Annica Isacsson

Lifelong Learning Travels

Single actors perception and talk of lifelong learning in a specific organizational context

Annica Isacsson

M.Sc. (Econ.) born in 1960 in Helsinki is a graduate from Svenska Handelshögskolan in Helsinki. Since her graduation in 1983 she has worked in the field of marketing with responsibilities involving consumer goods, youth-, exchange-, linguistic-, travel- and mobility programs.

Through her research project she has become involved and interested in teaching, in the world of academia and in issues related to learning in organizations. At the moment she works as a Training Manager at a vocational training and development centre in Espoo.

Cover design and photograph by Virpi Haavisto
Printed by Åbo Akademi University Printing House, Åbo

Åbo Akademi University Press
Biskopsgatan 13, FIN-20500 ÅBO, Finland
Tel. int. +358-2-215 3292
Fax int. +358-2-215 4490
E-mail: förlaget@abo.fi
http://www.abo.fi/stiftelsen/forlag/

Distribution: Oy Tibo-Trading Ab
P.O. Box 33, FIN-21601 PARGAS, Finland
Tel. int. +358-2-454 9200
Fax int. +358-2-454 9220
E-mail: tibo@tibo.net
http://www.tibo.net

Lifelong Learning Travels

Single Actors´ Perception and Talk of Lifelong Learning in a Specific Organizational Context

Annica Isacsson

ÅBO 2007

ÅBO AKADEMIS FÖRLAG – ÅBO AKADEMI UNIVERSITY PRESS

CIP Cataloguing in Publication

Isacsson, Annica
Lifelong learning travels : single actors´ perception and talk of lifelong learning in a specific organizational context / Annica Isacsson. – Åbo : Åbo Akademi University Press, 2007.
Diss.: Åbo Akademi University.
ISBN 951-765-350-6

ISBN 951-765-350-6
ISBN 951-765-351-4 (digital)
Åbo Akademi University Printing House
Åbo 2007

Acknowledgements

A painful, private and joyful process has come to an end. It is time to share and thank my contributors, colleagues, friends and family.

Firstly, I wish to thank my supervisors, professor Henrik Bäckström, who introduced me into the world of academia and professor Alf Rehn, who supported and helped me. You believed in me. You encouraged me. It made a world of difference. Thank you Alf! My opponent, professor Tomas Müllern from Jönköping International Business School devoted both his time and knowledge into my manuscript. He made some insightful comments. He thus contributed to my work. I am greatful Tomas. Docent Sanna Talja from Tampere University also proofread my manuscript. Thank you for the effort and time Sanna! Louise Stansfield helped me with issues related to English. Thank you, Louise!

Secondly, I wish to thank Stiftelsens för Åbo Akademi forskningsinstitut, the department of business studies at Åbo Akademi, Dagmar and Ferdinand Jacobsson´s fond, Marcus Wallenberg´s stiftelse and Gösta Brander´s fond for financial support.

Furthermore, I wish to thank KATAJA (Finnish Doctoral Program in Business Studies), EUDOKMA (European Doctoral School on Knowledge and Management) and ESADE Business School for inspirational research courses. Moreover, I wish to thank the ESADE professors Eduard Bonet & Alfons Sauquet for their time and devotion and Margarita Morey Van Der Star for providing housing during my séjour in Barcelona.

Professor Richard Bagnall shared some very enlightening comments during a conference in Australia. Linda and Tom Greene provided housing. Thank you all!

Barbro Schauman, Maria Suokannas, Anne Rindell, Gitta Forsström, Ann Yrjälä and Ranja Frommer, I met you all during my writing process in moments of joy, struggle, confidence issues and big questions. The bonding, the questions and your friendships was important. Thank you for sharing this joyful path with me!

Yvonne Lönnberg, my long lost friend, travel and party-maker, my school and Hanken friends, my relatives and colleagues, Nina Blomster and Markus Ikäheimonen you were always there for me, took me for outings and planned new parties. Thank you. I needed you then and I need you now. You showed me that there is life beyond books and articles.

My husband Fred, my daughters Gabriela and Nora, my father Helle and my mother Liisa, my brother and his family. Your importance is beyond words. Thank you for sharing your lives with me!

Esbo, 26.11.2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FIGURES, TABLES, PHOTOS AND ACRONYMES 11

PART ONE – INTRODUCTION 13
1.1 A best practice case is being constructed 14
1.2 Interest and intent 22
1.3 Who translates who? 24
1.4 Empirical gap and theoretical reflections 31
1.5 Arguments and questions 35
1.6 Conceptual distinctions and claim 38
1.7 Methodological considerations 43
1.8 Composition and process 50

PART TWO – THE TRIGGER 53
2.1 What puts the vehicle in motion? 53
2.2 The research partner 57
2.3 History and time 65
2.4 LLL in Finland 71
2.4.1 A new direction 72

PART THREE – THEORY MEETS THEORY 78
3.1 A confusing concept that is translated differently by different translators 78
3.2 Formal, non-formal and informal learning 82
3.2.1 Learning how to be with 83
3.2.2 Context- and situation specific learning 85
3.2.3 Learning arenas 87
3.3 LLL does not travel much within the OL and LO discourse 92
3.3.1 Organizational learning begins with the individual? 97
3.3.2 Organizations create knowledge in learning processes 101

3.3.3 OL is linked with information, knowledge and understanding 103
3.3.4 Adaptive, pro-active and generative learning 105
3.3.5 Learnification (my term) 109

PART FOUR – THEORY MEETS PRACTICE 119
4.1 Access and data 119
4.2 Intentional inductive conversation or interpretive phenomenological interviews 123
4.2.1 Sensemaking 127
4.2.2 Constructionism or constructivism 130
4.3 Theory guided content analysis 136
4.3.1 Organizational and situational context 137
4.3.2 Context 1 and context 2 138
4.4 Method and analysis 142
4.4.1 Individual formal learning 145
4.4.2 Group and organizational formal learning 146
4.4.3 Individual informal learning 148
4.4.4 Group informal learning 151
4.4.5 Organizational informal learning 153
4.4.6 Individual non-formal learning 155
4.4.7 Group non-formal learning 157
4.4.8 Organizational non-formal learning 158
4.4.9 Summary 159
4.5.1 Individual adaptive learning 162
4.5.2 Group adaptive learning 163
4.5.3 Organizational adaptive learning 163
4.5.4 Individual pro-active learning 165
4.5.5 Group pro-active learning 166
4.5.6 Organizational pro-active learning 168
4.5.7 Individual generative learning 169
4.5.8 Group generative learning 171
4.5.9 Organizational generative learning 172

4.6 Findings 173
4.6.1 Summary 176
4.7 Themes 183
4.7.1 Segregation 183
4.7.2 Personal and individual 185
4.7.3 Practice 186
4.7.4 Self-responsibility 188
4.7.5 Identity and pride 190

PART FIVE – TALK MEETS THEORY 192
5.1 Discourse analysis 195
5.1.1 Economic talk 201
5.1.1.1 Money talks 201
5.1.1.2 We compete - therefore we win 205
5.1.1.3 We are the winners 209
5.1.2 Integrative talk 212
5.1.2.1 'We' is also constructed through pride and identity 212
5.1.2.2 Celebrations 215
5.1.2.3 Artefacts 216
5.1.3 Personal talk 217
5.1.3.1 Lifelong learning is about your own story 217
5.1.3.2 Personal versus individual 219
5.1.3.3 It is up to you 223
5.1.3.4 It is not only up to you 225
5.1.4 Knowledge talk 229
5.1.4.1 Sharing knowledge 229
5.1.4.2 Knowledge sharing practices involve many roles 232
5.1.4.3 Learning of, from and with others 233
5.1.4.4 Imitation 235
5.2 Work defines practice 237
5.3 Reflecting on practice 242
5.4 Linking theory with practice 248

PART SIX - CONTRIBUTION AND CONCLUSION 253
6.1 Theoretical contribution 254
6.2 Implications 259
6.3 Conceptual contribution 264

REFERENCES 267

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. The construction of success
Figure 2. Constantly constructed
Figure 3. A superior idea travels
Figure 4. Individual actors´ perception and talk
Figure 5. An outline of this study
Figure 6. Local actors´ sensemaking process
Figure 7. The evolution of lifelong learning
Figure 8. Lifelong learning arenas and conceptual under-standing
Figure 9. LO/OL concepts adopted for this study
Figure 10. OL and LO definitions
Figure 11. A synthesized matrix
Figure 12. Major features, influences and representations of cognitive constructionism, collectivism and constructionism (slightly revised)
Figure 13. Positioning myself and this study
Figure 14. Law firm areas of expertise
Figure 15. The complemented model
Figure 16. Findings related to formal, informal and non-formal learning
Figure 17. Findings related to adaptive, pro-active and generative learning
Figure 18. Discursive findings
Figure 19. Interlinkage
Figure 20. Lifelong learning travels
Figure 21. Contribution

PHOTOS

Photo 1. The vase
Photo 2. Celebration
Photo 3. The award
Photo 4. The housing organization
Photo 5. CEO

ACRONYMES

LLL = Lifelong learning
LO = Learning organization
OL = Organizational learning
COP = Communities of practice
HRD = Human Resource Development
S/S = Social/ situational learning theory

Legal notice: The author is solely responsible for the form and content of the thesis. Any person(s) who may have contributed to this thesis shall not be accountable for any facts or conclusions made therein and these do not necessarily represent the view of the companies.

PART ONE - INTRODUCTION

The European Commission promotes, stimulates, enhances, creates and supports initiatives, projects and programmes that stimulate learning, education and knowledge development on different levels in all European countries. The aim is to create a knowledge based Europe permeated by learning and education. The idea is to shape an area where learning forms a natural part of every citizen's daily life, where learning and personal development constantly occur, where active citizenship and social integration continuously take place. The purpose is to enable and promote new ways of thinking and acting, to challenge institutionalised solutions, to create new knowledge and to promote and stimulate industrial innovation. Learning is acknowledged as being not only part of our formal education, but also part of our work, occurring not just at school, but also through our hobbies and leisure activities, indeed throughout our lives. The idea is hence to integrate citizens in activities and diversities where continuous learning and knowledge creation constantly occurs. The vision is a dynamic and competitive Europe that enables, supports, stimulates and enhances industrial competition, innovation and knowledge creation in addition to social integration, human growth and active citizenship.

In spring 2003 a Finnish law firm was certified by the European Union (EU) as the best organization in Europe in the area of lifelong learning, in applying and in implementing a lifelong learning (LLL) strategy among its personnel. The firm was astonished and taken by the award. The firm had participated in the "Best workplaces in Europe 2003" contest, but was not aware of any of the Commission's special categories at the time of the contest. As the law firm had not consciously implemented a LLL strategy among its personnel, they thus formed their conceptual understanding and created their meaning of lifelong learning after the award.

The EU, on the other hand, made their understanding of LLL in an organizational context explicit by benchmarking the law firm as a best practice case in the special category of lifelong learning through the contest.

There were three other European organizations nominated by the EU in spring 2003 in the special category of lifelong learning. I chose to include two of the nominated four organisations in this study, i.e. a municipal Swedish housing organization in addition to the award winner, a Finnish law firm. Both organizations were taken by surprise as they had not actively or consciously implemented a lifelong learning strategy in their respective organizations at the time of the award.

1.1 A best practice case is being constructed

LLL in an organizational context is made explicit by the EU through a contest and by nominating and awarding the law firm.

The base for the "Best Workplace in the EU®" contest and for the special category of lifelong learning can be traced to the Lisbon European Council that was held in March 2000

"which invited the Commission to introduce a European award for particularly progressive companies, in order to give higher priority to lifelong learning as a basic component of the European social model" (100 Best Workplaces in the EU & Three Special Awards 2003:1).

In the Lisbon strategy (Lisbon European Council, March 2000) lifelong learning is a core element in which LLL is central, not only for competition and employment, but also for social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development. The aim is to raise both qualifications and know-how. The purpose is to keep pace with and ensure a smooth transition into a knowledge-based era which, according to a number of EU reports, requires special attention. The objective is to prepare Europe to become a competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based economy, to enhance education and training for living and working in the knowledge society.

The Commission's interest in making LLL a top priority is followed up at the Feira European Council in June 2000 that asked the Member States, the Council and the Commission, within their areas of competence, to

"identify coherent strategies and practical measures with a view to fostering lifelong learning for all"(COM(2001) 678 final:3)

In October 2000, the European Commission published the Memorandum on lifelong learning. The aim of the Memorandum (SEC (2000) 832), which had been the subject of a six month process of consultation across Europe, was to help identify coherent strategies and practical ways to foster lifelong learning for all. At the heart of the Memorandum were new basic skills, raising levels of investment in human resources, innovation in teaching and learning, valuing learning, guidance and information and bringing learning closer to home.

The "100 Best Workplaces EU List" can be directly traced to the Commission's Green Paper on Corporate Social Responsibility that was issued on 18 July 2001.

"In that document, the Commission announced an initiative aiming at publishing an annual list of Best Workplaces, as an effective instrument

to reward companies, which through the attitudes and actions of the management are seeking to become good workplaces" (Best Workplaces in the EU and Special Awards 2003:1)

In November The Communication "Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality" 2001 was published was formed by active citizens. It builds on the Memorandum and it formed a platform for the competition.

"This mandate confirms lifelong learning as a key element of the strategy, devised at Lisbon, to makes Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world" (COM(2001) 678 final:3)

The aim of the Communication and the Memorandum was thus to prepare Europe for the transition to a competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based economy. With the help of these initiatives, in addition to the competition, the EU hopes, among other things, to strengthen companies' social responsibility, to further employee development, to raise workplace standards and to help Europe become the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy.

By announcing a competition (Best Workplaces in the EU 2003), and by paying attention to and certifying European organizations that distinguish themselves in three special categories, i.e. lifelong learning, diversity and gender equality, the European Commission strives at raising public awareness for, among others, lifelong learning in organizations. Awareness is raised by 'constructing' a success-story to serve as an example for other organizations, a best practice case to refer to in a benchmarking attempt.

"By publicly recognising best-practice organisations, the Commission's aim is to contribute to a professional benchmark in order to raise the

overall quality of workplace standards in Europe"(100 Best Workplaces in the EU & Three Special Awards 2003:1).

The EU strove, by this initiative, to enhance 'healthy' competition, to raise public awareness towards these issues in addition to raise workplace standards in Europe.

"Through the Special Awards and the 100 Best Workplaces-EU List, the Commission has declared its intention to stimulate public awareness regarding these issues. By encouraging healthy competition among many different organisations and publicly recognising best practices, the Commission aims to establish a professional benchmark in order to raise the overall quality of workplace standards in Europe. Along with competing for market shares and profits, it is hoped that European organisations will also strive to be known for the quality of their workplaces" (Best Workplaces in the EU and Special Awards 2003:1)

One of the ideas is hence to propose living examples of how lifelong learning is and/or can be carried out in practice.

"Why is putting lifelong learning into practice a top priority for the European Union?
Europe has moved towards a knowledge-based society and economy. More than ever before, access to up-to-date information and knowledge, together with the motivation and skills to use these resources intelligently on behalf of oneself and the community as a whole, are becoming the key to strengthening Europé´s competitiveness and improving the employability of the workforce; today's Europeans live in a complex social and political world. More than ever before, individuals want to plan their own lives, are expected to contribute actively to society, and must learn to live positively with cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. Education, in its broadest sense, is the key to learning and understanding how to meet these challenges" (SEC(2000) 1832:5).

The objective and aim proposed through the construction of a best practice case is furthermore to:

"further employee development both personally and professionally through outstanding training programs, educational opportunities, and policies or programs that focus on the long-term development of the individual employee" (100 Best Workplaces in the EU & Three Special Awards 2003:4).

"The Special Awards and the 100 Best Workplaces-EU List are part of a number of initiatives by the Commission to facilitate Europe in becoming the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater cohesion" (Best Workplaces in the EU and Special Awards 2003:1).

The vision is a Europe that is capable of both sustainable economic growth, with more and better work places, and bigger cohesion.

The initiative for the Special Awards and the contest is carried out with the help of media partners and independent research institutes in each membership country.

"As a basis for the EU initiative, independent workplace surveys are carried out in each of the 15 Member States in close co-operation with national research partners, national media partners and representatives of civil society. Based on the results of the 15 surveys, a list of best workplaces is published in each Member State" (100 Best Workplaces in the EU & Three Special Awards 2003:1).

The selection of suitable candidates in all three categories focus on superiority, uniqueness, integration and variety.

"The evaluation focuses on workplace practises exceeding the standard of other workplaces through uniqueness, distinctiveness and/or variety of

initiatives and results. Furthermore, the comprehensiveness of their initiatives and policies are taken into account. A limited number of superior submissions from each country for each of the three categories are selected" (100 Best Workplaces in the EU & Three Special Awards:4).

As a result, a total population of approximately 210,000 employees in all 15 member states participates in the survey process and contest "Best Workplaces in the EU 2003". Of these, 124,196 employees completed questionnaires.

"All national lists of Best Workplaces are primarily based on the opinions of the employees working at participating organisations, who are asked to rate their workplace according to a series of qualitative criteria. Each participating organisation is asked to conduct an employee survey, fill out a management questionnaire and send in supplementary material about their corporate culture and organisational practices" (100 Best Workplaces in the EU & Three Special Awards:5).

Mr Pehr Gyllenhammar, Chairman of Aviva, former executive chairman of Volvo and founder of the European Round Table of Industrialists chaired the Jury that selected the Award winners. Other members of the Jury were Ms Miet Smet, member of the European Parliament and former Belgian Minister of Employment, Ms Carola Fishbach-Pyttel, General Secretary of the European Federation of Public Service (ESPU) and Ms Susan Scott-Parker, founding Chief Executive of the Employer's Forum on Disability.

"Dear Mr Gyllenhammar, dear Members of the Jury, Ladies and Gentlemen
Today we are honouring companies that have demonstrated outstanding achievement in the areas of lifelong learning and the promotion of diversity and gender equality in the workplace.
Before announcing the names of the winners, I would like to congratulate the nominees and all the other companies which took part in this compe-

tition. As Pierre de Coubertin has said 'the most important thing is not winning but taking part" (Anna Diamantopoulou, IP/03/438, Brussels 27 March 2003:2).

Independent research institutes that carried out the contest during winter 2003 selected one candidate from their country for each of the EU's three special categories. The EU then nominated the best candidates in Europe for each category with the help of a highly distinguished jury.

The organizations involved in this study did not implement an active or conscious LLL strategy before the nomination. The private Finnish law firm and the Swedish municipal housing organization were not even aware of the Commission's special categories when they participated in the "Best workplaces in the EU" contest. They themselves had difficulty in comprehending the meaning of LLL at and after the nomination process. The organizations thus perceived, made sense and interpreted their understanding and implementation of LLL later, after the award.

A success story was thus created by the EU and later reconstructed and interpreted by the law firm and the housing organization.

The EU aim and participation was among other things to recognize, acknowledge, benchmark and award European organizations with best practices in three special categories (lifelong learning, diversity and gender equality). The whole process is simplified and depicted in the figure at the following page.

The European Council agrees on LLL as part of the Lisbon process as a top priority within the EU. The aim is to secure a smooth transition for member countries into the knowledge-based economy. This decision is at its first phase "translated" into a LLL MEMORANDUM (2000) and in a second phase "translated" to a LLL COMMUNICATION (2001) with the help of 12,000 people in all member states. One part of the strategy is to show how LLL is carried out in practice. The Commission decides to award LLL within the Best Workplaces in Europe 2003 contest (consistent with a Green Paper issued in 2001)

⇓

The independent national research institutes that carry out the Best Workplaces in the EU contest in each member state identify and select organizations that display LLL features, characteristics and practices, i.e. organizations that invest time and resources on education and competence development.

⇓

A distinguished jury at the European Commission then nominates four organizations that distinguish themselves most in the special category of LLL. A Finnish law firm is awarded as best in the special category of lifelong learning in Europe.

⇓

The two Nordic organizations in this study did not actively implemented a LLL strategy in their organizations before or at the time of the award

⇓

They "construct" their own understanding of LLL after the award.

⇓

The success story and best practice case, understanding and meaning of LLL is thus being constructed first by the EU in co-operation with the national research institutes and after the award by the organizations involved.

Figure 1. The construction of success

1.2 Interest and intent

I became intrigued by the award process, I was fascinated of the phenomenon. I was compelled by the discourse and of the complexity and tension within the discourse.

I had some pre-understanding of the concept lifelong learning as I had come across the term before, through work in the context of mobility programs for young workers, but I wanted to know more and I wanted to understand it better. Where did it come from, what was it, how was it different from learning, why was the law firm awarded, how and why did it penetrate the two organization at the time that it did, what triggered and affected the process and last, but not least, did the concept or language change in the process and how was it perceived and interpreted by individual actors´ in two specific contexts.

At the time of the award the organizations in question did not consciously comprehend the meaning of LLL. A 'conscious' LLL strategy had not been actively implemented nor was one applied at the time of the award. The organizations involved were hence hit by the phenomenon and concept. LLL as a term and idea, concept and strategy was 'forced' upon them and took them by surprise. The practitioners involved knew their practices, their profession, local culture and social context. The organizations in question invested heavily and consciously in education, in learning practices and in knowledge transfer. The actors´ involved had experience related to their field of expertise, of competence, of personal development and of their respective organizations. All the same, the actors´ and organizations involved did not fully comprehend how LLL was related to their experience and interrelated with their practices.

The two organizations studied in this research were both picked by national independent research institutes and

nominated by the EU for their unique qualities, extraordinary characteristics and positive attitudes towards learning and competence development. They had well structured educational programmes and, according to the EU, successful practices in the special category of lifelong learning. Both organizations spend time and resources in education, in planning and in structuring their learning processes, in creating and re-creating new practices and in enhancing individual personal competence development. Both organizations have extensive experience of working in teams.

The intent of this study is to depict how and why an idea (LLL) is (re)born at an institutional level, how it travels and changes in a process of translation, how it lands in two specific organizations and how it is perceived and described by local actors´ in two specific contexts. The focus of this study is predominantly on single actors´ perception of a controversial concept in a local context. It is about an idea, about its travel and about local perceptions related to this idea.

The history and theories behind lifelong learning are described in order to reveal the complexity, controversies, tension and evolution behind the concept. The institutional EU LLL strategy is depicted in order to contrast and interrelate it with local practice. Learning theories acknowledging the situational, socio-cultural (S/S), local, practical and contextual are referred to as they are perceived helpful in the understanding of individual actors´ sensemaking processes. Organizational learning theories are introduced as they demonstrate learning processes that take place in organizations involving the organization, the environment and the individual. Organizational and LLL theories also provide tools for categorizing data in this study.

An idea presumably changes during 'travel' in a process referred to as 'translation'. The process involves many actors´ (see e.g. Latour 1986). LLL in an organizational context

in this study is understood to be affected and continuously (re)constructed in a circular process involving the institution, the organization and the individual.

In an organizational context LLL is perceived to be (re)created by individual actors´ in a process involving sense-making, reflection and interpretation.

EU ↔ ORGANIZATION ↔ INDIVIDUAL

Figure 2. Constantly constructed

1.3 Who translates who

Translation is used as a central concept by e.g. Barbara Czarniawska and Bernward Joerges (1996). They show how ideas are being reinterpreted and transform locally in a process of translation. The concept of translation can be viewed as an alternative to the model of diffusion. Bruno Latour (1986) uses the term translation instead of knowledge transfer to depict a process where diffusion is in the hands of people. He contends that every person throughout a translation process acts in different ways – they modify, adapt, add on etc. An idea, a text or an object is thus transformed in the process. The fundamental differences are that ideas do not spread on their own (diffusion), but external energy (translation) is needed for an idea to spread (Latour 1987). Translation answers the question of energy that is needed for the process. It is thus people, both as creators and applicants, who transform an idea, whether they apply it for their own purpose or for someone else (Latour 1992). When knowledge is transferred from one context to another it is thus being translated.

Consequently, ideas in translation can be argued to be affected e.g. by social context, purpose and interest, i.e. by people and, translation not only applies to linguistics or ideas, but also

to games, artefacts and/or instruments. They are played, used or interpreted differently by different people depending on social context, interest and purpose or as Bruno Latour contends:

"…the spread in time and space of anything – claims, orders, artefacts, goods – is in the hands of people; each of these people may act in many different ways, letting the token drop, or modifying it, or deflecting it, or betraying it, or adding to it, or appropriating it" (Latour 1986:267).

Not only ideas are hence in the hands of people. Translation can involve models, books and practices. Barbara Czarniawska Joerges (1996) explain through the concept of 'decontextualisation' the process when knowledge, ideas and models are taken from their original context and embedded into a new one. Kjell-Arne Rövik (2000) on the other hand argue that total quality management programs that were introduced in the 1990´s in the US, throughout Europe and Japan all took different forms when they were introduced and implemented. The differences were not only dependent of the processes through which the programs were introduced. The programs were transformed foremost because they were not introduced in vacuum. When the total quality management programs were embedded in new places and organizations they were translated; they melted and were mixed with local traditions, with other models and other ideas. They were edited according to local contextual norms, cultural conventions and organizational rules.

The translation concept thus accepts and considers that ideas are being reinterpreted during a process of travel. Ideas in practice, in a local context, are thus often reinterpreted, reconstructed, recreated and perceived different from their original ideas. This is acknowledged in this study.

The award process is an example of a reversed adoption of a strategy, from local to institutional, in which the nomi-

nated organizations serve as passive (tacit) practical examples or late adopters, the pro-active implementers of LLL being the EU and the national independent research institutes. The EU and the independent national research institutes thus serve as the actors´ who 'implement', translate and acknowledge LLL in an organizational context through the nomination, the award ceremony and through the identification of organizations that, by their definition, carry LLL features.

According to Latour (2002), imitation, the fundamental learning mechanism, is said to lie behind translation. Tarde (1890/1962) stated that what is imitated is allegedly superior – on the grounds of its qualities or on the grounds of their provenance in time and place or a third type of superiority that characterizes ideas that have many allies in other ideas – that is, ideas that are well anchored in an institutional structure

The trigger for translation of ideas thus involves imitation combined with the perception of a superior idea. The process is also argued to involve shared desire (see e.g. Czarniawska & Sévon 1996). LLL is perceived a superior idea in this study. Imitation, according to my interpretation, involves processes of copying, adaptation and that of (re)creation of the 'original' idea and concept. Shared desire involves involvement, interest and passion. Both processes are in the hands of people and interdependent of one another. The trigger behind a process of translation can thus be understood through the concepts of a superior idea, shared desire and imitation. This process involves people. People who wish to contribute in the making of a better, more competitive and viable Europe. They do so through imitation and processes involving shared desire. Lifelong learning is hence considered a superior idea, not only by politicians and the power elite, but also among people.

Barbara Czarniawska and Guje Sévon (1996), as do I, use translation to express a process involving motion, trans-

formation and change. They argue that the concept of translation is a good way to describe the emergence and construction of various types of connections around the globe because of its polysemous character: albeit usually associated with language, it also means transformation and transference. It attracts attention to the fact that a thing moved from one place to another cannot emerge unchanged: to set something in a new place is to construct it anew (Czarniawska & Sévon 2005:8).

Czarniawska & Sévon or Latour, however, were not the first ones to use the term translation in the context of diffusion of ideas. It was Michel Serres (1982) who introduced the term in the context of ideas.

"It is this richness of meaning, evoking associations with both movement and transformation, embracing both linguistic and material objects, that induced Latour and Callon, and the contributors to this volume after them, to borrow the notion of translation from a contemporary French philosopher, Michel Serres" (Czarniawska & Sévon 1996:7).

Michel Serres (1982) can thus take credit for being among the first to use the concept 'translation' in the context of ideas. According to Serres, translation is a generalized operation, not merely linguistic, but one that takes many forms. Consequently, that which is involved in translation – be it knowledge, people or things – has an uncertain identity and each act of translation changes the translator and what is translated (Czarniawska & Sévon 2005:8). Guje Sévon and Barbara Czarniawska (2005), argue, furthermore that fashion can be the trigger for the travel of ideas. They view translation as the vehicle, imitation as the motor and fashion as the wheel in the process of 'travel'.

Many researchers claim that organizations follow fashion just as individuals do (Borgert 1992, DiMaggio & Powell 1983). The analogy and assumption here is that in-

stitutions follow fashion, just as organizations and individuals do. The trigger for the travel of LLL can be understood in terms of fashion. My interpretation, however is that the trigger for LLL may involve fashion, but in this case, also a shared vision. The EU has a vision of a Europe including high employment rates, educated and active citizens, dynamic and competitive economies, innovative industries, social integration etc. It thus seems that it is the EU vision integrated with fashion that triggers the process of travel in this case. Vision involves the strong mental picture of a dynamic Europe, the goal, the aim, the purpose and the strategy involving a 'better' Europe. Travel is used metaphorically to depict and explain the translation movement and motion from one place to another. Translation is the vehicle. In this study LLL travels from practice to award, from local to institutional, between the research institute and the EU, affected in the process by people, culture, local habits, context, purpose, interest, time materialization etc. I interpret lifelong learning to be a superior idea, fashion together with shared vision the triggers for travel of the idea, translation the vehicle, imitation together with shared desire the motor for LLL, i.e. for lifelong learning in motion involving people.

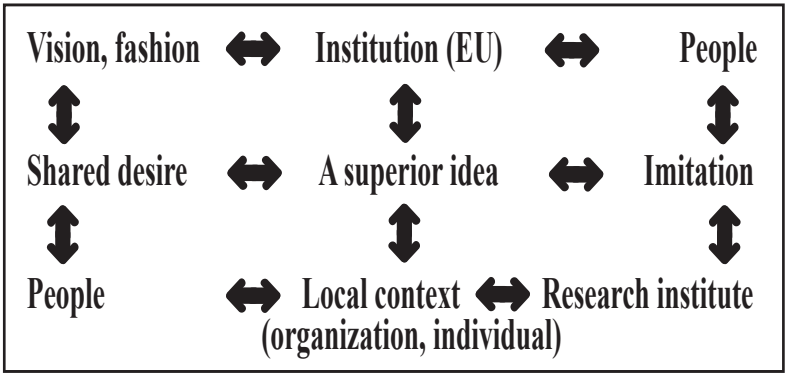


Figure 3. A superior idea travels

The pro-active actors´ are the EU together with the national research institutes. It is the EU that promotes the idea of lifelong learning and it is the independent national research institutes in Finland and Sweden that select the candidates. The EU thus proposes an idea with roots in adult education for strategic purposes. They use a complex, superior idea with an uncertain identity as a tool for the purpose of the knowledge based society´s aims and demands. The LLL takes the form of a strategic framework of which one purpose is to enable a smooth transition for the EU membership countries from an industrial economy into a knowledge based one.

Barbara Czarniawska and Bernward Joerges (1996) make a distinction between the travel of ideas and institutions. Institutions do not travel between organizations. An institution cannot travel between different organizations as an institution is a product of action- and mind -patterns that are created within the organization they argue. Ideas, however, travel and often originate from an institution.

According to Czarniawska & Sévon (2005) translation is a concept that immediately evokes symbolic associations. It is symbolic and material at the same time whereas only a thing can be moved from one place to another and from one time to another. Ideas must materialize, at least in somebody's head; symbols must be inscribed. A practice not stabilized by a technology, be it a linguistic technology, cannot last; it is bound to be ephemeral. A practice or an institution cannot travel; they must be simplified and abstracted into an idea, or at least approximated in a narrative permitting a vicarious experience, and therefore converted into words or images. Neither can words nor images travel until they have materialized, until they are embodied, inscribed or objectified, as only bodies or things can move in time and space (Czarniawska 2002:7)

The nomination of best organizations in the special category of lifelong learning shows how a complex and popular

idea with an uncertain identity transforms into an award, i.e. to an artefact (a vase), through a complex process and chain of translation. LLL is transformed during travel through the minds of people changing both the translator and what is translated in the process and along the journey.

The practices of the Finnish law firm and/or the Swedish municipal housing organization would not have travelled without materialization. Best practices of LLL in an organizational context may not have travelled without the contest. The contest, the nomination and the award, the publicity, the transparencies, documents, web pages and presentations produced for the contest and after the award made LLL practices explicit. LLL can be said to have been objectified through the contest and through the nomination. It was symbolized through the award, the vase. The actors´ (people) included, among others; the HRM-manager at the law firm who provided extra material for the "Best workplaces in the EU 2003®" contest; the staff at LTT-Tutkimus Oy that nominated the law firm as the best in Finland in the special category of LLL; the highly distinguished jury that selected the law firm as the best in the special category of LLL; the Commissioner who finally awarded the law firm; and the representatives of the law firm who received the award in Brussels. The EU purpose and interest here was to diffuse and benchmark LLL practices.

Other translators include the people who started this process, the actors´ participating in the construction of the Lisbon strategy, the ones that followed it up at Feira, people that produced the Memorandum, actors´ that created the Green Paper and the Communication. They were the ones who shared a vision of LLL as a superior, fashionable idea that could be both shared and imitated.

People at the EU and people at the local research institutes translate the idea through local practical examples. They materialize the idea through the Communication, the

Memorandum, the Green Paper, the contest, through printed material and through the nomination. The local actors´ translate their meaning of the idea through reflecting on their own practices, through the nomination and through the award and artefact (the vase) that is the ultimate symbol of the award.

Photo 1. The vase: From the European Commission archives (2003)

1.4 Empirical gap and theoretical reflections

Empirically lifelong learning has mainly been studied in the context of adult and complementary education, predominantly from an individual's point of view. Not many studies involving LLL have been undertaken in an organizational context from the point of view of individual actors´ talk and perception, at least not in the Nordic countries.

Theoretically (lifelong) learning does not 'travel' much in the field of organizational learning and visa versa. Hence, not many ideas on learning and/or organizational learning are found

in LLL theories or in the institutional ideas involving LLL. In this study these theories interconnect, interrelate and meet.

Learning, to put it simple, is often viewed as being an individual, personal, behavioural and/or a cognitive act. The behavioural schools on learning study, among other things, individual responses to different forms of stimuli whereas the cognitive school views learning as information processing involving cognitive structures and patterns related to individual learning processes. This study will not directly involve schools of thought related to individual cognitive/behavioural learning processes.

My understanding is, that in an organizational context peoples learning and individual actors´ perception of (lifelong) learning is strongly interconnected with social context and practice (see e.g. Lave and Wenger 1991). This study acknowledges that learning cannot occur in vacuum, without recognizing previous knowledge, situation, social context, practice and local culture. My interpretation is that individual actors´ perception and talk about (lifelong) learning is influenced by previous knowledge, situation, social context, practice, experience and local culture. In my view (lifelong) learning is thus a social process that takes place in a specific context, not only in peoples' heads.

(Lifelong) learning in an organization is hence not to be understood as something that only happens inside the brain, separated from experience, situation, mind and social context or as Merriam and Caffarella (1999) contend:

"adult learning does not occur in a vacuum" (Merriam and Caffarella 1999:22)

Learning as Wilson (1993) argues never occurs in a vacuum, but is always context- specific and occurs interdependently with other people

"learning is an everyday event that is social in nature because it occurs with other people….and finally, it is the interaction with the setting itself in relation to its social and tool dependent nature that determines the learning" (Wilson 1993:73).

Paul Hager (2003), a contemporary Australian researcher in the field of learning at work, has attempted to define and distinguish lifelong learning from 'ordinary learning'.

"a common factor is that workers place high value on the satisfaction they obtain from their work. It provides them with a strong sense of personal development. This personal development is something that is an internal good to the work itself. For these workers, work is much more than paid employment. We need an account of work that locates this satisfaction and distinguishes it from work that is essentially alienating" (Hager 2003:25)

According to Hager (2003), the idea is, that work must involve personal development in order to be perceived, acknowledged and recognized as 'lifelong' learning.

My definition of LLL involves besides personal development learning from, with and of others in a specific context involving practice

The Russian psycholinguist, L.S. Vygotsky (1896-1934), put forward a theory of learning showing that learning can never be seen in isolation from the context in which it occurs. Socio-cultural approaches in learning and development were hence first systematized and recognized by Vygotsky and his collaborators in Russia in the nineteen-twenties and thirties. Vygotsky´s ideas are based on the concept that human activities take place in local cultural contexts. The power of Vygotsky´s ideas lie furthermore in his understanding of the dynamic interdependence of the social and the individual processes. The sociocultural approaches furthermore empha-

size the interdependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge.

Learning theories that acknowledge the socio-cultural, the situational, the local and practice will, from now on be referred to as S/S theories. They will, in addition to organizational learning theory and LLL theories form the theoretical platform of this study. They are applied as they are argued to have an impact on individual actors´ perception, talk, interpretation and sensemaking of lifelong learning in organizations. Organizational learning (OL) theory is applied to illuminate and discuss the dynamic aspects of learning, relating the organization with the environment, the individual with the organization and the institution. OL theories seem appropriate as they recognize the interdependence between the individual, the organization and the environment. Data is also categorized according to OL and LLL concepts and arenas related to learning.

Theoretically (lifelong) learning theory, socio-cultural learning theories and organizational learning theories do not often meet. In this study they interrelate and interact. These theories form a bond and framework in the understanding of how an idea is talked of and perceived, interpreted, made sense of and understood in an organizational context by individual actors´.

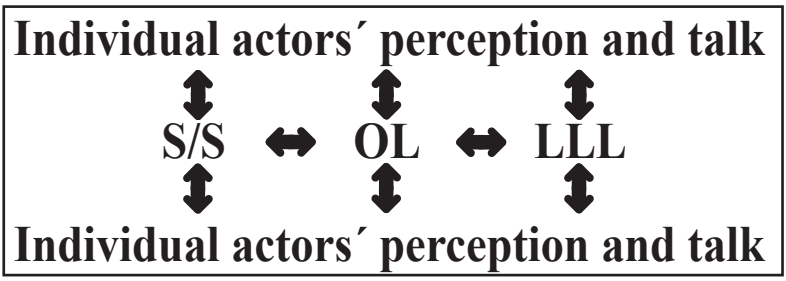


Figure 4. Individual actors´ perception and talk

1.5 Arguments and questions

In this study I argue that (lifelong) learning as perceived by individual actors´ in an organizational context is culturally embedded, locally, socially and contextually specific affected by practice and experience, personal development and previous knowledge. Moreover I argue that individual actors´ perception and talk is influenced by the organization (its aims, purposes, strategies and goals) in addition to the institution (and the environment) in a process involving both people and translation.

LLL is hence perceived to be interdependent with its social context as the perception of the concept is assumed to interrelate with the organization. Local actors´ and practioners are presumed to be re-creating the concept in the context of organizations. LLL in an organisational context is understood to be formed and re-constructed through individual and shared interpretation and perception related to practice. It is through shared practice that purpose and learning at work is defined or as John Dewey (1916), who promoted learning by doing, puts it:

"the social environment ....is truly educative in the effects in the degree in which an individual shares or participates in some conjoint activity. By doing his (sic) share in the associated activity, the individual appropriates the purpose which actuates it, becomes familiar with its methods and subject matters, acquires needed skills, and is saturated with its emotional spirit" (Dewey 1916:26).

Lifelong learning is hence studied here as an institutional idea that changes during 'travel' and takes another form within a specific context. Local actors´ perception and talk of the concept are interpreted and analyzed. The process of travel is depicted with the help of the concept and theory of

translation whereas the local perception and talk is depicted, explored, understood, analyzed and explained through and with the help of S/S, LLL and OL theories, the hermeneutic paradigm and the sensemaking perspective.

In this study the process of translation is triggered by an external event and in this study, single actors´ statements and talk create local meaning. In order to comprehend local actors´ perception and talk, I need to explore the relationship between the institutional LLL discourse and practice, i.e. between the EU and the two Nordic organizations. I wish to depict, understand and show how LLL at this time, in this context, is constructed and to explore who or what affects local sensemaking in these cases. Consequently, the research questions of this study are:

-how is LLL interpreted by local actors´ in two specific contexts and to understand/depict

-who or what affects this process

Gap
LLL has not been studied in an organizational context through single actors perception and talk, at least not in any Nordic countries. (Lifelong) learning and Organizational learning theories do not often meet.

Intent
The intent of this study is to depict how and why an idea (LLL) is (re)born at an institutional level, how it travels and changes in a process of translation, how it lands in two specific organizations and how it is perceived and described by local actors in two specific contexts. The focus of this study is predominantly on single actors perception of a controversial concept in a local context. It is about an idea, about its travel and about local perceptions related to this idea.

Arguments
In this study I argue that (lifelong) learning as perceived by individual actors in an organizational context is culturally embedded, locally, socially and contextually specific affected by practice and experience, personal development and previous knowledge. Furthermore, I argue that individual actors perception and talk is influenced by the organization in addition to the institution (and the environment) in a process involving people and translation.

