at fortælle endnu en historie – denne gang fra det afsluttende og opsummerende interview med begge aktører AM og AL. Historien skal endnu engang være med til at illustrere mit møde med dem begge og skabe en indsigt i hvad den proces som de har deltaget i, har haft af betydning for deres relationelle etablering og meningsskabelsen gennem dialogen.

ALs anden historie

Jeg møder igen AL i huset hvor Life Science holder til. Denne gang tog mødet en mere uformel karakter fra start, da vi placerede os på ALs kontor over en kop kaffe. Tilgangen til dette møde var for mig, at skabe indsigt i ALs mening, syn og holdning på, hvor Life Science projektet i det lille årstid har bevæget sig hen. Jeg ønskede at AL med egne ord, skulle beskrive processen som AL

havde oplevet den. Fra start fik jeg indtrykket af åbenhed og ærlighed. Ligeledes fik jeg en fornemmelse af tillid til mig som person, en tillid AL viste mig ved at fortælle mig om de personlige og følelsesmæssige udfordringer, som AL har gennemlevet.

Ved dette møde udtrykte AL forståelse for de andre aktørers, til tider manglende forståelse for projektet, men også for den, til tider manglende videndeling universitet, universitetshospitalet, regionen og kommunerne imellem. AL udtrykte også en forståelse for den kompleksitet det er, at bringe så mange forskellige aktører på banen, i håb om at de kan samles om et fælles projekt. AL har gennem deltagelsen, både med AM men også på styregruppemøderne, skabt indsigt i at ikke taler samme sprog, at aktørernes tilgang til projektet bunder i vidt forskellige tilgange, muligheder og vilkår for deres deltagelse.

AL har ligeledes etableret en forståelse for AMs rolle og position i projektet, samt måden hvorpå AM kan bidrage og lige såvel hvordan AL kan gøre nytte af AMs kompetencer og viden, på området omkring projektledelse. AL er i denne sammenhæng blevet bevidst om, hvorfor AM til tider har virket meget kritisk og stillet en masse spørgsmål, da det netop er AMs opgave at være den spørgende/kritiske instans, der har været igangsættende for en efterfølgende refleksion hos AL. En refleksion der er med til at AL er blevet bevidsthedsgjort om vigtigheden, at formulere projektets intention i relationen med de andre aktører, fremfor at agere ud fra en taget-for-givet forestilling om, at alle ser verden på den samme måde. AL kan se at relationerne mellem aktørerne i styregruppe langsomt etableres og danner grundlag for fremtidige samarbejdsaftaler.

Et andet og meget afgørende punkt er den netop overstået midtvejsevaluering, hvor jeg fornemmer at AL har været meget spændt på udfaldet af. Ikke blot udfaldet af resultatet, men også fremlæggningen for styregruppen. AL ånder nærmest lettet op nu hvor evalueringen er overstået og vigtigst for AL var der stor enighed blandt aktørerne i styregruppen om udfaldet. AL udtrykker tilfredshed med den fælles forståelse styregruppen viste ved det sidste møde og tror på at de sammen er vej at finde vej.

AMs anden historie

Ved mit andet møde med AM tegner der sig også et helt andet billede end ved det første møde. Dels er AM meget mere rolig og afklaret omkring rollen og positionen i Life Science projektet og dels har AM etableret en bedre forståelse og indsigt i grundlaget for organisationen. Et grundlag og fundament der giver langt bedre mening nu, hvor AM selv har været en aktiv spiller i udarbejdelsen heraf. Der er dog langt vej endnu til en fælles forståelse..

AM har erkendt at universitet og regionen er to meget forskellige verdener, og med den erkendelse stiller AM selv spørgsmålet; "Er en fælles forståelse nødvendig for Life Science projektet?". For AM handler det om at fundamentet, de alle skal arbejde ud fra, skal være tydeligere og de skal alle kende spillereglerne for at kunne deltage. Samtidigt efterlyser AM en bedre forståelse for kommunernes placering i projektet – for hvordan skal denne tanke om kommunernes deltagelse realiseres?

AMs opgave er stadig, at være det kritiske øje og AM vil derfor blive ved med at søge svar indtil at linjerne er trukket tydeligt op og indtil at erkendelsen af forskelligheden, blandt aktørerne, er en realitet. For at runde denne historie af har jeg valgt at tage et citat med fra det andet møde med AM - et citat der udtrykker hvor svært det kan være at samarbejde, og blive enige om hvordan verden ser ud;

”Vi ligger nogle gange arm om, hvordan vi forstår tingene”
(AM interview 2)

Afrunding

Denne undersøgelse viser at gennem dialog, med en bevidsthed om vores forskelligheder, kan vi etablere en relationel forståelse. En forståelse der er afgørende for at aktørerne i projekter som Life Science kan finde vej sammen. Det er samtidigt en erkendelse af, at vi arbejder ud fra meget forskellige vilkår, både funderet i et relationelt skabt erfaringsgrundlag, men også de vilkår som aktørerne kan agere ud fra i deres hverdags kontekst. At tilgå et projekt med en overbevisning om at en projektbeskrivelsen udarbejdet uden for fællesskabet kan vise vej, kan være svært at forholde sig til for deltagerne. Svært fordi, projektet ikke umiddelbart giver mening, da vejen kan være svært at se, men også fordi aktørerne ikke selv har været med til konstruere hvor vejen skal føre hen.