Research questions

- how is LLL interpreted by local actors in two specific contexts and to understand/depict
- who or what affects this process

Definition of LLL
personal development and learning from, with and of others in a specific context involving practice

Methodology and method A sensemaking perspective (in which individuals create local meaning) within the hermeneutic paradigm involving intentional inductive conversational (my term) interviews and an analytical thematic process (in which I interpret individual actors perceptions and talk of lifelong learning in an organizational context).

Figure 5. An outline of this study

1.6 Conceptual distinctions and claim

Lifelong learning as a concept can be argued to be blurry and unclear to its character. It is a discourse that involves ideas of social integration. It assumes that learning occurs among individuals from the cradle to the grave. The concept acknowledges not only formal, but also informal and non-formal elements of learning. (Lifelong) learning is hence not tied to a specific place or age. LLL seems to be a discourse involving power struggles and political views, aims and controversies. LLL can, all the same, be viewed as a superior idea. It has evolved and survived many periods involving many phases throughout history. LLL can and often is viewed as a powerful political idea, a tool, strategy and framework.

My interpretation is that the institutional contemporary LLL discourse within the EU (and the OECD) is shaped by history and people. It is related to power structures, modern politics and ideas interconnected with rapid change, new technology, competence development and economic views involving competivity, entrepreneurship and innovation and less by ideas related to learning (see e.g. Salling Olesen 1999, Rubenson 2000).

One part of the EU lifelong learning strategy is to acknowledge best practice cases for benchmarking, imitation and transfer purposes. Best practices for others to imitate and translate in order to enhance knowledge development, innovation, knowledge creation and learning. Best practices cannot, however, be transferred, moved or imitated as such. Also institutional ideas go through a process of translation involving the culture and the contextual, the specific and the situational, the local and the practical.

By institutional I understand official, e.g. the EU/LLL related statements, documents, strategies, communications in addition to among others UNESCO and OECD documents.

By practice I refer to the practical elements involving tasks, duties, practices, habit, routines and work. With social context I refer to the group of people that influence individual work and learning within the organization. Practice thus involves the work that practitioners do, the cases they have, the problems they face, the clients they deal with, the people they meet etc. Practice is very wide and here loosely defined. It is defined by the work practitioners do, the underlying assumption being that practice varies and is dependent on work, situation and context.

This study draws upon a sensemaking perspective within a hermeneutic paradigm in which I interpret individual actors´ perception and talk of LLL. in which the underlying assumption is that individual perception create local meaning. Interpretive phenomenological interviews or rather inductive intentional conversations (my term) are performed within two specific local contexts in order to catch individual actors´ perception and talk of the concept. Being present to each other in the interview situation creates dialogues that can be as described as interactive processes of sensemaking. Interviews are not conducted, rather they are participated in since it seems that the person being interviewed both shapes and is shaped by the interview. Informants are hence free to talk about what they want in a way that makes sense to them. Interpretive phenomenological interviews are hermeneutic: they are circular and never-ending.

The fact that only four interviews have been conducted in two organizations may seem as a restriction, but it is not. I argue that individual actors´ insightful perceptions, statements and talk are valuable and create meaning, also in a larger perspective. The participants in this study have practiced (law and HRD) in their respective organization for years. They have actively, through their positions, been involved in developing their profession, practices and organizations.

They are knowledgeable and experienced. I am proud to have had access and to have been given the opportunity to talk with them. My primary data is rich, sufficient and insightful. My secondary data supports my primary data. They together create the whole. My data as a whole allowed me to depict and create an understanding of the concept within my specific area of interest.

Local actors´ perception and sensemaking theory imply that meaning is created differently in different social groups, even differently between people in the same organization. What makes sense to one person is not always true for another. My duty as a researcher is to interpret different actors´ perception and talk so that it makes sense in a larger context. Social facts are viewed differently in different social groups, so understanding and constructions will always be different in different contexts, localities and situations, even between single actors´. Some generalisations and underlying mechanisms or patterns can apply or be detected all the same, also in a study of only one or two organizations and in a study involving four informants, in a study with fewer respondents. Sensemaking theory argue that even single words matter in making sense.

The law firm case and its informants are acknowledged and referred to more in this study than the Swedish municipal housing organization because

a) I had better access to the law firm

b) they were judged best in Europe in the special category of lifelong learning

In this study I claim that single words matter and that local perception create meaning. Furthermore I argue that in order to understand single actors´ perception and talk I need to depict, explore and understand the relation and interdependency between the individual and the organization, practice and institution as I assume that they affect single actors´

perception and sensemaking of lifelong learning in an organizational context. Hence, not only previous knowledge, experience, personal development and interest affect individual talk and perception, but also a process involving translation.

This is thus how I picture the process of travel and translation, the interdependencies that presumably affect local interpretation of LLL in an organizational context.

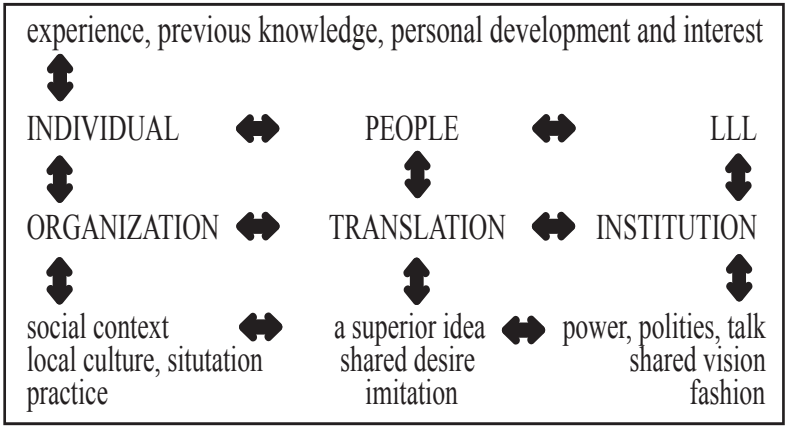


Figure 6. Local actors´ sensemaking process

Local actors´ perception and talk in this study is argued to be influenced by experience, previous knowledge, personal development, interest and by social context, local culture, situation and practice in a sensemaking process. Meaning and perception, however, are not created in vacuum, but are influenced of previous knowledge, experience, institution, the organization, translation and people or as Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann put it:

"Each step of my explication & understanding of the world is based at any given time on a stock of pervious experience, my own immediate experiences as well as such experience as are transmitted to me from my fellow-men & above all from my parents, teacher, and so on" (Schutz & Luckmann 1973:7)

In this study I emphasize the social context strongly, i.e. I do not view (lifelong) learning to be a process in which knowledge is constructed only in individual heads. Furthermore, I take the softer (or moderate) standpoint of constructivism. Kristensson Uggla (2002) distinguishes between a soft and strong version of constructivism. Supporters of the strong version claim that everything is constructed. Supporters of the strong version also make claims about the world's ontological status whereas supporters of the softer version are happy to acknowledge knowledge as a construction (Kristensson Uggla 2002:234). The constructivist approach to learning relies on the individual, but it recognises the social. It assumes that learning is an active process in which the learner develops his or her own understanding by assembling facts, experience and practice. It is a social process, in which learning is seen as an act of participation. The knowing depends on practice and participation. To become part of a community enhances learning and knowing through shared practice (Gee 2003).

George E. Hein (1991) also takes a constructivist standpoint and contends that learners construct knowledge for themselves. Each learner individually (and socially) constructs meaning, as he or she learns. There is no knowledge independent of the meaning attributed to experience (constructed) by the learner, or community of learners. Thus there is no such thing as knowledge 'out there' independent of the knower, but only knowledge we construct for ourselves as we learn. Learning is not understanding the 'true' nature of things, but rather a personal and social construction of meaning out of a bewildering array of sensations which have no order or structure besides the explanations which we fabricate for them. The idea in this study is to show also how the social, cultural, local and practical affects the concept of lifelong learning in an organizational context.

1.7 Methodological considerations

It is important in any study to reveal and openly discuss the method of data collection, the choice of study objects in addition to the methodological stance. It is, however, equally important in a qualitative study to understand the organizational and situational context, i.e. the Community of Practice (CoP) of the respondents as well as the setting of the study. It is important not least because the CoP, practice and social context is argued here to shape single actors´ perception and talk of LLL in organizations.

Virtually all qualitative researchers agree that the purpose of their research is to make sense of narrative data, which is usually in the form of texts that require interpretation (Tesch 1990:4). Thus, the approaches generally draw on hermeneutics, an area of philosophy that deals with the practice and the theory of interpretation (Kusch 1986).

Hermeneutics has historically been described as the theory of interpretation that has been prevalent in disciplines such as theology and law. The German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) redefined hermeneutics as a science of historical understanding and sought a method for deriving objectively valid interpretations. Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) recast hermeneutics from being based on the interpretation of historical consciousness to revealing the temporality of self-understandings (Palmer 1969). In this research I do not attempt to show the correct interpretation among many. In the first phase of analysis (chapter four) I seek to depict and look for meaning and make sense of what is said through and with help of theory and interpretation. In the second phase (chapter five) I concentrate more on talk and how talk produces reality through text and through analysing how what is said is said. The attempt in chapter five is hence to look more at linguistic constructions and how the actors´ act in (dis)harmony of what

they say. The purpose is further to relate practice with institution, i.e. how what is said on a local level with how what is said is related and interconnected with the institutional level. Heidegger, in his famous conversations with Japanese explained in a book called "Unterwegs zur sprache" (Heidegger 1959), that his aim is to 'think Greek thoughts in a more deeply Greek way'. He was then asked if he means to understand Greeks better than they understand themselves. The aim was not to understand better, but to understand differently, i.e. to bring different interpretations and constructual issues to fore. Heidegger wished to reveal the unthought and unsaid.

A slightly different point of view involving hermeneutics is offered by the French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur (1976), who claims that human beings think in terms of concepts. It is through concepts that we can understand the world and relate to one another. Ricoeur argues, however, concepts to be context-specific, situated both in time and place. Accordingly, it is possible for the same concepts to have different meanings in different contexts. It can be said that that the definition and signification of concepts is a hermeneutic system (Alasuutari 1995; Ricouer 1976).

Language and concepts are thus important in understanding individual action (Bruner 1990:68; Gioia, Donnellon & Sims 1989). It is through talking with the organizational members that we learn something about their perceptions of an occurrence. Language is needed to express meaning, but also to explain and liberate meaning in actors´ behaviour (Müllern & Östergren 1995: 87). What an individual say influences what she does which makes her better understand what is happening. Jerome Bruner has expressed it as follows:

"A culturally sensitive pshychology is and must be based not only upon what people actually do, but they said they do and they say caused them to do what they did (Bruner 1990:1).

Tomas Müllern argue that our perceptions are formed and created by the cultural context in which we encounter ourselves. Our perception is influenced by the situation, i.e. it varies depending on cultural context (Müllern 1994:191). An important consequence is that the cultural situation influence how we treat and interpret a phenomenon that we encounter. In one context and situation we interpret in one way, in another we may perceive and interpret a phenomenon quite differently. Our interpretation is thus related and interdependent with the cultural situation in which we encounter ourselves.

Hermeneutics is furthermore an approach that acknowledges the temporal situatedness of both the researchers and the participants. Understanding is circular, and humans as self-interpreting beings are always already within this interpretive (hermeneutic) circle of understanding: thus,

"interpretation is never a presuppositionless grasping of something previously given" (Heidegger 1927/1996:141)

Hermeneutic researchers should hence not attempt to isolate or 'bracket' their presuppositions, context or situation, but rather, make them explicit. Interpretative phenomenological interviews (and inductive intentional conversations) are hermeneutic to their nature. They are circular, complete and never-ending. As language experiences, interpretive is attentive to context and is always situated. Weber (1986) describes this situatedness as:

"the invitation is genuine, the interviewer turn to the participant as one human being to another in a way that….confirms the other – the interviewer is genuinely present, committed, and open to the participant" (Weber 1986:65)

The research process in an interpretative study is thus a hermeneutic circle. The researcher unavoidably brings her

or his pre-understanding to the research. Moreover, the theoretical perspective chosen for the study is an important part of the researcher´s pre-understanding. The interpretations of the concepts and their definitions are always in some sense 'imperfect'. One of the most important issues in the interpretative study of concepts is the potential. The rigour and plausibility of the study are closely linked to the researcher´s interpretative ability. Therefore, the researcher needs to be open and ready for continuous learning in her or his work. Description and interpretation are often so intertwined that they can easily be taken as one. In an interpretive perspective language is used as an instrument for analysis, perception and in making sense. Weick (1995) argues that sensemaking is an activity whereas interpretation is a description of a product. Descriptions consequently, according to Weick, do not have to involve the making of sense. Interpretation, however, is essential for understanding experience and the experience always includes interpretation. Thus, a phenomenologist view focus on how we put together the phenomenon we experience in a way to make sense of the world and in doing so develop a work-wide view. This view holds that there is no separate reality for people except what they know their experience is and means. The second premise is that the only way for really knowing what the other person experience is to experience it. This study is influenced by phenomenology as I recognize and acknowledge the importance of experience even though I, the researcher have not experienced what the actors´ have experienced as I have not lived their lives.

Alfred Schutz (in Heritage 1996:58-59) emphasize that people interpret the social world as meaningful and understandable through social categories and by constructions. For Schutz understanding processes go through the whole life and societal activity. Common life is not just random events, but projected by subjective meanings and intentions. When we

meet each other we interpret their doings and actions through underlying agendas such as motives, wishes, fears and ambitions. The interpretative mechanisms and the evaluation of background factors´ are things we have learned upon socialisation into society. Interpretation helps people understand what is going on in a situation, context and how it is time related.

Hermeneutics is, consequently, a theory of interpretation influenced by phenomenology. Interpretation is moreover culturally, socially, locally, temporally and contextually embedded, but it should not be regarded as pure constructivism as Tappan notes

"Hermeneutic approaches view the knower and the known as fundamentally interrelated, and thus assume that any interpretation necessarily involves an essential circularity of understanding – a hermeneutic circle in which the interpreter´s perspective and understanding initially shapes his (sic) interpretation of a given phenomenon, and yet that interpretation, as it interacts with the phenomenon in question, is open to revision and elaboration, as the perspective and understanding of the interpreter, including his biases and blind sports, are revealed and evaluated" (Tappan 1997:651).

In this study I view the respondents as experienced and professional practionners and experts (on law and HRD), as actors´ sensitive to their own development and learning, path and aims. They are furthermore both experienced and familiar with the organization (strategies, goals and aims), its social context, local culture, organizational habits, routines, praxis, business and practices. Their interpretation is assumed to be influenced by their perspective that is influenced by their experience, knowledge and also, by their interest in the field of study. My interpretation is influenced by my perspective and understanding that shape my interpretation. My interpretation is moreover influenced by my experience, knowledge and interest in the field of study. Our experiences, perspec-

tives and interests do not correspond. Among the informants, the respondents' experiences, perspectives and interests are not the same. They are based on individual perceptions that are temporal, situational, social, contextual, local and culturally embedded. The respondents describe and interpret what they know and what they do, based on their understanding, experience, practice and interest in a circular interaction with the topic. I describe and interpret what the informants say based on my understanding, experience and interest in a circular interaction with the topic combined with theory. Double or triple interpretation is thus involved in the analysis in addition to many constructions and layers of sensemaking that seem to intertwine. Blind spots are revealed and my mind was open upon interpretation for revision.

According to Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004) hermeneutics refers to a practical skill. It is about declaring, interpreting, explaining and it is about the skill of interpretation. Understanding seems to be a prerequisite for interpretation and thus for hermeneutics. To make sense relates closely to understanding, i.e. in order to understand a text, it has to somehow make sense to be understandable. On the other hand, a text has to be understood in order to make sense. They thus seem to be interrelated. They intertwine and interconnect. It thus appears that both sensemaking and understanding are prerequisites for interpretation.

As this study predominantly relies on single actors´ opinions related to a blurry concept, i.e. lifelong learning in organizations, interpretive phenomenology interviews or rather intentional inductive interviews (my term) seems to offer an effective and appropriate method for collecting data. The sensemaking perspective within a hermeneutic paradigm offers an appropriate methodological framework in which I, the researcher, collect data using an interpretive phenomenological method and interpret single actors´ talk, language,

perceptions, sensemaking and meanings related to (lifelong) learning in an organizational context

"sensemaking is about such things as placement of items into frameworks, comprehending, redressing surprise,, constructing meaning, interaction in pursuits of mutual understanding, and patterning" (Weick 1995:6)

The contemporary American Professor of Psychology, Karl Weick, uses the term sensemaking to depict the reflection that occurs in a process involving retrospective sense. This description seems appropriate in order to describe the reflections that occurred at the time of the interviews by the single individual actors´ involved in this study:

"to talk about sensemaking is to talk about reality as an ongoing accomplishment that takes form when people make retrospective sense of the situation in which they find themselves and their creations" (Weick 1995:15)

Karl Weick means that actors´ constantly create meaning, but that meaning is most intense when change occurs (Weick 2000). Individual actors´ and/or organizational members, however, do not create meaning in vacuum. Sensemaking is always blended with actors´ former understanding, experience, perception and memory. New ideas can, all the same, make former understandings and perceptions change.

Weick´s sensemaking perspective mainly deals with sensemaking in relation to the individual actor, but can be shared within and related to an entire organization. Karl Weick perceives that sensemaking often starts with the individual actor, but that a collective understanding can be created on an organizational level. Weick hence argues that individual sensemaking can become collectively shared and can create common sensemaking. Individual perception can thus become to involve and create an entire organizational culture.

1.8 Composition and process

This monograph will not follow the traditional order of a 'normal' academic composition, but rather take the form of a novel. It thus does not include any separate chapters on methodology, theory and data as they intertwine in this study. The chapters are not separately presented, but take a dialectic form, running into one another.

The aim is to search for dialogue where theory and data intertwine rather than present or view theory and data separately. The analysis run, on some level, throughout this study. Most distinctively analysis is present in chapters four and five. The purpose and consequences of the dialectic choice is to make this study more readable and interesting for the reader.

Chapter one describes interest, offers arguments, clarifies aims and attempts, purposes and intents, offers two research questions and a brief discussion, some reflections, motivations and decisions related to my theoretical and methodological choices. Furthermore chapter one depicts the award process and offers an outline for this study.

Chapter two shows and presents LLL as an idea and discourse, with the help of theory and data in an attempt to understand how LLL travels and is translated between local and institution, institution and practice, through time and history, translated differently among different actors´. Chapter three discusses some discourses in which LLL does not yet travel, in an attempt to present LLL into those circles. Chapter two thus links OL/LO theories with LLL theories with the help of social situated theory in an attempt to understand individual actors´ perception of LLL through the notion of social context.

Chapter four deals with choices related to methodology and methods involving the perspective, view and approaches selected in this study. In addition, chapter four relates theory with context & practice. In chapter four the attempt is to look

for content, sense and meaning with the help of distinguished categories that evolved out of LLL/OL theory. The purpose of chapter five is to look beyond the obvious, beyond facts, words, content and meaning. The aim is to draw attention to the institution with the help of a more profound thematic analysis. Practice is thus related to institution in this chapter with the help of (discourse) analysis.

Chapter six summarizes findings, glues together and reflects back to the initial questions. A final understanding is presented in chapter six with the help of some figures and new concepts. I summarize and present findings, conclusions, contribution and implications. Moreover I discuss the need for further research.

The overall perspective is a sensemaking one in which single actors´ perception and talk is perceived important and create meaning. In this study, the participatory voices are perceived meaningful and important. Even single word count. Without the participation of the single actors´ this study would not be what it is.

The research-process of this study has evolved and can be described with the help of four periods:

HONEYMOON PERIOD

In April 2002 I was accepted onto the Doctoral Programme at Åbo Akademi University. I spent most of the forthcoming year and a half attending Kataja (The Finnish doctoral program in business studies) and EUDOKMA (European Doctoral School on Knowledge and Management) doctoral courses with the purpose and aim of earning as many credits as soon as possible. I read anything and everything related to lifelong learning and philosophy with both enthusiasm and passion. Everything seemed interesting and challenging. I learned a lot, but by the end I almost drowned in material, journals, books, perspectives, well meaning hints and ideas.

DEPRESSION

I was lost in the midst of masses of information. I could not orientate within the scientific paradigms, the many variations and orientations. I was thrown out in the ocean without a lifewest searching for truth and meaning.

I did not seem to find the clue, the core and the meaning. The original motivation and passion was lost. I could not grasp nor focus, relate or write. I was struggling with my topic, contribution, theoretical and conceptual framework. I hung on, among other things, to the Communication (COM(2001) 678 final) in a desperate attempt to find answers. It all seemed dark and hopeless for some time until I saw

LIGHT

I participated in a conference. I started to write newspaper articles and I started to analyse and to read more theory, but I was still doubting myself and this project. Which was to be my contribution? Which was my area of expertise and superior understanding? What could I bring into the world of academia? How could I put it all in writing? How could I make a thesis of it all?

BARCELONA

I had an intense period of writing in Barcelona together with some very insightful seminars on learning in organizations that made all the difference. I became more acquainted with theories on social/situational orientations in learning theory and it all started to make sense, fall to place and come together. I regained some confidence and started to see the end of my tunnel.

In the following chapter I will focus on the blurry concept of lifelong learning and depict it with the help of institutional EU LLL texts in addition to local documents with the support of theory.

PART TWO – THE TRIGGER

2.1 What puts the vehicle of translation in motion?

In the previous it was discussed that the trigger behind translation is a superior idea, imitation and shared desire. Shared desire seems to be needed in the process in order to achieve mutual understanding or as Callon (1980) puts it:

"..translation postulates the existence of a single field of significations, concerns and interests, the expressions of a shared desire to arrive at the same result….Translation involves creating convergences and homologies by relating things that were previously different" (Callon 1980:211).

Translation, however, not only involves shared desire, but also, people, in addition to imitation and a superior idea. The trigger for travel in this study is perceived to be shared vision and fashion. The EU has a vision, a purpose and an aim. The idea of lifelong learning is attractive. LLL is the means to an end, the way to achieve a goal. A concept in the hands of politicians. The EU vision involves competitiveness, social integration, active citizenship, knowledge development, transfer, education etc. The idea of lifelong learning is perceived superior by the EU. It is perceived superior also among people. The trigger for travel thus involves a vision of a better Europe. It also involves fashion. LLL is translated into a local context with the help of an external event. The educational practices at the law firm and the housing organization are acknowledged to be superior by the EU.

(Lifelong) learning, however, is not just a hot topic or perceived superior by the EU. It has also come to the fore in a range of contexts, with politicians in many countries speaking breathlessly of the goal of a 'learning society' and the achievement of lifelong learning (see e.g. Hughes & Tight, 1995).

"Proposals to encourage and support learning communities, cities and regions as well as enabling workplaces to become learning organisations are seen as key ways to bring learning and learners closer together. Importance is also attached to the development of local learning centres" (COM (2001) 678 final).

The trigger for travel, as previously stated, can also be explained, depicted and understood through the concept and idea of fashion. Fashion was, according to Czarniawska & Sévon (1996), until recently a phenomenon treated with disdain and neglect both in social theory and organization studies, but for the authors of Translating Organizational Change fashion it is the key to understanding many puzzling developments in and between organizations not least when it comes to the diffusion of ideas. Czarniawska & Sévon are not the only ones to praise the metaphorical and literal understanding of fashion in the context of organizational change, but also e.g. Eric Abrahamson (1996) and Kjell-Arne Rövik (1996) treat fashion with interest in the context of organizational studies of ideas.

In the book 'Global ideas' Czarniawska & Sévon (2005) discuss how people know what is superior and how they learn about things to imitate. They suggest that fashion (as used by Blumer 1969) holds the answer. Fashion together with a superior idea thus put the vehicle of translation in motion.

"Fashion is a collective choice among tastes, things and ideas; it is oriented toward finding but also toward creating what is typical of a given time. Fashion creates 'a time collective', as Sellerberg (1994) called it, making an allusion to Tarde's differentiation between a 'timeless society' and 'time we live in" (Czarniawska & Sévon 2005:9).

Fashion involves something that people desire and acknowledge at a certain time in a certain place. Shared vision and fashion is a powerful trigger for travel.

The philosophy of learning throughout life, however, is not new. It is an old ideology now appearing in a new context, in a new setting, in 'new fashionable clothing' as a 'new' political strategy. The 'new' LLL idea now promotes, among other things, a constant urge and need for continuous individual development and learning in order to face labour market challenges. The Unesco/World Report for the 21st century example presents LLL in the new context related to the evolving requirements and needs of the labour market:

"A key to the twenty-first century, learning throughout life will be essential, for adapting to the evolving requirements of the labour market and for better mastery of the changing time-frames and rhythms of individual existence" (Unesco´s World Reports, http://t21.ca/education/tp.htm)

LLL is nowadays recognized as a tool to serve the labour market, as an instrument for politicians to play with

"What is clear is that the context of lifelong learning has changed and the utopian and generous vision and organizing principle of education reforms. It is recognized today as an indispensable tool to enable education to face its multiple current and emerging challenges" (Medel-Añonuevo, Ohsako, Mauch 2001).

Lifelong learning is, however, a concept that works also in developing countries:

"We propose lifelong education as the master concept for educational policies in the years to come for educational policies in the years to come for both developed and developing countries" (Faure 1972).

Lifelong learning is thus in fashion. Previously it was a tool to enable and enhance, among other things, education and democratization throughout the world. In the beginning

of the 21st century, we find ourselves in the midst of the loud voices of the European Union (EU) and its member states, the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and even the World Bank, advocating our need to learn throughout life. It is now presented as a strategy in a changing world, as an instrument in order to survive in a knowledge based economy.

The Norwegian researcher Kjell-Arne Rövik (1996) discusses how old standards often are reinstitutionalized and appear again, in a new context, setting, form or frame

"new institutionalists have observed that institutionalized standards from former times can be reinstitutionalized and appear once again as the new and correct way of organizing" (in Czarniawska & Sévon 1996:170).

An idea whose time has come, even a reinstitutionalized one, is a powerful one as the French author Victor Hugo (in Czarniawska 2005:111) insightfully notes:

"there is nothing more powerful than 'an idea whose time has come".

We can thus explain, depict and understand the EU/LLL translation/travel process with the help of fashion and with the understanding that the time was right for LLL to reappear. Fashion is a powerful trigger for the travel of ideas. It can enhance a process of translation and a powerful reconstruction and re-institutionalization process. Fashion can help us to understand why certain ideas are/become popular at certain times. In this case the diffusion of LLL has to do also with shared vision. The LLL idea reappears and takes the form of a 'new' LLL strategy initiated, in this case, by the European Council.

The role of LLL seems to be instrumental, i.e. the EU uses the LLL idea and ideology to serve its goals of which one significant one is to enable the EU membership countries´

smooth transaction into a knowledge-based economy. The original idea has thus changed through time. The 'new' idea has been reshaped in order to fit a new context, aims, goals, interests and purposes of the future. The institutional EU related discourse, however, includes rhetoric from the past.

The concept of travel helps to depict the movement from one context to another. Translation help to depict the process of change and transformation that occurs and takes place when an idea travels, i.e. when an idea is taken from its original context and implemented into a different one.

In this case it was an outside external event that triggered the process of translation.

2.2 The research partner

The contest "Best workplaces in the EU 2003®" in Finland was activated by the EU and carried out in Finland by the research partner LTT-Tutkimus

Oy. The idea behind the contest, according to the national research institute in Finland, was to:

-arouse interest towards HR (human resource) matters in Finland and in Europe

-support organisations in human resource development (HRD) related matters

-create international benchmarking-knowledge on HR matters for organisational use and -purpose (LTT-Tutkimus Oy 2004).

The survey gives, in addition to the benchmark report, according to LTT-Tutkimus Oy, unique benchmarking comparisons and possibilities between the best organizations in Finland, the EU and the US. The organizations are them-

selves given the opportunity to choose what comparative elements they wish to include in their report. Besides benchmark-comparisons the report contains a thorough analysis of the organizations' results, a summary of the personnel's open comments and examples of best organizational practices.

In the year, 2003, when the law firm was awarded

-over one thousand European organizations participated in the contest
-210,000 employees participated in interviews
-nine of the top one hundred workplaces in the EU were from Finland
-one organization from Finland came in the top ten
-one organization from Finland won the special category of LLL

Data collection in the "Best workplaces in the EU 2003"® contest was conducted by means of

1) A Trust Index questionnaire was given to the personnel involving a full sample or random sample (250 people), a paper questionnaire or Internet version, containing 53 statements on a scale from 1-5.

2) A Culture Audit – a questionnaire given to the HR department involving one answer per organization, with questions related to personnel structure and HR handling in the organization.

3) Additional material from the organizations included personnel reports, personnel magazines, annual reports, educational programmes and strategies, plans and structures.

The evaluation was conducted with the help of the questionnaire that counted for 2/3 of the analysis and with the help of HR handling material which counted for 1/3 of the analysis and finding.

When I asked LTT-Tutkimus Oy in spring 2003 for more details regarding the selection of the best organization in the EU special category of LLL, the research institute claimed to be bound by confidentiality and referred me to the participating organizations in question for more information. Much later, when I contacted LTT-Tutkimus Oy again in spring 2005 they told me as much:

"in an open ended question one respondent had replied that the law firm was a great place to grow professionally, i.e. one cannot develop better at any other work place" (Respondent X/LTT)

They also told me that the EU partly sponsored the contest, that 54 organizations participated from Finland and that the law firm was outstanding as shown in the additional material they provided. At the law firm some employees had expressed that they were given the opportunity to develop professionally. Moreover the law firm is considered unique in Finland as they invest immensely in education and development and that as an employee you cannot educate yourself better at any work place. It was the whole picture that made the difference according to LTT-Tutkimus Oy.

Learning and development

Introduction training for all new XX team members

- days of lectures and meetings
- content for example: Welcome to XX company presentations and values, Ethics and Morale in Law Business, CR, HR, IT training several times, Knowledge Management and Library, own operational group
- after the introduction days the next two weeks are partly working, partly training
- personal tutor for the first year (XX-Tutor Program)
- XX-Manual (paper and Intranet version)
- Feedback is gathered after two weeks, after one month and after four months

XX Tutor Program (1)

- designated tutor for all new recrution
- forms part of the introduction package
- lasts for 12 months for permanent employes, for trainees the entire training period
- the goal is to
    - provide information on how matters are handled at the firm (XX best practices)
    - facilitate the integration of the tutoree in the office
    - make the tutoree part of the XX team
    - clarify basic principles of the work, provide practical advice related to the work

Tutor Program (2)

- the challenge is to create a genuine interaction between the tutor and the tutoree
- tutoring is part of the job description for every employee at the firm
- in addition to the tutor, also the team leader, the managers, HR and all colleagues are responsible for guiding the tutoree
- the tutor should have at least one year´s experience of working at the firm
- the tutor is a co-worker, not a supervisor
- the tutor and the tutoree shold belong to the same team
- training for the tutoring is provided by XX
- the tutor gets feedback twice during 12 months

Performance Appraisal Discussions

- part of each employees´ personal development plan
- done twice a year
- including: feedback on past performance (both ways), planning on future actions and projects, career planning and a personal development plan (which is copied to HR and used for the training and development plan/schedule for the whole firm)
- HR together with the person´s supervisor /team leader makes sure that the development plans are executed in due time if possible

XX – Academy (1)

- legal in-house training program obligatory for all associates and partly also for senior associates
- content for example: Competition Law, Capital Markets, Basics and special issues on Procedural law, Key clauses of contracts, Labour Law, Industrial Property Law
- lecturers mainly the firm´s own lawyers in certain issues outside lecturers are used (for example Bookkeeping and Analysis of financial statements)
- duration about 1,5 years, meetings approximately every other week, 1 to 4 hours per lecture
- about 30-60 participants on each lecture

XX-Academy (2)

- the first Academy started in May 2002 and continues until September 2003
- next one starts in October 2003
- continuous program guarantees better opportunity to participate
- feedback from all lectures given and analysed
- feedback has been very good (on a scale from 4-10, the average is 8,5-9)

Legal training for assistants/secretaries

- Program to develop assistants´/secretaries´ legal knowledge and motivate them in their work
- content for example: Company Law, Insolvency Law, Labour Law, Regulation of the capital market, Legal proceedings, Acquisition agreements...
- duration about one year, lectures 1-2 times a month, 2-3 hours/lecture
- lecturers mainly the firm´s own lawyers
- feedback is gathered and used in order to develop the next program
- first program started in October 2001 and finished in December 2002
- new program started in February 2003

Management and Leadership training

- Development groups (partners and senior associates) which meet once a month for four hours each time for 6 to 8 months
- Each session has a theme on which a theoretical lesson is held and most of the time is spent on discussions and real life issues
- The first group will start in August and the next one at the end of 2003
- Themes for example: Team leadership, Time Management, Coaching and Feedback, Values, How to handle “difficult” personnel situations/Conflict Management, Customer Relationship Management, Self Management, Project Management, Own leadership skills and developing them (incl. few analysis, for example 360 degree feedback and EQ-I/Emotional

Coaching and Feedback

- part of management and leadership training
- a two-day seminar with lots of exercises on how to be a good coach and how to give, get and ask for feedback
- three seminars/workshops held (about 45 participants; partners, senior associates and managers)
- next seminar planned for spring 2003

Language training

- Finnish, English and Swedish mainly
- Also German and French if needed
- Spoken written and legal language groups (some 1-3 day seminars, some continuous 1,5-2 hour sessions for 20-30 weeks)
- 2001-2002 about 15 groups
- 2002-2003 about 15 groups
- Feedback is gathered and all training is evaluated

Outside training

- all employees can attend outside seminars and other training on a need basis (often discussed and agreed in a Performance Appraisal Discussion)
- yearly budget for training and development about 6-7 % of the salary budget (not including salary for training time and travel costs)

The extra material they sent to LTT-Tutkimus Oy thus consisted of, among other things:

-Introduction training for all new team members
-Tutor Programme (1 and 2)
-Performance Appraisal Discussions
-Academy 1 and 2 (legal in-house training, programme obligatory for all associates and partly also for senior associates (competition law, capital markets, basic and special issues on procedural law, key clauses of contracts, labour law, industrial property law, lecturers, mainly the firm's own lawyers)
-Legal training for assistants/secretaries
-Management and leadership training
-Coaching and feedback
-Language training
-External training

The national research institute in Finland hence identified the law firm as outstanding compared with other Finnish participants in the special category of LLL, i.e. in professional further employee development well structured training programmes, educational opportunities and programmes that focus on the long-term development of the individual employee (as defined in 100 Best Workplaces in the EU & Three Special Awards 2003:4).

However, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the discourse and the process of translation, I need to go back in time. I need to depict the evolution and historical development of the concept in order to understand the discourse, in order to understand how an original educational idea is transformed into a fashionable tool for the EU and into a best practice case, in order to show how the idea of lifelong learning is translated into local practices.

2.3 History and time

People imitate desires or beliefs that appear attractive at a given time and place. The image that Czarniawska & Sévon (2005) are evoking is one guided by fashion. Attractive ideas are translated into 'new' ideas, objects and practices as in our case when the EU detected an appealing idea, translated the law firm practices for their own purpose, interest and use in an attempt to benchmark best practices in an organizational context within the LLL strategy.

However, translation always changes the original and those who translate. There is thus always room for new fashions and for subsequent translation. This circular or perhaps spiral process produces an enormous variety of different results of an original idea, as was already shown.

Before the 20th century, education was a privilege that only involved the upper social classes. What is now new in education is that it involves the whole society (Silvennoinen & Tulkki 1998).

The LLL idea and discourse can, however, be traced back as far as to John Dewey who already noted in 1916 that;

"It is commonplace to say that education should not cease when one leaves school. The point of this common place is that the purpose of school organization is to insure the continuance of education by organizing the powers that insure growth. The inclination to learn from life itself and to make the condition of life such that all will learn in the process of living is the finest product of schooling" (Dewey 1916:51).

The idea of lifelong education was, however, first formulated by a modern educational and learning system in 1919 by a British adult education committee that stated the need for lifelong learning in a document. According to this report,

adult education should not involve just one special group, but be available for all (Jessup 1969; Suchodolski 1976).

"Adult education must not be regarded as a luxury for a few exceptional persons here and there, nor as a thing which concerns only a short span of early manhood, but that adult education is a permanent national necessity, an inseparable aspect of citizenship, and therefore should be both universal and lifelong (Ministry of Reconstruction 1919:55)

Eduard Lindeman (1926a) and Basil Yeaxlee (1929) provided an intellectual basis for a comprehensive understanding of education as a continuing aspect of everyday life. They drew upon the French notion known as French permanente and developments within adult education within Britain and North America.

The inclusiveness of LLL is a main trait that has survived all phases throughout history. Documents and reports from practically all nations, as well as reports from intergovernmental organizations such as the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) uniformly promote lifelong learning as the foundation for adult education and as a training policy for all.

In 1994, UNESCO chose 'Lifelong Learning for All' as its mid-term strategy covering the period 1996-2001. In the same year, the OECD Conference of Ministers of Education proposed that all member countries should adopt a "making lifelong learning a reality for all" strategy as a priority for the ensuing five-year period.

The modern roots of lifelong learning can be traced to UNESCO's second International Adult Education Congress in Montreal in 1960. The final report does not contain the words lifelong learning, but the conference is nonetheless ac-

cepted as being the founding platform for the concept and idea as it recognises the right to education and learning for all throughout life:

"Having regard to the fact that education must be realistic, scientific and related to present-day life, so as to contribute to the overall development of the modern man, to mutual knowledge and respect of peoples and their cultural values, and to the strengthening of peace throughout the world, and also to the fact that a similar role is played by art; considering that education and culture should be available to everyone, irrespective of race, sex, nationality and religion, thereby helping to ensure equality of rights to men and women in all walks of life… Education should embrace the great ideals of mankind and should foster mutual respect between the peoples, and mutual appreciation of their cultural values; it should break down racial hatred and make for brotherly understanding among the peoples, it should militate in favour of peace throughout the world" (World Conference on Adult Education 1960:2)

UNESCO, the internationally recognised authority on education, is thus generally perceived as being the father and promoter of lifelong learning, although the idea was not UNESCO's alone and the origins of the idea can be traced elsewhere.

Typical characteristics for the UNESCO viewpoint on lifelong education have been a human value base, an aspiration for democracy, inclusiveness and a global way of thinking. Furthermore the integration of pedagogical learning activities into all different areas and spheres of life have been emphasised and pinpointed by UNESCO in addition to a human resources policy aiming at democracy and personal development as the extract below vividly shows:

"In Learning to Be, the report of the International Commission on the Development of Education, under the chairmanship of Edgar Faure, the

Organization took a firm stand and declared its refusal to choose between quantity and quality, between democratisation and effectiveness, affirming on the contrary, the two are inseparable and must therefore go forward together, each strengthening the other. The democratisation of access to education, and its renewal, remain two durable and indissociable objectives in UNESCO's action, in harmony with its humanistic approach to development as opposed to merely economic considerations" (www.UNESCO.org/education/educprog/50yr/brochure/:3) 1.10.2005.

The attempt of the Faure report (1972) was to advocate the right, access and necessity of learning for all. In the Delors report (1996) lifelong education was, twenty-four years later, replaced with the term lifelong learning. The societies had developed and the world looked different, the demands, the atmosphere and the time was different so even UNESCO felt the need to update their rhetoric, goals and mindset accordingly. Twenty-four years after the Faure report the UNESCO´s Delors Report acknowledged the need to

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

"rethink and update the concept of lifelong education so as to reconcile three forces: competition, which provides incentives; co-operation which gives strength; and solidarity, which unites (Delors 1998:18).

Competition played one part of the report, together with co-operation and solidarity. The report also recognized the changes in the nature of work together with the demands these changes enhanced.

"There is a need to rethink and broaden the notion of lifelong education. Not only must it adapt to changes in the nature of work, but it must also constitute a continuous process of forming whole beings – their knowl-

edge, as well as the critical faculty and ability to act. It should enable people to develop awareness of themselves and their environment and encourage them to play their social role and work in the community" (Delors 1998:21).

At the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s, the OECD and the EU translated the idea of lifelong learning to fit the problems of, among others, the labour market.

The OECD and the EU thus translated the idea for political purposes and interest combining an attractive idea with the needs of the labour market.

"In fact, this present situation is a continuation of the OECD lifelong learning discourse made public in its report, Recurrent Education: A Strategy for Lifelong Learning (1973), which reframed the lifelong learning discussion in largely economistic and employability terms. (Medel-Añonuevo, Ohsako, Mauch 2001:1).

According to the OECD (1996b) the promoted idea on lifelong learning is not as school centred as it was before. Furthermore, LLL is perceived important also for innovations, democracy and for the sustainability of societal order.

"Success in realising lifelong learning – from early childhood education to active learning retirement – will be an important factor in promoting employment, economic development, democracy and social cohesion in the years ahead" (OECD 1996b:13)

In the report the economic viewpoint, however, is strongly visible. The OECD always stresses the economic national benefits and viewpoints of LLL. The OECD stresses the economic LLL benefits both for individuals as well as for nations. The OECD perceives LLL as a win-win for all, not least the global economy.

This change of focal point of LLL from democracy and from a human value base to fit the demands of the economic and knowledge-society did, however, not please everybody.

"The predominantly economic interpretation of lifelong learning in the last ten years, however, has become problematic for many educators and practitioners who have come forward with such terms as "Lifelong (L)Earning" and "Learning to Earn" as their succinct criticism of the way the term is being promoted" (Medel-Añonuevo, Ohsako, Mauch 2001:1).

In the nineties lifelong learning was thus linked to re-training and learning new skills that would enable individuals to cope with the demands of the rapidly changing workplace (Matheson and Matheson 1996; Bagnall 2000). LLL talk in the nineties was also talk about innovations. However, as a consequence of the criticism that the Memorandum (2000) faced, the Communication (2001) interconnects knowledge-based economy talk with talk on societal order, social integration, active citizenship and democracy.

UNESCO aimed in the nineties at developing the horizontal integration involving education and life, not only should educative learning experiences be found in everyday life, but also in continuous educational situations.

The modern UNESCO idea is basically based on four pillars:

-learning to know (by combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects)

-learning to do (in order to acquire not only an occupational skill, but also, more broadly, the competence to deal with many situations and work in teams)

-learning to live together (by developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence)

-learning to be (so as better to develop one's personality and be able to act with ever greater autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility (Delors 1998: 97)

2.4 LLL in Finland

Talk on lifelong learning and education has surfaced in Finland three times during the past century. The idea was transported to Finland in the 1960s as part of UNESCO's II international adult educational world congress recommendations.

In the beginning the principle of lifelong education in Finland was connected to voluntary civic educational work and later to adult vocational education. Lifelong education is here parallel with lifelong learning although certain distinction can be made.

Lehtisalo & Raivola (1999) point to reasons as to why LLL did not become a development strategy in the 1970s. One reason they give was that LLL in Finland was being marketed in an OECD sequential spirit according to which adolescent education was to be postponed - to be given at adult age. Another reason the idea of LLL was not more successful was because the educational system was not yet holistically perceived. Adult education was thus still separated from the rest of the educational system.

The idea of LLL reappeared in official documents in 1978 when the cabinet decided on adult educational development and planning principles. This cabinet decision made it possible for lifelong education and learning's second appearance in the Finnish educational system (Lehtisalo & Raivola 1999).

"By lifelong learning is meant the continuous learning process throughout a person's life that includes all human learning regardless of the context and the way in which learning occurs. Learning occurs continuously both in structured education and informally" (KM 1983:62)

The third time LLL turned up in Finland was in the 1990s - as a consequence of the discussions and speeches that were held and had been held at the European Union at different levels about the knowledge society and the knowledge-based economy´s requirements. LLL was brought to Finland for the third time as a working tool for the knowledge society and its inhabitants. In between these appearances, the concept suffered from practical implication. During the third phase it seems important to also aim at operationalizing the concept:

"The principles of lifelong learning principles need to be put into practice" (KM 1995:13).

Representatives of the economy on the one hand wish education to benefit productivity whereas pedagogical representatives on the other hand emphasise the substance in learning and the meaning of learning in individual growth processes. Lehtisalo and Raivola state that lifelong learning should not be transformed into something mandatory dictated by economic and societal change (Lehtisalo and Raivola 1999:188).

2.4.1 A new direction

LLL has both in the OECD and the EU taken a somewhat economic and technological direction. According to Lehtisalo and Raivola (1999:188) international competition, economic life and an interest to comply with the needs of working life are the true motivators for LLL in the 21st century.

There has been a significant amount of critical debates around lifelong learning and its operations that serve the interests of capital, the state and the labour market and not the interest of the human or as Salling Olesen puts it:

"The idealistic, wishful thinking, that has in the last 3-4 decades been slowly worn down by the absence of practical implementation, now seems to be promoted by power elites in the capitalist world" (Salling Olesen 1999:1).

Technological changes in the EU were rapid in the 1990s. Finland, along with the rest of Europe, was moving fast towards something that has been labelled and named as the knowledge society and/or knowledge-based economy.

The European Parliament and Council declared 1996 as the year of Lifelong Learning in Europe and during the same year the Finnish cabinet established a committee to plan a national lifelong learning strategy.

The strategy of lifelong learning (LLL) rose to the very peak of educational policies in the EU in 2002. This is confirmed by documents addressing this subject prepared by the EU. Such documents are among others, the Memorandum (SEC(2000) 832) on lifelong learning and the Communication (COM (2001) 678 final) in which arguments for decentralisation and deformalisation can be found, in the interest of capital on the one hand, and with the desire to provide an inclusive society on the other. Deformalisation stands for bridging the gap between formal, informal and non-formal learning.

The Communication (COM (2001) 678 final) "Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality" builds on the Memorandum. Its top priority and foremost aim is to make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world. Implementation of lifelong learning in practice is a highly significant priority of the EU, but

arguments for social cohesion and an inclusive society are also strong and powerful. Arguments related to knowledge and competitiveness can be found in these documents together with arguments related to social inclusion, employment, active citizenship, equal rights for learning etc.

It seems that many interests, purposes and political agendas can be traced to these documents, all translated to serve different purposes. Learning theories play a less dominant role in these texts. It is 'talk' about technology and economy that dominates.

History thus reveals that there has been a shift from the original thoughts on lifelong learning, including ideas on personal development and human growth, to economic interests, demands, pressures, changes and requirements that the knowledge-based economy now stands for.

Lifelong learning has thus gained new vitality and use, rhetoric and framework in a new context.

LLL is now found to be the key for socio-economic needs related to adapting human resources to demands at work, economic growth and competition or to use the words of Salling Olesen:

"Now the reasons given are those of economic competitiveness, whether on a national or a continental level (Europe versus North America versus Asia)" (Salling Olesen 1999:1).

or Rubenson:

"Driven by different ideology with different goals and dreams the idea reappeared in the latter part of the 1980s. Judging from national policy documents as well as those coming from intergovernmental organisations like EU, OECD and UNESCO it is evident that lifelong learning has become the New Jerusalem by promising to solve some of the economic and social problems facing the industrialised world" (Rubenson 2000:2).

The previously published Memorandum (SEC(2000) 832) was critizised for defining lifelong learning in terms of employment and labour market demands. This is how lifelong learning is termed in the context of the Communication

"lifelong learning is, however, about much more than economics. It also promotes the goals and amibitions of European countries to become more inclusive, tolerant and democratic" (COM(2001) 678:7).

In the figure we can see how the idea and concept has developed through history and time.

learn through living	adults learn too	value based view	economy	knowledge-based society
John Dewey	Adult Education Committee	UNESCO Adult Education Congress	OECD	EU Informal Formal Non-formal
1916 ➡	1919 ➡	1960 ➡	1970 ➡	1990

Figure 7. The evolution of lifelong learning

Lifelong learning based and constructed upon many competing discourses, controversies, inconsistencies, paradoxes, inner contradictions and compelling ideas depending on who translates, for what purpose and where the idea travels. Its practical implication is dependent on time and place.

The (post) modern 'institutional' LLL is thus shaped by ideas and talk on human fulfilment and individual competence development, of social integration and of economic interests as well as of the knowledge-based society's many requirements and demands for new skills and competences.

I understand the lifelong learning discourse to be a construction, a discourse that is interdependent with history, power relations and time. It is people who are behind these constructions. The concept does not go free from power struggles

and controversies, competing ideas and inconsistent talk. It is all produced by people with different political agendas, purposes and interests. The EU documents involving history reveal that shared desire and a mutual vision has been difficult to achieve, also in the area of lifelong learning.

The institutional concept is heavily influenced by political views, rhetoric and (paradoxical) talk. The market economy realism is struggling to take over the discourse. This is symptomatic of this era, not only reflected upon the lifelong learning concept and discourse. The economic view and market economy ideology reflects post-modern European values and constructs the bases for many discourses of our time, not LLL alone.

What used to be an ideology based on human growth is thus today a discourse shaped by economic talk on competitiveness, efficiency, rationality, benefit, cost and return, ideas based on the knowledge-based economy's many demands and requirements integrated with talk on social inclusion and personal fulfilment.

An idea, however, cannot catch on according to Czarniawska & Sévon (1996) unless it already exists for some time in many people's minds, as a part of a master idea in a translocal space/time. Master ideas serve as focus for fashions and build a bridge between the passing fashion and a lasting institution. It seems, according to Czarniawska & Sévon (1996) that, master ideas come from the narratives of the past which are translated into the present set of concepts and are projected in the future, often in opposition to the present. This conforms well to the LLL discourse. Some ideas stay around and become modern whereas others stay on and become institutions. Some ideas simply disappear.

The LLL discourse stayed around for decades, became modern, disappeared and then reappeared in a new shape, in a new conceptual frame with a different message. The driving

force lay in the interest, people, purpose and shared desire and in the energy that comes with translation (Czarniawska 2005). The driving LLL force used to be found in democratization with talk related to human values. It is now found in the needs, desires and demands of the knowledge-based society.

When new ideas, habits and praxis travel through the world they must as Giddens (1991) expresses it, be disembodied from their original context and then embedded again where they land. This means that an idea that comes to a new place is never identical with the original one. It is translated to fit the new context, the present needs, desires, purposes and gaps.

Not only is LLL an idea, an institutional discourse with a long and interesting history shaped and translated differently by politics, power, people, purposes, interest, aim and talk, but theoretically LLL is also a confusing concept that is translated differently by different translators.

PART THREE – THEORY MEETS THEORY

3.1 A confusing concept that is translated differently by different translators

or as Richard Rottenburg in Global ideas puts it:

"translation is never identical to the original and globalisation produces as much variety as standardization" (Rottenburg 2005:12).

Peter Jarvis finds the concept of lifelong learning extremely confusing since it combines individual learning and institutionalized learning (Jarvis 2004:64). In this chapter I will introduce LLL into the field of Organizational Learning (OL) and Learning Organization theory (LO). These theories seem relevant and most pressing in the context of LLL in organizations, in addition to the previously mentioned learning theories that recognize the contextual, socio-cultural, situational, cultural and work related aspects related to learning.

Learning can thus be understood both as an individual process which continues throughout life – lifelong learning - or as institutionalized and formalized: in other words the educational system. The latter is often distinguished and understood as lifelong education. In an organization I understand (life)long learning as a social process that takes place in a specific context, not only in peoples' heads.

Dave edited in 1976 the book "Foundations of Lifelong Education" in which he understands lifelong education to comprise formal, non-formal and informal patterns of learning throughout the life cycle of an individual for the conscious and continuous enhancement of the quality of society. Dave´s attempt was to introduce lifelong education as a norm for the whole range of age groups and educational services. As the precursor of lifelong learning, lifelong education was conceived as a holistic and integrated strategy that was di-

rected towards the fulfilment of adaptive and creative functions of the individuals learning to the continuous improvement of the quality of personal and collective life.

Longworth and Davies (1996) define lifelong learning as continuous and as a support process where individuals are given the possibility to obtain the needed understanding, knowledge, skills and values through which they can cope in life in changing roles, various situations and different surroundings. They thus recognise the supporting role of learning. The outside pressures of society and needs presented through changes of working life, however, are also present in Longworth and Davies definition.

Oliver (1994) perceives lifelong learning as a wide and holistic concept in which child, adolescence, adult-education and learning is included. According to Oliver, lifelong learning is a psychological mind model and a way to perceive learning.

Silvennoinen (1998) has a similar definition. According to him lifelong learning is a question about how an individual continuously absorbs new information, knowledge and skills in order to think, interpret, act and adapt. Many researchers stress the individual.

Lifelong learning can easily, as Carolyn Medel-Añonuevo, Toshio Ohsako and Werner Mauch (2001:7) recognize, be offered as an appropriate remedy for practically every thinkable crisis people are faced with on both the macro and the micro level, be it poverty, war or sickness.

According to Thompson (2001) the term lifelong learning includes so many elements that it looses its importance. The secret of LLL according to McGivney for instance is hidden in the fact that it means everything (2001). According to Oliver (1999), however, there is a risk in the wide and loose use of the concept that it looses significance.

It seems that the concept is ambivalent and its use as ambiguous; it is at the same time everything and nothing and

it can thus be defined at the same time in so many various ways (McGivney 2001).

Nevertheless, talk on lifelong learning is a way to produce reality according to Silvennoinen, Tulkki (1998). By creating 'new' concepts institutions aim at getting people to act in a different way or at least to view the world through lifelong learning lenses. Yet it is very confusing and unclear what lifelong learning really is or what it is meant to be or stand for according to Silvennoinen, Tulkki (1998).

There are many interests and conflicting ideas that steer, direct and imply what LLL should aim at or stand for. According to Lehtisalo & Raivola (1999) human growth and self-development should be the starting point in the definition of lifelong education, not the pressures for change that working life and society stands for. According to Silvennoinen and Tulkki (1998) talk on lifelong learning aims, despite talk on education, first and foremost to adjust attitudes to be in harmony with the demands of the labour market, i.e. to fit the requirements of the knowledge-based society for innovative knowledge and new skills.

One strong view on LLL is thus that people need to continuously develop themselves in order to be competitive on the labour market (Silvennoinen, Tulkki & Honkanen 1998). Lifelong learning, consequently, is not lifelong schooling. Rather, the concept increasingly stresses the importance of having people take responsibility for their own learning, while the task of educators is to provide an environment in which this can be done effectively (see for example the Memorandum 2000 and the Communication 2001). The European Commission defines LLL as:

'all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civil, social and/or employment-related perspective'(COM (2001) 678 final:33).

Learning at work is how the Ministry of Education in Finland perceives that LLL principles can be applied in practice. It is assumed, on the one hand, that competence at a global competitive level is maintained through learning at work and on the other, that opportunities are being created for individuals to fulfil themselves (KM 1993:36).

The literature on LLL does not, however, contain strong opposition to one thing that is self-evident, i.e. that learning is a continuous process (Pantzar 1991). LLL is not static, it is dynamic. There is thus no fixed ending for learning, it is continuous. LLL is constantly under construction. It is constantly reconstructed in an ongoing process of translation between institution and practice affected by need and desire, purpose, social context, culture and interest or as Medel-Añonuevo, Ohsako and Mauch (2001) state:

"Learning is both an individual and a social process. While learning takes place at the individual level with the interplay of cognitive, emotional and physical elements, the learning process is very much shaped by the environment in which the learning finds himself/herself. Learning environments are no static and constantly pose new challenge to the learner. The learner needs to assimilate and accommodate the changes in his/her environment" (Medel-Añonuevo, Ohsako, Mauch 2001:14)

My interpretation and definition of lifelong learning in an organizational context includes not only personal development, but also learning from, with and of others in a specific context involving practice.

Lifelong learning can thus be seen from many perspectives and it can involve many processes, controversial ideas and views. All the same, there has been mutual and/or shared understanding that LLL consists of formal, informal and non-formal elements of learning.

Even if much of the core KM (Knowledge Management) literature is focused on how to consciously provide structures, spaces and opportunities for workplace learning the informal elements of (lifelong)learning are predominantly dealt with here through recognising and acknowledging the social/situational, contextual, implicit and tacit aspects of learning. The more pro-active forms of learning are acknowledged, dealt with and recognized through the pro-active OL forms of learning.

The following chapter focus pre-dominantly on informal learning as it is seen more problematic than the other two forms (arenas) of learning within the concept of lifelong learning.

3.2 Formal, non-formal and informal learning

Basil Yeaxlee, recognized the non-formal elements and opportunities related to (lifelong) learning already in 1929.

"Much adult education will never know itself as such, and will be recognized only by leaders and teachers of real insight. It will go on in clubs, churches, cinemas, theatres, concert rooms, trade unions, political societies, and in the homes of the people where there are books, newspapers, music, wireless sets, workshops, gardens and groups of friends (Yeaxlee 1929:155)

Richard Bagnall (1990) does not use the word intuition, but he suggests that informal learning is obtained unconsciously, existentially through the mere experience of living in a particular environment or context (Bagnall, 1990). Bagnall's view on learning is not very different from the one adopted here. Informal learning can thus be termed and understood as "learning how to be"; i.e. learning how to exist, be and act, in a specific community of practice. It is basically

unconscious, incidental, incremental and accidental learning that occurs from being and existing in a specific social community of practice. My understanding is that a prerequisite for learning how to be is ‘learning how to be with’ which brings to the fore the social skills needed in order to interact in practice, e.g. for knowledge to transfer and be created.

3.2.1 Learning how to be with

It was Jerome Bruner who in 1986 made a distinction between ‘learning to be’ and ‘learning about’. The former requires ‘knowing how’, the art of practice, the latter facts and information. Learning about requires knowing that, which confers the ability to talk about a game, but not necessarily to play it. Transforming ‘knowing how’ into ‘knowing that’, the tacit into its nearest explicit equivalent is as transforming learning from learning to be into learning about.

Michael Polanyi (1969) is the father behind the term ‘tacit knowing’. Polanyi referred by the term to the sort of knowledge that is difficult to make explicit. Later the ‘tacit knowing’ term has been used often, among others, by e.g. Nonaka and Takeuchi in their book “The knowledge-creating company” published in 1995 in which the authors show how ‘tacit knowledge’ can be made explicit with the help of symbols and metaphors in the Japanese car-industry. Their theory has been heavily critized, among other things, for the lack of empirical evidence.

It was, however, through these ideas, that ‘learning how to be with’ emerged. ‘Learning how to be with’ is argued to be important in the context of workplace learning. It is viewed as an elementary and tacit part of informal learning as there is less likely much knowledge creation if the learner does not have the ability and know how to be with,

that is know how to be together with others in a social context, in practice. This is often perceived as natural or given, i.e. the ability to know how to be together e.g. in a workplace context, but it is often not. It is recognised here as the tacit dimension of informal learning. 'Learning how to be with' presupposes and correlates with 'learning to be'. The former stresses the ability to know how to interact together in a specific social context. It involves the knowing how to speak and work together, how to interact and communicate with one another, how to read body-language and how to be understood. It is often assumed and agreed upon that we learn from each other. It is often also assumed and agreed upon that through human interaction and involvement knowledge is transferred and new knowledge is created. These assumptions and agreements, however, involve social interaction, i.e. the knowing 'how to be with'. Consequently, knowledge does not transfer in learning processes without this tacit knowing. New knowledge is not created nor do we learn from each other if the social dimension and interaction is not recognised. It is thus vital for learning that we know how to be together. It is not enough to recognise the social context, but also the skill, art and ability that is involved in the participatory processes.

Traditionally lifelong learning has been studied in the context of adult education. Individual learning has been studied from a cognitive or behaviour perspective where focus has been on individual human beings behaviour stimuli or cognitively related learning processes. Learning has thus often been seen as an activity with a beginning and an end, isolated from practice and social context. It has been perceived that learning:

"has a beginning and an end; that it is best separated from the rest of our activities; and that it is the result of teaching" (Wenger 1998:3).

Consequently, learning has not always been viewed as an interaction or as a dialectical social process, but rather as an input with a measurable outcome such as changed behaviour.

Here, the art of 'learning how to be with' is defined as the ability to know how to interact with people in practice. The art of 'learning how to be with' presupposes the art of 'learning how to be' and it involves the skill and the art to know how to interact, i.e. the tacit knowing dimension related to social interaction. It is perceived important in the context of informal learning and in this study it is considered a prerequisite for informal learning.

3.2.2 Context- and situation-specific learning

Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) introduced a new way of understanding learning in 1991 through the concept of communities of practice. Originally it was used in the understanding of situated learning processes in organizations, but has also become quite influential in participatory design as a way of understanding relations between different groups of users in a specific context (Wenger 1998). The concept situated learning (Lave and Wenger 1991), is not a pedagogical strategy, learning technique or a theory of learning, it is a way to understand learning. Learning is seen as a social process that considers individual needs in addition to the learners cultural background. Consequently learning always occurs in a specific context in relation to others. Learning occurs everywhere among and with people, i.e. learning occurs regardless of the educative form and institution.

"We emphasize the significance of shifting the analytic focus from the individual as learner to learning as participation in the social world, and from the concept of cognitive process to the more-encompassing view of social practice" (Lave and Wenger 1991: 43).

Communities of practice is a concept in which the researchers depict an activity system in which the participants share an understanding of what they are doing, how it affects their own life in relation to others, but also to the activity itself and to the world. A human does not enter a learning situation in vacuum. He carries with him his own history and always comes from a different cultural context.

Lave and Wenger's theory (1991) on situated learning was not the first to recognize that learning was contextually dependent, socially embedded in and related to practice. Michael Polanyi (1962) is recognized as one of the forerunners to the idea related to communities of practice. Polanyi´s interest and research was developed in the middle of the 20th century in the context of scientific practice. He wrote of the concept in terms of tradition, a system of values that describes how knowledge is transferred within a social context.

"An art which cannot be specified in detail cannot be transmitted by prescription, since no prescription for it exists. It can be passed on by example from master to apprentice. This restricts the range of diffusion to that of personal contacts…(for example) while the articulate contents of science are successfully taught all over the world in hundreds of new universities, the unspeciafiable art of scientific research has not yet penetrated to many of these…To learn by example is to submit to authority. You follow your master because you thrust his manner of doing things even when you cannot analyze and account in detail for its effectiveness. By watching the master and emulating his efforts in t he presence of his example, the apprentice unconsciously picks up the rules of the art, incluing those which are not explicitly known to the master himself. These hidden rules can be assimilated only by a person who surrenders himself to that extend uncritically to the imitation of another. A society which wants to preserve a fund of personal knowledge must submit to tradition…We accept the verdict of our appraisal, be it at first hand by relying on our own judgment, or at second hand by submitting to the authority of a personal example as carrier of a tradition" (Polanyi 1962:53).

Nevertheless, it is generally acknowledged that Jean Lave´s and Etienne Wenger´s work on 'community of practice' was conclusive in generating a growing research interest for learning in relation to social and situational context. The researchers viewed and argued learning to be a social process, a process that takes place in a social context. Lave and Wenger (1991) perceive learning as participation in practice, in a social context.

3.2.3 Learning arenas

Informal learning can thus be viewed as an activity that is present in daily activities defined by practice and involvement, activity and social interaction. Lifelong learning can be viewed and divided in terms of e.g. learning arenas. By learning arena I here refer to the physical place in which learning occurs and takes place. Formal learning can be understood as the arena in which formal education takes place, i.e. the school, university etc. Non-formal learning can be understood as the physical and geographical place in which non-formal learning occurs, i.e. the church, the home, the political party, the course, the locality for pursuing a hobby, the association, course location etc. Informal learning recognizes learning at the workplace, i.e. learning from experience, within a social context, situation, by doing, involving oneself, by watching, practising and participating. Informal learning acknowledges, according to e.g. the KM literature, also the conscious, pro-active dimensions of learning. Here, however, the intuitive, incremental and tacit dimensions related to workplace learning are highlighted.

Traditional views on learning are hence replaced in this study by contextual, situational and social views on learning. Although Lave and Wenger's (1991) initial works were not integrated or linked with any theories on lifelong learning or

organizational learning, they are emphasized here in the context of informal learning, i.e. with learning at work.

Informal learning is argued by Marsick & Watkins (1990) to be different from incidental learning. In their interpretation incidental learning involves learning from mistakes/trial and error, assumptions, beliefs, values, hidden agendas, the action of others and learning from involvement, whereas informal learning is self-directed, networking, coaching, mentoring and learning from experience. The incidental and informal dimensions are, however, said to be interconnected. In their interpretation informal learning is given a pro-active label and incidental learning a more tacit or hidden one. The authors claim that informal learning is intentional whereas incidental learning is not. Incidental learning seems to occur on a subconscious level not involving explicit cognitive thinking.

All the same, informal and incidental learning take place wherever people have the need, motivation and opportunity for learning. After a review of several studies conducted on informal learning in the workplace, Marsick and Volpe (1999:5) concluded that informal learning can be characterised as follows:

- integrated in daily routine
- triggered by an internal or external jolt
- not highly conscious
- haphazard and influenced by chance
- an inductive process of reflection and action
- linked to the learning of others

Wain simply states that informal learning is often distinguished from other kinds of learning by the fact that "it is non-intentional" (Wain 1987:48) as opposed to formal learning, which refers to intentionally constructed learning activities.

La Belle (1982) and Mocker and Spear (1982) also define informal learning by distinguishing it from "formal learning" which they characterise as being university or college studies; short professional training courses: or externally planned programmes of instruction.

I view informal learning as interrelated with social context, practice and knowledge. Here incidental learning is understood to be informal learning, thus involving the incidental, implicit, accidental, unconscious and random learning as well as learning from practice, experience, context, situation and learning from others. Informal learning is predominantly viewed here as being non-intentional and non-purposeful, i.e. learning through involvement, through being around, through practice, imitation, intuition and through situations. It is basically viewed as learning to be and learning how to act in a specific community of practice. 'Learning how to be with' is furthermore highlighting the interactive social dimension of learning to be and is perceived to be a prerequisite for learning to be.

Informal learning is thus unstructured, non purposeful and does not lead to a certificate. Informal learning is learning from every day experience, from social context and from situations, from being in a profession, from artefacts, symbols, history and merely from being around, from traditions, celebrations, routines and from daily practices. Informal learning can thus be both subconscious, accidental or implicit. It is often non-purposeful, but can be intentional to some extent. It can be referred to as learning how to be and how to act in a specific community of practice or as Sauquet (2004) puts it:

'Learning processes are dependent on contexts, be they hallways (Dixon 1997) or enablers (von Krogh et al., 2000). They are predicated on conversations among individuals. When thinking of learning, or creating knowledge, verbal exchanges are crucial vehicles for sharing experiences, ideas, or previous knowledge.' (Sauquet 2004:382).

I conclude by stating that there are many perspectives and ideas related to workplace/informal learning. There has been a shift from the cognitive and behavioural perspectives on learning towards the socio-cultural one. Within the social perspective there are at least two schools of thought related to learning; one in which learning is actively constructed and the other which implies that learning is a more unconscious and implicit process that occurs within a social context.

Lifelong learning theory is interested in when we learn and in making sure that we learn. Here I categorize and understand it also in terms of where we learn.

The widespread claim is that learning starts before we are born and continues until senility. LLL is perceived to be a continuous process. Theoretically it is thus shaped of formal, non-formal and informal learning. Those concepts are adopted in this study and will be used in categorising and analysing data. As one idea in this study is to inter-relate LLL with OL theory I have chosen to divide the analysis (and learning) into three levels, the individual, the work group and the whole company.

There are three basic concepts and pillars, i.e. formal, informal and non-formal learning that form the basis and structure of LLL and will be used and interpreted as a tool to categorize data in chapter 4.

The understanding and interpretation of these concepts as used in this study are presented below in figure 8 and differ somewhat from the EU definitions. I understand non formal learning to also be e.g. learning at home, through hobbies and leisure activities and informal learning to be more or less work related, contextually and situational specific, culturally embedded and related with practice.

Formal	Informal	Non-formal
Purposeful, intentional Structured Certificate Learning about that and about what	Non purposeful Non-structured No certificate Incidental, accidental Learning how to be, how to act, implicit learning influenced by social context/ situation, culture and intuition It is shaped by practice in a workplace context	Purposeful, intentional Structured No certificate Often related to hobby, activity or interest involvement in politics trade union, church, courses and home Non-purposeful, non- intentional, non-structured

Figure 8. Lifelong learning arenas and conceptual understanding

The EU defines formal learning as:

"learning typically provided by an education or training institution, structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and leading to certification. Formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective" (COM 2001 8678) final: 32).

The European Commission's definition on informal learning is:

"Learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and typically does not lead to certification. Informal learning may be intentional, but in most cases it is non-intentional (or "incidental/random")" (COM (678) 2001 final: 3).

The European Commission defines non-formal learning as:

"Learning that is not provided by an education or training institution and typically does not lead to certification. It is, however, structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective" (COM (678) 2001 final:33).

3.3 LLL does not travel much within the OL and LO discourse

LLL is fashionable and has been re-institutionalised in many circles. It travels as I have showed in circles known to us as informal learning or work place learning, it travels between institution and practice, local and institution, it travels and is translated in time through history, it travels within powerful EU strategies, papers, memorandums and reports. It travels within and between UNESCO, OECD and the EU. Informal learning travels through the notion of social context within the socio-cultural aspects of learning, but at large, LLL does not travel much within the LO/OL literature. Why?

LLL does not travel much in the organizational learning and learning organization literature, although the last section of the book "Learning to be" published by Edgar Faure at UNESCO in 1972 gives suggestions and principles on how to become a learning society. Lifelong learning is, according to Faure (1972), seen as the cornerstone for the learning society, and the master concept for educational policies.

The learning organization theories can, to some extent, be argued to build upon ideas on the learning society even though the level of thought, purpose and angle is different, i.e. Faure has a macro level in mind whereas LO theories evolve around micro level and often recognizes the top management as the actor. The general (naïve) understanding, however, is that organizations/societies that are learning organizations/societies survive crises and are better prepared and equipped to encounter and survive changes, to challenge and fight difficulties than those organizations/societies that are not.

The European Commission had not actively discussed the need to advance towards a 'learning society' before the nineties. Many authors are critical of the learning perspective in organizational studies in that it allegedly conceals aspects

of power and politics in organizations and fails to ask the question of whose interests are being served (Easterby-Smith et al. 1998; Huzzard 2000a). Easterby-Smith et al. imply and argue that power and politics, top management and leaders do not always have the human being's interest at hand.

The intention here, however, is not to become involved in these debates, but rather to introduce LLL in the LO/OL circles through the notion and award that triggered a translation process and put LLL in an organizational context. But, is organizational learning a new way of thinking? Easterby-Smith and Luis Araujo provide one reply:

"the idea of organizational learning has been present in the management literature for decades, but it has only become widely recognized since around 1990 " (Easterby-Smith and Araujo 1999:1).

Two developments have, according to Mark Easterby-Smith and Luis Araujo, been highly significant in the growth of the field. First, it has attracted the attention of scholars from disparate disciplines who had hitherto shown little interest in learning processes. A consequence of this is that the field has become conceptually fragmented, and representatives of different disciplines now debate over who has the correct model of organizational learning. The second development is that many consultants and companies have caught onto the commercial significance of organizational learning. Much of the effort of these theorists has been devoted to identifying, templates, or ideal forms, which real organizations should attempt to emulate. (Easterby-Smith and Araujo 1999:1-2)

Organizational learning is often coupled with positive results for the organization. Change, evolution, development, innovation and reorientation are being expected and anticipated as an outcome of organizational learning. There is hence a mutual understanding among researchers (see eg. Easterby-

Smith 1990; Lant & Mezias 1992; McKee 1992; Mumford 1992; Senge 1990) that learning is vital in order to accomplish positive results. The idea is that organizations learn in order to survive. Not only do they survive, they often become innovative, competitive etc. Organizations that learn are thus likely to perform better in competitive business environments.

The OL field is divided and there are no easy answers as to what OL and LO theories stand for and/or whether they are two distinctively different schools of thought or not. Often the two are used in literature to mean the one and same thing.

Tomas Müllern (2006, personal communication) distinguishes between individual learning involving behavioural and cognitive approaches, small-group learning involving among others, communities of practice and social influences on learning and between organizational learning that, according to Müllern consists of behavioural approaches, learning organization and 'learning in organizations'. Learning in organizations consists of sensemaking & communication, knowledge management, the cultural perspective and the resource/knowledge based view.

In 1995, Tomas Müllern and Katarina Östergren introduced the concept of a learning culture and argue that organizational learning is born in a learning culture.

"A learning culture is the context in which the organizational learning is born. Learning culture is coupled to the institutional conditions that are present in the actual organizational field and that influence organizational learning. The concept is used to depict how ideas are formed and diffused in different forms of organizations, i.e. how sensemaking looks like within and between organizations" (Müllern & Östergren 1995:15).

This is significant as it implies that organizational learning is culture and context specific. It is thus a learning

culture and a specific context within a certain field in which organizational learning is born, nurtured and shaped.

Richard Cyert and James March (1963:):99) on the other hand, provide one of the earliest contributions to the literature on organizational learning and define organizational learning (OL) as a process by which organizations as collectives learn through interaction with the environment. This means that the individual organization adapts their activities and actions in accordance and interactively with the environment. Cyert & March viewed OL as an adaptive process where goals, attention rules and search rules became adapted to the experiences that are made within the organization. The idea was that OL is executed on the basis of rules. Organizational experiences determine the contents of these rules. If the rules no longer fit organizational experiences they had to be altered.

Another early contribution to the OL literature is introduced through the works of Donald Schön (1963, 1967, 1973). Schön was among the first to link the experience of living in a society in constant change with the need for learning.

"The loss of the stable means that our society and all of its institutions are in continuous process of transformation. We cannot expect new stable states that will endure for our own lifetimes. We must learn to understand, guide, influence and manage these transformations. We must make the capacity for undertaking them integral to ourselves and to our institutions. We must, in other words, become adept at learning. We must become able not only to transform our institutions, in response to changing situations and requirements; we must invest and develop institutions which are "learning systems" that is to say, systems capable for bringing about their own continuing transformation" (Schön 1973:28).

Schön thus made the defining contribution for the learning organization (LO) through the notion and urge for societies to learn. This happened one year after the Faure report

that was published by UNESCO in 1972. Schön suggests that the movement toward a learning system, of necessity, is a

"groping and inductive process for which there is no adequate theoretical basis" (Schön 1973:57).

According to Schön, transformation can thus not be completely planned or theoretically driven, but is rather induced in a continuous circular process involving and intertwining transformation with learning and the other way around. Systems learn when they transform and transform when they learn. Schön thus viewed organizational learning as a transformative process – a process which actively implements planned change to help organizations self-reflexively examine and change their own routines and cultural norms (Argyris and Schön 1978).

The American researchers Barbara Levitt and James March (1988, March & Olsen 1975) have stated that curves related to experience are evidence of organizational learning. Organizations learn, according to Levitt & March directly through (trial and error) and indirectly through other organizations' experiences, e.g. through imitation. In addition, organizations intermediate their learning with the help of history, symbols, behaving norms and expectations – learning can also be perceived to be linked to a cultural process. Learning was viewed as a process in order to

"encode, store and retrieve the lessons of history despite the turnover of personnel and the passage of time" (Levitt and March 1988:319)

or to continually improve existing processes of adaptation.

3.3.1 Organizational learning begins with the individual?

By definition, organizational learning (OL), however, is a process that can be fully understood only at the organizational level. Nevertheless, several theorists on the subject have tended to agree that organizational learning begins, and often ends, with the individual (Argyris and Schön 1978, 1996; March and Olsen 1976; Senge 1990).

"all learning takes place inside individual human heads (Simon 1991:125).

According to Jarvis (2004), the idea e.g. that teams learn (e.g. Watkins and Marsick 1993) is quite misleading. Only individuals learn, but e.g. within a team there is a great deal of inter-subjectivity, so that exposed to the same pressures different individuals might reach similar conclusions and decide together on a plan or action. Many of the ways we thus have of talking about learning and education are based on the assumption that learning is something that individuals do. Christine Prange (1999:27) states that one of the greatest myths of organizational learning is the 'who question', that is 'the way in which learning might be considered organizational. There are thus many who argue that it is individuals, not organizations, who learn.

But can organizations learn? If we think of organizations as living organisms the answer is yes. Living organisms are open systems and live in a dialectic relation with the world. Organizational learning can thus be defined as the organizational ability to renew and change (Sydänmaalakka 2004). Chris Argyris and Donald Schön relate the individual to the organization, also using the metaphor of an organism:

"an organization is like an organism each of whose cells contains a particular, partial, changing image if itself in relation to the whole. And like such an organism, the organization´s practice stems from those very images. Organization is an artifact of individual ways of representing organization" (Argyris and Schön 1978:16).

Organizational learning and individual learning interconnect in the works of Chris Argyris and Donald Schön (1978; 1996). They suggest that each member of an organization constructs his or her own representation or image of the theory-in-use of the whole (1978:16). The picture is always incomplete – and people, thus, are continually working to add pieces to form a picture, an image, of the whole. Members of the organization need to know their place in the organization. Individual members are hence according to Argyris & Schön continually engaged in attempting to know the organization, and to know themselves in relation to the organization. Their continuing efforts to know and to test their knowledge hence represent the object of their inquiry. Public representations of organizational theory-in-use are needed in the process to which individuals can refer to. This is what we call organizational maps. These are jointly shared, they both construct and are used to guide inquiry. Organizational theory-in-use is thus continually constructed and re-constructed through individual inquiry. It is encoded in private images and in public maps. These are the media of organizational learning (Argyris and Schön 1978: 16-17).

Stephen Marquardt (1996) state that organizational learning differs from individual and team learning as organizational learning occurs through shared revelations, knowledge and thinking models that the members of the organization have. This knowledge (mental map) is dependent on earlier experience and knowledge, i.e. the organizational memory that is depicted in the organizational processes, procedures, routines and actions.

The organizational learning movement thus seems to recognize the interdependency between the individual and the organization, the organization and its environment.

An agreement on the fact that individual learning is a prerequisite for organizational learning thus exists to some extent, but it is, all the same, argued that individual learning is insufficient in bringing about organizational learning. Consequently, organizational learning is not the sum of each individual's learning (Fiol and Lyles 1985:804) – some learning seems to be embedded in the organization as collective mental maps. It is, however, according to Müllern & Östergren (1995) the individuals in the organization who learn through developing shared insights, knowledge and mental pictures. I understand that it is individuals who learn through embedding, constructing and re-constructing collective mental maps into the organization. These maps are not, however, static, but do change and are constantly re-created as Argyris & Schön suggest (1978; 1996) in a search between the individual and the whole.

Kolb's experiential learning cycle is a good example of learning applied to organizations. According to Kolb (1984), learning takes place in a succession of moments which combine reflection and action. The learner, who faces a surprise, makes observations to which data, new situations, is contrasted. Data is hence compared with or related to previous knowledge or concepts. This inductive step is followed by a moment in which the learner frames the problem in a new way, guides future action which, in turn, results in a new experience. This cycle is repeated until the learner finds a satisfactory solution. Learning is thus tied to experience and problem-solving. Learning occurs when reflecting upon mistakes in a process of trial-and-error according to David Kolb (1984). However, it is claimed (Sauquet 2004) that Kolb's theoretical experiments often fail due to the fact that it is not a real

problem or situation without any real meaning for the participants. Thus, the connection to real practice, according to Sauquet (2004) is missing from Kolb´s experiments. However, the notion of experience, previous knowledge, action and reflection is important, because it is through experience, previous knowledge, action and reflection that knowers know and knowing is induced also according to Donald Schön (1983) who introduces one of his main ideas in the book "The reflective practioner". It was, however, John Dewey, who first observed and coined the term 'reflective thinking' and revealed the idea that learning occurs through a combined process of acting and reflecting.

Salomon and Perkins (1998) summarize in "Individual and social aspects of learning" that organizations, like individuals, can learn. Many of the fundamental phenomena of learning are the same for organizations. However, organizational learning also has distinctive characteristics with reference to what is learned, how it is learned, and the adjustments called for to enhance learning. These derive from the fact that any organization by definition is a collective, with individuals and larger units in different roles that involve different perspectives and values, passing information through their own filters, and with noisy and loss-prone information channels connecting them.

Consequently, the OL theory strongly implies, interconnects and is interested in issues relating individual organizational member to learning processes in the organization. I interpret and understand organizational learning as an ongoing circular process in which the individual organizational member learns in interaction with the organization through action and reflection. They learn when they relate themselves to the organization and to the environment, the past and the future in a process involving creation, experience and recreation. They thus learn when they position themselves with and

in relation to others and to the organization. Individuals learn through creating shared insights together, by understanding and positioning themselves in relation to the previous, the present and the future, in relation to the organization, to others and to themselves.