Det er derfor afgørende for organisationer, hvordan de tænke relationel meningskabelse ind i etableringsprocessen. For at udarbejde et grundlag for et projekt som Life Science kræver at der lyttes til flerstemmigheden, og aktørerne tages med i etableringen, for at de gennem deltagelsen relationelt har mulighed for at skabe mening. Mening der udspringer at en fælles etableret forståelse, dels for de andre aktørers placeringer, roller, positioner, strukturelle vilkår mv. Alle elementer der er afgørende for etableringsprocessen og involveringen af aktørerne.

Den relationelle forståelse kan dog etableres over tid, gennem en forhandling heraf, blandt aktørerne gennem dialog. Dialog hvor de får rum og tid til netop at udtrykke deres viden der udspringer af hverdagens praksis, i den organisation hvor de til dagligt er placeret. Viden der har stor betydning når aktørerne træder ind i nye fællesskaber, for det er her den skal bringes i spil i interaktionen med andre deltagere. Undersøgelsen viser, at det kan altså lykkes for aktørerne at finde vej sammen, det kræver rum, tid, deltagelse, enactment og dialoger, hvor aktørerne har mulighed for igen og igen at søge svar og indsigt, i den verden der umiddelbart er svær at forstå.

Litteraturliste

Bakhtin, M.M., Emerson, C. & Holquist, M. (1986) *Speech genres and other late essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bakhtin, M.M. (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. Ed. Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press

Berger, L. Peter; Luckmann, Thomas; "Den samfundsskabte virkelighed", 1966, 6. oplag 1966, Lindhardt og Ringhof.

Berger, L. Peter; Luckmann, Thomas; "Den sociale konstruktion af virkeligheden", 1972, Akademisk Forlag.

Bohm, D. & Nichol, L. (1996): *On Dialogue*. London: Routledge.

Chia, R.; "From Modern to Postmodern Organizational Analysis", *Organization Science*, Vol. 16, No 4, 579-604

Gergen J. Kenneth; "Virkeligheder og relationer" 2005, 2. udgave, 1. oplag 2005, Dansk Psykologisk Forlag.

Gergen J. Kenneth; "Social konstruktion – ind i samtalen", 2007, 1. udgave, 3. oplag 2007, Dansk psykologisk forlag.

Gergen J. Kenneth; "En invitation til social konstruktion", 2010, 2. udgave, 1. oplag, Forlaget Mindespace.

Gergen J. Kenneth; "Relationel tilblivelse", 2010, 1. udgave, 1. oplag 2010, Dansk Psykologisk Forlag.

Larsen Vinther, Mette & Rasmussen Gulddahl, Jørgen; "Strategisk Ledelse som meningskabende processer", 2013, 1. udgave, 1. oplag 2013, Jurist- og Økonomiforbundets forlag.

Shotter, J. (1997): "The Social Construction of our 'inner' lives". <http://www.massey.ac.nz> (the article was written to the *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* 1997).

Shotter, J. (2005): Fra at "tænke-om" til at "tænke-med" (From "about-ness" thinking to "with-ness" thinking). Oversat til dansk ved Hanne Buhl. Artiklen er indledningskapitlet til Shotter, J. (2005): "From about-ness" thinking to "with-ness" thinking. Pre-book fra KCC-F. London.

Shotter, J. (2005): *The Short Book of 'Witness'-thinking*. London, KCCF.

Shotter, J (2010): *Social Construction on the Edge. 'Witness'-Thinking & Embodiment*. TAOS Intitute Publications. Chagrin Falls, Ohio.

Shotter, John (2011) Getting it: Witness-thinking and the dialogical-- in practice. New York: Hampton Press.

Shotter, J. & A. Cunliffe (2003): Managers as practical authors: everyday conversations for action. In: Management and Language. The manager as a practical author. Eds.: Holman D. & Thorpe R. Sage Publications. London.

Tsoukas, H. & Chia, R.; "On Organizational Becoming; Rethinking Organizational Change", Organization Science, Vol. 13, No. 5, 567-582

Weick, Karl E.; "Enacted sensemaking in crisis situations", July 1988, Journal of Management Studies

Weick, Karl E.; "Sensemaking in organization", 1995, Sage Publications. ISBN 978-0-8039-7176-9

Weick, Karl E.; "Making sense of the organization", 2009, 13. udgave, Blackwell Publishing. ISBN 978-0-631-22317-7

Weick, K. & R. E. Quinn; "Organizational Change and Development, Annual Review of Psychology, Vol. 50, 361-386

Wenger, Etienne; "Praksis Fællesskaber", 1998, Hans Reitzels Forlag. ISBN 87-412-2396-9