3.3.2 Organizations create knowledge in learning processes

The technical view assumes, according to Mark Easterby-Smith and Luis Araujo (1999), that organizational learning is about the effective processing, interpretation of, and response to, information both inside and outside the organization. This information may be quantitative and qualitative, but is generally explicit and in the public domain. The social perspective on organization learning focuses on the way people make sense of their experiences at work. These experiences may derive from explicit sources such as financial information, or they may be derived from tacit sources, such as the "feel" that a skilled craftsperson has, or the intuition possessed by a skilled strategist. From this view, learning is something that can emerge from social interactions, normally in the natural work setting. In the case of explicit information it involves a joint process of making sense of data. The more tacit and "embodied" forms of learning involve situated practices, observation and emulation of skilled practitioners and socialization into a community of practice. (Easterby-Smith and Araujo (1999:3-5)

According to Nonaka (1994) and Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), organizations do not only process information – they create knowledge. They thus make a clear distinction between the concepts information and knowledge. Knowledge is information that is interpreted and given a meaning; it is anchored

in values and beliefs and is closely connected with action (Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995). Learning is the process through which knowledge is created and developed (Vera and Crossan 2003). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) thus framed the organizational learning processes in terms of and involving phases of knowledge creation and individual learning. Socio-cultural approaches emphasize the interdependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge.

Building on the idea and viewing on organizational learning from the point of view of the management, individual learning is not sufficient for organizations to be successful. In order for organizations to encounter change, survive competition and compete on a global market, organizations need to transform and distribute individual knowledge (Kim 1993) and to acquire new knowledge (MacDonald 1995). The authors thus identify three crucial elements in order for organizations to be successful, those of transforming (creating), distributing (sharing/transferring) and acquiring (using) new knowledge. Garvin used almost the same terms in defining an LO in 1993 as:

"a learning organization is an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights" (Garvin 1993:51).

Garvin (1993) explains the management practices of a learning organization as systematic problem solving, experiment, building on past experience, learning from other organizations (benchmarking and borrowing), and transferring knowledge.

Chris Argyris (1992) argues in his book "Overcoming Organizational Defences" that the primary problem facing companies is not the ability to remember past lessons, but rather the ability to acquire new knowledge. This ability

is strengthened when organizations gain an understanding of two key features of their operation: single versus double loop learning and tacit versus explicit knowledge.

The OL theory relates learning to knowledge, to knowledge transfer processes and to the processes related to the acquirement, creation and co-construction of new knowledge. The perspective is clearly managerial, not individual. Most scholars agree, however, that organizational learning is a process linked with information, knowledge and understanding.

3.3.3 OL is linked with information, knowledge and understanding

Organizational learning, however, is a field of confusion or as Fiol and Lyles (1985) state:

"Systematic assessment of the strategic management literature suggests an interesting dilemma: although there exists widespread acceptance of the notion of organisational learning and its importance of strategic performance, no theory or model of organisational learning is widely accepted. Major research…along with more modest efforts provide the basis for initial attempts to define, to develop, and to differentiate organisational learning and its components. Each has approached the project from different perspectives, leading to more divergence" (Fiol and Lyles 1985:803).

A consensus on the importance of OL to long-term growth and survival also exists and it is assumed that organizational learning will improve the performance of the organization (Argyris and Schön, 1978; Fiol and Lyles 1985; Senge 1990), i.e. these authors all apply a prescriptive, normative, technical and functional view on organizational learning. The managerial interest is predominant and the purpose is to be successful and to survive in the long run.

The information-processing perspective on OL is reflected for example in Huber's (1991) definition on organizational learning

"an entity learns if, through its processing of information, its range of its potential behaviours is changed" (Huber 1991:89)

This view can be regarded as static, a linear view that does not encompass the dynamic, continuous, knowledge-creating and circular nature of organizational learning that Nonaka (1994) and Crossan, Lane and White (1999) emphasize.

Argyris, Watkins and Marsick and Senge among others may all be considered normative writers in the context of organizational learning. They advocate views on how organizations can learn more effectively. They are not satisfied with describing organizational learning as they see it, nor do they recognize that it is the culture that nurture and foster organizational learning. They present practical tools to intertwine pedagogy with production. Their confident advocacy of particular prescriptions (Edmonsen 1996) is, however, in contrast to the evolutionary view of learning, which suggests that the presence and type of learning behaviour is always dependent on social context.

The notion of OL has thus become very prominent in the near past. Managers see OL as a powerful tool to improve the performance of an organization much in the same way that the EU sees LLL as a powerful tool to improve the performance of its member countries. Accordingly, the EU uses LLL as an instrument to gain higher profitability, to improve competivity in order to transit smoothly into a knowledge-based economy. The managers implement OL in order to increase effectiveness, competivity, innovation, knowledge creation and knowledge transfer.

3.3.4 Adaptive, pro-active and generative learning

Generally, one can distinguish between two different processes of organizational change associated with the OL; adaptive learning, i.e. changes that have been made in reaction to changed environmental conditions and proactive learning, i.e. organizational changes that have been made on a more wilful basis. Pro-active learning goes beyond reacting to environmental changes. A distinction between adaptive learning and proactive learning has been adopted in organizational learning theory.

In general, it is assumed that adaptive learning comes along with a lower degree of organizational change. This means that adaptive learning is seen as a process of incremental changes. What is more, adaptive learning is also seen as more automatic and less cognitively induced than proactive learning. Many theorists hence consider adaptive learning inferior to proactive learning (Argyris & Schön 1978, Fiol & Lyles 1985, Senge 1990, Dodgson 1993).

Chris Argyris's (1992) theory based on single-loop and double-loop learning can serve as an example of adaptive versus pro-active learning. In single-loop learning the underlying assumptions are not questioned whereas in double-loop learning the underlying policies and orders, assumptions and programme are questioned. In single loop learning, goals, purposes, values, plans are rules are operationalized rather than questioned. Single-loop learning seems to be present when goals, values, frameworks are taken for granted whereas in double loop learning errors are detected and corrected in ways that involve the modification of an organization´s underlying norms, policies and objectives. Argyris (1992) argues that organizational learning is dependent on the capacity to engage its organization in double-loop learning. Argyris claims in his book that one of the largest hindrances to learn-

ing is that most organizations learn through single loop rather than through double loop learning. He goes on to suggest that one of the most important aims of a learning organization is to develop the capacity to engage in double loop learning, i.e. the capacity to think critically and creatively about underlying mechanisms, assumptions, programme and frameworks.

Argyris thus prescribes double loop learning as a solution for organizations. Moreover, he suggests that most organizations store and use knowledge in a tacit rather than in an explicit form. His advice on how to become a learning organization focuses also on making tacit knowledge explicit, so that it is available to everyone in the organizations.

Peter Senge (1990) made 'learning organizations' a trendy phrase and helped to launch 'systems thinking' as a manager's conceptual framework. Senge argued that a learning organization worthy of the LO title successfully develops five component technologies, i.e.; systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision and team learning. He views them interdependent of one another. Senge differentiates in learning organizations from other organizations in terms of their greater adaptability. Adaptive learning is described by Senge as coping behaviour, whereas generative learning is seen as creativity.

"By enhancing each of the other disciplines, it continually reminds us that the whole can excess the sum of its parts" (Senge 1992:12).

By mental models he refers to the blocks that sometimes hinder us from thinking creatively and keep us from having an open mind.

'Mental models focuses on the openness needed to unearth shortcomings in our present ways of seeing the world. Team learning develops the skills of groups of people to look for the larger picture that lies beyond individ-

ual perspectives. And personal mastery fosters the personal motivation to continually learn how our actions affect our world' (Senge 1992:12).

According to Senge, personal mastery is not something you possess. It is a process. It is a lifelong discipline. People with a high level of personal mastery are acutely aware of their ignorance, their incompetence, and their growth areas. Furthermore they are deeply self-confident. Team learning, according to Senge (1990) is viewed as

'the process of aligning and developing the capacities of a team to create the results its members truly desire' (Senge 1990:236).

Senge's special interest is said to focus on decentralising the role of leadership in organizations so as to enhance the capacity of all people to work productively toward common goals. Or as Senge further argues:

"It is no longer sufficient to have one person learning for the organisation, a Ford or a Sloan or a Watson. It is just not possible any longer to figure it out from the top, and have everyone else following the orders of the 'grand strategist'. The organisation that will truly excel in the future will be the organisation that discovers how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in an organisation" (Senge 1992:4).

I understand adaptive learning as adaptation to new situations, to the environment, to outside pressure, to new tools, new personnel, new technology etc. I perceive it to be different from informal learning even though they both occur mostly at the workplace. Adaptive learning involves not only the individual, but also the organization. Adaptive learning occurs through adaptation involving incremental learning in order to conform with the outside and to changes whereas informal learning according to my interpretation involves in-

cidental, informal, sudden, unplanned, accidental, implicit, subconscious and tacit learning. It is culturally locally and situational specific. It involves learning in a specific context involving artefacts, practice, experience, history, symbols etc.

The adaptive learning concept as used in this study differs from the understanding of e.g. Schein (1996) who perceives adaptive learning as a gap or problem between where we are and where we want to be. We learn, solve the problem and close the gap according to Schein (1996). Schein perceives generative learning as an action where the learner learns how to learn, i.e. perceives new ways of thinking about problems or rethinks cultural assumptions.

These concepts evolved from literature on OL and LO theories and are perceived focal also in the understanding of lifelong learning in organizations according to my interpretation. These concepts are acknowledged in an attempt to comprehend single actors´ perception of LLL in an organizational context. They will be used as instruments to categorise data in chapter four. They will be used on three levels. Together with the LLL concepts formal, informal and non-formal elements they will form an analytical instrument through which data will be analyzed in a theory guided content analysis attempt used on qualitative data in qualitative research in which theory guides data into certain categories.

Adaptive (low intense)	Pro Active (medium)	Generative (high)
adapting to new situtations reacting to the environment adapting to survive reacting to new environmental conditions, to change & to new situations techology opportunities	cognitively incuded planned organization change intentional purposeful active roviding facilities,	enhance creativeness be open to questions underlying orders assumptions, policies, structures re-creating ourselves learning how to learn reflecting on action and practices

Figure 9. OL/LO concepts adobted for this study

Pro-active learning as interpreted in this study is about consciously and actively providing learning facilities, structures and opportunities for learning. Adaptive, pro-active and generative learning can also be comprehended and explained in terms of intensity in relation to change (Müllern, personal conversation 2006) in which adaptive learning stands for low intensity learning whereas generative is high in intensity involving reflection of underlying assumptions.

3.3.5 Learnification (my term)

Besides lifelong learning, the change in society that has taken place in education has been described through the concept 'learning society' as was previously shown through examples and references to the Faure (1972) report published by UNESCO. In a learning society people live in a continuously changing world where lifelong learning is an imperative for survival. The concept lifelong learning and learning society are often used as synonyms. The learning society though put specific focus on the place where learning takes places whereas lifelong learning is often more interested in when learning occurs (Moreland 1999). We are moving towards learning management and a learning era.

The learning organization is often defined via the existence of organizational conditions that favour (organizational) learning. The learning climate and a culture that offers learning opportunities represent basic elements and contextual factors´ for learning. Those must represent the basic bricks when building a learning organization, i.e. to structure the organization so that it recognizes meaningful learning and arranges facilities that enable learning throughout the company. A learning company can, according to Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, be defined as

"an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself and its context" (Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell 1991:1).

However, as a result of the authors' extensive experience in this field, they suggest a few years later a more, in their mind, appropriate definition for the learning organization, i.e.

"an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and consciously transforms itself and its context" (Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell 1997:3)

The authors thus replaced the word continuously with consciously which implies that the transformation is a cognitively active process. They thus suggest that the ongoing transformation should be a conscious, cognitively induced process. This, however, is somewhat contradictory to Schön's (1973) and Senge's (1990) view that systems should bring about their own learning in inductive groping processes intertwining learning with transformation, in processes that cannot be fully planned or steered. Pedlar et al's definition and notion is, however, important here as it recognises the conditions favouring learning. Whether learning in organizations is planned, conscious and purposeful or unconscious, implicit and intentional remains to be seen. I do not see why it could not be both.

Karen Watkins and Victoria Marsick have also been active in shaping an understanding of what a learning organization is and is not. Their original definition is from 1992:

'Learning organizations are characterized by total employee involvement in a process of collaboratively conducted, collectively accountable change directed towards shared valued or principles' (Watkins & Marsick 1992:118).

Many ideas and definitions as to what a learning organization is have been put forward. Most suggestions are nor-

mative to their character. Not one single definition has been completely agreed upon, but there are, however, notions as to what a learning organization is not.

"What the learning organization is not, however, is a statement in the corporate vision, put there to look good to shareholders, with no attendant questioning about where the organization is now and what it should do to make that statement real" (Marsick & Watkins 1999:4).

The authors continue:

'We hope that organizations will never canonize the learning organization as an impossible ideal. We think that the ideas have been compelling. It is a vision worth promoting and striving for, even when the reality is less than we hoped for' (Marsick & Watkins 1999:4).

The learning organization should thus, according to Marsick & Watkins, never be just talk or politics, a façade or a showroom, but rather a serious ideal, a vision still intact involving concrete action plans, strategies, practices, routines, follow-up and evaluation schemes.

The view that organizations can never attain learning organizational status or that a learning organization is never complete or completed is recognised also by Senge who illustrates this with reference to the achievement of organizational excellence:

"a corporation cannot be "excellent" in the sense of having arrived at permanent excellence; it is always in a state of practising the disciplines of learning, of becoming better or worse" (Senge 1990:11).

Hamel and Prahalad (1993:80) involve knowledge-based economy terms in their definition:

"Being a learning organization is not enough; a company must also be capable of learning more efficiently than its competitors" (Hamel and Prahalad 1993:80)

However, while there are those who view the learning organization as a positive ideal – a new workplace paradise for employees resulting in phenomenal organizational performance and success – there is another school that presents the learning organization as a negative ideology – a new workplace nightmare for employees in which they are exploited in even more devious ways. They see the learning organization ideology as one more managerial tool to stimulate worker productivity without providing more pay or benefits and as such serving to exploit employees who mistakenly believe that they are working for self-development and their own betterment (Easterby-Smith 1997, Marsick & Watkins 1999). The learning organization concept and discussion has also been viewed as fashion, fad, buzzword or hype (see e.g. Eccles & Nohria 1992, Garavan 1997, Scarborough and Swan 2001) that will soon be replaced with new, trendy concepts and ideas. The power of fashion, however, should not be undermined.

Recent research in mental health has shown that our lifestyle and the many requirements, not least requirements related to new technology and constant learning, that are forced upon citizens and employees are too demanding. Mistakes and errors are not allowed whereas it can be precisely those that lead to new solutions. Many have also started to disthrust the idea on lifelong learning and the unhealthy in the requirements of having to continuously develop oneself (Ollila, 2002).

Alvesson´s (1999) critical article on educational fundamentalism points ironically and sarcastically to the modern society´s overwhelming and exaggerated thrust and belief in education. Or as Hawkins (1994) so vividly puts it, it

is unproblematically assumed that learning, like vitamins and stopping smoking, is a good thing.

A certain awareness and conscious understanding of the critical discourses surrounding lifelong learning and learning in general are important to recognise. In fact, this phenomenon can be labelled 'learnification', a naïve thrust that all learning is good and that learning will always bring about more good.

There is a lot of research that supports a relation between negative stress and the requirements that our society

The insight and my understanding of a learning organization, however, is that it is an ongoing process, a metaphor that suggests that we need to treat the concept as a scenario, aspiration, mental picture, strategy, as a future vision or dream of something for organizations worth striving at. A learning organization is thus an ideology difficult to grasp and accomplish. Senge's view is also supported by Waterman who writes that he has

"never seen one" (Waterman 1994:65)

and Pedler et al. who state

"that creating one is easier said than done" (Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell 1991:2)

and Kerka (1995) who states that it is difficult to find real-life examples of learning organizations.

The institutional (official European) definition of a learning organization is:

"an organisation that encourages learning at all levels (individuals and collectively) and continually transforms itself as a result" (COM (678) 2001 final:33).

The organizational learning movement is occupied with questions of the nature of learning in organizational environments and with what managerial leaders can do to enhance learning processes within organizations. The great contribution of this movement is to see the managerial leader as affecting the kind of learning that goes on in an organization and to define one of his or her role responsibilities as enhancing the learning of others (Vaill 1996). This on the other hand, is exactly what the critics oppose.

The general understanding of LO theory is that for organizations to be successful they need not only to facilitate learning, but also to identify where and how knowledge is shared in order to induce and affect the learning of others in mutual co-constructions where it is argued that new knowledge is also created or as Senge points out:

"Organisations learn only through individuals who learn. Individual learning does not guarantee organisational learning. But without it no organisational learning occurs" (Senge 1990:139).

In the figure below i have combined and depicted some organizational learning definitions with learning organization definitions in chronological order in an attempt to summarize this discussion. Both the OL and LO movement can be critizised to take a managerial and functional view on learning. The approach is normative, functional, technical and managerial. The role of LO is predominantly to enhance, facilitate, stimulate, motivate, stress and enable learning whereas the OL movement is occupied with questions related to how we learn, the outcome of learning and, in linking the individual with the organization and with the environment. The OL movement is occupied with questions involving organizational learning with attention rules, experiences, mental models, processes, mechanisms, underlying patterns, assumptions

and structures involving experimental learning (Kolb 1984), double-loop learning (Argyris and Schön 1978) and learning in the context of practice (Schön 1978). OL learning is involved with questions involving information processing and with relating knowledge with learning. Moreover OL stresses the individual in relation to the organizational, the environment to the institutional. It involves the organization and the individual, the institution and the organization.

The LO movement through Senge (1990) takes a more systems, managerial and functional oriented approach to learning. This view, however, is different from some OL, e.g. Donald Schön´s (1973) view, in which organizations are viewed upon as systems that learn when they transform and transform inductively when they learn.

What is, however, surprising, is that the OL/LO movement, literature and theory does not recognize LLL much. They are viewed as two different discourses that barely interconnect.

With the help of the literature overview of LO/OL theories I was able to distinguish between three concepts and three levels; i.e. the adaptive, the pro-active and the generative concepts and the individual, group and organizational level. With the help of these concepts and categories I will begin to depict and guide primary data into categories.

To introduce OL/LO theory to LLL and vice versa on three levels combining six concepts on three levels forms a matrix. The general understanding may be that informal and non-formal learning is individual whereas adaptive, pro-active and generative learning more often organizational. The attempt here, however, is to challenge earlier assumptions with the help and support from social situational learning theory and through single actors´ perception of lifelong learning in an organizational context. Lifelong learning is here comprehended in terms of learning arenas, i.e. where learning oc-

Cyert and March (1963:99)
a process by which organisations as collectives learn through interaction with the environment
Schön (1973:57)
groping and inductive process for which there is no adequate theoretical basis
Argyris and Schön (1978:16)
each member of an organization constructs his or her own representation or image of the theory-in-use of the whole
Fiol and Lyles (1985:803)
the process of improving actions through better knowledge and understanding
Levitt and March (1988:320)
encoding of inferences from history into routines that guide behavior
Fiol and Lyles (1985:804)
OL is more than the sum of the parts of individual learning
Senge (1990:3)
where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together
Huber (1991:89)
an entity learns if, through its processing of information, its range of its potential behaviours is changed
Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1991:1)
an organization that facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself and its context
Watkins & Marsick (1992:118)
Learning organization are characterised by total employee involvement in a process of collaboratively conducted, collectively accountable change directed towards shared valued or principles an entity learns if, through its processing of information, its range of its potential behaviours is changed
Hamel and Prahalad (1993:80)
Being a learning organization is not enough; a company must also be capable of learning more efficiently than its competitors
Garvin (1993:51)
an organisation skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behaviour to reflect knowledge and insights
Argyris (1996:3)
an organization may be said to learn when it acquires information (knowledge, understanding, know-how, techniques, or practices of any kind and by whatever means)
Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1997:3)
an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and consciously transforms itself and its context
COM (678) 2001 final:33
an organisation that encourages learning at all levels (individuals and collectively) and continually transforms itself as a result" (COM (678) 2001 final:33).

Figure 10. OL and LO definitions

curs and organizational learning through learning intensity, i.e. how deeply learning affects the organization and the individual, the underlying assumptions, structures, practices, norms and routines. The matrix is an effective tool for 'evaluating' and analysing learning.

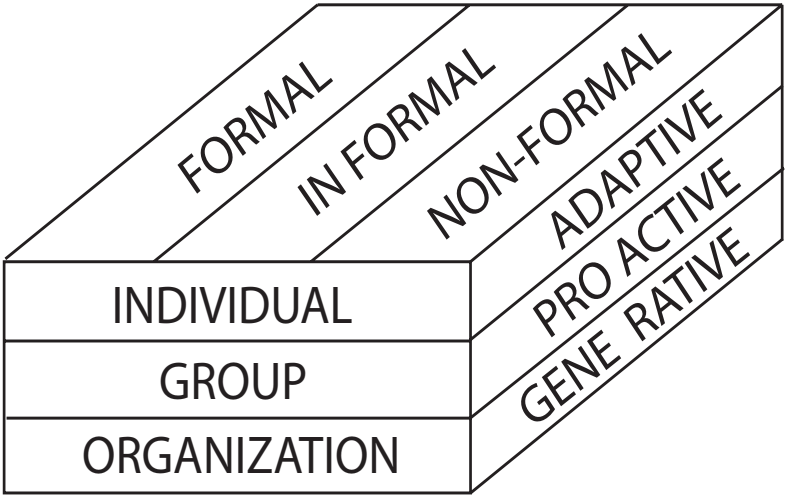


Figure 11. A synthesized matrix

This matrix not only summarizes discussions on learning organization and organizational learning. It also acknowledges the concepts and levels that I perceive important in relation to lifelong learning in an organizational context. It acknowledges adaptive, pro-active and generative learning in addition to formal, informal and non formal learning. Further, it recognizes the individual, group and organizational level which I perceive important in order to understand the dynamism and interaction between the individual, the group and the organization. It thus combines theories, levels, arenas, intensities and concepts. The cubistic form implies flexibility, dimension and depth. It implies that the levels and forms, arenas, intensities and types in learning both intertwine and interact.

The attempt is to introduce lifelong learning concepts into OL/LO theories with the help of practice, with the help of individual actors´ and with the help of context/situational/social aspects on learning. The aim is to understand, interpret and make sense of single actors´ perception and talk of LLL in a specific organization context. The idea is that even single statements create meaning. The matrix is a tool that is perceived helpful in order to understand, organize, explore, interpret and analyse primary data.

Before analysis, however, I will present, discuss and argue for my choices on methodology and methods relating these choices to data, interest, questions and context.

PART FOUR – THEORY MEETS PRACTICE

4.1 Access and data

Hammersley (1990) considers the discovery of the social world as the main assumption that underlies qualitative research. This he suggests can only be attained if the researcher, guided by exploratory orientation, directly observes and participates in the natural setting. It seems to me that any phenomenon can only be properly understood if it is investigated in the setting in which it occurs, through people's experiences of it. It thus seemed important to conduct the interviews in the informants own context, i.e. their respective workplaces.

Phenomenology is a school of thought that claims that all our understanding comes from sensory experience of a phenomenon, but that experience has to be described and interpreted. It is about how people describe things and experience them through their senses. The philosophical assumption is that we only know what we experience. The problem with this view is that it implies and suggests that the researcher herself should experience what the actors´ have experienced. Participant observation is the recommended method within phenomenology. In this study I do not claim to have experienced what the participants have experienced. I have not worked in the law firm and/or housing organization. Nor have I participated in their meetings and or daily work as a participant observer. What I have done is interviews. I have listened to their talk about their experiences. I have heard them speak about their perception of LLL in an organizational context. I have asked them about their experiences and they have talked about their practices. Thus, I have tried to understand their social world and their experiences in their own context, through interviews.

A Finnish law firm was awarded the best organization in the special category of lifelong learning in spring 2003. A municipal housing organization won the award in Sweden and was also nominated by the EU as one of the top four in Europe. Both organizations were surprised and astonished as they did not know of the EU's special categories upon participation in the "Best workplaces in Europe 2003®" contest. The questions related to the special categories were 'hidden' in the contest. The organizations selected for this study were not aware that their (educational) practices could be labelled lifelong learning. The term and award was thus 'forced' upon them, it hit them by astonishment and it travelled to them from the EU, much though to both organizations sincere delight and honest surprise. An external event thus triggered the translation of the concept to these specific organizational contexts.

Four European organizations were nominated in the special category of lifelong learning, among them the municipal housing organization, a car factory, the law firm and a construction company. The amount of time and resources spent on education were crucial for the research partners and the distinguished jury in addition to inclusiveness that was both highlighted and central in the nomination process, i.e. the understanding that education, development and learning processes were carried out throughout the organizations involving all of the employees.

"We spend a lot of money on this. The two years when we invested the most money we had a budget of 60 000 SEK/employee. I had an educational budget of 8 millions. It is an educational budget that is comparable in money with a company or commune with thousands of employees. It was impossible to get rid of so much money"'. Respondent 4

I chose to study two of the four nominated organizations. The fact that I did not choose to study all of them can be

seen as a restriction. However, quantity does not always guarantee quality. In sensemaking, even single words and single actors´ matter. Consequently, I was both satisfied and quite saturated with studying only two organizations and four respondents. I gained plenty of both written and oral data. I also collected supporting data and had access to plenty of 'naturally occurring' data (Silverman 2004). The naturally occurring involved EU published contest material, brochures, magazines, reports, competence development programmes, leaflets, communications, memorandums, papers etc. Adding all of it together helped me to form a comprehensive view and enabled me to write a thorough thesis on the topic. I thus triangulated between transcribed tapes from four extensive interviews, between documents, both from the EU, UNESCO and the OECD and from the organizations studied and between observations made during the interviews. I also conducted a pre-study that may or may not have had an impact on my pre-understanding of the topic. I performed extensive discussions on lifelong learning with EU officials before the here analysed context-specific performed interviews. In addition I conducted a brief telephone-interview with an employee responsible for the "Best Place to Work" contest in Finland. I did not, however, at least consciously let my pre-understanding, dictate my questioning, approach, view or ability during the in-context interviews. I tried to have an inductive mind during the data collecting process and during analysis.

I do admit, however, that after having read through and analysed e.g. the "Communication" (COM (2001)678 final) and the "Memorandum" (SEC(2000)1832) I was starting to form a slightly critical view of the LLL concept and topic. This slightly critical approach can account for my pre-understanding. A carefully critical mind corresponds with and can furthermore be related to my personality, my way of being, acting, thinking, interpreting, analysing and in making sense.

I was thus given access not only to the companies, but also to internal and external publications, press releases, award and contest material, reports, papers etc. throughout this process. Much of the institutional secondary data I printed out from the Internet, from the EU, the UNESCO and the OECD web-pages. The institutional secondary data consists basically of documents and reports produced by the EU, UNESCO, the Finnish Ministry of Education and the OECD about LLL, of which the most important for this study are the ones produced by the EU; the Memorandum (2000) and the Communication (2001). Secondary data in this study thus consists of all of the above, about 200 pages altogether.

The examples and extracts used in chapters one and two serve the purpose of describing, depicting and introducing the award process, the history and evolvement of the concept LLL, the translation and construction of LLL, the travel of the original idea to various contexts throughout time and context, researchers and theories. They are perceived important in comprehending, understanding, explaining and depicting this phenomenon in an introductory attempt. They are also perceived important in contrasting primary data to and complementing primary data with.

4.2 Intentional inductive conversation or interpretive phenomenological interviews

Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan launched the interpretative paradigm in their book "Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis" in 1979. They emphasize the importance for a researcher to understand the experience of the actors´. The interest within this paradigm should hence lie in actors´ perceptions and experiences, not in any structured reality. Consequently, interpretation is an active methodological act that the researcher uses in order to create meaning (Weick 1995).

In this study primary data was collected through in-depth unstructured open-ended interviews at the two organizations studied. These interviews could almost be labelled dialogues. Dialogues are often understood as reciprocal conversations. In these cases however, the participants in the dialogues were not fully equal as it was I, who was the activator and who guided the conversation. It was I, who posed the questions and directed the conversation. On the other hand, the interviews were very much an interaction, a mutual conversational construction in which we created an understanding and tried to make sense of the concept together. The most appropriate term to describe the interviews would hence be intentional inductive conversation. In intentional inductive conversation (my term), the researcher is the activator. The act, here the interviews, involves both reflexivity and construction, i.e. an active reflection on practice.

"When a practitioner reflects in and on his practice, the possible objects of his reflections are as varied as the kinds of phenomena before him and the systems of knowing-in-practice which he brings to them. He may reflect on the tacit norms and appreciations which underlie a judgment, or on the strategies and theories implicit in a pattern of behavior. He may

reflect on the feeling for a situation which has led him to adopt a particular course of action, on the way in which he has framed the problem he is trying to solve, or on the role he has constructed for himself within a larger institutional context" (Schön 1983:62).

The situation was open to both parties and the tone was conversational, the outcome was an interpretation and a process that can be labelled sensemaking. During the interviews I used a so-called ladder technique (my term) in which we, I and the respondents, slowly climbed up the 'ladder' until there was nothing more to say on the topic and we both felt that a point of saturation was achieved. The interviews, however seem to be interconnected with interpretive phenomenological interviews as they were hermeneutic: i.e. circular, complete and never-ending. As language experiences, interpretive interviewing is attentive to context and is always situated. Weber describes this situatedness:

"the invitation is genuine, the interviewer turns to the participant as one human being to another in a away that…confirms the other – the interviewe is genuinely present, committed, and open to the participant" (Weber 1986:65).

"through dialogue, we get to think things through, glancing at the mirror the other hold up to us, discovering not only the other, but ourselves (Weber 1986:66).

The danger with interpretive phenomenological interviews, however, is that the purpose of the interview becomes more important than the experience of the participant in telling the experiences. In this study, I told them who I was and what my interest was. The exact content, purpose or conceptual meaning was not outspoken, defined or agreed upon. It developed as a process as we talked. We talked about the

award process and about the nomination, about the respondents own development, work place praxis, learning practices, their education and careers, in short, their own story in the context of practice and organization, i.e., their perception and talk of lifelong learning in an organizational context.

During the interviews I did not have any specific framework or closed mind as to what LLL in an organization is/was or how LLL in an organizational context should be comprehended, talked of and/or perceived. The replies at hand often gave me an opening for the next line of questioning. If the response was inexact, not fully understood or only partly answered, I posed a follow-up question to cover the area more thoroughly. The skills, questions, way of being and acting, ability and sense as to what is important and what is asked is pronounced in such situations. The interviewer must be a good listener and a sensitive person, a perceptive human being and an attentive researcher, an active co-human and a humble servant. She must guide, not lead and she must, above all, thrust her instincts.

In interpretative research, interpretation is aimed at the meaning of what the respondent is saying and involves the researcher´s meaning to what is said (intersubjectivity). Behind this is a hermeneutic epistemologic understanding. The aim for hermeneutic interpretation is that the researcher creates categories of meanings for subjects with similar characteristics. Categories are based upon an inductively shaped interpretative generalisation.

Yet, interpretations are often seen upon as constructions and the meanings that are given to interpretations, as social constructions. The meanings that I give to the respondents interpretations on LLL are my own constructions (interpretations) based on my sensitiveness, sharpness, ability, experience, understanding, observation, skill, perception, pre-understanding, logic and mind. The meaning that the re-

spondents give through description, reflection and intense interest interrelated with the topic and their work, personal development and work place, are their interpretations and/or constructions. Meaning in this study was also partly co-constructed, as it was I, the researcher who pose the questions (and decided what was interesting or worth asking) and hence became involved. It was also I, the researcher, who decided when and how to follow up on questions. It was I, who decided when or how to intensify, clarify, continue and/or let go. Most of the time, however, I just listened and gave space to the interviewees as I was interested in their talk and perception, not my own. The interview questions are hence not analyzed or made explicit. The single actors´ perceptions, talk and language are, however, analyzed in depth. Through them I, the researcher, am tacitly, indirectly and implicitly present.

The actors´ were interviewed as employees in a specific context. In the analysis, the respondents are hence acknowledged and recognized as experienced and important actors´ with expertise knowledge and insightful thoughts. They have experience and knowledge of local organizational practices and of specific/situational routines, of structures, habits, background and culture. Their importance and value lies in the fact that they work in important positions at the organizations that were nominated as best in the special category of lifelong learning in Europe.

4.2.1 Sensemaking

”Sense is generated by words that are combined into the sentences of conversaton to convey something about our ongoing experience” (Weick 1997:106)

Sensemaking implies that when we speak about human perception we refer to the whole. An individual interprets matters in terms of a larger framework interdependently with her capability, experience and interest. A human being interprets through concepts. It is through concepts and meaning that order in this world is created. It is by concepts that we understand the world and can relate to one another. Consequently, it is concepts that help to make the world and sentences meaningful to us. Concepts can be said to involve abstractions of reality called by different names (Luostarinen and Väliverronen 1991).

Karl Weick (1995) uses the term ’sensemaking’ as part of human life:

”a developing set of ideas with explanatory possibilities, rather than as a body of knowledge” (Weick 1995:xi).

A single actor perceives things, objects, attributes and subjects differently, depending on which her background is and what her social context is. The human is thus given an active role in the sensemaking process. Perceptions indicate that we have a relationship to the things, attributes, objects and subjects that we encounter. To have a relationship helps us function and manage. It helps us to avoid chaos. The idea with the sensemaking perspective is that the individual is forced to give things meaning, in order for reality to matter and to become manageable.

Through the interviews the actors´ interpreted their understanding, perception and thoughts relating LLL to their own experiences, personal develoment, practices, organiza-

tion, colleagues, context etc. The interviews forced the actors´ to reflect upon their practices, to make sense, to give meaning and to interpret their understanding, perception and experiences related to the concept.

The term lifelong learning was not very familiar to the respondents. The conversations lasted from 1-3 hours each time. The discussions that lasted the longest were with the actors´ involved with and responsible for HRD. I interviewed two lawyers and the HRD manager at the private Finnish law firm and the person responsible for HRD at the municipal Swedish housing organization. I was very satisfied and saturated with my primary data. Each actors´ voice, talk, words and sentences were recorded and transcribed. The interviews were very successful and data was sufficient in order to answer the research questions, fulfil the purpose and aim of this study and in order to draw conclusions related to single actors´ perception and talk of LLL in a specific organizational context.

The respondents described very openly and willingly their cultures, traditions, professions, practices, actions, routines, activities, ways of thinking, being and viewing LLL in addition to their own lifelong learning processes, experience and development. They seemed happy and proud to talk to me, at the same time some awkwardness among the lawyers in relation to the subject could be detected. The lawyers, I presume, felt insecure and awkward as the term implied that this was not their field of competence and/or expertise. They were thus thrown into the land of the unknown even if they participated willingly. The managers were articulated, more secure and more certain in terms of the subject. It was the HRD manager at the law firm who suggested whom among the lawyers I should interview. All single actors´ are perceived equally valuable, articulate and important actors´ in this study. In fact, their participation and importance cannot be highlighted enough.

In qualitative research the aim is not to obtain statistical

generalisations, in qualitative research the aim is to describe processes or incidents, to understand certain action or to give a theoretically interesting interpretation to a phenomenon. Thus it is important that the persons interviewed know much or more about the phenomenon than the interviewer or that they have more experience of it. In this respect the choice of respondents should not be random (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004:87).

That lifelong learning was not used, had not been implemented and was not an integrated part of the organizational vocabulary became clear and was obvious among all of the respondents, also at the Swedish municipal housing organization. The managers at both organizations, however, were more ready and better prepared in relation to the topic. They had given the terminology and strategy, concept and meaning more thought and specification, before the interview. It was obviously easier for them than for the lawyers to communicate with me about LLL. It was easier for them to express the reasons behind their LLL success. The managers were the ones that had been involved in planning educational structures and programmes related to competence development strategy discussions in addition to implementing HRD activities, carrying out the contest and putting organizational strategies into practice. The media had also already interviewed them several times in relation to the contest. They were thus used to some publicity and admiration. They had some experience in understanding the topic as they had already created their success story many times in their minds and for the press. They had a better taste for the term and it was easier for them to use and express it. They had already constructed some meaning and interpretation for it. Their answers were thus more ready, better prepared and both more shallow and insightful at the same time; shallow because some replies were too ready, and insightful because some replies had and were pondered upon reflectively related to action, the organization and practice. They involved both time and thought.

4.2.2 Contructionism or constructivism

Social constructionism or, briefly, constructionism, is according to Sanna Talja, Kimmo Tuominen and Reijo Savolainen (2004) in the widest sense a synonym for 'the linguistic turn' in human and social sciences. In constructionism, the primary emphasis is not on mental, but on linguistic processes. Constructionism sees language as constitutive for the construction of selves and the formation of meanings. Constructionism speaks of discourses, articulations and vocabularies, and replaces the concept of cognition with conversations, i.e.

"we produce and organize social reality together by using language" (Talja, Tuominen and Savolainen 2004).

The basic assumption of constructionism is that knowledge is constructed in "systems of dispersion" (Foucault 1972). The production of knowledge is always positioned: we are not dealing with a pure reflection of a single position but rather with dynamic tensions among multiple positions (Bowker and Star 1999). Thus, while cognitive constructivism and collectivism assume that individuals´ or discourse communities´ mental models have a relatively stable form and existence, constructionism takes the view that the words of language do not carry meaning that remains stable

"through the changing occasions of their use" (Garfinkel 1967:40).

Constructionism thus emphasises the context and perspective dependent and argumentative nature of language use. Edwards (1997) makes a distinction between ontological and epistemological constructionism. In the former, the research object is not solely language, but also organizations, techni-

cal artefacts, economic and ecological structure. In contrast, epistemological constructionism and discourse analytic studies usually avoid going beyond language, argumentation and rhetoric.

Sanna Talja, Kimmo Tuominen and Reijo Savolainen has in an article accepted for publication in 2004 distinguished between constructivism, collectivism and constructionism.

Constructivism and constructionism are hence sometimes distinguished, but not always in any one consistent way. I will use constructivism with the implicit idea that knowledge can only be understood through construction processes. There is thus not any knowledge 'out there' that can be

Metatheory	CONSTRUCTIVISM		COLLECTIVISM	CONSTRUCTIONISM
Origin of knowledge	Individual creation of knowledge structures and mental models through experience and observation	Individual creation of knowledge structures and mental models; influenced by history and social relationships	Knowledge is social in origin; the individual lives in a world that is physically, socially and subjectively constructed; mutual constitution of the individual's knowledge structures and the socio-cultural environment	Production of knowledge in ongoing conversations; knowledge and identities are constructed in discourses that categorise the world and bring phenomenon into sight
Philosophical influences	Kelly Piaget	Bruner (early work)	Bruner (later work) Vygotsky	Bakhtin Foucault Garfinkel Gergen Wittgenstein (later work) Volosinov

Figure 12. Major features, influences and representatives of cognitive constructivism, collectivism and constructionism (slightly revised)

put into a head or context without construction. For an individual this means that when you hear, sense, feel, observe, see, understand, learn or realize something you construct your knowledge through reconstructions in your mind. Social constructivists thus tell stories, make interpretations and constantly reconstruct.

Consequently, epistemologically I believe that I can understand, create, share, preserve, accumulate knowledge and learn only through constructions and reconstructions in my mind. How I construct and shape meaning depends on experience, intelligence, analytical skills, prior understanding, experience, social interaction, context, culture, situation etc. I therefore believe knowledge to be a construction. Epistemologically knowledge cannot be obtained, created, shared, preserved, accumulated or understood without a construction or as Schutz and Luckmann put it:

"In the natural attitude, I only become aware of the deficient tone of my stock of knowledge if a novel experience does not fit into what has up until now been taken as a taken-for-granted valid reference scheme" (Schutz and Luckmann 1974:8)

No matter how independent or individual a research process is, it is also always a co-construction in the sense that it belongs to a certain social community of practice in which certain ways of producing facts apply, certain ways of talking and producing knowledge are approved of etc. A study is therefore not conducted in a vacuum or as Kristensson Uggla puts it:

'It would be naïve to deny that observations are theory dependent, that interpretations can form and decide the results of experiments etc'. (Kristensson Uggla 2002:233).

Mir & Watson (2000) argue that constructivism occupies a methodological space characterised by ontological realism and epistemological relativism.

Schools of thought are divided within social constructivism. A lot of the arguments put forward and differences expressed are about issues related to ontology, i.e. what does/does not exist and about what does/does not exist independently of knowledge. Among constructivists there are both realists and idealists (Czarniawska 2005). A good example of realist ontology is new pragmatism, i.e. that things do exist without people knowing of them. Idealists, on the other hand, argue that if it is not possible to prove that something exists independently of human knowledge one can assume that knowledge and reality are one and the same.

The only assumption that Barbara Czarniawska (2005) accepts is that reality is constantly being constructed and it is not worth looking for its essence. This means that it is not important to establish the traits that an organization has, but rather search for why an organization is what it is, i.e. how it has been constructed of those who organise it and by those who observe it. According to Bruno Latour (1998) researchers should look for the performative, not demonstrative, definitions of organizations.

In this study I look mainly for the performative one. Performative definitions as stated in Czarniawska (2005)

According to Kristensson Uggla (2002:352) there are two versions of constructivism. One that sees constructions as consequences of human action, created and shaped by humans. The other that takes a structural perspective on reality, and views reality as something that is constructed by anonymous, self-regulating systems. Thus to answer the question whether hermeneutics is constructivism or not, it is important to distinguish whether we talk about active constructivism or about a deterministic version of constructivism.

In this study I take a position closer to an active form of constructivism. I thus take a moderate, relativistic position. The ontological assumptions of the two methods applied in this study are slightly different, in the first perspective the text is presumed to be reflecting the world rather than constructing it, which is the understanding of the second attempt of analysis. I thus position myself and this study closer to relativism, subjective epistemology and constructivism than to pure realism, objective ontology or positivism. I claim therefore to be a moderate relativist-subjectivist-constructivist. In hermeneutics, it is important for the researcher to position herself. It is important as it is presumed that one own´s position affects handling and analysing of data, which it does, also in this study.

Epistemologically, a subjectivist aims at revealing her thoughts and mind map to the reader whereas an objectivist aims at shutting herself out of the study. Ontologically, it comes down to whether I wish to look behind the text into reality or if I consider the text to be reality, i.e. do I wish to 1) find out what the text is about or 2) how the text is producing reality? This study aims at doing both, roughly divided in two chapters.

This study thus takes an active, moderate constructivist interpretative view (Denzin & Lincoln 1994; Guba and Lincoln 1994a) seeking to understand and interpret through description, sensemaking and analysis.

I apply a constructivist paradigm, relativist ontology (multiple realities), and a naturalistic set of methodological procedures (Denzin and Lincoln 2004) in which emphasis and interest is put on constructions, practice, context, situation and interaction or as Sauquet puts it.

'The situated learning perspective attempts to describe the learning processes interwoven with practice in context. From this standpoint we gain

a better understanding of the relationship between learning and identity building and the role communities play in it. We also are better equipped to understand the importance of people. More importantly, the perspective helps us to undertake a more critical reading on learning coming close to the question formulated by Shotter in terms of knowing as the possibility ingrained in identity (1993) or in more Vygotskian terms, underscoring the importance of others in constructing our identity and knowledge' (Sauquet 2004:382).

ONTOLOGY/EPISTEMOLOGY

REALISM	X **RELATIVISM**
OBJECTIVE	X **SUBJECTIVE**
POSITIVISM	X **CONSTRUCTIVISM**

QUANTITATIVE/QUALITATIVE

Figure 13. Positioning myself and this study

4.3 Theory guided content analysis

The analysis conducted in this chapter is a descriptive attempt of analysis where what is said is looked upon as facts, as reflections of truth and as reality, where theory guides data and in which data is analysed 'through' theory. I look for what is said here in a descriptive sense, more than how and why what is said is said. The respondents' answers are examined here from the point of view of content and meaning. Participants' accounts, or verbal expressions, are thus treated as descriptions of actual processes, behaviour, or mental events. The attempt is consequently to reflect the 'truth', not to see how the "truth" is constructed, i.e. what constructions lie behind 'facts'. The name for the analytical method as applied here can be labelled theory-guided content analysis (see e.g. Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004).

Content analysis is often used in quantitative research to analyse quantitative data. The theory-guided content analysis method is furthermore often viewed as being positivistic or rationally objective. The method, as applied here, is used on qualitative data in qualitative research as I do not test any hypothesis, conduct deductions or measure data, count categories or statements. The purpose of this analysis in this chapter is hence not to conduct positivist research. The aim is not to reach any objective reality, since such a reality cannot be captured according to my understanding. The aim for content analysis, as applied here in chapter four is consequently, to gain a description of the phenomenon studied in a tight and general mode (Tuomi & Sarajärvi (2004:105).

4.3.1 Organizational and situational context

With social context I refer to the group of people that influence individual work and learning within the organization. In this study, the respondents' workplaces are understood to be the contextual setting, i.e. their work-related Community of Practice (CoP). Practice and social context within respective CoPs are argued to be influential as to the respondents' perception of LLL.

"Here it is a way of doing things. We did not talk about lifelong learning with that name, but it was built in the culture. It is understood that in such a profession you cannot be successful without continuous learning". Respondent 1

The anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) use the term 'practice' when they discuss how actions are situated in their socio-cultural contexts. The basic argument given by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger is thus that communities of practice are everywhere and that we are generally involved in a number of them.

In this study the respondents' action, reflection and practice are primarily understood in relation to the respondents' context of practice, i.e. their reflections on interaction and action at work. Numerous other CoPs that the respondents may or may not be involved in are not studied here. However, it is noted and perceived that other and former CoPs may also influence and construct the respondents' present view on LLL in addition to the larger organizational field.

"For me the concept is familiar. I have a background in managing complementary education, i.e. in educating adults. For me lifelong learning is familiar". Respondent 1

From a situated point of view, people learn as they participate and become intimately involved with a community or as Jacobson (1996) puts it:

"learning is situation in interactions among peripheral participants and full participants in a community of meaning. These interactions take place in the context of practice and the process of gaining mastery" (Jacobson 1996:23).

4.3.2 Context 1 and context 2

The private law firm is a successful establishment in every sense of the word. Success is effectively produced through symbols such as location, dress code, artefacts, tables, chairs, carpets, drawings, curtains, vases, magazines etc. The entire interior is tasteful and elegant. The people and the customers at the establishment look good; i.e. they are well and expensively dressed, they wear business suits, nice jewellery, elegant hair cuts, designer shoes etc. – which is all very appropriate and in line with a successful law firm and a modern business.

When I visited one of the law establishments I was sitting in the reception area for about 20 minutes before the scheduled interviews. I enjoyed the sofa, the sea view, reading the law firms staff magazines and observing some people, mostly lawyers.

The meeting room where I sat and discussed first with the manager (respondent 1) and later with a partner (respondent 2) was vast, tasteful, solid and comfortable. The coffee was served out of a modern steel coffee set.

This is how the law firm was described in the award report (Best Workplaces in the EU 2003 and Special Awards)

"One of the oldest and largest law firms in Finland, it evidences its commitment to staff education by the fact that its annual learning budget

amounts to seven percent of total salaries. In addition, the firm makes a point of offering training and development for everyone, including law courses for assistants. All employees – there are 186 – have their own personal development plan, reviewed twice a year. What it comes down to then is that the largest groups of employees, assistant attorneys, spend an average of 150 hours a year in training. The largest non-legal group, staff assistants, spend an hour a week in courses on law. Tutoring and mentoring programmes, 'coaching' and job rotation supplement this learning programme. The firm also offers language training, either in-house or outside. One employee said: 'in this workplace I am able to build my know-how to the greatest possible extent in Finland".

The law firm acts in the areas of mergers & acquisitions, technology, finance & capital markets and dispute resolution.

Respondent 1 has a solid background and expertise professionally and educationally in HRD and the firm (3 years). A common acquaintance acted as a gate opener to him. We began the intentional inductive conversation by exchanging a few words about our common acquaintance and my research project and then started talking about lifelong learning. It was a very relaxed, pleasant and a fruitful meeting that lasted a couple of hours.

Respondent 1 gave the impression of being professional, serious, knowledgeable, structured, dynamic and well

Figure 14. Law firm areas of expertise
(source: web page, accessed 19.10.2005)

M&A	TECHNOLOGY	FINANCE &	DISPUTE RESOLUTION
Private M&A	IPR	Capital market transactions	Dispute avoidance & resolution
Public M&A	ICT (incl.	Banking, financing and	Competition law
Private equity	Media & marketing	Financial, credit and	Bankruptcy & company

spoken. He was prepared and actively involved in the firm's success story. He was opinionated and fairly dominant in his views and ideas. He had clear ideas on what to do and where to go, why they won and how it was achieved. He looked very satisfied with the whole process. When I asked if all learning is good, encouraged, supported, facilitated etc. in the firm, he replied NO and explained that competence development had to primarily be work related. The law firm's culture, traditions, praxis and roots were also stressed and highlighted in this discussion.

Respondent 2, the lawyer, was much more hesitant in his answers. He has a solid background in the firm. He has advanced from a trainee position some ten years ago to a present partner position. He has seen the firm grow and been part of it in every sense of the word. He has grown with the firm and knows it inside out. However, the topic lifelong learning was obviously both odd and awkward for him. He preferred to talk about knowledge, tacit knowledge and knowledge transfer. Respondent 2 was, however, both open and willing to play this inductive research game with me.

Respondent 3 has a solid background in the firm and she too has advanced from a trainee position some 10 years ago to a successful partner position. She is reflective and critical, open, intelligent and honest. I saw her at another establishment of the firm, an equally elegant and spacious establishment with the exception that there was no sea view and the lawyers had to make their own coffee.

The Swedish municipal housing organization looked ordinary. The staff seemed ordinary, as did their offices, shelves, clothing and furniture. There was no showing-off, no elegance. I met respondent 4, an enthusiastic elderly gentleman who had ideological ideas, burning cheeks and a deep passion for learning, at their headquarters in Sweden. He had very well articulated ideas on human values, learning, environmental is-

sues, innovations related to learning, creativity etc. We met in one of the housing organization's dull rooms, on a cold and rainy autumn day. He did not have any formal education, but had learned through, with and in practice, i.e., a true practitioner who learned as he lived and live as he learned. He had more than ten years of experience of the organization.

"I do not have any, how to say it, formal education. It has been an interest and an engagement.
I have learned the same way we develop education at our company". Respondent 4

This is how the housing organization is described in the report from Brussels (Best Workplaces in the EU 2003 and Special Awards)

"A municipal housing agency with 113 employees in the town of Botkyrka, south of Stockholm, it has demonstrated that it's possible for a government-owned entity to put in place a strong programme of competency training for its staff. Between the years 1997-99, some 10 000 education days were provided. Every employee now has an individual development plan. The authority has a budget calling for € 7,250 to be spent on education each year for every single on of the 113 employees. Competency development has become, in effect, the agency's most important investment. In the year 2000, the agency broadened its programme by unveiling its 'training for company development'. The idea here is to link training to the development of the whole company. Among the trainees are house managers who know the tenants and what their needs and desires are. The agency's goal is to transform these positions from 'handyman,' repairing what was broken, to 'managers' responsible for service".

It is Sweden's 14th biggest public housing organization with 11,668 apartments. The housing organization owns up to 40 % of the community's apartments. 27,000 people live

in the community's apartments, which is 36 % of the population of the community. Their turnover in SEK 679 million (source: web page, accessed 19.10.2005)

The public housing organization restructured the whole organization due to an economic crisis in 1997.

A group of former handymen were systematically educated into managers. They participated in a thorough three year 'formal' three step educational programme including 20-30 days of courses in study technique, economy, administration, planning, rental law, customer service, information technology, communication skills, environmental issues, diversity, technique (electrical skills and ventilation), business management and psychology.

4.4 Method and analysis

During data analysis the researcher takes a close look at the data she gathers and tries to make sense of it. In qualitative studies, this means spending a lot of time with your data. In the early stages of data analysis, the importance lies within sense making and organizing. It is helpful to remember that the purpose of data analysis is about creating meaning or making sense (Chenail & Maione 1997), i.e. forming concepts, themes and or categories in order to understand. The need for making sense is unique and occurs repeatedly as people are creative and strive at clothing the world with meaning (Bender 1998).

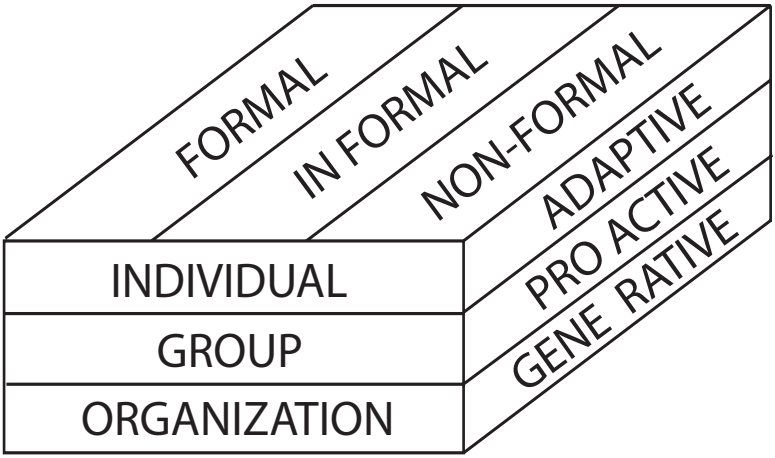
It seems to me that in this study not only data and theory intertwine in the search for making sense, but also the analysis of data was interrelated with the process involving the making of sense and interpretation. The analysis can therefore be described as a simultaneous dialectic process interrelating theory with data.

Making sense through theory-guided content analysis (not to be confused with theory based content analysis) is similar to making sense through data generated content analysis. In data generated content analysis the concepts evolved from data whereas in theory-guided content analysis the theoretical concepts are already known (Tuomi, Sarajärvi 2004:116).

The aim in the first phase of analysis in the forthcoming text is to depict, explain, create meaning and make sense of data (primarily interviews) through theory-guided content analysis applied on qualitative data. The theoretical concepts that evolved out of theory (see chapter one) are used here in a first and preliminary attempt to organize and structure data. The attempt is not to count, prove, test, count or control data, simply to organize and to make sense of primary data. The matrix is used as a structuring device, as an instrument that aids in organizing, 'cleaning' up, reflecting upon and discussing both content and meaning, i.e. in relating data to theory and theory to data. After having interviewed I transcribed all interviews. I wrote each interview down, word by word. I listened to the tape many times. I transcribed and then read the text over and over again. I became sensitive to my data. I came to grow quite attached to it and felt that 'it was talking to me'. I became one with it.

In the first phase of analysis I structure and categorize primary data on three levels, individual, group and organizational, with the help of the theoretical concepts that evolved out of LLL/OL/LO theory and as interpreted and explained in chapter one and depicted (again) below.

Formal	Informal	Non-formal
Purposeful, intentional Structured Certificate Learning about that and about what	Non purposeful Non-structured No certificate Incidental, accidental Learning how to be, how to act, implicit learning influenced by social context/ situation, culture and intuition It is shaped by practice in a workplace context	Purposeful, intentional Structured No certificate Often related to hobby, activity or interest involvement in politics trade union, church, courses and home Non-purposeful, non- intentional, non-structured



Adaptive (low intense)	Pro-active (medium)	Generative (high)
adapting to new situations reacting to the environment adapting to survive reacting to new environmental conditions, to change & to new situations technology opportunities	cognitively induced planned organizational change intentional purposeful active providing facilities,	enhance creativeness, be open to question underlying orders assumptions, policies, structures re-creating ourselves learning how to learn reflecting on action and practices

Figure 15. The complemented model

4.4.1 Individual formal learning

Formal learning is structured, intentional and leads to a certificate. At the law firm the self-evident requirement for an acting lawyer is a law degree. The education of acting lawyers, however, does not stop with a Masters degree from a law school. This is implicitly recognized and stated

"in a profession like this you cannot be successful without continuous learning". Respondent 1

Learning (continuous education) at the law firm is thus valued, imperative and facilitated, supported, encouraged and induced. Employees, lawyers, are encouraged to take additional degrees partly even supported and sponsored by the firm.

"We do try to support those who take courses at open university. We also partly sponsor lawyers who wish to take a Master of Law exam abroad and study in another country for one year". Respondent 1

If the lawyers spend time abroad achieving a degree, they are bound by a contract, but which and who benefits from the experience?

"I will never need the Master in Laws degree that the firm party sponsored, but when I am with foreign clients they see from my CV that this fellow understands what we are talking about and where I come from". Respondent 3

The benefit of a second qualification may, however, be indirect or implicit as expressed here by Respondent 3. Furthermore foreign clients may value and recognise it. It may be a fruitful way to understand another community of practice, their culture, way of being, thinking and acting, an effective instrument for foreign clients.

The opportunity and degree is thus appreciated and recognised both by the firm and the lawyer. However, when the law firm invests time and resources, they expect something in return. The employee gains, but is expected to give in return, to perform better, take on more roles and more responsibility. The many diversified roles that come along and are part of being a successful lawyer is stressed and highlighted.

"We have this one lawyer who is a good example of a student who enters the firm as a trainee, who stays on and learns, takes on more responsibility and in a few years time spends an year abroad, returns to us and develops, takes the position of a top-lawyer, but also takes on other roles. She now has both the customer relation and client recruitment role in addition to her lawyer role. She understands that the position involves many roles". Respondent 1

4.4.2 Group and organizational formal learning

A group of former handymen were systematically educated into managers at the municipal Swedish housing organization during a thorough 3-year three step educational programme in the 1990s. The education had more features of formal than informal or non-formal work place learning even though it took place at the housing organization and was tailor made to fit the housing organization's specific purposes. It was a systematic, structured, purposeful, comprehensively and actively planned extensive formal educational programme that led to certifications suited to fit a specific job description at the housing organization.

The whole organization was restructured and their status got a boost through the educational programme.

"Our managers are attractive on the working market with the education and experience they have". Respondent 4.

The housing organization thus succeeded in introducing and carrying through formal education at the workplace. It involved employees, i.e. former handymen who were motivated to learn the skills and tasks of a house manager with the idea and purpose of becoming one. The housing organization thus combined individual, group and organizational learning including formal, non-formal and informal elements of learning, in an organizational context. It was an implicit attempt of deformalization, i.e. of bridging the gap between formal, informal and non-formal learning in addition to, here, between individual, group and organizational learning. The formal education involved learning what and learning that. The informal part involved learning 'how to be' and learning 'how to act' as a house manager. The non-formal part of the education occurred during their spare time. The education was formal as it was subject related and content oriented, structured, intentional and led to a certificate.

The informal learning was more related to learning how to do and how to act in a specific 'new' community of practice, i.e. in the context of house managers. The model of situated learning proposed by Lave and Wenger in 1991 suggests that learning always involves a process of engagement in a 'community of practice'. Learning involves participation in a community of practice, in our cases involvement, interaction and participation at work or as Lave and Wenger put it:

"A community of practice involves much more than the technical knowledge or skill associated with undertaking some task. Members are involved in a set of relationships over time" (Lave and Wenger 1991:98).

The non-formal learning was related to activity and interest in addition to practice. They learned both individually and in groups, during working hours and during their spare time, i.e. both at work and at home. Their learning had an

impact on the whole organization. The participants learned through the social domain, i.e. from relating problems with practice and learning related to and in a specific context.

4.4.3 Individual informal learning

Informal learning may be implicit, unintentional, unconscious and non purposeful. The law firm stresses the taken-for-granted, the traditional, the professional and their work-culture in addition to the implicit and habitual in their ways of learning as part of their organizational every day practices.

"We learn from each other, for example, how a senior handles a negotiating situation". Respondent 2.

"We have an open door policy within this company. To give advice and share knowledge is a habit with us". Respondent 1

To learn from and with the premises, the context and from being involved is stressed at the law firm. Knowledge seems to be both context-specific interrelated with practice or as Alfons Sauquet points out:

"Learning processes are dependent on contexts, be they hallways (Dixon 1997) or enablers (von Krogh et al., 2000). They are predicated on conversations among individuals. When thinking of learning, or creating knowledge, verbal exchanges are crucial vehicles for sharing experiences, ideas, or previous knowledge" (Sauquet 2004:382).

Knowledge and learning can thus be said to be contextual and can occur even at a subconscious level. It is about learning through socialization and about learning through practice, through listening and participation.

Informal learning involves learning to be and 'learning how to be with', i.e. learning how to interact in practice, in a certain domain, social context, profession and situation, in a specific community of practice, together with others.The habitual is also expressed here, implying that it is part of the law firm tradition, culture and praxis to share knowledge in this specific community of practice. It is a way of acting and being. Knowledge sharing can, however, occur in any situation, during a coffee break, in the corridor, during lunch etc. Learning at the law firm, hence, is not always purposeful. It can happen incidentally or accidentally, i.e. simply by being around and through being involved.

"Here it is a way of doing things. We did not talk about lifelong learning with that name, but it was built in the culture. It is understood that in such a profession you cannot be successful without continuous learning". Respondent 1

The tutor and introduction programmes involve a process in which experienced lawyers at the firm guide and aid newcomers to the community of practice, i.e. to the firm's way of being, doing and acting. It is perceived important at the law firm to know how to be and how to act at the law firm. It is perceived equally important to know and be introduced to who is who and to who knows what and that. The tutor programme is particularly designed to help newcomers adapt to the law firm community of practice.

Informal learning at the Swedish municipal housing organization is also about how to be and how to act in a specific community of practice:

"We wish with this introduction to give a good start in the company to the newcomer through establishing a network at an early stage of employment. The introduction is individual in collaboration with our own per-

sonnel and consists of: social care and guiding (mentoring), introduction in the company culture (meeting with the CEO), get to know the company (business plan, annual report, organisation etc.), introduction to the work role (routines, ways of doing), introduction in the computer system and local knowledge (tour in the company and municipality)". Housing organization brochure for 2000-2002

Informal learning occurs in an inter-relation with practice. However, the word practice, among law professionals is ambiguous as Donald Schön notes:

"When we speak of a lawyer's practice, we mean the kinds of things he does, the kind of clients he has, the range of cases he is called upon to handle. When we speak of someone practising the piano, however, we meant the repetitive or experimental activity by which he tries to increase his proficiency on the instrument. In the first sense 'practice' refers to performance in a range of professional situations. In the second, it refers to preparation for performance. A professional practitioner is a specialist who encounters certain types of situations again and again. This is suggested by the way in which professionals use the word 'case' – or project, account, commission, or deal, depending on the profession. All such terms denote the units which make up a practice and they denote types of family-resembling examples" (Schön 1983:60)

4.4.4 Group informal learning

As the law firm has grew, different forms of learning facilities enabling learning were structured and systematized over the years, in order to support learning in every phase of change and growth. Among others, a tutor-programme was developed. The idea of the tutor-programme is to involve the newcomer with the expert in order for the newcomer to become acquainted with the law firm traditions and cases, practices and habits, culture and people.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991) everybody can learn in such processes, not only the newcomer, but also the expert. Learning, according to Lave and Wenger, is a social process in which exchanging experiences and reflecting on learning, at best, makes everybody a learner, not only the learner. The tutor-programme can hence be viewed as a mutual activity, a process involving the expert and the learner, a process in which both are involved and both learn.

Even if the law firm tutor programme is both systematized and structured, it is also casual. It varies among the tutors and tutees. They themselves create it, both the process and its content, the form and its value.

"Some go to lunch almost every day during the first weeks. Some meet once a week and some do not meet after the first weeks. It varies very much". Respondent 1

Consequently, group informal learning can be supported, facilitated and encouraged, but the aim is to keep it casual. It is structured, but the purpose is not to over-control contextual learning. The casual, friendly, open and interactive aspects in learning are hence recognized at the law firm.

The law firm way of working, i.e. to organise work and problem solving through team-work involving cases, is

an excellent example of informal group learning where most of the learning comes from being involved, implicitly and existentially.

”we work in teams and the tutee is part of it whereby the work comes back to the team and our everyday work”. Respondent 2

It is here recognized that learning occurs through involvement and participation as in legitimate peripheral participation. When learning takes place in a social context, learning is considered a process acquiring an identity within a specific community of practice. Thus, learning a trade or a task not only involves acquiring certain given knowledge, but also involves the dynamics of participation in a group. These dynamics of participation, which these authors conceptualise as ‘legitimate peripheral participation’, is what enables the individual to simultaneously acquire knowledge and a place in the community. In this sense, learning, according to Lave and Wegner (1991) is less a matter of content than a matter of being. It is a process by which the individual learns how to perform – as a professional – and uses the language and performs the tasks defined by his or her particular professional group.

Lave and Wenger coined the concept of communities of practice in 1991. Originally is was used in the understanding of situated learning processes in organisations, but has also become quite influential in participating design a way of understanding relations between different groups of users in a specific context (1998). According to Eric Lesser and John Storck (2001), a community of practice provides members with a sense of identity – both the individual sense and in a contextual sense, how the individuals relates to the community as a whole.

4.4.5 Organizational informal learning

In the law firm case, the systematization of competence development and education takes a very structured, purposeful, active and intentional form. The aim, however, is all the same to also recognize the contextual and situational in learning. Furthermore, the law firm strives at creating an atmosphere that stimulates, induces and encourages learning between and among everybody

"It was one of the criteria that we were certified, that it involved the whole staff. It was important". Respondent 1

Also the celebrative dimension aims at involving and integrating everybody, to strengthen company identity and pride, to enhance a spirit of belonging and socialization. It can be viewed as an important dimension of organizational informal learning here exemplified through the Swedish municipal housing organization case:

"When you are nominated you should hit the big drum to gain publicity and create awareness. That is what we did. We made a big party. We invited all tenants and gained plenty of publicity. We celebrated outdoors with music, balloons and a grand cake. Here (in the Congratulations to all of us brochure) is Sofia, our CEO standing and cutting the cake". Respondent 4

At the law firm the event was also celebrated, however their celebration took on a more distinguished form suitable for their community of practice:

"We did celebrate the event. We had a champagne party for the whole staff at the same time as the award ceremony took place in Brussels". Respondent 1

Photo 3. The award: The European Commission archives (2003)

The company identity, sense of integration, belonging, meaning and pride can hence also be built through cultural artefacts as the law firm case exemplifies:

"The vase is in the reception area. We have this fine engraved ceramics vase that we brought with us from Brussels to remind us". Respondent 1

or as Clifford Geertz recognizes: "meanings can only be stored in symbols" (Geertz 1973:127).

It is thus clear how symbol and meaning interact. Meaning is hence embedded in the symbol. Vice versa, the symbol is embedded and always has to involve some form of meaning to be meaningful. Also rituals, myths, language and art Geertz (1973) argues can be perceived as symbols. Here, both the celebrations and the vase are perceived to be symbols creating meaning for the staff in the context of the award, the prize and of lifelong learning in an organizational context.

"The prize – I see it as a positive signal for what we have done. Our thinking has been rewarded so we know we will keep going in the same direction". Respondent 2

or as the President of the law firm puts it:

"The acknowledgement that our educational and development activities have received is important to us because our personnel's professional knowledge and continuous development are key factors´ for a knowledge-intense firm's competitiveness". CEO/Law firm magazine 1/2003

4.4.6 Individual non-formal learning

Human beings learn throughout their lives and in almost all situations –at home, in their leisure activities and at work. We start learning even before birth, and we continue until senility. Some of the learning is incidental and largely subconscious, but a large amount of learning is planned and purposive (Tough 1971). This is what is meant by the notion of lifelong learning according to Tough. What is new, is the notion that also learning from hobbies and/or activities, not specifically related to work and/or the work-place can be important and perceived as (lifelong) learning.

Non-formal learning is structured, non-structured, intentional, non-intentional, purposeful and non-purposeful. It does not lead to a certificate. It is often related to hobbies, activities and interests. The basic claim and underlying assumption of non-formal learning is a rationale, that all kinds of

learning, also ones related to hobbies and spare time are good for humans, not only specific, work and topic related, subject-oriented learning involving learning that or learning about.

The law firm is interested in supporting and facilitating, even sponsoring non-formal learning to some extent, but basically they prefer learning to be work related.

"We do agree in the development discussions what courses and education is appropriate. We do emphasis both work and competence. We do not support all hobbies – it has to be work-related. There are people who would like to know more, but it is only useful and appropriate for us to support learning only up to a certain limit. We have to think hard what to prioritize as 'WE DO WORK HERE". Respondent 1

It is interesting to note how the organizational policies differ in this respect between the two organizations studied here. The housing organization have adopted an almost reverse policy:

"one of the things we refused in the past was supporting driving lessons which probably would have been accepted today as it involves personal development processes with higher self esteem as a result". Respondent 4

When the law firm stresses the need for learning having to be work-related, the housing organization states the opposite. Almost anything that supports personal development and human growth is possible at and supported by the housing organization.

"of all wishes it is only one co-worker that wanted to have a driver's license that we did not approve of...now I think why not? More freedom means more efficiency…". Respondent 4

The support, however, means bigger work efforts, more pressure and expectations. The housing organization admits that when employees are invested in, given freedom and responsibility, it is a tactical strategy on their part. A return on investment is expected.

"It is perceived generous of the company to invest in me, therefore I try a little more. It is unbelievably tactical as is the freedom under responsibility that we have". Respondent 4

4.4.7 Group non-formal learning

The law firm also enhances group belonging and integration through group non-formal activities that are supported, structured and available for law firm employees. The events are related to hobbies, family and interests and are also available to family members:

"in October we have a children's Saturday with activities in the office – food and then circus" Respondent 1

The idea is to enhance social integration. The organization hence recognizes the importance of relating work-colleagues with hobbies, activities, interests, family and peers.

"During the whole year we have big common happenings – there are several, big within group events and among group events and then at least once a month they go to a concert, theatre, very different kinds of ....and we hope that everyone can find their own. In October we have a children's Saturday where we meet at the workplace and then to circus. We have also been skiing". Respondent 1

4.4.8 Organizational non-formal learning

An entirely new situation occurs, as the housing organization points out, when learning and co-working involves a group who is unwilling to learn. It could be labelled group non-learning, but as there is not such a category explicitly known in this study, this situation is categorized under 'organizational non-formal learning' and exemplified here:

"There still is a group who wish not to take part, be activated, participate or be involved. This group slacks behind. Those who were and are uncertain, uninterested – it is up to yourself in the end". Respondent 4

This corresponds very well with the general understanding and view on lifelong learning, i.e. that LLL is an individual matter. Everyone is responsible for his/her own knowledge, development, skills and competitiveness. The organization can make learning possible by enabling, facilitating, building structures and supporting activities, but they cannot do the learning for the individuals. Not everyone is interested, regardless of how fantastic the programmes, opportunities, facilities or learning projects are. Not everyone wants to become involved and work for the whole, for the development of others, the company and/or themselves. Lesser and Storck (2001) posit that communities are only responsible to their members and to develop their own processes (Lesser and Storck 2001:832).

4.4.9 Summary

LLL in organizations is understood here to involve learning from the context and from situations, through interaction and involvement. Meaning is created through symbols involving celebrations and artefacts. Meaning is perceived to enhance a feeling of belonging and incrementing a sense of identity among its CoP members. Talk of lifelong learning in organizations is hence heavily influenced by practice, situation and social context. LLL seems, accordingly, to involve the art of 'learning how to be with' and knowledge sharing.

Lifelong learning in an organizational context is dynamic, interactive and can be viewed upon as a construction. It involves not only the individual, but also the group and the organizational. LLL is perceived by the actors´ as an activity, i.e. closely linked to practice. The recognition of the many different aspects and levels of learning imply that LLL is understood to involve far more than merely schooling leading to a certificate. LLL in organizations constitute also the inducing, enhancing and stimulating of others to learn, i.e. learning from, of and with others. It, consequently, involves creating meaning and some shared understanding together. It hence involves continuously co-constructed knowledge sharing, enhanced and induced through, among other things, practice.

(Lifelong) learning is perceived to be connected and interdependent with previous knowledge and experiences, in addition to our lives outside work. It is hence not only related to practice and/or learning at work. Learning is interpreted to be both social and active, therefore it cannot be viewed as an isolated affair only occurring at work, or only affected by work peers, situation and practice. Previous knowledge and formal learning in addition to hobbies, family, friends, interest and activities (non-formal learning) interrelate and are perceived to also have an impact on (lifelong) learning in an organiza-

tional context. Formal, informal and non-formal learning are implied to be interrelated and interconnected in the perception and talk about lifelong learning in an organizational context.

LLL theory to present date has been rather individual, adult and complementary education oriented. The EU interest in LLL learning is based on the knowledge-based economic viewpoint claiming that the adoption of an LLL strategy will enhance competitiveness and enable a smooth transition for people, organizations and their nations from a modern society to a knowledge-based one. A LLL strategy is perceived to solve many educational and workforce related issues, it is launched to enhance new skills, it is hoped to create innovations and competences among firms. A LLL strategy is aiming at ensuring competitive advantage to European organizations, its people and to nations on a global arena. Institutionally LLL is involved with questions related to personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social integration and democratic processes, economic interests and the knowledge-based society's requirements for new skills and competences.

Lifelong learning theories can be said to be concerned with theories on informal, formal and non-formal learning. These types of learning can be viewed upon as different arenas

Figure 16. Findings related to formal, informal and non-formal learning

FORMAL	INFORMAL	NON-FORMAL
INDIVIDUAL		
additional degrees access entry	situations, culture praxis to share open door, social context a habitual way of doing things tutor programme	non-work related hobbies, activities and interests
GROUP		
handymen were turned	being involved, introduced to the COP tutor-programme team-work	concert, family day
ORGANIZATION		
into house managers	celebrations continuity celebrations artefacts	not everyone wish to take part non learning

for learning. Most LLL theories are based on the understanding that LLL is about individual competence development. Situated social learning theory recognizes and implies that informal learning is related to its social context and to situation. One learns by being around, through being involved and by being part of a community. Our actors´ show, through talk and perception of LLL, that (lifelong) learning in organizations is heavily influenced by its social context, culture, practice, action and situations. Meaning for the concept is constructed through e.g. the tutor-programme in which older lawyers guide new comers into their community of practice. Learning at the law firm occurs through participating and through being involved in practice and activities related to real cases.

Meaning is also created here, among other things, through symbols involving a vase and celebration. Symbols increment a sense of belonging which enhance the creation and embrace the formation of a company identity. An identity is also co-created here through the supporting of non-formal elements in learning, e.g. company gatherings involving the individual and the whole, hobbies and family. Also the non-formal in addition to formal elements as shown in figure 13 are found to involve learning and knowledge-sharing, i.e. to construct meaning, among single actors´, of lifelong learning in an organizational context.

The finding at this stage is that meaning and sense of lifelong learning in organizations through talk and perception of individual actors´ is not only constructed through individual competence development and plans, but also in group and organizational processes involving not only formal education, but also informal and non-formal elements of learning. The lines between the levels and categories are fine and they often interconnect.

The next phase of analysis involves the adaptive, proactive and generative forms and ways of learning.

4.5.1 Individual adaptive learning

The adaptive is a form of learning shaped by the environment, by demands and requirements, new technology and/or new legislation. Firms adapt in order to survive, adapt and fit in. It can be termed as a low intense form of learning.

The Swedish award winner tried to follow a rigorous long-term 3-year individual development scheme, but soon realised that it did not work as the world around them continually and rapidly changes. The adaptive form of learning thus requires flexibility.

"We had an ambition that all co-workers would have a three year individual competence development plan, but we have not succeeded to follow this. The reason that we have not succeeded is because this type of education must be fresh. To keep following a rigorous a plan is not working as we are an organization in continuous motion. We make many changes and every change has its specific feature that requires new skills". Respondent 4

The adaptive form of learning is more of a non-active survival type of learning, more of a reaction to the environment. The housing organization emphasizes and stresses the importance of flexibility and freshness in their individual educational programmes in order to be able to react adequately to change and new requirements. Flexible educational structures were thus called for instead of rigorous educational programmes or development systems. Education must be kept fresh, structures must allow flexibility and plans need to be continuously updated and reformed according to individual aims and pursuits. Individual adaptive learning is thus shaped by, and adapted to change, here expressed through the requirement of freshness and flexibility. Practice is implicitly implied to play a role here. The organization is in

continuous motion because internal changes are adapted to external changes to better serve practice and be part of a society in transition.

4.5.2 Group adaptive learning

At the law firm, groups are formed, shaped and adapted to fit specific client needs. They evolve and develop from one case to the next. The formation of groups is sensitive to situation and related to experience, expertise and skill as well as to requirements and needs. Learning comes from adapting to client problems and specific cases. Learning evolves throughout the case, from being involved, from working with experienced seniors and demanding clients, from interactive meetings and from adapting old knowledge to new problems. Learning here is shaped through customer needs and specific case demands. To create a team for a specific project is an effective way of organizing work with group adaptive learning as an outcome.

"Every team is originally created for a specific project – there is one partner who is responsible for the case and builds up the team so that it involves older and younger assistants depending on the transaction size, time frame, schedule and scope". Respondent 3

4.5.3 Organizational adaptive learning

There are forms of learning that are more adaptive, than pro-active or generative to their nature. When I spoke to the Swedish award winner about lifelong learning it became evident that they did not use the term lifelong learning at the time of the contest. The housing organization did not know of the EU special category of LLL upon participation in the contest. They do now and they also claim that;

"Everybody talks more of lifelong learning now". Respondent 4

The concept and term has evidently now landed in Sweden (2003). Before the award the Finnish law firm did not advocate lifelong learning at their web page as they did after the award:

"Continuous learning (in Swedish translated at the web page as livslångt lärande=lifelong learning) Continuous learning is seen as a key to the success of the firm. We expect all members of our staff to have a genuine interest in developing their professional skills. Our lawyers regularly participate in internal and external seminars and courses, and we provide challenging opportunities for training and further education through varying work assignments. (Law firm web page, 07/2005, and 06/2006)

The law firm introduced the term and web text after the award, in other words, something changed in the process due to the award.

As organizational learning is difficult to grasp, one distinctive or obvious feature for organizational learning can be recognised through changed behaviour, changed norms, routines, beliefs, values, changed terminology, new ways of talking as viewed in this extract and example. Another way to view organizational learning is through new insights and understanding.

One of the earliest contributions to the OL movement was when the individual organization adapted their activities and actions accordingly with the environment. The fact that the Swedish apartment organization now talks differently can be seen as one form of organizational adaptive learning. They have thus adapted their talk and web pages to fit the environment. A low intense form of learning has occurred.

4.5.4 Individual pro-active learning

Pro-active learning is planned and structured to its form and is more conscious and cognitive than adaptive learning. It is more than just merely reacting to changes in the environment. It involves planning and readiness for change to meet future challenges and actively plan for development. The rigorous 3 year educational programme is a good example of medium intense learning. But also, to educate your staff or receive groups can be viewed upon as pro-active individual learning as it involves planning, active knowledge sharing and learning from preparing as these two responses from the two different organizations vividly show:

"To educate your own staff is always a challenge: even a top specialist learns from preparing a lecture. It takes time and is part of the job". Respondent 1

"To receive groups is an important learning situation and demands different types of knowledge, e.g. how to show overhead slides and talk in front of a group". Respondent 4

Naturally these situations must also be viewed as pro-active group learning involving interactive elements involving the audience, but in these responses the individual learning dimension is stressed.

A top specialist at the law firm learns from preparing a lecture based on expertise, knowledge, practice and experience. The expert learns from preparing, but also from and with the participants. Senior partners at the law firm are responsible for in-house law training (named the In House Academy). Specialized lectures are hence offered to junior lawyers. That is an example of a situation where knowledge is shared and new knowledge is created. It is a process in which the experts

and juniors are involved in together. The expert learns from reflecting on practice, based on real cases.

The housing organization Manager learns from receiving groups. The house-manager learns through preparation when reflecting on practice, but also through interaction and in co-construction with the audience.

In both cases learning is, at least partly, pro-actively and thoroughly planned and involves careful reflection on practice.

This is an active form of knowledge sharing, as exemplified here, learning from, with and of others. It is also said to be part of the job at both organizations and it demands different types of knowledge and skills.

4.5.5 Group pro-active learning

There are many forms of pro-active group learning at the law firm of which the tutor programme is the one that is recognized and acknowledged, spoken of and perceived important the most. The tutor-programme takes a very active, planned, systematised and structured form at the law-firm even if its design and form varies among the tutors and tutees. The programme was shaped and actively structured due to growth and could therefore also be claimed to be an adaptive form of learning stimulated by growth more than change. However, the pro-active dimension is predominant involving features recognized here as informal learning. The tutor-programme at he law firm is supported. It is also mandatory, evaluated, monitored, followed up, reported and even managed to some extent.

"Before it was more ad hoc – one self tried to figure what could be of interest to a young lawyer, now it has been packaged in a way that the tutor and tutee receive support". Respondent 2

The programme is packaged and the pair receives support. It is, however, to a large extent up to the pair how the programme is carried out. Practice often partly organises tutor structures at the law firm. However, it is an excellent example of how knowledge is shared and new knowledge is created as the tutee is also part of the work group interacting through active and participatory casework.

The trainee and introduction programmes, as well as the In House Academy at the law firm are also very structured, purposeful and planned. They can thus also be labelled as pro-active group learning where knowledge is actively shared and learning is induced. Other examples:

"Development groups (partner and senior associates) meet every month for four hours. Each session has a theme on which a theoretical lesson is held. Most of the time is spent on discussions and real life issues such as: Team leadership, Time Management, Coaching and Feedback, Conflict Management, Customer Relationship Management, Self Management etc.". Law firm/competition material

In the development groups interactivity is viewed important as is the homogeneity and level of skills and experience of the group. The aim of the development group is to be on top of things, to be updated and aware of what is going on in society. In these groups theory is confronted with practice in a process involving reflection, action, practice and experience. To learn from each other, of others and with others is stressed at the law firm.

4.5.6. Organizational pro-active learning

The housing organization stresses continuity as part of the organizational process in learning;

"We do not intend to lay low even if we slow down a little at times. The work continues. It is not a one-off thing". CEO/housing organization brochure

The law firm also stressed continuity in addition to the integrative dimension of learning, both well-known elements from LLL theory and understanding:

'It is widely understood that one seminar does not bring along the one correct way of learning. We have tried to do things widely, systematically and long term, involving everybody'. Respondent 1

The two organizations selected for this study met with each other during the award ceremony in Brussels in March 2003. The Swedish housing organization copied some practices they viewed as excellent from the Finnish law firm. This can be viewed as an active form of organizational learning;

"The core business is something that everybody in the company should know. We copied this idea from the law firm and we have now started a construction technical education that the whole company staff must participate in". Respondent 4

The law firm also offers extensive law education to their assistants and secretaries. The fact that they offer law training and development, i.e. the core business, to everyone was one reason that the law firm was awarded. That was in fact viewed as crucial as it was perceived that social integration was effectively put into practice. The law firm thus includes their secretaries and assistants in their core business.

The law firm was awarded for it and the housing organization copied this idea. The housing organization also imitated some practices from another company that they came to meet during the nomination process.

"It was a small company in Småland that won the 'Best workplaces in Europe' â contest. They work very much like us with a strong emphasis on self-responsibility, they represent something we very much hold as a model and are aiming at". Respondent 4.

Here we can identify vivid examples of what Garvin (1993) explains as learning from other organizations, through benchmarking and borrowing or as Sévon (1996) contends that not only do Western people and organiszations praise their heroes, they imitate them.

Many studies show that organizations prefer uniform behaviour (Brunsson 1989; Levitt & March 1988, Meyer & Rowan 1977) models rather than creating their own models based on experience and problem solving. Many researchers (Borgert 1992; DiMaggio & Powell 1983) thus have found that organizations follow fashion and imitate other organizations, just as humans do.

4.5.7 Individual generative learning

Generative learning stresses the creative, the reflexive and the deeper form of learning, the kind of learning that may have on impact on values, attitudes, underlying norms and assumptions, patterns, structures, and beliefs. This is the most deep and intense form of learning.

It involves new ways of doing and thinking. It involves reflecting on why we do as we do, why we act as we act, why we think as we think and/or why we are as we are. It involves learning how to learn and it enhances creativi-

ty among employees. According to Peter Senge (1990) real learning gets to the heart of what it is to be human. We become able to re-create ourselves. This applies to both individuals and organizations in his view. Thus, for a learning organization it is not enough to survive. According to Senge, adaptive learning is important – indeed it is necessary. But, for a learning organization, adaptive learning must be joined with generative learning, i.e. with learning that enhances our capacity to create (Senge 1990).

The housing organization expresses concerns related to old learning and unlearning. They are aware that old habitual ways of thinking and learning are hindering new, fresh ideas.

"It is important to continuously take part in courses and in lectures because it gives you an energy kick even when the topic is not specifically related to work. You are released from the work tasks for a while. You may learn to think in different paths. This is important for an individual in her development. Creativity is a gift of only a few – we are so trapped in certain paths in thinking". Respondent 4

This is what (Senge 1990) referred to as mental models and (Argyris 1996) as skilled incompetence, i.e. mental blocks hindering us from learning which implies the need for unlearning. It is here identified, exemplified and recognised by the municipal Swedish housing organization in Sweden.

However, Vygotsky (1896-1934) implies that learning is essentially always new ways of thinking about something, but for learning to take place, it must somehow be related to old assumptions, knowledge, ways of thinking etc. For new learning to occur there must hence be categories or concepts through which understanding and meaning can take place. New knowledge can, however, challenge current understanding and thus stimulate new ways of thinking.

4.5.8 Group generative learning

"To mix people in our internal education from different departments is a winning concept. We bring people together and thus create and strengthen our company identity, a bigger understanding for the whole and we learn from one another. It is very valued, to learn from one another and take part in other's experiences". Respondent 4

"It does not seem to make any difference what sort of education we arrange as long as put together the right groups". Respondent 4

It is interesting how the housing organization celebrates the heterogeneous whereas the law firm encourages and actively stimulates learning in more closed groups, i.e. senior partners have their own forum for learning, newcomers their own, juniors theirs, experts theirs etc.

Heterogeneity, however, is a winning and valued concept at the housing organization. Learning with others and learning from and of others' experiences is both stressed and highlighted. This is where knowledge and experience is actively shared. Learning with the 'right' people is also explicitly expressed, identified and highly recognised. To learn together enhances furthermore the understanding of the whole organization.

The law firm emphasises working together, reflecting on practical cases as one of the best forms of learning.

"The greatest learning comes from reflecting upon practical examples". Respondent 1

"At the Academy which is in-house law training we make education less formal and more practically oriented". Respondent 3.

These examples can be viewed as a generative form of group learning, as there is the reflexive (generative) attempt

involved in relating learning with reflecting on real, practical cases. The practical dimension and the reflexive part is highlighted by the law firm. It seems that the most genuine form of learning among lawyers takes place there and then - when reflecting upon real cases, when reflecting on practice and experience.

4.5.9 Organizational generative learning

At the law firm they are very conscious of inventing structures, strategies, routines and practices for the diffusion, transfer and support of knowledge preservation and use of knowledge. The firm also recognises the implicit and tacit form of knowing:

"How we get the information out that we have in our heads is a big question and how we succeed with this is a future challenge… the idea is that when a project is over we evaluate how the model could be developed. We also go through the whole case to evaluate the time frame, administration, legal aspect, control, etc. – what could have been done better – the evaluation is thus divided in two phases". Respondent 2

The outcome of the learning described here often results in some changes that affect not only the individual or the group, but the whole organization. The participants work through a case with the help of a model. After and during the work process they develop the model to fit their case. After case-work they reflect upon the model they have based their case on. They reflect on it through their experience and through practice. They suggest and agree upon improvements and develop the model for future cases. The reformed model is distributed within the firm. They also reflect upon particular cases in terms of time and money, learning and handling. The law firm team reflects on both practice and action in or-

der to improve quality, efficiency, routines and action, in order to preserve, develop and transfer of knowledge.

They, however, also express the idea that there is a lot of knowing-in-action and knowing-in-practice involved, i.e. knowing that is difficult to express or formulate. Knowledge is hence sometimes difficult to make transferable or explicit. In these reflective learning processes knowledge is not only preserved and developed, but new knowledge is also shared and created.

4.6 Findings

ADAPTIVE	PRO-ACTIVE	GENERATIVE
INDIVIDUAL freshness and flexibility rigorous plans do not work	to learn by careful preparation through reflecting on practice 3-year plan	to be released from work tasks we are trapped in certain ways of thinking
GROUP teams are created to suit a specific project	tutor, academy introduction, trainee	to mix people to reflect on practice
ORGANIZATION everybody talks of it more now new ways of talking	copying and imitating	careful thorough documentation

Figure 17. Findings related to adaptive, pro-active and generative learning

The LO is viewed upon as an organization that enables, facilitates, stimulates, enhances, induces, supports and encourages learning from, with and of others. The organization supports and enhances learning of the individual and the individual supports and create knowledge, specific and valuable for the organization. Single actors´ perception and talk of (lifelong) learning is presumed to be related with context. Individual actors´ perception and talk on learning is hence

perceived to be contextual. The constructivist approach on learning imply that we do not learn isolated facts and theories in some abstract ethereal land of the mind separate from the rest of our lives: we learn in relationship to what else we know, what we believe, interrelated with our prejudices and our fears. On reflection, it becomes clear that this point is actually a corollary of the idea that learning is active and social. We cannot divorce our learning from our lives (Hein 1991).

Learning organization theory is concerned with creating an atmosphere that generates, enhances, transfers, supports, encourages, facilitates, enables and stimulates learning and knowledge transfer. LO theory is interested in that we learn in order to create (new) knowledge. It is often related to change, survival and to success. It is presented as an imperative in order to challenge future demands, in order to survive and in order to be(come) successful. LO is often viewed upon as a vision, strategy, goal, framework and/or metaphor. The approach is managerial, technical, normative and functional whereas LLL theory is more interested in when and where individuals learn (learning arenas). The LO, however, is not only about individual learning, but involves also the idea of creating a system that enhances learning of all at all levels, a process in which learning intertwines with transformation. Learning is hence linked to change, information and transformation in an ongoing process. LO theory is basically interested in enhancing learning on all levels, in developing systems that enable and are capable of organizational learning in circular, continuous processes, intertwining learning with transformation - implying, according to my interpretation, that learning cannot be fully managed, directed or steered only supported, stimulated, enhanced, encouraged and enabled.

Theories and ideas on organizational learning and learning organization in addition to lifelong learning theory intertwine in this study. All are viewed as dynamic processes.

The interpretation and meaning that is created and argued for here give the theories a stance beyond the individual. The inclusiveness, the whole, the integration, the group and the organizational is emphasised, in addition to the notion and importance of interaction through reflecting on practice on all levels.

OL theory is interested in relating the individual with the organization and the environment. Moreover, organizational learning theory is interested in linking learning to organizational change and development. Furthermore OL is concerned with questions related to how organizational learning affects the learning of others. When an organization learns, the individual, on some level, affects also how other members or the organization think, act and learn. OL theory is interested in connecting learning with knowledge and with practice, involving processes of reflection on practice. OL/LO theories is understood in this study also through the level of intensity, i.e. in relating learning to organizational change.

An organization does not, according to my understanding thoroughly learn without individuals or without individuals reflecting on practice. The reflection of practice and the notion of social context, the interrelation between the individual and the organization, the dimensions and levels here presented are perceived and found to be interconnected. LLL, as interpreted by single actors´, involving experience and practice, in a specific CoP, is found to be influenced by formal, informal, non-formal, adaptive, pro-active and generative learning on three levels.

LLL in organizations is more than merely about individual competence development. (Lifelong) learning is knowledge sharing in continuously co-constructed processes involving experience, practice, knowledge sharing, social context and it is situation-specific and it runs throughout the organization.

4.6.1 Summary

Many content analytical studies are criticised for their incompleteness in character. The researcher may have described her analysis very specifically and carefully, but she has not been able to present interesting conclusions, but rather she presents the structured data as if they were conclusions (Grönfors 1982).

This occurred here to some extent. I guided my data into categories evolving from theory. This was done in order to handle data, in order to organize and categorize data, in order to make sense and meaning of data. It served as a classifier and as a base for further analysis. It helps me to look further, to look beyond. In content analysis the meaning and content of a text is searched for whereas in the next step of analysis focus is more on how content and meaning is constructed, in how talk affects meaning.

According to Rorty (1989) people pull words from the vocabularies of society and makes sense using ideology. They pull words from the vocabularies of organizations and make sense using third-order controls They pull words from vocabularies of occupations and professions and make sense using paradigms. They pull words from vocabularies of coping of predecessors and make sense using tradition. And they pull words from vocabularies of sequence and experience and make sense using narratives.

But all of these words that matter invariably come up short. They impose discrete labels on subject matter that is continuous. There is always slippage between words and what they refer to. Words approximate the territory; they never map it perfectly. That is why sensemaking never stops according to Karl Weick (1997:107). This is why making sense never reaches a final point. The importance, however, according to my understanding is to recognize that meaning is influenced

and created through the framework we have, the social context we are in, the local culture surrounding us and through the situation we find ourselves in. It is affected by the words and expressions that we have, by our experiences, by concepts and by a world that we can relate to and understand. It is influenced by our education, profession and through the work that we practice and through the people that we work with. Meaning and sense can also be created through whom we know and by ideas that we believe in. It is hence also produced by the society we live in. Furthermore it is created by the ability that we possess and through the understanding that we have for the concept in general and by what it means to us, in particular. Meaning and sense is furthermore and foremost, to my understanding, also created through and with the help of other people, their words, expressions, meaning, sense and interpretation of the world. Mutual understanding involves body language, symbols and all of our senses, not only words.

The importance of the matrix does not lie in perfection nor in the purity or clarity in the theory-generated categories, but in the examples, in the discussions it generated and in the findings that the discussions around data within the categories resulted in. The matrix was constructed out of theory in terms of categories. The theory-guided content analysis can be used on qualitative data in qualitative research to enable and enhance discussion, interpretation, content, meaning and understanding. It is not deductive or quantitative to its character. I did not count statements, arguments, words or claims. I did not monitor or control theory and/or data. I did not deduct, nor did I test hypothesises. I did not present objective truths and/or make claims on rationality. The outcome of the structure is more a reflective process, an interpretation of theory through practice, in search for content and meaning, understanding and interpretation. The idea is that every statement and response is important and creates meaning.

A critique against this analytical method is that it steers and leads data to fit certain theory generated categories. Data is more or less forced into these categories. The categories, however, helped me to grasp data. The process also helped me to get to know my data. It also helped me to relate theory with data and vice versa. In addition it helped me to structure my thoughts on the subject.

Lifelong learning in an organizational context, through single actors´ perception and talk, interpreted by me, is thus found to be and consist, at three levels, of among other things:

F O R M A L LEARNING

-A law degree is a pre-condition for working as an acting lawyer at the law firm. Law education is further supported through the in-house academy, through intensive trainee-programs, through the systematized tutor-programme and through offering law education also to secretaries and assistants. Further education is supported. Basically all work-related formal education is supported at the law firm.

-The housing organization produced their house manager education programme. Handymen were turned into House Managers.

I N F O R M A L LEARNING

-Learning how to be and how to act as well as 'learning how to be with' is acknowledged and recognized, enhanced, stimulated, structured and systematized at the law firm. The law firm way of working in teams, their open door, knowledge-sharing culture enhances and induces informal learning as does the trainee-, tutor-, and introduction-programmes in addition to the in-house law-education. The knowing and skill involving 'learning how to be with' is, in fact, essential and most crucial in order to act and perform as a full member of the organization, in order to be able to practice law.

-The housing organization recognises, stimulates and values learning how to be in their Community of Practice. Furthermore, at the housing organization they learn from each other and from others, on all levels. They imitate and they copy. The housing organization recognizes the value of celebrations, continuity, happenings and symbols.

N O N - F O R M A L LEARNING

-The housing organization supports, recognizes and encourages also non work-related activities, hobbies and interests involving the idea that freedom conveys responsibility.

-The law firm does not support non work-related education, but they sometimes organize family activities with the specific aim to interconnect family with work and work with family and hobbies.

A D A P T I V E LEARNING

-At the housing organization they have e.g. adapted their talk to fit the environment. They have furthermore adapted their structure to meet future challenges e.g. through turning former handymen into House Managers.

-At the law firm they adapt groups to fit client needs and they have adapted and structured e.g. the tutor programme due to growth.

-They adapt their talk and text due to the award

P R O - A C T I V E L E A R N I N G

-The law firm induces active knowledge sharing through structured systematized processes and programmes. Learning, however, also occurs through careful preparation.

-The housing organization learns through well designed educational programmes. Further education is stimulated in mixed groups.

GENERATIVE LEARNING

-At the law firm learning occurs at all levels through reflective processes related to cases and client needs.

-The housing organization enhance non work related activities and education in order to generate new ideas.

Law firm

At the law firm lifelong learning is continuous and related to competence development very strongly. (Lifelong) learning is encouraged and enhanced, stimulated, supported, sponsored and induced at the firm and it involves learning that is work-related, i.e. learning that is perceived useful and beneficial for the firm. Lifelong learning is called continuous learning in English whereas in Swedish the term 'livslångt lärande' (=lifelong learning) is applied. Text involving continuous learning were introduced after the award. The law firm thus adapted their talk to fit the award and the institution.

It is, however, mostly through talk with the help of practice and team-work that lifelong learning is spoken of by the actors´. It is through practical work with clients and with colleagues, in groups and in reflective processes involving reflection on cases. The most generative form of learning appears to occur when reflecting on cases, i.e. on practice. It is practice on how to improve and develop models, how to share new knowledge and how to share improved models with others that makes sense in relation to the concept at the law firm. How to preserve 'old' knowledge and how

to transfer and make knowing that is tacit and implicit to its character, so called knowing-in-practice, explicit, expressive and available to all, seems to create meaning at the law firm? It is in knowledge sharing practices that knowledge is best shared, enhanced and induced. Learning, however, is also actively shared and induced through systematized programmes, i.e. through learning about the Community of Practice and learning through careful preparation, individually and in interaction with others. To share knowledge is developed through systematized in house structures. Learning is perceived and expected to be more than merely individual competence development. It is not accepted to merely think about your own learning, career and development. At the law firm the employees have to actively share their knowing and knowledge, both through structured programmes, but also informally as members of the community. Knowledge is shared within the firm, among the lawyers, among legal assistants together with secretaries. It is every lawyer's responsibility to share and develop knowledge within the firm. It is part of every lawyers job description. It is enhanced through roles and through responsibility. It is implicitly embedded in the law firm's culture and atmosphere. It is part of the profession and their praxis. Learning at the law firm is said to be integrated to involve everybody. At the law firm, in-house training with, from and of others within the firm is highly valued and hardly any outside expertise is used in their educational programmes. They learn from each other, of and with each other. The law firm community is strong. At the law firm they share and create their own knowledge in co-constructed in-house reflective processes that pre-supposes the art of 'knowing how to be with'.

Housing organization

Perception of (lifelong) learning at the housing organization is developed through self-responsibility. That is talked of and perceived important by the single actor involving the housing organization in this study.

Copying and recognising, benchmarking and imitating good practices is furthermore an explicit and accepted way of developing company practices and strategies at the housing organization. Lifelong learning is perceived to be continuous and also other than strictly work-related learning is strongly supported, encouraged and enhanced at the housing organization. Non-work related topics and subjects outside the work domain are argued to be good for generative learning, inspiration, motivation and individual development. It is hence stimulated and important to be open to new approaches in doing and thinking. They therefore enhance curiosity and an open mind for their employees on all levels.

However, the housing organization admits that extensive learning possibilities, resources invested and facilities made available are based on a tactical strategy on their part, as is freedom under responsibility. They invest and give freedom to their employees. Consequently, they expect more work and more responsibility in return.

The housing organization values learning from others. They use a lot of outside expertise and they say that it does not matter what sort of education they arrange as long as they put together the right groups as learning from others' experiences is valued and perceived important both in-house and out-house. LLL at the housing organization is more than merely about individual competence development. It is sharing knowledge through the experience and practises of others. The society around is recognized. It is about learning from and of others and learning with others within the organizations, but it is also about learning from others, i.e. about copying and imitating others outside the organization.

4.7 Themes

Some themes started to evolve during the structuration process, out of data. They came out of data or as Silverman (1993:9) puts it: content analysis in qualitative research is "to understand the participants categories". This was achieved in the end, through theory-guided content analysis. In the following I will briefly go through the themes and thoughts that evolved out of data. I present and interpret some new data here, in order to offer a more comprehensive picture and in an attempt to reflect data better, more comprehensively and more truthfully. This attempt shows that 'reading data' is indeed, a matter of interpretation. The intention hence, is to interpret data from different angles to make interpretation and its importance explicit.

4.7.1 Segregation

The law firm indicated that it was growth more than change or adaptation to the environment that led to the structuring and systematization of some of the learning programmes (e.g. the trainee, introduction and tutor programme), but that the basis for the programmes was found in the culture and thus easily implemented and enforced in the organization.

However, not all employees were uncritically happy about the extra workload that the systematization, support and evaluation generated;

'Everything was less bureaucratic in 1997 when there were only 20 lawyers than now when we have over 100. The structuration involves dull things such as planning and evaluation, the bureaucracy increases' Respondent 3.

It can thus be stated that learning also generated bureaucracy at the law firm.

Another interesting feature of the law business was the perception in relation to career;

'it is part of the law business that you enter the business at a young age; you mature, develop, make a career, grow in your career and go on'...Respondent 1.

Implicitly it is thus said that young newcomers are preferred, that the law firm prefers to hire staff at a young age. Young newcomers are expected to learn about the law firm traditions, culture, habits and practices. They are expected to grow and develop with and within the firm. Young arrivals are, consequently, shaped by the firm. Seen from this perspective the law firm can be said to represent a rather closed organization despite statements of the opposite. Structurally supported learning at the law firm can be stated to be not only bureaucratic, but also hierarchical and segregated; i.e. assistants and secretaries have their own education (legal training from assistants/secretaries), partners their own lunches and development groups, associates their own In House Academy etc. There is thus a rather strict hierarchy embedded in terms of knowledge sharing and learning, despite statements on open door policies, open atmosphere and on the everyday in knowledge sharing. Consequently the structurally supported HRD view does not enhance or fully support the open, the heterogeneous, the integrated and the social if you look at the law firm structures and practices from this angle.

Knowledge sharing can thus be said to be an institutionalized practice at the law firm, but also to some extent, a hierarchical, non-integrated, segregated and bureaucratic activity. Learning is not only structured and enhanced, but also steered to some extent through tunnels of hierarchy, closeness and separation.

'I do not think our organization is hierarchical, compared to any other law firm, we do not have hierarchy. If we compare ourselves to an ad agency or IT-firm we probably do. So it depends who you compare us with'. Respondent 1

4.7.2 Personal and individual

The underlying assumption at the law firm is that continuous lifelong learning is a necessity dictated by the profession. It is an understanding that in order to be successful, lawyers have to continuously develop themselves. It is related directly to the profession and to the culture of working in a competitive law firm where lawyers strive to become partners. To become a top-lawyer you have to continuously develop yourself. It is thus implied that it is your responsibility as a lawyer, i.e. each and everyone´s responsibility, not solely the firm's.

The underlying assumption at the housing organization is that learning is always personal, but that learning often takes place in a group or in an organizational context or situation. It can thus be labelled individual, but also social, interactive or as group learning. Individual personal learning is stimulated and supported, generated and activated by the situation and the group to support and enable personal growth whereas at the law firm individual personal learning is also stimulated, generated, activated and supported not only by other people, but also by the profession, context, practice, situation and tradition.

Lifelong learning is thus about individual personal learning. The insight is based on the assumption that the organization can only do so much. The rest is up to you, to each and everyone, to oneself. Lifelong learning is thus viewed upon as a personal exercise that occurs in a social context. (Lifelong) learning can be supported, enhanced, developed

and structured through different educational options, possibilities, development discussions, programmes and incentives. By the end of the day, however, personal development is up to oneself. This was vividly exemplified by those staff members at the housing organization who did not wish to participate or be activated.

4.7.3 Practice is created through talk

The fact that the municipal Swedish apartment organization now talks differently can be seen as one form of organizational adaptive learning. They now (2003) talk about lifelong learning. They did not used to talk about it, but claim that one reason for them to now be using the term has to do with the environment, with the fact that everybody else in Sweden now talks more about lifelong learning. They are thus adapting their talk in accordance with the environment. Reality is constructed in accordance with and in a larger context. They do what everybody else seems to be doing. They are open to the outside influences. Talk produces practice.

The housing organization copy and benchmark best practices from others. They learn from others' experiences both outside and inside the housing organization. What, however, seems to work for a private Finnish law firm may not work in a Swedish municipal housing organization. Practices need to be locally adapted. Knowledge and practices often are difficult to transfer as knowledge and practices seem to be dependent on and embedded in social context, situation, culture and local people. Talk and best practices, may hence be transferred, but are translated in the process and often take a local shape in a new context.

The interactive dimension is never questioned at the law firm. It is part of the job to work in teams with cases and clients. Working at the law firm unquestionably involves the

art and skill of 'learning how to be' and 'learning how to be with'. Even if the law firm seems to thrust their own practices, habits, traditions, routines, structures, expertise and profession to a large extent, they do, however, in the development groups, discuss and ponder upon the influences, consequences, trends, talk and politics that occur in society.

To learn from the right people plays an important role at the law firm. Learning is constructed and knowledge is shared, new knowledge is produced through being with the 'right person' in the 'right situation' at the 'right time'. The introductory programmes involve learning about who knows what and who knows that, who is who and who talks what. People in action, who work and interact in a specific domain, who work with and reflect on specific practical cases with others through talk involving reflection, hence build and shape the practices at the law firm.

'The greatest learning comes from reflecting upon practical examples'. Respondent 1

'At HS Academy which is in-house law training we make education less formal and more practically oriented'. Respondent 3.

The law firm reflects upon both practice and action to improve quality, efficiency, routines and action. However, they also express the idea that at their firm there is a lot of knowing-in-action and knowing-in-practice that is difficult to express or formulate, in other words knowledge that is difficult to render transferable or explicit.

To learn from the premises, the context and from being involved is precisely what informal individual learning seems to be about, whether it is individual, group or organizational learning and whether it is conscious or subconscious. It is thus about learning through socialisation and talk, about who

is who and who knows what, through practice and through reflecting on practice. It is about learning to be, learning how to act in a certain domain, how to talk within the community, context, profession and situation. It seems to involve context- and situation-related learning endorsed within a specific community of practice involving talk that produces practice.

4.7.4 Self-responsibility

'A good company development is built upon responsibility. I am convinced that there are two things that make people develop; one has to do with education and competence development – the other is about self responsibility. To give people responsibility. To thrust makes people grow. And to support this thrust and responsibility. It is not enough to just give tasks and responsibility. Support, help, structures and openness must be part of this strategy'. Respondent 4

The key words consist of responsibility and thrust. The Swedish organization was very open and confident regarding this approach. Nevertheless, they state that it is a tactical strategy on their part, not merely a structure developed to support the individual.

'It is considered generous of the company that they wish to invest in me therefore I try more. This is as tactical as it can be. As is this enormous freedom under responsibility that we have'. Respondent 4.

It is strongly suggested that freedom, self-responsibility and thrust benefit the company as well as the individual. Freedom, self-responsibility and thrust often generate feelings of importance, generosity and power. The individual may feel the support, the thrust and the belief through the time and money invested in her. She may, however, also feel the stress that comes with the burden related to responsibil-

ity. The employer always expects more of an employee when time and money has been invested in him/her. This circle can be a good one - an engine for true generative individual learning and/or company development. However, it can also be a vicious circle, one in which the employer or the employee constantly exploit the other.

At the law firm, education works partly and mostly as an incentive. For instance, promising lawyers are offered the opportunity to spend a year abroad, partly sponsored by the firm, to pursue e.g. a Master in Law exam in the United States of America. This is a strong incentive that top lawyers see as being worth achieving and aiming for. Competition is embedded and present in such incentives. From the organization's point of view the benefit of such extensive and costly education is not as explicit and/or direct, though loyalty, a long lasting bond, a strong sense of pride and thrust will be the hoped for outcome of such an investment. Furthermore, when a firm invests heavily in something, they do expect return on investment. The employee at the law firm receives, but is expected to perform better and work harder, take on more roles and more responsibility.

Where the law firm stresses that learning has to be work-related, the housing organization states quite the opposite. Almost anything that supports personal development is supported. However, as previously stated, there may be a vicious circle hidden and implemented in such an attitude and openness. Support and investment appears to mean better work efforts, more work, more roles, responsibility and expectations. As the housing organization admits, when the firm invests in employees, giving them freedom and responsibility, it is a tactical strategy on their part and a return on investment is expected. What comes around goes around.

4.7.5 Identity & pride

To create an atmosphere that stimulates and encourages learning is an active attempt to stimulate and encourage social integration.

'It was one of the criteria that we were certified, that it involved the whole staff. It was important'. Respondent 1

Celebrations also aim at involving and integrating everybody, strengthening company identity and pride, enhancing a spirit of belonging and socialisation. This is an important dimension of organizational informal learning. Company identity and pride can be built not only through talk and celebrations, but also through cultural artefacts.

According to ideas on situated learning (e.g. Brown, Collins and Duguid 1989), knowledge does not exist only in people, but in the discourse among individuals, in the social relations that bind people, the physical artefacts they use, gain or produce.

In order to fully answer the questions on how LLL is perceived by local actors´ in two specific contexts and to answer who or what affects this process, I need to include the institutional and the translation process more explicitly into the analysis as I argue that institutional talk and discourses influence single actors´ talk and perception on lifelong learning in an organizational context.

PART FIVE – TALK MEETS THEORY

I concluded chapter four by stating that the adaptive, pro-active and generative categories serve as appropriate categories and means for studying and structuring data on single actors´ perception and talk on (lifelong) learning in organizations. The categories, however, do intertwine and there is some data that does not fit any of the categories. Out of the theory guided categories discussions, thoughts, interpretations and sensemaking, however, evolved. Some may not have appeared without the help of these categories and without some levels, intensities and dimensions. Therefore chapter four including pre-analysis followed by a discussion involving themes forms an appropriate base for the upcoming, second phase of analysis.

I detect, however, that not only the categories intertwine, but also the methods to some extent. I start off with theory-guided content analysis in qualitative research on qualitative data where informant responses were fitted in certain categories to fit theory. The structuring element for the categories was theory. I conclude the analysis and chapter by identifying five themes that make sense and construct meaning of lifelong learning in an organizational context. The themes evolved from data, from reflection, through interpretation and from the first set of analysis. Themes that evolved were data based, but evolved through structuring data into categories. Themes evolved and 'spoke' out of data.

I consequently gradually move on to analyse not only what is said as facts, i.e. content and meaning, but start incrementally to listen more closely to both text and data, being more attentive to how what is said is said. I thus gradually moved on to the second phase of my analysis, i.e. to a form of analysis that is influenced by discourse analysis.

The attempt of this part of analysis is to capture linguis-

tic expressions, not to view interview answers only as facts about how users think or behave. Participants' expressions are consequently not only examined here from the point of view of content and meaning, but also from the point of view of their implications and effects in constructing different versions of reality. The reliability of the answers does not depend on the trustworthiness of participants' answers, since even a speaker who lies reveal important values and truths of her (sic) culture. All forms of talk and texts represent situated speech which provides evidence of the various ways in which a particular phenomenon can be approached. Research data does not describe reality; but provides 'evidence' of local practices.

As a text, qualitative data always has a structure of its own. Data can always be researched as such, as its own reality, regardless of its relation to the outside reality that it is presumed to be describing or reflecting. Texts are thus not viewed as descriptions of the object of research; they are the object of research. Text extracts are a necessary basis for the researcher's argumentation in the research report, and they also provide the linguistic evidence for the researcher's interpretations (Potter & Wetherell 1987).

Many qualitative data researchers agree that merely using a descriptive approach on qualitative data is to undermine and under use it. A major part of the richness of language is not being used if language is being treated as one only reflecting reality, i.e. as an inaccurate tool or simply as an inexact lens (Alasuutari 1999:113).

I do not make claims about my data being complete or claims that it reflects a comprehensive truth of the topic. To fulfil such an ideal state I would probably have needed more samples, more interviews, more organizations. I would actively have sought a higher saturation point. Even then I may not have been satisfied or convinced that my data would have reflected the whole truth of this topic. The idea here is that

single statements count and create meaning. The argument for using multiple phase analysis is to make explicit how different tools and methods give different discussions and conclusions at hand. Moreover, I wish to show that my data is sufficient for the claims that I make. Furthermore I wish to show how data deserves to be seen from more than one angle and to show how a somewhat more comprehensive understanding of the topic can be achieved through such an attempt.

I feel that I have been honest and truthful to my data and, it is, after all, the researcher's call to abstract and decide what is/is not relevant or interesting in a study. It is the audience's call to decide whether or not the study is coherent and the arguments consistent. When the law firm Manager read through my interpretation related to his interview answers his comments revolved about his statements about learning at the law firm having to be work-related. He did not wish this element to be stressed as much as he felt that

"this is normal at any workplace" Respondent 1

With the help of Wetherell and Potter (1988) I wish to point to contextual issues that I perceive as most important in analysing qualitative data.

"the constructivist method of interpretation used in discourse analysis problematizes some traditional approaches in qualitative analysis, Interview talk is approached with very different expectations from how we have learned, as members of culture, to interpret people's talk in everyday life. Participants' accounts, or verbal expressions, are not treated as descriptions of actual processes, behaviour, or mental events. Interview talk is by nature a culture and collective phenomenon. The meaning of an answer is not a straightforward matter of external or internal reference, but also depends on the local and broader discursive system in which the utterance is embedded (Wetherell & Potter1988:168).

5.1 Discourse analysis

I hence attempt to continue the analytical process by looking beyond what was said, beyond content, fact and obvious meaning. I now turn to look at language in an attempt to make a more thematic analysis inspired by discourse analysis. I hence look for what terms the informants use and what sort of talk they produce. I look more at the context and at the social domain in order to understand why they spoke as they did. I think about how and why the respondents talk as they do. I look for background in order to see and understand how discourses were/are shaped. I look for inconsistencies within one respondent's talk and for consistencies with other respondents' talk. I relate respondents' talk with institutionalised talk, i.e. official EU / LLL talk, and I see how competing discourses are shaped and inner contradictions are formed as part of them. I hope to see how discourses intertwine and how the whole topic becomes more insightful, different.

The attempt now is to grasp some of these themes on a more profound level in order to obtain a more conclusive insight on lifelong learning in an organizational context. The starting point for analysis now is data, not theory. The matrix, it can be argued, hindered some data from its richness to blossom to its rightful full extent. The tool generated some valuable reflections, but here and now it is data that talks and meaning is created from data with some help and insight from theory.

The category of Critical realism and Contextual constructionism (Parker 1998; Cromby & Nightingale 1999; Madill, Jordan & Shirley 2000) contend that there are real structures that do exist independently of our experiences. We are only able to access, however, the circular relationship between reality and discourse. Discourses shapes reality, and is shaped by it and also by people.

According to the dictionary (Uusi sivistyssanakirja 1991) the word 'discourse' means discussion. Discourse can also be defined as a way of talking. The word 'discourse' originates from the word 'discoursus' meaning to run around, whereas 'text' originates from the word 'textum' meaning knitted together. The French word 'discours' means speech, talk, jargon and speak. All discourses have their own aim and institution and their own means of categorizing, interpreting and forming an entity (Luostarinen and Väliverronen 1991:53; Pietilä 1986:48) or as Jorgensen Winther and Phillips (2000) put it

"discourse is a specific way of talking about and understanding the world (or a part of it)" (Jorgensen Winther, Phillips, 2000:7).

A discourse may also be considered as

"a well bounded area of social knowledge"(McHoul & Grace 1993:31).

Defining the term discourse is not an easy task. Language, talk, stories and conversations are the essential stuff of organizational interaction and discourse is a feature of social life in general. The definitions are heavily influenced by the multi-disciplinary roots of discourse analysis, which is both a strength and a weakness. The array of sociological, psychological, anthropological, linguistic, philosophical and literary approaches, however, has given discourse analysis both credibility and status (Grant, Keenoy and Oswick 1998:2).

The field of discourse analysis can be seen as divided in the French one including discourse analysis inspired by structuralism and semiotics and in discourse analysis seeking inspiration from linguistics. According to Finnish researchers, discourse analysis means an approach in which the use of language is separated in order to depict ways in which cultur-

al-social reality is being constructed. Discourse analysis can be categorized as a way of analysing qualitative data in which text is studied as text. Furthermore discourse analysis can be defined as detailed social behaviour through which social reality is being produced (Suoranta 1991, Suoranta and Eskola 1992; Jokinen, Juhila and Suoninen 1999).

The text and context, however, are always inseparable, as Dachler and Hosking suggest (1995:5) Discourse analysis thus focuses on talk and texts as social practices, and on the resources that are drawn on to enable practices.

There thus appears to be significant diversity of views regarding the definition of 'discourse analysis'. One view of discourse analysis, stemming from philosopher H.P. Grice, is to see discourse analysis as a further development of linguistic or semantic analysis:

'the study of the use of language as it flows or unfolds, as opposed to the rather atomistic sentence-based focus of stylistics or traditional linguistics' (Sim 1998: 231).

Discourse analysis can, however, be claimed to be part of the linguistic turn in the societal sciences and the humanities which emphasizes the role of language in the construction of social reality. Michel Foucault views discourses as practices that systematically form the objects of which they are speaking. In other words, discourse refers to the process in which meanings are produced.

Whilst discourse analysis may not constitute a "stand-alone" research methodology, it provides a valuable tool by which the researcher can analyse the 'objectivity' with which a given research question is approached, and may also provide a means for elucidating the manner by which social forces shape individual cognition, and subsequent collective actions. Within organizational research, particularly that which

is concerned with the nature of organizational change, discourse analysis may prove to be a fruitful technique for uncovering the epistemology of the underlying assumptions which shape organizational culture and behaviour.

"Discourse analysis can be used to trace the interconnection between a discourse and the social context in which it emerges. By analysing a discourse critically alongside the social context, the method (of discourse analysis) can take account of agents and groups of agents who take part in discourse and trace the relations between discourse and social processes" (Garnsey and Rees 1996:1042).

In discourse analysis language users are not viewed as informants, but the focus is on how the respondents make things explicit through language. For discursive research this means that for action and phenomenon it is not purposeful to rush into naming reasons, but rather focus on the ways (routines, habits) through which the actors´ describe phenomenon and name reasons for them (Jokinen & Juhila & Suoninen 1999:18). Language and action is thus not viewed as opposites, but both are seen as action that either reinforces or changes social reality (Jokinen & Juhila & Suoninen 1999:19).

The ontology in discourse analysis presumes some level of constructivism (socially different sort of realities can be produced).

In my apprehension and use of discourse analysis, I am interested in how discourses are constructed and maintained through talk, habit, practice, routines, action, speech, artefacts and interaction, in how discourses are contradictory and competitive within themselves, in how smaller discourses are present in bigger discourses, i.e. in how reality is produced differently in different social domains and in how knowledge is produced through discourses. I am not particularly looking for power relations, problems or repressions in my data. I am

basically comparing 1) one respondent's statements and 2) comparing them to other informants' statements in addition to 3) institutional talk and text.

In discourse analysis, interview data is analysed at a macro sociological level, as social texts. Discourse analysis is an approach which surpasses the dichotomy between subjective meanings and objective reality, as well as the dichotomy between user-centred and system-centred research (see Talja 1997). It concentrates on the analysis of knowledge formations, which organize institutional practices and societal reality on a large scale.

Discourse is social action and interaction, but also a way to construct reality, one form of knowledge. Meanings are not abstract, but produced in a social, historical, and institutional context (Lehtonen 1996). What adds to the confusion, however, is that the end results of the construction process are also said be discourses. Discourses thus have a double character; they construct social reality and are themselves constructed (Potter & Wetherell 1987).

On a more general level, some regard discourse not simply as a linguistic mechanism, but as a mode of thinking. Such an interpretation implies discourse in the social construction of reality. The more influential approaches to discourse analysis are those which situate discourse within a social context (Fairclough, 1992 a, b and c; van Dijk 1997a). The texts are not analysed in relation to how well or how poorly they represent reality, but to demonstrate the reality that is constructed in these texts and to evaluate the consequences of this constructed reality (Talja, 1998). However, discourses should not be understood only as reports or accounts of organizational reality. They have a far more active role; they shape and direct organizational behaviour and generate meaning. Talja (1998:20-21, 33) explains how each discourse builds on a few widespread claims. These claims are not necessarily true

or untrue, but they are commonly shared. The claims are also selective. Two contradictory discourses can exist at the same time. Many contradictory discourses can exist simultaneously in an organization for example. They may compete with each other, in other words, fight for the status of being the best and the most truthful interpretation of social knowledge. A discourse has a strong inner logic, but can be contradictory and alternative in its relation to other discourses.

Discourses cannot hence be analysed without their context, place and time. Discourses are constructions shaped by history and social domain.

The constructivist method of interpretation used in discourse analysis problematises some traditional approaches in qualitative analysis. Participants' accounts, or verbal expressions, are not treated as descriptions of actual processes, behaviour, or mental events. Interview talk is by nature a cultural and collective phenomenon. The meaning of an answer is not a straightforward matter of external or internal reference, but also depends on the local and broader discursive system in which the utterance is embedded (Wetherell & Potter 1998:169).

In discourse analysis, the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee is taken into consideration in the analysis, contrary to positivist methods where an attempt is made to eliminate the influence of the interviewer. My presence and influence is hence noticed, called for and legitimized.

My approach to discourse analysis is not one pure, earlier defined clear methodological approach, but rather my own interpretation and construction, understanding and apprehension. It could also be termed thematic analysis. I construct the discourses myself out of the themes that stem, that 'speak to me' out of the data. I look for homogenising and controversial statements, inner and outer contradictions, inconsistencies, harmony and competitive discourses. I listen to data and I use my creative tools, i.e. my brain, in the process. I

think through and read, hear and listen. I see and detect formations within the themes that evolved out of data. I compare one respondent's statements with themselves. I also compare statements with other respondents' statements as well as with institutional discourses on many levels, so as to detect paradoxes, inconsistencies, contradictions, harmony and/or competitive discourse and in order to detect and identify irregular or regular claims and/or assumptions.

The attempt here is to show how the perception of LLL in an organizational context is interrelated with institution and the translation process.

5.1.1 Economic talk

5.1.1.1 Money talks

Two organizations are awarded for LLL, one as best in Europe and the other as best in Sweden. Both organizations have been celebrated for having implemented LLL successfully in their organizations. The silence, the squirming, the use of more appropriate terms for LLL in a business context, such as competence development, knowledge sharing and educational strategy reinforce that not only is LLL perceived personal, but also shaped in and by its context through practice. When I ask the actors´ about lifelong learning, the respondents start talking about themselves, about education and about knowledge in business terms. The terminology lifelong learning has not yet been launched. It is not actively used. Context together with practice produce talk, words and sentences. Those words create meaning.

The concept was unknown, unfamiliar, unclear and/or alien at the time of the award. LLL as a terminology or strategy had not yet been implemented or introduced, despite the award and despite the nomination. Moreover, LLL is not yet an active part of a competitive and professional Nordic busi-

ness discourse. LLL is not yet a known strategy among firms. It has not yet been implemented, at least not actively or consciously. It has not yet been operationalized. It lacks practical implication and implementation. Lifelong learning is thus not yet a hot topic in the business world although LLL is a hot topic in the EU and an active part of political economical rhetoric. The meaning and understanding of the concept is thus yet too vague to be expressed in firm and/or convincingly through other than terms familiar to the respondents. The underlying and implicit understanding that LLL is a personal process makes it difficult to grasp and, to some extent, uncomfortable to talk about.

Economic, also company-related talk is, however, actively produced by the EU in the context of LLL. Economic talk is hence an active part of the (post)modern institutional understanding of LLL. To award organizations in the special category of LLL is an EU attempt to operationalize and launch economic related LLL talk into local practices. By benchmarking organizations that the EU identify as successful in this field is a way to implement the (post)modern understanding of LLL into organizational realities.

The underlying assumptions for a Nordic business discourse involves competitiveness, rationality, benefit, cost and return, i.e. a claim and idea that through objective rationality business success is enhanced, cost and labour effectiveness is accomplished, return on investment is ensured and competivity is achieved.

LLL in these two firms is produced through pieces of talk on themes that the informants value, know something of and view important in relation to LLL. This is how LLL is constructed and shaped in these two cases, i.e. through indirect and direct talk, through denial, through silence, awkwardness and through discomfort to some degree. This is how it is produced here at this time. This is how reality is con-

structed in these organizations. This was established when I looked behind the words and the obvious meaning, when I started to look deeper into how certain arguments were made explicit through talk, but also through silence, awkwardness and discomfort, through the domain and discourse. This came to me when I started to ponder how they talked about lifelong learning. They did, of course, talk about LLL, but in different terms, using their own familiar terms. The business discourse may in part be controversial to many smaller and larger LLL discourses, but nevertheless LLL in this study is shaped in business terms by its context through practice. In another context and/or situation it may be spoken of in different terms, shaped by another domain, thus strengthening or contradicting the official EU / LLL discourse.

Here LLL is produced and strengthens the institutional view on LLL as part of the knowledge-based economical view and discourse, thus shaping and reinforcing the institutional LLL which was the idea of the award.

Respondent 1 connected LLL also to complementary education to some extent, because of her own professional background. From a discourse analytical point of view this shapes his understanding and underlying assumption. It strengthens the idea and his view that LLL is being constructed by and of adult education. However, in this study LLL is mainly constructed by business terms although respondent 1 refers to another context. This statement confirms that lifelong learning is a construction of many discourses. In this study complementary education is subordinated the business discourse.

Respondent 4 explains their success in the special category of LLL in terms of competence development and in monetary terms.

'There are many reasons as to why we won this category in Sweden. We view education or competence development as an important investment. We invest plenty of money in it. Those two years when we invested the most we had a budget of 60 000 SEK per employee. I had an educational budget of 8 million. It is impossible to spend so much money. Respondent 4.

Both competence development and money are active constructors of the competitive business discourse. Money is also part of the institutional business-related discourse that the examples below clearly show. The institutional LLL discourse is constructed of business talk using terms such as funding, benefit, cost and return and fiscal incentives.

"The Commission will evaluate various models of individual funding schemes (e.g. 'individual learning account') to assess their impact on investment, participation in learning and on learning outcomes. This evaluation will take full account of the work done by the OECD in this field and an evaluation report will be presented by the end of 2000.

"The Commission will propose that research into the benefits, costs and returns of investing in learning, building on current research, be supported under the 6th Research Framework Programme.

"The Commission will produce, based on information provided by the Member States, an overview of fiscal incentives available for learning financed by individuals and companies with a view to the identification and adoption of good practice"(COM (2001) 678 final:20)

To talk and provide evidence in terms of monetary value and functional sums is a very convincing, logical, rational and a powerful method to prove excellence and success, on both micro and macro level. Money can hence be perceived as 'objective' as monetary sums are easy to correlate to and argue with. Talk about money shapes the business discourse

and helps to understand the construction of LLL in an organizational context. LLL is thus part of the business/competitive discourse, monetary values and talk strengthens this view on both levels. Lifelong learning is thus shaped in these organizations by the business domain, by business talk and through talk about money. The institutional business related LLL discourse is shaped by economy, i.e. also by talk about money. Talk about benefit, cost and return are also actively shaping and constructing the institutional business related discourse. The EU therefore awarded what they themselves are constructing, thus strengthening their own construction. Consequently they are awarding what they themselves value and perceive important.

5.1.1.2 We compete – therefore we win

The assumption and idea underlying this discourse is that competition generates business success. It is a commonly mutually accepted understanding and agreement within economic theory.

"The Feira European Council in June 2000 asked the Member States, the Council and the Commission, within their areas of competence, to 'identify coherent strategies and practical measures with a view to fostering lifelong learning for all'. This mandate confirms lifelong learning as a key element of the strategy, devised at Lisbon, to make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world" (COM (2001) 678 final:3).

This piece of rhetoric is a good example of EU and LLL talk. The aim is to achieve something through talk, speech, rhetoric and texts. The purpose is for nations within the EU to start talking in those terms thus enhancing and strengthening EU self-importance, self-esteem, pride and identity, to convince people that it is possible to be number one in a global

market. This is an example of the business-related competitive discourse that represents the official EU / LLL discourse and constructs the business-related institutional discourse. Talk about the most competitive and dynamic stresses the competitive dimension of the business discourse, the attempt and aim to be number one, the competitive claim and underlying assumption, i.e. that if we compete – we can win.

The idea here is based on an understanding that lifelong learning enables and stimulates competition and makes the aim possible. This is an example of the business related competitive talk produced through talk and texts created by the EU.

To always have to be prepared confirms not only the importance and readiness of the law firm, the continuous dimension of the job, but also the competitive spirit as an important part of the law firm culture and profession. Implicitly it is stated that if you wish to be number one you always have to be prepared. It is part of the job and understood to be part of a professional, successful lawyer, it defines an attorney at law.

"We do not have a written or unwritten dress code, but everyone knows that when you have a meeting with a client you dress accordingly. If you do not have a client meeting and it is hot, you can wear shorts. But, you do have a suit in the wardrobe in case a customer is in the reception area and wants to negotiate. You always have to be prepared". Respondent 1

Thus, if you wish to be part of the business, you have to be constantly prepared. It is part of the spirit to always be prepared. To be number one in requires that you play your role, which includes wearing the appropriate clothing and being constantly prepared.

The housing organization is proud that their managers are noticed, that they are wanted on the labour market. This, in their mind, strengthens their company identity. It communicates to the housing organization that they are the best, that

their employees are desired on the labour market. The fact that their highly skilled extensively invested in Managers can be taken away from them is not seen as a potential risk. This is viewed as a positive sign, a symbol and a quiet statement that they are number one. They are the the most competitive. They are at the top. They have produced and educated the best house Managers in the industry.

"Our landlords are attractive on the working market with the education and experience they have". Respondent 4

"This is our utmost finest PR. Let our house managers seek out the market, the best is when other companies take our house managers, then our status is raised and it means publicity that is invaluable and it has been a correct strategy. It was a conscious strategy". Respondent 4

The law firm exemplifies the same thing in the following:

"Our vision is to be the most wanted work place, our HR aim is to be the number one choice". Respondent 1

To be at the top generates many things. Knowledge and increased competence generate self-esteem; good self-esteem generates more hours for the company etc. Within the business discourse this line of reasoning is generally viewed as a positive circle generating benefits for everybody. In the previous however, I also discussed the downsides of such thinking. To invest in education and human resources may seem generous, but it can also stimulate stress, feelings of exploitation etc. It can thus also be a devious and dangerous circle.

However, to be at the top and investing heavily in education can also mean losing your staff to the competition. Here, the housing organization has chosen to view this as a positive sign that they are on the right track, they are number one, they

have the most wanted personnel etc. They are at the top, they are the best and also the most competitive, specifically when it comes to their most valuable resource, i.e. human resources. The law firm wishes to be the most attractive firm for potential lawyers and among law students. The law firm spoke repeatedly about top-lawyers. By using the term 'top-lawyers' the informants wanted to strengthen and make explicit that normal, regular, shabby or inferior lawyers do not work at the firm. Their lawyers belong to the crème de la crème. They are the top-ones. The law firm is very aware of their reputation, appearance, elegance and importance. One way to produce and strengthen this image is through façade and interior decoration, location, address, appearance etc.; another is through talk. In talking about top-lawyers and top-specialists, the law firm produces reality thus reinforcing the importance and image of their firm and their lawyers. They strengthen the competitive dimension of the business discourse:

"One of our top lawyer's duties is to teach our younger lawyers". Respondent 1

"A top-lawyer understands that it is not enough to be just a top-lawyer, but he/she also needs to take on other duties such as client-relations, training, recruitment, supervision etc. It is also a top lawyer's duty to educate younger lawyers". Respondent 1

"To educate your own staff is always a challenge: even a top-specialist learns from preparing a lecture. It takes time and is part of the job". Respondent 1

Lifelong learning here is thus shaped by talk familiar for a business domain. LLL is constructed through talk about being number one. It is shaped through talk about being a top-lawyer and a top-specialist. It is created through talk about

success, about talk about having to be constantly prepared and available. On an EU-level 'top and number one' speech is reinforced through talk about dynamism and competitiveness.

5.1.1.3 We are the winners

A strong sense of identity and belonging, an open culture and a positive working environment are perceived as being essential for motivation and innovation, for coping with stress, in fighting tiredness and emptiness, for co-operation and teamwork. All of the above are also constitutive elements of a modern business discourse. To be aware of such values is perceived important and part of most organizations' HR-values. It is one of the core elements of HRD, i.e. to make people feel good about themselves and others, to enhance motivation to work for the company and the business. It is part of the EU / LLL institutional discourse, not only strengthened through talk on education for all, but also specifically through talk about activating the social in an organizational context. It is labelled social integration here, and it is constructed among others, through talk about learning organizations. The most important feature of social integration is that it is inclusive, not discriminative or segregating. The claim is based on the underlying assumption that social integration enhances participation and well-being.

"Enterprises should be facilitated to become learning organisations, where everyone learns and develops through the work context, for the benefit of themselves, each other and the whole organisation, with such efforts being publicised and recognised" (COM (2001) 678 fina:14l).

Social integration is one of the political keys of the institutional lifelong learning discourse. Social inclusion policy is vital and has long been part of LLL history and the institutional discourse with the aim that learning should be inclusive, made available for all and possible for everybody.

The EU enhances and encourages companies to follow this path of thinking. Both organizations have chosen this path, although as described earlier, segregation, hierarchy and bureaucracy can be detected at the law firm. The segregation, hierarchy and bureaucracy are inconsistent with and controversial to the institutional understanding of social integration. This is interesting since the law firm was specifically awarded for their inclusiveness, i.e. for offering law education to all. It is thus, again, a matter of interpretation what is or is not inclusive and on the other hand, what appears to be may not always be as it appears. The law firm offers, encourages, stimulates and enables learning for all, but is also segregating and discriminating education to some extent.

The conclusion and my understanding is that there is a slight inconsistency between the institutional understanding of social integration and the one produced and reinforced at the law firm. There was inconsistency in respondent 1's talk.

"We take care about them, they are not just machines that work here and bill for us. They are people who have a life outside the office and that other life has to be recognised in certain phases of life". Respondent 1

"They cannot participate in all possible courses as WE DO WORK HERE". Respondent 1

On the one hand the law firm emphasises work very strongly. For example in the case of learning and education, it is said that is has to be strictly work-related. On the other hand, respondent 1 produces an awareness of other than work related needs and a life outside the office through inconsistent talk. There is thus a slight contradiction in the talk he produces. On the one hand he strongly emphasises work and on the other, the social and the understanding for a life outside work is stressed. The housing organization is more consistent.

"We had not thought about it before we won the special category on lifelong learning in Sweden and were nominated among the top four organisations on a European level that we teach people for their lives. We are developed for life which goes far beyond specific work related task." Respondent 4

Another interesting point to note is that respondent 1 at the law firm talks about 'employees' rather than 'co-workers', whereas the housing organization and respondent 4 tends to refer to co-workers instead of personnel, employee or staff which is exemplified through this example.

"We as a group, our co-workers at The Organization, put high demands on lectures'. Respondent 4

Respondent 1 thus distances and alienates himself from the employees through talk on social integration that he produces whereas respondent 4 creates a stronger bond between himself and the staff. He in fact sees himself as one of them, not as one of the others.

Social integration at the law firm is produced through offering education and core competence to everybody. It is, however, somewhat inconsistent with the institutional understanding of social integration as at the law firm education is segregated, i.e. offered to homogenous groups. True integration is not celebrated or produced despite the award. Education at the law firm can thus be perceived as being hierarchical and segregated. Learning is also apprehended to be bureaucratic including systematized programmes, follow-up systems and structured products. The law firm produces awareness related to a social life through talk of employees not being machines, through talk about having to consider that employees have a life outside the office, through talk that employees have different phases in their lives. All the same learning and education has to be strictly work related. So some degree of segre-

gation and inconsistency is again produced, not least through talk about THEM rather than we.

5.1.2 Integrative talk

5.1.2.1 'We' is also constructed through pride & identity

Integration and integrative talk assumes that success and business activities cannot be accomplished alone. It also implies that social is a constructor of wellbeing and a builder of company belonging and identity. To be social furthermore, fulfils primary human needs.

To strive at becoming a learning organization can help organizations in creating a stronger company identity as well as enhancing learning from others. It enables top performance and generates competitive advantage. It stimulates innovation and encourages teamwork. A strong company identity is a source of pride and pride is important in creating positive outcomes. To be part of it means for the individual and for the organization, that you are a winner, not a loser, that you are part of the winning team, not a losing one.

To be proud of your own organization is part of social integration, here produced in business terms. The law firm constructs pride through talk on importance, professional knowledge and continuous development among others.

"The acknowledgement that our educational and development activities have received is important to us because our personnel's professional knowledge and continuous development are key factors´ for a knowledge company's competivity" (Law firm magazine 1/03)

This celebrative "speech" is another example of pride construction by the law firm with the help of their own law firm magazine (1/03). Pride speech is legitimized through referring to important people:

“A good workplace

An enterprise’s responsibility towards society is often divided into economic, social and environmental responsibility. The primary and most important target group for social responsibility is the enterprise’s own personnel.

From the staff point of view the yardsticks applied to social responsibility consist especially of fairness, maintenance of working capacity, education and training and the job satisfaction experienced by the working community.

Well being at work is the result of several factors´, such as the successful functioning of the workplace as a social community, a good command of one’s work and the performance of both the working environment and the individual employee. The employee’s health and social capacities, and the values and attitudes of the employee and the working community are examples of factors´, which influence performance.

Trust, openness and good management are key factors´ in maintaining well being in work.
Mr Jouko Kuisma, Senior Advisor, Corporate Responsibility, at the Kesko Group, is of the opinion that an enterprise’s responsibility towards society and its economic performance do not constitute conflicting targets. On the contrary, improving economic performance is also part of the aim when an enterprise puts responsibility towards society into practice.

This opinion is undoubtedly correct when taking care of the personnel’s well being at work in a responsible manner is concerned. A study carried out in the US in 1993 indicates that in the one hundred enterprises with the best working atmosphere the return on invested capital was almost double that of the enterprises included in the Frank Russel 3000 index.

Good management and improvement of know-how directly correlate with personnel satisfaction and this in turn correlates with customer satisfaction.

Taking care of the well being of both the working community and the individual employee constitutes an intrinsic value of the XXX corporate culture. Regular internal enquiries are used to measure the well being and the satisfaction of our working community.

At the end of last year, we participated in the Finland's best workplaces in 2003 study carried out by LTT-Tutkimus Oy.
The employees at the workplaces taking part in the study participated on a voluntary basis and judged their own workplaces using five different criteria, credibility, respect, equity, pride and community spirit.

XXX ranked fifth among the best workplaces in Finland and we feel humbly proud of this. We are especially proud that we were elected to represent Finland in the special Company Awards category "lifelong learning" in the competition to find Europe's best workplaces and that XXX won the award.
It is important to us to be acknowledged for our education, training and development activities because professional know-how and the continuous development of our personnel are key factors´ which determine the competitiveness of an enterprise selling knowledge and expertise.

Managing Partner"(Law firm magazine 1/03)

The housing organization constructs pride through talk on self-esteem, by daring to do wrong and through taking initiative.

"With increased competence comes increased self-esteem. We have today a staff that has gained an increased self-esteem, who dare take initiative and above all, is not afraid to do wrong. Everyone can feel that the company is behind us in our work. It is wonderful to see co-workers that are not afraid of changes, but stimulate it and are involved in creating it. It is a resource that is invaluable in a modern enterprise". CEO/Company brochure 2003

It is important, however, to note that social integration (identity and pride) as part of LLL is also constructed here in business terms.

"To mix people in our internal education from different departments is a winning concept. We bring people together and thus create and strengthen our company identity, a bigger understanding for the whole company and we learn from one another at the same time". Respondent 4

'The acknowledgement that our educational- and development activities have received is important to us because our personnel's professional knowledge and continuous development are key factors' for a knowledge company's competivity' (Law firm magazine 1/03)

5.1.2.2 Celebrations

Celebrations are seen as an important and crucial part of social integration in organizations. Parties can give a feeling of belonging, help people to mix, enable the creation of an open environment and atmosphere, aid the construction of a successful company image, stimulate and strengthen the idea of 'we together are number one', 'we are the one', 'we have fun and we always win' atmosphere.

This picture of the CEO at the municipal Swedish housing organization is from their celebrative brochure "Congratulations to all of us" produced after the nomination.

Photo 5. CEO: Housing organization publication

"When you are nominated you should hit the big drum to gain publicity and create awareness. That is what we did. We made a big party. We invited all tenants and gained plenty of publicity. We celebrated outdoors with music, balloons and a grand cake". Respondent 4

5.1.2.3 Artefacts

Artefacts often serve as important signals and symbols of success that are put there to actively shape company identity and pride, competitiveness, winning, celebration, integration, belonging and success.

"The vase is in the reception area. We have this fine engraved ceramics vase that we brought with us from Brussels to remind us". Respondent 1

"The prize – I see it as a positive signal for what we have done. Our thinking has been rewarded so we know we will keep going in the same direction". Respondent 2

I thus conclude that lifelong learning is constructed through business talk. It is shaped by the domain, context and practice. It is constructed of business terms in an organizational context. It is strengthened through talk about money, of being number one and of being at the top. It is constructed through talk about being prepared, about continuous development and of social integration. It is shaped through talk about pride, identity, celebrations, parties and artefacts, but foremost it is shaped through the underlying assumption that LLL in an organizational context is about you and about your own story.

5.1.3 Personal talk

5.1.3.1 Lifelong learning is about your own story

The squirming, the silence, the uncomfortable appearance and insecure looks indicate that the informants view LLL as inappropriate for a business domain. They perceive of LLL as a personal matter, maybe too personal for a business discourse. LLL is produced in an organizational context by business terms. Lifelong learning from an individual's point of view is seen as being a personal process.

The respondents in this study feel comfortable when expressing themselves through a business discourse or by talking about their own learning and development stories. All but one of the informants construct their understanding of LLL as a personal process. Respondent 1 takes an organizational point of view, as does the President of the law firm (in the personnel magazine).

This is a typical example of how the informants responded when we talked about lifelong learning in an organizational context. They took the individual perspective and told me about their own personal development process.

"I started to work with the company in December 1994. I was employed as responsible for the environment for the whole company. Then I worked with it for only a year and then I complemented environmental work with helping out on the educational side Then I was made responsible for the whole educational side and have been doing that since. I was also an administrator for two years, but I still helped out and was responsible for the environment, as well as involved in education. What I have done at the company involves environment and education. Previously I have worked with environment and education, mostly, in different situations. I have for example, been environmental representative and a abf representative. XXX is an educational association so one can say that the environment and education has followed me". Respondent 4

Respondent 4's insightful statement on every human's need supports his underlying understanding of lifelong learning being a personal process.

"The awareness of the concept I hope will not disappear and I do not think it will, as historically we have spoken of education for children and youth. We have also talked about adult education, but that has been for adults without education whereas I think we have become more aware today that every human has needs. This awareness cannot be taken away. We are open for new ideas and new knowledge for as long as we live". Respondent 4.

However, discourses are never individual creations, how can anyone claim personal to be a discourse, a constructor of LLL in an organizational context?

It is not the sole discourse of LLL in an organizational context, but through talk, silence, awkwardness and through personal stories it is evident that it is part of it and an important constructor of lifelong learning in an organizational as the informants' construct it. From an organizational point of view LLL in an organizational context is not merely shaped by the personal and the individual. However, it is part of it, also from an organizational point of view.

"I was born in the forties. When you come up to that age you do not have the same opportunity to spend three four five years to get a formal education". Respondent 4.

The respondents' relation of their own lifelong learning stories and processes thus imply and strengthen the idea that lifelong learning is perceived among the respondents to be about each and everyone's own story and learning-process. Furthermore institutional talk and EU texts also support and produce this understanding to some extent:

"…lifelong learning should comprise all phases and forms of learning from pre-school to post-retirement" (COM (2001) 678 final: 9).

Respondent 3 spoke almost only about her own training, career, education, involvement, personal process and individual development, her tasks and her roles. It was her unconscious way of expressing that lifelong learning is about individual personal development.

"At one time I reflected together with the HR manager about my development. The options were that I could either experience a year abroad in further education or do further training to become a district judge. The HR manager stated 'why don't you do both? ….Then I had a feeling that the world spins too fast". Respondent 3

LLL in an organizational context is perceived as individual and personal process by three of the four informants in this study.

5.1.3.2 Personal versus individual

Not all education is supported at the law firm. It seemed important to make that distinction, to make it clear that the firm is an important player and actor in a rational professional business domain, not a playground. Some may wish to learn more about Power Point or take some courses in Spanish, but the firm only supports it up to a certain limit.

"everything is not prioritised even if it would be fun to study Spanish, but it is not to our benefit if it is not used in work. The starting point is that we do not support all spare time activities – it has to be work related. There are those who would like to know more, but it is not necessarily purposeful or beneficial to us". Respondent 1

I concluded earlier that this strong and strict work relation talk is not consistent with comments that respondent 1 made related to social integration and learning. On the one hand work is emphasised and there does not seem to be room for much other than work related learning in the company. All education and learning has, at some point, to be beneficial for the company. On the other hand, respondent 1 made statements about employees not being machines etc. implying that there in fact is room for more than work related activities in the company.

The work-relation is an active constructor of how LLL is shaped through talk at the law firm. Work related individual competence development is supported almost without limit. Lifelong learning at the law firm is thus shaped and supported also through work related individual competence development even if they claim that development cannot only be about yourself. One constructor of the personal/individual discourse is thus individual competence development. Competence development is also part of the business/knowledge-based discourse.

The housing organization perceives it to be important to be also involved in other activities than specific job duties or competence development programmes. Their claim is that competence development in other than direct individual work related and specific work related tasks can generate new ideas, energy, self-responsibility and positive outcomes, i.e. human growth. This kind of talk strengthens the personal human growth dimension within the individual/personal discourse. At the housing organization talk constructs human personal growth rather than about individual competence development.

"It is important to continuously take part in courses, and in lectures because it gives you an energy kick even when the topic is not specifically

related to work. You are released from the work tasks for a while. You may learn to think in different paths. This is important for an individual in her development. Creativity is a gift of only a few – we are so trapped in certain paths in thinking". Respondent 4

"To thrust makes people grow. And to support this thrust and responsibility. It is not enough to just give tasks and responsibility. Support, help, structures and openness must be part of this strategy". Respondent 4

The European Commission talks about both individual competence development and personal fulfilment in relation to LLL. Both are thus recognised by the EU and through the institutional understanding of LLL.

"Overall, consensus can be surmised around the following four broad and mutually supporting objectives. Personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability/adaptability" (COM (2001) 678 final:9).

"The social partners, at all levels, are invited to agree that each employee should have an individual competence development plan, based on an assessment of his/her individual competences, and in accordance with overall competence development plans at the enterprise' level" (COM (2001) 678 final:22).

Individual competence development and personal growth are thus both active constructors and important elements of the (post)modern institutional LLL. In this study personal human growth is strengthened and valued by the housing organization whereas the law firm almost only talks about individual competence development. However, respondent 2 spoke about human growth in the context of becoming a district judge. She never did this, however, because she chose to go to America to study for a Master in Law qualification instead.

"it would have, from a human growth learning point of view, been a possibility to gain access to an environment where there is no selection – you deal with all the cases that are at hand". Respondent 2

Personal human growth has been another of the cornerstones in the original understanding of lifelong learning that can be traced back to universities and to the church. The economic business discourse is strong in the (post) modern institutional understanding of LLL, constantly struggling to win over other weaker discourses, e.g. the personal human growth discourse.

"There were, however, concerns that the employment and labour market dimensions of lifelong learning were too dominant within the definition. Indeed, in relation to specifying the objectives of lifelong learning, responses tended to echo the Memorandum as well as citing wider aspects such as the spiritual and cultural dimensions of learning. Overall, consensus can be surmised around the following four broad and mutually supporting objectives: personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability/adaptability" (COM (2001) 678 final:9)

Personal human growth is not perceived as equal with individual competence development. They are competing with one another, but can intertwine. Personal human growth struggles for room and space, talk and understanding. It is, however, considered rather weak in relation to economic/business discourses and interests. Individual competence development is a legitimate, strong, (post) modern discourse that is part of the individual/personal, business and knowledge-based economy talk discourse whereas the personal refers to human growth and is not perceived as important and beneficial for the economy. Both individual competence development and personal human growth are active constructors of the personal/individual discourse together with self-responsibility, i.e. the understanding that it is up to you in the end.

5.1.3.3 It is up to you

Self responsibility is another discourse that the institutional lifelong learning consists of. Talk about self-responsibility shapes, supports and constructs the personal/individual discourse of LLL also in an organizational context. Lifelong learning in an organizational context is hence not only constructed of business terms in a business domain through talk on money, about competitive advantage, about being at the top, being number one, of pride, social integration, artefacts, celebrations, self esteem, personal human growth and of individual work-related competence development. It is also created through strong and persuasive talk about self-responsibility, through talk that strengthens the idea that it is up to oneself in the end. It is built upon the idea and understanding that one basic degree, competence or skill is not enough, that competence and skills must be constantly developed and updated, i.e. that by the end of the day, we are all responsible for our own development and lives.

Stressing self-responsibility at various social levels for the development of lifelong learning has become a norm and way of speaking, supported, awarded and enhanced by the EU. It defines LLL both theoretically and institutionally as much as talk about individual competence development does.

"The member-states are primarily responsible for their systems of learning and training. In practice, achievements of these systems depend on the investment and commitments of various factors´ from all spheres of social and economic life, including social partners, and last but not least, from efforts of each individual who is in the last instance responsible to strive for his own learning" (Memorandum SEC (2000) 1832 :5).

The housing organization also talks about self-responsibility. To push people forward and invest in education may seem generous, but on the other hand it may also be a tactical and devious strategy

"It is considered generous of the company that they wish to invest in me therefore I try more. This is as tactical as it can be. As is this enormous freedom under responsibility that we have". Respondent 4

Self-responsibility can thus also be viewed as a devious and exploitative mode of working and talking that is spreading throughout societies at all levels.

Talk about self-responsibility does not recognise weakness, tiredness, stress, slow learning, learning through mistakes, sickness or problems with learning in terms of time, capacity, strength, old mental models, elements hindering us from learning etc. The self-responsibility talk within the personal/individual discourse can thus be viewed upon as exploiting and devious. The implicit claim is to get people to take responsibility not only for their own learning, but also for their own work, for others, for the company, for society and for the economy at large. Talk about active citizenship that the EU produces is part of this discourse.

The housing organization produces two mini discourses within the self-responsibility one. Respondent 4 is inconsistent in his talk. On the one hand he talks about tactics, freedom and responsibility and on the other about thrust, support and personal growth. It is thus not only devious and exploiting talk about tactics and freedom that shape self-responsibility, but also talk about thrust, support and personal growth.

"A good company development is built upon responsibility. I am convinced that there are two things that make people develop; one has to do with education and competence development – the other is about self-responsibility. To give people responsibility. To thrust makes people grow. And to support this thrust and responsibility. It is not enough to just give tasks and responsibility. Support, help, structures and openness must be part of this strategy". Respondent 4

These statements seem inconsistent. On the one hand there is a strong idea that links self-responsibility with tactics. On the other hand there is talk about self-responsibility and thrust as well as the assumption that what is good for you is good for us and what is good for us is good for you in the end.

Self-responsibility here is thus constructed through talk about support, thrust, help and personal growth, tactics, freedom and responsibility. Two competing discourses can be identified here within the self-responsibility one, both part of the larger personal/individual discourse. Both discourses suggest that it is up to oneself in the end.

5.1.3.4 It is not only up to you

"One understands that in such a profession you cannot be successful without continuous learning". Respondent 1

"Continuous learning is seen as a key to the success of the firm. We expect all members of our staff to have a genuine interest in developing their professional skills. Our lawyers regularly participate in internal and external seminars and courses, and we provide challenging opportunities for training and further education through varying work assignments… ."Law firm web page 07/2005

Two years after the award LLL is constructed at the law firm through talk about the future, by talk about continuous learning, professional skills and further education. The individual self-responsibility claim is built and embedded in the text. The firm requires self development through supported structures and challenging opportunities. It is built in the profession and the law firm contract.

Individual competence development is strongly supported and encouraged, stimulated and enabled within the firm. The talk strengthens the idea that further education is not only supported, but also imperative for lawyers working

in the firm. In order to be successful and to become a partner you have to continuously develop yourself. It is not entirely up to you. It is not your free choice whether or not you participate and educate yourself. It is not entirely up to you what you study or whether you choose to develop yourself. At the law firm further and continuous education has become a part of the company values and strategy. The value of learning and further education is strongly encouraged by the law firm, even to the point where it is no longer only voluntary, challenging, supported and inspiring for the individual, but also mandatory, work-related and imperative. It forms the company competence development strategy. It is not any longer entirely up to the individual employee, but is foremost in the company's interest that he/she develops themselves. However, the law firm stresses that they do discuss suitable further education and individual competence development plans with their employees.

"Twice a year we have a development discussion with all. It is face-to-face conversation. We have a form that can be used and needs to be filled in and returned so that we can monitor their development. It is a feedback conversation where feedback is given, but its focal point is on development. We go openly through what the individual desires and then we look at the priorities for next year and decide what is in our best interest". Respondent 1

Although they discuss, the law firm nevertheless puts the company interests first. The housing organization, on the other hand, hesitates to push those who do not wish to participate in educational programmes, competence development structures and teamwork.

"There still is a group who wish not to take part, be activated, participate or be involved. This group slacks behind. Those who were and are uncertain, uninterested – it is up to yourself in the end". Respondent 4

Therefore at the housing organization you can choose whether to be a looser or a winner, to succeed or fail, to become involved or to remain a passive observer. One self is responsible for education and further development. There is a choice. At the law firm individual competence development is not based on free choice. It is part of the law firm strategy. It is mandatory and part of the law firm strategy. Nor is it entirely up to one self what to educate further in. It has to be work related and related to the company's priorities. Education and learning processes are prioritised and carefully planned, evaluated, monitored and managed at the law firm whereas the housing organization has taken an approach claiming that individual competence cannot be fully planned or managed.

"We had an ambition that all co-workers would have a three year long individual competence development plan, but we have not succeeded to follow this. The reason that we have not succeeded is because this type of education must be fresh and to keep following a rigorous a plan is not working as we are an organisation in continuous motion. We do many changes and every change has its specific feature that requires new skills". Respondent 4

According to the housing organization, the organization can enhance development and learning. However, as learning, personal growth and development is a process, the final responsibility is wit the one self. The housing organization claims that an organization can enhance, encourage, enable, structure, facilitate and plan education and further development, but they cannot fully manage a personal process. Flexibility is thus one necessary organizational and operational tool in terms of educational planning and development, according to the housing organization.

"What I value about lifelong learning is that it is a process and this is why we have put so much effort in finding different forms of learning and we have noticed that is needed. We have on top of the ordinary tried out process groups – we had that for a term –all our education was process groups where one could choose a theme which one desired to work with. The aim was to come up with proposals'. Respondent 4

The law firm has a more strategically oriented view on learning and claim that it is not enough to only take responsibility for your own learning or as Respondent 1 puts it:

"To merely do your own thing. Sorry, it does not work here. It is not in our culture. We are one company and each one contributes. It is crucial and every one's competence is equally important". Respondent 1

The law firm thus implies that for an individual it is not enough to be active and to participate, to learn and/or to qualify. LLL at the law firm also involves the learning of others, not only learning from others or with others. Their organizational understanding of LLL includes more than the individual and the personal, i.e. the education of others. This is also strongly produced and embedded in institutional LLL talk.

"Enterprises should be facilitated to become learning organisations, where everyone learns and develops through the work context, for the benefit of themselves, each other and the whole organisation, with such efforts being publicised and recognised" (COM (2001) 678 final:14).

This is also part of LO/OL theoretical ideas. The underlying claim of the housing organization is that learning can be encouraged, supported, encouraged and stimulated by others and by different learning situations. It is though regarded a process that cannot be entirely managed, monitored, supervised or planned. It is flexible and loose to its character.

The law firm takes this one step further and makes learning, education and competence development a basic skill and compulsory factor in working for the firm, i.e. part of their core competence and development strategy. They have thus structured and systematised competence development. It is part of their strategy and they strive not only at enhancing, developing, enabling, supporting, encouraging and facilitating learning, but also at monitoring, evaluating, structuring, managing, evaluating and controlling it. Furthermore, the law firm claims that competence development is not only about yourself and your own learning, but it is also and foremost about learning for the company and the learning of co-workers.

5.1.4 Knowledge talk

5.1.4.1 Sharing knowledge

The knowledge discourse assumes that knowledge produces more knowledge, innovations, better and more products, new work opportunities, increased productivity etc. Within the LLL discourse knowledge is strongly interconnected with technology.

Both organizations preferred to talk in terms of their own learning stories and in terms produced by the business domain, within the knowledge-based economy, i.e. of competence development, core competence, knowledge sharing and knowledge management; all of which are well-known, comfortable, safe and familiar terms in (post) modern business. All are active ingredients of everyday knowledge-based business talk, strongly enhanced and stimulated by the EU. The basic claim of the knowledge-based discourse is, besides continous change, the understanding that knowledge enhances competitiveness, innovation and success which stimulates the economy which stimulates people etc. Knowledge can thus be seen as a tool for the economy and an outcome of learning.

"In order to achieve the Lisbon aim of a knowledge-based society'……
……'Yet people, their knowledge and competence are the key to Europe's future" (COM (2001) 678 final:3).
….
"This includes ensuring the rights of citizens to have access to opportunities for acquiring and updating knowledge and competences throughout life" (COM (2001) 678 final:10).
…….
"This Communication contributes to the establishment of a European area of lifelong learning, the aims of which are both to empower citizens to move freely between learning settings, jobs, regions and countries, making the most of their knowledge and competences, and to meet the goals and ambitions of the European Union and the candidate countries to be more prosperous, inclusive, tolerant and democratic" (COM (2001) 678 final:3).

Respondent 2 spoke not only about his own learning, but also about knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing as well as about different responsibilities and programmes, about the In House Academy and about transforming tacit knowledge into explicit; thus implying, the underlying assumption being, that lifelong learning in an organizational context is about knowledge management and sharing. To speak about knowledge is a way of producing reality and maintaining and reinforcing a popular competitive business as well as the knowledge-based discourse. The two discourses - business and knowledge – are partly interrelated. They are both shaped and actively produced in the same domain, within the same society. For example competence development, here classified as a personal/individual discourse, is very much also part of the business and knowledge-based discourse. In a business discourse there is talk of knowledge and a knowledge discourse involves elements of business talk. The basic claim is that knowledge is good for business and learning develops knowledge.

The knowledge-based discourse is also an active part of the institutional EU / LLL discourse. Knowledge is also thus an active creator of the organizational LLL discourse here shaped by the business context and by the knowledge-based discourse.

"Knowledge Management is to preserve practical knowledge produced through our cases and to produce models and thus make use of this knowledge internally". Respondent 2

Talk about making tacit knowledge explicit strengthens and upholds the views upheld and shared through knowledge management theory, i.e. the discussions involving tacit and explicit and including talk about whether tacit knowledge can be made explicit.

"How we get the information out that we have in our heads is a big question and how we succeed with this is a future challenge… the idea is that when a project is over we evaluate how the model could be developed. We also go through the whole case upon closure in an attempt to evaluate the time frame, administration, legal aspect, control, etc. – what could have been done better – the evaluation is thus divided in two phases". Respondent 2

Knowledge sharing and the creation of new knowledge is one part of the evaluation process at the law firm. The preservation of old knowledge is another part of the evaluation process. The law firm is aware that they should make use of the knowledge and tacit knowing that they possess through experience, by making it explicit.

5.1.4.2 Knowledge sharing practices involve many roles

'It is part of this culture and tradition that a senior teaches younger lawyer". Respondent1

To have different roles is part of the law profession as well as a larger discourse and understanding that working life in a knowledge-based society consists of many roles and areas of competence. To have many roles also means to have the right qualifications and skills for different tasks. This again puts pressure on both the employer and the employee. It is thus not enough in e.g. the law firm to know the law, since a top lawyer must also know about administration, client recruitment, customer relations, education etc.

"She has to manage our office, she has a CR role, client recruitment, client contacts, i.e. she understands that the job consists of many pieces". Respondent 1

"We have many examples of lawyers who come to this bureau, take responsibility, study abroad, take on more responsibility and understand that it is not enough to be a top-lawyer, but that he/she also needs to take responsibility for other duties such as client relations, education, recruitment, counselling etc." Respondent 1

To have many roles is a production of the knowledge-based society. The many requirements are constructions of the knowledge-based society. In fact, the many roles and the demand for new skills is another basic claim of the knowledge discourse. It is assumed that one education or role is not enough. It is here produced through the law firm practice.

The roles in the law office are many. One role is to teach someone a junior.

"To educate your own staff is always a challenge: even a top-lawyer learns from planning a lecture. It takes time and is part of the job". Respondent 1

Yet another role and skill is to speak the language of the client:

"I will never use the 'Master in Law' exam that the company partly sponsored, but when I have foreign clients they see from my CV that this person understands what we are talking about and where we come from". Respondent 3

And last, but not least to be able to make explicit what it is that you do:

"It is knowledge to be able to tell about what it is that you do. To stand in front of a group. It has been an incentive for many. I must develop myself at public speaking. I must perform better in showing overhead slides…". Respondent 4

The knowledge-based discourse is here partly constructed of knowledge sharing practices through the requirements for many roles, new skills and many areas of competence, and the many roles and various requirements for competence enhance learning. It is valued and important at the law firm to make your knowledge explicit and available for all.

5.1.4.3 Learning of, from and with others

The law firm's tutor programme is a good example of a planned, supported, systematized, social and structured HRD activity for learning and sharing knowledge However, the structured form in this case was enhanced by growth, not change. The structured form is part of the law firm's competence development strategy, in an attempt to plan, monitor, systematise, manage and evaluate learning.

Knowledge sharing is an important part of the knowledge-based discourse which is constructed here e.g. through talk about the tutor programme. The tutor programme thus shapes the LLL discourse in an organizational context.

"Every new employee gets a tutor; he has a tutor when he starts here the very first day. The new employee meets the tutor during the first day. The first 3-4 months we lead it from Human Resources, then we leave it. After a 4-month long trial period we discuss the tutor process". Respondent 1

"Before it was more ad hoc – you yourself tried to figure what could be of interest to a young lawyer, now it has been packaged in a way that the tutor and tutee receive support. It is equal to its nature and when we are in our work groups the tutored is part of our group". Respondent 2

By stating that the tutor programme is equal to its nature suggests that knowledge is created together. It is shared and constructed interactively. It is not based on the idea that the tutor teaches the tutee, that the junior learns from the senior. The equality claim takes this process further and makes the process mutual. They construct understanding, knowledge, learning and knowledge sharing together.

Coaching, tutoring and mentoring are still non-structured forms of learning at the law firm.

"Mentoring – we talk about it and we understand the meaning of it, but it is not systematic, it is mental support, coaching and maybe and perhaps mentor-couples have not been formed. During the four years that I have been here we have talked about it". Respondent 1

Sharing knowledge can thus occur in many ways at many different levels. To learn from each other has almost become a mantra during the past decade and critical voices are few. It is a knowledge-based claim that we can learn from

each other. It is a way to produce reality. To learn from each other is also a mean for sharing knowledge, although the law firm very strongly emphasises enhancing the learning of others, not only learning with or from others as the housing organization tends to do. The learning of, from and with others pre-supposes 'learning how to be with' and the art and skill of 'knowing how to be with'.

"It is very valued, to learn from one another and take part in others' experiences". Respondent 4

To imitate is also a popular mode of learning from others. It is also legitimate and well acknowledged and an accepted method for sharing knowledge.

"They worked very much like us and I have the ambition to learn from their working methods". Respondent 4

5.1.4.4 Imitation

Respondent 4 was very open to all kinds of learning. He willingly admitted that they copied the core competence idea from the law firm. He also told me that another firm that participated in the competition made an impression on him. He was impressed by the way the other organization actively pursued strategies to decentralise responsibility, towards a higher level of self-responsibility. To copy and imitate successful practices of others is a well known and agreed upon strategy in the study of organizations. It is a legitimate, proven way to share knowledge. It is an instrument for creating new knowledge.

"By publicly recognising best-practice organizations, the Commission's aim is to contribute to a professional benchmark in order to raise the overall quality of workplace standards in Europe" (Address at the Con-

ference and Awards Ceremony for the EU 100 Best Workplaces and Special Awards 2000, Brussels 27 March 2003:1).

It is not espionage; it is imitation, learning from each other, exchange of ideas, knowledge sharing and learning from best practices. Knowledge sharing is thus part of the knowledge-based discourse, much celebrated by knowledge management theorists as well as shared by the EU. In fact, this whole award process is based on imitating best practices, i.e. the sharing of knowledge through benchmarking and through a best practice case. By honouring the winners, the Commission wishes to draw attention to the quality of particularly progressive companies and to promote the mainstreaming of these good practices across Europe into more and more companies.

However, as discussed in the theoretical chapter, knowledge and best practices often change in a 'translation' process. They are adjusted to fit another set of practices, another set of people in practice. The transfer and sharing of knowledge always go through a process of construction and reconstruction, also when an individual shares knowledge with another in which people are the actors´.

The knowledge-based sharing discourse and practices are here shaped through talk about learning from others, e.g. through the tutor programme, coaching, mentoring and team-work although the law firm also emphasises affecting and contributing to the learning of co-workers as well as of creating knowledge together, hence not only knowledge sharing and learning from and with others.

Imitation and learning from best practices is yet another important official EU / LLL claim. Here imitation is an exemplified practice and an active constructor of the knowledge sharing element of the knowledge-based discourse.

Coaching and mentoring are embedded ways of supporting and enhancing knowledge sharing although they are not yet a structured or systematised form of learning at the law firm. They are acknowledged and part of the culture, but they are not yet managed, controlled, evaluated, monitored or planned. They are part of the law firm culture and perceived as a duty, role and active part of the profession.

"it's always been part of this culture and tradition that a senior guides a junior in her work. Tutoring is developed to support the newcomer. Coaching and mentoring stand for continuity that every more experienced employee initiates. It is a duty. My duty is to be patient. My duty is to guide and share information…" Respondent 3.

5.2 Work defines practice

Practice involves the work that practitioners do, the cases they have, the problems they face, the clients they deal with, the people they meet etc. Practice is very wide and here loosely defined. It is defined by the work practitioners do, the underlying assumption being that practice varies and is dependent on work. The claim is that work defines practice. Practice is essential to learning. Practice is often the main if not the only reason for learning in an organizational context. Without practice, learning in an organizational context would not seem relevant or understandable. It is through practice that learning becomes interesting, relevant, intriguing and involving.

Practice is often monotonous work, often involving repetition. The more routines it involves, the more increasingly tacit and spontaneous it becomes. If the work becomes too routine-loaded, practitioners may even miss out on reflecting on their action and on their practices and may even stop ask-

ing themselves why they do things in certain ways and how they could improve and enhance their practices. Their work involves 'knowing-in-action' and 'knowing-in-practice', to use Donald Schön's terminology, i.e. the embedded knowing how to do because of the repetition and routine experience you have. You thus know how to act and how to be.

Practice at the law firm as well as at the housing organization is based on many roles. The many roles are part of the institutional knowledge-based claim as well as of practice here. The many roles and expectations in this study involve teaching, meeting with clients and groups, working on cases in teams, learning in development groups, to be exact interactive work.

Knowledge is shared through many channels and paths of wisdom. It is expressed through, from, to and with others. Since it is often co-produced together, knowledge is thus created. The law firm has structured many channels to share knowledge such as the trainee, introduction and tutor programme as well as the in-house Academy.

"Upon joining XX, all new recruits attend an orientation programme. By receiving both an introduction to practical matters such as the information services and IT system, as well as an overall understanding of the firm, new employees can quickly become valuable and efficient members of the staff. The programme includes instruction on the firm's operating environment and markets, its strategies, policies, values, professional ethics and practices.

The process of getting to know the firm continues through tutoring, as well as an active, supportive and coaching oriented management. All members of our firm belong to a group, which has been formed to maintain a high level of expertise in certain key areas. Our in-house legal training system has been systematised. We also invest in outside legal and non-legal training. As part of the continuous learning process, we encourage postgraduate studies and internship abroad". Law firm web page 07/2005

Through many of these programmes the community of practice is introduced to newcomers. The importance of the community of practice is in fact invaluable in terms of being able to cope, handle oneself and one's clients, handle cases as well as various situations, here strengthened and thus enhanced. Through these introductions the newcomers learn about praxis. They learn how to be and how to act, but more importantly they learn about who is who and who knows what, which is perhaps the most important knowledge and learning in the communities in practice, the others being to learn about how to be and how to act in various roles and situations, with clients and among team-members.

The law firm had an implicit LLL strategy before the award (in 2003). After the award the law firm adapted to the award and what was their implicit LLL strategy has become explicit. The discourse has thus changed slightly from implicit talk to explicit talk.

The law firm reflects on their practices more thoroughly upon closing each case. Reflecting involves the process of taking distance to the case, literally. They evaluate their cases in two phases and reflect deeply on their action in the second evaluation phase. They do so in order to improve and enhance their future practices. The evaluation is written and saved. They thus reflect on the tacit norms that applied during the case, on the roles they constructed for themselves, on the institutional boundaries or possibilities, importance or value they created or enhanced in society or the practice of law. They may simply reflect on the institutional elements that existed during the case. They actively reflect on their knowing and their action. They also aim to preserve old knowledge with the help of their Knowledge Manager and to share new knowledge that was created through working with a case. They actively seek to make use of everybody's knowledge. They are also aware of the challenges included in transfer-

ring tacit knowledge into explicit. Furthermore this form of knowledge transfer undergoes a construction and reconstruction process if only in the head of one person.

The housing organization reflects on practices in e.g. process teams and group work. There are 12 different themes that they reflected upon on in mixed groups. Number 11 is on routines and on quality:

"Premises and Co-workers. Our administration includes many tasks to meet client needs, from caring for premises to service, maintenance and administrative tasks. The quality and efficiency in the organisational administration is directly dependent on thoroughly thought routines. The task is to critically evaluate our present routines and come up with a development scheme; - what routines need to be similar in the company? – how can we develop and make our routines more efficient"? (Housing Organization competence development plan 2000-2000:17)

This is said to enhance not only development and reflection on practice, but also identity, pride and learning as well as a deeper understanding of the whole.

"you gain a deeper sense for the company and a more thorough understanding for the whole company, you receive knowledge for free when you participate together with others, you learn from each other. You get to know each other and can take part of each other's experiences. It seems not so relevant what kind of education we organise as long as we put together the right groups". Respondent 4

There are many examples of how learning is said to be valued when related to practice.

"When I arrived here I was very cautious. I did not know much about ovens, packages and such – now I can reconstruct an oven, washing machine or dryer. And it works, he laughs. I notice how I improve in my

work. I impress both myself and others"
(Housing organisation competence development brochure, interview with one invested upon House Manager)
"Today you are more of an entrepreneur that cares for the whole of "your" area. It is a huge difference from what it was. Today I manage my area myself with the support from the head office. I plan together with the tenants what needs to be done. I have developed immensely through this, he says. I am more confident, secure and stronger in my professional role. I take initiative. I am like a new person – I have learned how to talk to people, I have gained knowledge and overview on cost, time etc."
Housing organisation competence development brochure (interview with House Manager in Housing Organization brochure)

The understanding is strong that practice is in fact shaping LLL in an organizational context. Learning is valued and regarded as being most meaningful when related to practice. However, LLL is not only shaped by practice or individual competence development here although practice is the leading and most relevant discourse affecting and shaping the other discourses. Lifelong learning is also shaped through the sharing of knowledge, i.e. the learning from, with and to others as well as through the co-creation of knowledge and learning. It is also constructed through social integration by the competitive business discourse in economic terms, here in the business domain as well as by the knowledge-based discourse based on constant requirements for new skills and new competences.

5.3 Reflecting on practice

The informants did not know at the time of the interviews that what they were doing could be labelled lifelong learning. The awards in the special category of LLL came as a surprise to the organizations following their participation in the "Best Workplaces in Europe 2003 Ò" contest. The organizations were not aware of the European Commission's special category on lifelong learning when entering the contest. The respondents thus constructed their understanding of LLL in an organizational context to me and together with me to some extent. I was part of the situation and thus inevitably involved. I chose a very open and inductive, non-structured and loose approach throughout my interviews, which I have named 'inductive conversation'. I did not present myself as an expert on LLL, merely as a doctoral student interested in the topic. I may have had some background knowledge on LLL. My aim was, however, not to let my pre-understanding influence the situation. If it did, I cannot know, but I do not think it did. The respondents reflected on their practices and of their own professional development to me. They were hesitant at times and somewhat reluctant at other times in their answers as they perceived lifelong learning as somewhat personal. They were also hesitant because they could not point out or say exactly or precisely what LLL is or what it means. They seemed unfamiliar with the historical, educational, political, economic, social, ideological, pedagogical or other background related notion directly related to LLL. They were thus not familiar with the specific vocabulary or the correct formulations. They were, however, needless to say, products of this world, of their own culture, of their practices, context, customers, cases and co-workers. They were also and foremost heavily involved in their work, in their practices. They used their own 'language' in the construction of the concept, i.e. in terms familiar to

them in a business domain. The whole interview process came thus to be about reflecting on practice. The informants tried to make sense of the phenomenon through talk about their practices, or, as Donald Schön (1983) so well puts it:

"Stimulated by surprise, they turn thought back on action and on the knowing which is implicit in action. They may ask themselves, for example: 'What features do I notice when I recognise this thing? What are the criteria by which I make this judgement? What procedures am I enacting when I perform this skill? How I am framing the problem that I am trying to solve?' Usually reflection on knowing-in-action goes together with reflection on the stuff at hand. There is some puzzling, or troubling, or interesting phenomenon with which the individual is trying to deal. As he tries to make sense of it, he also reflects on the understandings which have been implicit in his action, understanding which he surfaces, criticises, restructures, and embodies in further action. It is this entire process of reflection-in-action which is central to the 'art' by which practitioners sometimes deal swell with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict" (Schön 1983:50).

They tried to make sense of the term, of the concept, of the phenomenon and of their practices in relation to the term. They spoke of it in term of cues. They spoke of it in terms of their experience. They distanced themselves from work through the interviews. They reflected on their practices in relation to lifelong learning.

In the following sections, I will conclude this phase of analysis through an interpretation on the practices that the respondents reflected upon in the interviews.

LLL is thus here part of a business discourse shaped by context and practice. It is shaped in a business domain through talk familiar in this domain. It is shaped through competitive talk about being number one and being at the top. The underlying assumption and basic claim of the business discourse is

that of competitiveness, benefit cost and return. It is understood that business is good for competitiveness. LLL is thus constructed here in economic terms as is the institutional understanding and talk about LLL. In fact there has been much criticism that the economic, labour and employment aspect of institutional LLL is too strong. This results in the constant clash between discourses at institutional level, a clash relating to power, politics and priorities.

LLL within the business/competitive discourse is also constructed through talk about us and we, i.e. through talk about social integration. This is shaped through talk on identity, pride and self-esteem supported by artefacts, celebrations, symbols and signs. Respondent 1 however talked inconsistently about the employees as "them" and "they" instead of "we" or "co-workers", thus distancing himself from the respondents despite talk about social integration and in so doing, contradicted himself. He was also inconsistent in his talk about learning and education having to be strictly work-related on the one hand, but understanding and acknowledging that the employees have a life that needs to be considered and supported outside the office on the other. The law firm education was also perceived to be segregating and discriminating to some extent as senior partners had their own exclusive education, juniors their own homogenous one, assistants theirs etc. Segregation is not in harmony with the EU understanding and construction of social integration which is based on including everybody and offering education to everybody on an equal basis regardless of race, gender, age etc. The law firm was specifically rewarded because of their integration and because they convinced the jury through talk in economic terms. The EU thus awarded partly what they had constructed.

The informants talked about themselves. They spoke about their own learning, about their own competence development and career. The implication is that LLL is perceived as

personal and individual. LLL theory and the institutional understanding of LLL largely also support this view, i.e. that lifelong learning is about individual competence development and personal human growth. It is shaped here through personal learning stories, of talk about individual competence development as well as through talk about self-responsibility, the underlying assumption of self-responsibility being that it is up to you yourself in the end. You are yourself responsible for your own learning. You cannot be successful without continuous learning.

Talk about self-responsibility is strengthened and upheld by the EU / LLL discourse where self-responsibility is also actively produced through e.g. talk about active citizenship. The EU also talks about individual competence development as well as personal fulfilment. Self-responsibility here consists of controversy and competing elements constructed by respondent 4 involving talk about both tactics and freedom under responsibility on the one hand and talk about thrust, support, help and personal growth on the other. The EU discourse does not explicitly involve talk about tactics and freedom, but is implicitly understood to be part of it all the same.

Personal human growth is not only an element of self-responsibility. It also forms the personal/individual discourse together with the competing discourse, individual competence development. Personal human growth and individual competence development are thus not the same. They are each other's opposites and competing with one another. One is in harmony with the original lifelong learning ideas and claims. The other is in harmony with modern lifelong learning claims. The law firm produces talk about individual competence development whereas the housing organization also talks about human growth. Competence development is also part of the business/competitive as well as the knowledge-based/knowledge sharing discourse. The discourses thus not only fight with one another, but also intertwine and clash with one another.

Lifelong learning is always an individual process that can be enhanced, enabled, facilitated, supported, stimulated and encouraged through systematised structures and educational programmes, but it cannot be fully controlled, steered or led as it is personal and it is a process, according to the housing organization.

The law firm takes another approach. They perceive LLL in an organizational context to be more than merely about individual competence development. They also tend to try to manage, structure, systematize, monitor, evaluate, control and follow up their competence development strategy. It is not voluntary, loose or implicit. The law firm explicitly constructs the understanding that LLL is not up to you. The understanding is that competence development is not merely based on free will. It is thus perceived as being mandatory and imperative, embedded in the profession and law firm culture. The law firm requires not only individual competence development from their employees, but also first and foremost the learning of others, with and from others. They also talked about learning interactively and creating knowledge together through talk about the tutor-programme that was said to be based on equality.

Lifelong learning is also about sharing knowledge. Knowledge sharing is produced and shaped at the law firm through their practices and through talk about the tutor, trainee, work introduction programmes, through team-work, coaching and mentoring as well as through the in-house academy. The discourse of knowledge sharing is upheld by the housing organization through talk about imitation and learning from best practices. Imitation is an important way of sharing knowledge upheld and strengthened also by the EU. In fact, the award process is based on this very basic idea and claim, i.e. that learning from others is an excellent way of sharing knowledge.

Lifelong learning in an organizational context and viewed from an organizational perspective, is shaped by practice to a large extent. Learning without practice is as empty or useless as practice without learning. These are interdependent and work thus defines practice and practice work. However, LLL in an organizational context is also shaped by learning from the social context and from the situation. It is here reflected through formal, non-formal, informal, adaptive, proactive and generative learning. It is understood that learning can be both explicit and implicit. It is continuous and dynamic and it is a process, shaped by the business/competitive as well as the knowledge-based/sharing discourses. It is understood to be personal and individual, however, in an organizational context LLL is also co-constructed in mutual processes.

The greatest learning at the law firm comes from reflecting on practical cases and on real action in co-constructed in-house interactive processes. Knowledge is shared and produced together in mutual learning.

5.4 Linking theory with practice

One argument of this study was that the perception of lifelong learning in an organizational context is influenced by practice. The discourses identified strengthened this argument. In fact, all discourses identified here are basically constructed through the notion and influence of practice. The respondents talk in context with their own practice, experience, knowing, understanding and comprehension. They reflect on practice when they speak even when they speak of their own competence development.

All talk is more or less intertwined with practice. Furthermore institutional LLL talk aims at comprehending and valuing practice. In fact the whole award process was an attempt in sharing best practices and benchmarking good practice. However, practice is difficult to share and/or transfer. It is always and continuously locally constructed and reconstructed in an ongoing process in constructivist and socio-cultural learning processes. In so doing, it is adapted to fit new practices, situations and circumstances. It is practice that is also steering and influencing knowledge sharing. It is practice that influences knowledge creation and the use of knowledge as well as the preservation and use of old knowledge. Furthermore, old knowledge is constantly reconstructed in a process adapted to fit new situations and practice. The law firm strengthens and recognises this view. This view also supports the constructivist learning claim and understanding that even individual knowledge is reconstructed and co-constructed in attempts to make implicit knowledge explicit and in order to be accepted. In the end it nevertheless comes down to these sharing and creation processes pre-supposing the understanding, understanding and knowing of ‘learning how to be with’.

The lifelong learning element of this study is the process notion of the continuous as well as the notion of informal, formal and non-formal learning.

LLL in an organizational context is continuous learning in an ongoing process. It involves elements of informal learning, i.e. learning from premises and context, through interaction and various situations. It also involves the formal and the non-formal, i.e. the stimulation and acknowledgement of formal education as well as encouraging hobbies, activities and other than strictly work related learning, activity and education. Lifelong learning in organizations involves and is constructed through practice and it interconnects the individual with the organization, as well as the organization with institution.

The housing organization is a learning organization supporting, facilitating, recognising, acknowledging, encouraging and enabling all forms of learning, also generative forms enhancing creativity. The municipal Swedish housing organization also recognises and supports adaptive forms of learning by adapting themselves constantly to the demands and requirements as well as the spirit and new knowledge stimulated by the surrounding society. Their structures and programmes are in fact based on flexibility, freshness and continuous change. The municipal Swedish housing organization also encourages learning pro-actively through various, exciting learning structures and programmes.

The law firm stimulates and heavily invests in organizational learning through the enhancement and inducement of learning with, of and from co-workers and others. They have, among other things, prioritised and recognised the importance of in-house learning.

"The in house work is prioritised here and valued as important as client contacts. Lots of resources and time are invested in in-house learning". Respondent 2

The law firm takes the learning organization concept one step further through the systematization and structuration of learning processes and through the acknowledgement of in-house knowledge and learning. The attempt is to manage, monitor, evaluate and control individual, team and organizational competence development and in-house knowledge transfer as well as learning. The law firm also strongly relies on the law firm practices, the open culture, years of tradition involving knowledge sharing, teaching of others, mentoring and tutoring. Moreover they constantly reflect on their practices.

They try to manage, steer and lead a process in an attempt not only to stimulate, induce, support and enable learning, but also to manage and monitor it. On the other hand, the bases are to be found in the traditions, in their culture. They are not satisfied merely with building a learning organization or relying on individual competence development, but they attempt to manage learning, also at team and organizational level. They do not believe that a system can enhance and stimulate its own learning without heavy and active involvement, structure and feedback. The roots and base for it is, however, in the foundation. Their learning is both conscious and unconscious, actively recognised and constructed through explicit reflective action processes.

Individual competence development is mandatory and part of the profession and law firm culture. It is part of their competence development strategy. The law firm however insists on learning being more than merely individual competence development. LLL also has to include the affecting, inducement, enhancing and stimulating the learning of, with and from others. The law firm actively seeks to make in-house knowledge and learning available and floating through various reflective and interactive channels. They aim at making individual implicit knowledge explicit and available for all. They seek to constantly and actively stimulate, induce and

manage the learning of others in a continuous process and systematised structure. They talk about an open culture and a tradition stimulating knowledge transfer. It is still there, but through growth and change, there was a need to systematise it. They thus recognise both non-structured and structured forms and ways of knowledge sharing and learning, the one supporting the other.

Lifelong learning in an organizational context here is more than individual competence development, it is about co-constructed knowledge and stimulating and inducing the learning of co-workers through in-house processes involving reflection.

The methodological approaches used here were influenced by the understanding that the use of more than one method enhances a more thorough understanding of the topic.

Competitiveness, rationality, benefit, cost and return, i.e. a claim and idea that through objective rationality business success is enhanced, cost and labour effectiveness is accomplished, return on investment is ensured and competivity is achieved		The knowledge discourse assumes that knowledge produces more knowledge, innovations, better and more products, new work opportunities, increased productivity etc. Within the LLL discourse knowledge is strongly interconnected with technology.
BUSINESS/COMPETITION	**INDIVIDUAL/PERSONAL**	**KNOWLEDGE-BASED**
Money talks We compete- therefore we win We are the winning team	Lifelong learning is about your own story Personal versus individual	Knowledge sharing Knowledge sharing practices Learning of, from and with
INTEGRATIVE		others
"We" is also constructed of pride & identity, celebrations and artefacts	It is up to you It is not only up to you	Imitation
Integration and integrative talk assume that success and business activities cannot be accomplished alone and/or relying solely on rationality. It also assumes that social is a constructor of wellbeing and a creator of company belonging and identity. To be social furthermore, fulfils primary human needs. Individual refers to the self and competence development whereas personal is considered more intimate and spiritual, relying on inner values and human growth		

Figure 18. Discursive findings

The methodological mix also showed how methods intertwine and clash as well as how difficult it is to be truthful to one method or perspective when interpreting and analysing data.

The theoretical bridge and implication as well as contribution of this study thus lies in the awareness and notion of practice, in the understanding that they are, in fact, united.

At the law firm the sharing of, with and from was induced and actively enhanced whereas at the housing organization learning from and with was valued. That is basically the difference. At the law firm these processes were actively structured, whereas not at the housing organization. For organizations to be successful it is thus important to develop and enhance those processes as it is in those interactive internal processes through reflecting on practice that knowledge is best shared and transferred, induced and produced.

PART SIX - CONTRIBUTION

An idea is born. Ideas are not born in vacuum. They are shaped and constructed by people through their social and cultural context, influenced by the time and history in which they are born. Ideas are, not only influenced by cultural social context in which they are born, but also, by their larger context, the environment, institutions, ideologies, power, history and people, i.e. by the political, societal, economical and physical time in which they are born. People and social context influence ideas in travel in a process involving translation. An idea is influenced by local practices and social context when it hits an organization. The trigger for the travel of an idea can be traced to trends and fashion. The trigger for travel of ideas can also, as in this case, be shared vision, an ideology that involves shared desire. Shared desire involves involvement, interest and passion. The drivers for translation, the process of change and transformation, can be superiority, imitation and shared desire. They are all interdependent with people. An idea does not travel without energy, without people. Shared desire thus involves people. People are involved in shared desire. An idea in motion is reborn and reshaped by its users in a process of translation. An idea is hence re-constructed when it is used (see eg. Czarniawska & Sévon 1996). It is thus paradoxically enough both shaped and used at the same time. Furthermore ideas in translation shape and change the user. Ideas are translated and transformed when they are applied. They are used and implemented differently in different contexts depending on purpose, desire, intent, previous assumptions and aim. They are adapted in accordance with the new context. The process of translation hence seems to involve elements known as adaptive learning. Ideas are consequently used differently by different people, in different contexts. An idea is also perceived differently by different

people in the same context because of individual experience, knowledge, skills, interest, education etc.

This way of reasoning and understanding shape my interpretation of LLL in this study. The social/situational orientation of (lifelong) learning that emphasize and bring to the fore the social, situational and the contextual aspect related to learning combined with ideas and theories of translation helped me to see why an idea is constructed differently and takes another form in a different context. The OL/LO theories helped me to link the individual to the translation process involving the organization. The notion of practice helped me to identify the driver for single actors´ perception and talk of LLL in an organizational context. LLL theory, institutional texts and history helped me to identify the discursive and rhetorical, visionary, strategic and inconsistent dimensions of the concept.

In this case the trigger for translation into a specific context was triggered by an external event.

6.1 Theoretical contribution

The conceptual understanding of translation helped me to define my questions and to depict the problem, i.e. it helped me to see that in order to comprehend the relationship between the institutional LLL discourse and practice, i.e. between the EU and the two Nordic organizations I need to explore and understand how and why LLL is constructed differently in different contexts and who or what affects this process. I hence wanted to understand and depict the communication process between practice and institution and that of the individual and of the collective in order to answer the research questions of this study, i.e. how is LLL perceived by local actors´ in two specific contexts and who or what affects this process?

Ideas are not static when they are being used, they are dynamic and they change in a process of application. They are constructed and reconstructed when they are applied. They are in the hands of people. Carriers of ideas are people who co-construct and re-construct ideas within their social context in a process between the collective, the institution and that of practice. The conceptual tool of translation as used in organizational studies gave me a theory and idea that aided and helped me to comprehend the complex process of travel between institution and practice. This process is argued to influence single actors´ perception and talk of lifelong learning in an organizational context. It involves the processes of shared desire, a superior idea and imitation. When ideas are shared, they change.

The notion of fashion gave me the metaphor and concept for understanding what is behind and what may trigger a process of travel, i.e. what may put the machinery of translation in motion. In my case I argue that it is not only fashion, but also shared vision that put the machinery in motion. The EU has a strong and clear vision within the framework and ideology of lifelong learning. The EU vision related to lifelong learning involves ideas related to social cohesion, active citizenship, competitiveness, basic learning skills for all, employability etc., but first and foremost it involves a vision of a smooth transmission from an industrial era into a knowledge-based one. The EU aims are many and controversial. Inconsistent discourses go into one another. Shared visions and desire thus seem to have been difficult to accomplish as discourses seem to fight and be partly in disharmony with one other. The travel metaphor helped me to depict and frame time with distance, relating history to the present and institution to organization. When ideas are exchanged, they travel. When ideas move and are diffused, they travel.

LLL theory helped me to see how this phenomenon and idea has evolved through time and what elements it consists of and is constructed by. Time and history, the local social context and wider environmental context, politics and society all influence and shape smaller discourses within the larger one. Contradictory and competitive discourses are traced within the dominant ones. Fights and repression, power and politics in addition to economic aims and games contribute and shape their construction. Shared vision and desire is thus hard to accomplish. LLL is, however, not static, but dynamic and continues to evolve. Theories on lifelong learning thus helped me see and view the phenomenon from different angles, also as a discursive phenomenon. This helped me to comprehend, present and depict the complexity and confusion within the concept.

LLL theory gave me the formal, non-formal and informal learning arenas and tools for categorizing data in this study and helped me understand that I need to look for other theories in order to link LLL to organizations. I looked for aid and support within the OL/LO theories. In general, LLL theory does not travel much within OL/LO theory and or discourses. The S/S orientation in learning theories thus helped me to link LLL/OL/LO theories to context and situation. Donald Schön (1978) helped me to link LLL with practice. The social/situational orientation brought to fore the social and the contextual, the situational, and the local. Social, situational and contextual theory (S/S) theory helped me to relate LLL in organizations to its social, cultural, situational and local context. The school of thought influencing this study corresponds with the evolutionary view of learning that suggests that the type of learning we find is dependent on social context.

Organizational learning theory acknowledges individual experience and the organization, the environment and the process. OL theory attempts to understand and explain inter-

relating learning processes, the tension, and importance of, and between the individual, the environment and the organization. Most theorists agree that organizational learning is related to the individual and to organizational experience. OL theory was, despite its many interpretations, however, useful in this study as I categorized single actors´ perception and talk of lifelong learning not only in formal, non-formal and informal categories, but also in adaptive, pro-active and generative categories. I challenged the assumption that (lifelong) learning is individual and organizational learning organizational. Moreover, OL theory acknowledges the relationship between information, knowledge, sharing and learning. Learning occurs when knowledge is shared and OL recognizes that new knowledge is co-created in these processes. Consequently, OL/LO theory gave me the concepts of adaptive, pro-active and generative learning that served as tools in relating individual actors´ talk and perception to change and learning in organizations. These concepts generated discussions that were insightful and helped me to look further, deeper and beyond.

LO/OL theories gave me the notion of and differences in systems thinking related to organizational change.

LO theory also helped me to depict the visionary and metaphoric view on organizations, the naïve and normative apprehension that learning organizations are better equipped to survive crises and changes, better equipped to enhance competitiveness and challenge competition, better equipped to meet challenges and face problems. Organizations may aim at becoming learning organizations, but nobody has seen one. It is merely a metaphoric and visionary strategic planning device, a process, not a state. The assumption is that a learning organization enhances organizational learning. Many researchers thus approach LO/OL theory with a technical, normative, managerial and functional approach whereas the approach in this study is constructivist.

Theory gave me a tool to describe content and meaning and further allowed me to make sense and interpret. It helped me to depict fact and reality as they appeared in text and data. The theory guided content analysis as applied here on qualitative data in qualitative research gave me a discussion platform that enabled me to understand content and meaning.

The discourse analytical inspired thematic approach gave me the tool to look beyond content and meaning, beyond the obvious facts, text and data. My own interpretation of discourse analysis helped me to see and consider how 'facts', 'truth', knowledge and statements, values and views were constructed, i.e. what assumptions they were build upon, which institutional statements supported local talk. It helped me to detect and understand controversies and tension. It helped me to look not only for what was said, but also how and why it was said as it was said. Discursive understanding and theory helped me to link the organizations with the institution in an attempt to understand and depict the interrelation between the two.

An interpretative paradigm and a sensemaking perspective was applied throughout this work in which actors´ perception and talk is central. Every actors´ participation, talk, sentences, apprehension, words and replies are considered important in an attempt to create meaning.

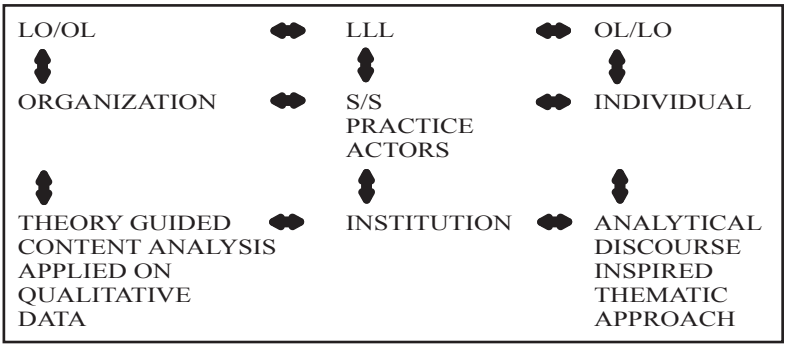


Figure 19. Interlinkage

6.2 Implications

The translation process in these cases is triggered by an external event. The (post) modern idea of LLL hits organization and is confirmed through individual actors´ talk and perception. The EU thus defines the (post) modern understanding of LLL through these cases.

LLL in an organizational context is shaped in this study through single actors´ talk and perception of money and competivity, through talk about imitation, knowledge sharing and of the many roles that contemporary work involves. Furthermore, meaning is created by the personal/individual discourse involving learning and competence development in addition to self responsibility. Pride and identity are shaped through talk of the award, through celebrations, social belonging and with the help of cultural artefacts.

Both organizations adapt their talk after the award. The competition and the award process forced the organizations to reflect on their practices. The sensemaking process of LLL in an organizational context can thus be explained through generative intense learning involving reflection and intense experiences, adaptive processes involving new terminology, pro-active processes involving careful and planned preparation, structuration and systematization. Furthermore LLL can be understood by informal processes involving the social, the cultural, the local, the situational, the tacit, the unconscious, the implicit and the contextual, by formal learning involving access and entry, by non formal learning involving activities, hobbies in addition to non-learning involving an unwillingness to change, move on, adapt and learn.

Single actors´ talk is predominantly affected by their own learning experiences, the organization, by peers, by interaction, informally by being involved, through participation. It thus seems that professional education and background have

little, other than entry status, impact on (life) long learning in organizations in which learning is often context-, situation- and practice-specific.

It furthermore seems that it is no longer acceptable or enough for individuals to think merely of their own learning. It has to be shared. It has to be transferred in order to enhance, stimulate and in order to be useful for the organization, in order to make an impact and in order to change the thinking of others. Good learning experiences thus have to be shared in order to create new knowledge, new insights, new learning.

Individual actors´ perception and talk of LLL in this study reveal, not only the different forms and levels of learning, but also the importance of sharing knowledge and learning experiences. Single individuals responsibility must therefore not only be about building one´s own competence and development, but to contribute to the competence and development of all. Individuals must hence be stimulated to share and make individual and team learning and knowledge explicit and transparent, available to all. Therefore it seems appropriate to suggest (even at the risk of being labelled normative or at the risk of contradicting myself) learning audits and Learning Managers (my term) to organizations. An annual learning audit would involve reflection and the 'evaluation' of learning experiences. A Learning Manager would coordinate learning, collect and identify learning experiences and make 'good' learning experiences available to all. It thus seems that learning occurs on all levels in organizations. It also seems that segregation at the law firm hinders inclusive learning to some extent and that important learning experiences are not always shared. Learning experiences need to be shared in order for knowledge to be transmitted and in order for new knowledge to be created.

The organizations became involved in the translation process through the contest, the nominations and through the

award. EU talk was confirmed, at least to some extent, by single actors´. The EU thus confirms their perception and definition of LLL in an organizational context through these cases. It may therefore seem that single actors´ talk is also influenced by dominant societal discourses through processes in which the LLL concept is (re)born and constantly reshaped.

Behind the superior idea there is the evolution. Behind the institution, the EU, there is a desire, a shared vision of a knowledge based economy. Lifelong learning is a concept with history. It has evolved and survived many phases and ideas. In the (post) modern idea there are traces of the original idea, but foremost it is shaped through talk on active citizenship, increased competivity, basic skills for all, self responsibility, knowledge and competence development etc. in order for the EU to become the most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. LLL as a concept and idea is used as a tool to enhance and stimulate the EU measures, means, aims and purposes in order to ensure a smooth transfer for the membership countries to a knowledge based economy. Best practice cases are searched for, nominated and awarded.

My starting point was that the two organizations studied did not know that what they were doing could be termed LLL. Very few, if any, empirical studies on LLL have been conducted in a Nordic context from an individual ac-

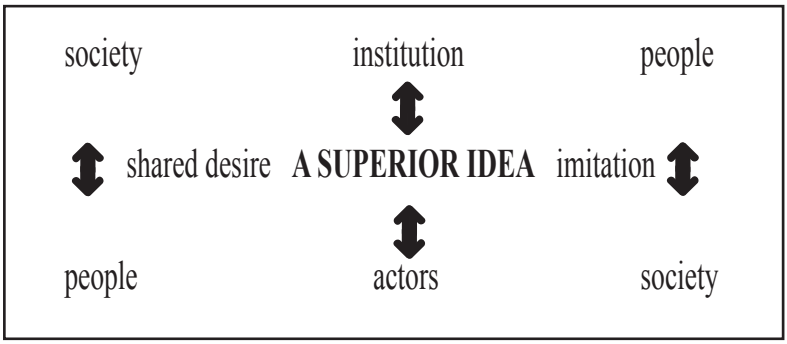


Figure 20. Lifelong learning travels

tors´ organizational point of view. The viewpoint taken here was thus individual actors´ in an organizational context. This study shows that LLL in organizations is more than merely about individual competence development. It shows that LLL is constructed in a complex process of translation involving not only social and local context, purpose, interest, practice, work and people, but as exemplified and explained in this study through the contest, also the institution and the surrounding society. The institution and practice interrelate and are interdependent on one another, involving the individual and the organization, in addition to the society and the environment.

This study fills a gap through introducing theories of lifelong learning to learning organization and organizational learning theory through the notion of practice and social context.

The intent and aim of this study was to comprehend and depict the relationship between the institutional LLL discourses and practice, i.e. between the EU and the two Nordic organizations. It was accomplished with the help of theory-guided content analysis in addition to thematic analysis and through descriptive processes in chapter one. I have explored and depicted how an idea, when it hits a specific context, is perceived by local actors´ in two specific contexts and who or what affects this process in an attempt to understand the whole complex communication process between the local and the institution, the individual and the organization.

Lifelong learning is thus continuous, not static. Lifelong learning is dynamic, not linear. Lifelong learning can be objectified/materialized through reports, awards, papers, strategies, communications etc., but it will always be translated differently depending on people, social context, situation, culture etc. The local interpretation of LLL on an organizational level is interdependent with its environment. It involves the organization in addition to its institutional field.

It involves imitative processes,benchmarking and learning from best practices. Moreover, it involves shared experiences, practice and the acknowledgement of (self)responsibility, many roles and responsibilities, the construction of identity and pride, the organization and oneself.

(Lifelong) learning occurs continuously on all levels in organizations. The degree and intensity vary as does the arena for (lifelong) learning.

GAP	QUESTIONS	MEANS	CONTRIBUTION
Two orgs are awarded to their surprise	how is LLL interpreted by local actors in two specific contexts	to interrelate LLL with OL/LO theories with the help of S/S theory	to show how two methods complement and shape the whole
LLL theory focus mainly on adult individual further competence development education and	who or what affects the process?	to show how the organization is interdependent with the individual and the institution with the organization in processes involving translation	
LLL has not been studied in a Nordic org. context/ single actors perception			LLL is more than individual competence development it involves learning from, with and of others. Perception and alk is interdependent with social, culture, local, situational context and practice
theories on OL and LO and do not correspond with LLL			To acknowledge the art of 'learning how to be with' and the active sharing of learning experiences as a pre-condition for knowledge creation and sharing.
LLL theory is mainly occupied with questions related to when, what			LLL is co- and re-constructed in mutual continuous, imitative processes involving processes of translation,
and that we learn			the construction of identity, a sense of belonging many roles, (self) responsibility and shared experiences

Figure 21. Contribution

6.3 Conceptual contribution

A few new words and concepts evolved throughout the writing process.

The art of 'learning how to be with' is defined as the ability to know how to interact with people in practice. It is a prerequisite for learning from and with others. It is important in relation to knowledge sharing and the creation of new knowledge. Knowledge is not shared nor created without social interaction and ability. The art of 'learning how to be with' hence emphasise and acknowledge the art and skill involved in the tacit, sensitive, intuitive, social and interactive practices and abilities. Consequently, it is the ability, art and skill related to knowing how to interact with people in practice that enhance and pre-suppose the creation of new knowledge and knowledge sharing practices. 'Learning how to be with' is perceived essential in the attempt to interconnect LO/OL with LLL theory through theories related to social/situational and contextual learning.

Learning audit and Learning Manager (Lifelong) learning in organizations is found to be more than merely about individual competence development. It is about sharing and it is about co-constructing identity and mutual, shared experiences. It is not enough to merely develop yourself as every individual in the organization is part of sharing and learning, in making their learning experiences, processes and knowledge explicit. A learning audit is suggested to be an annual event in which a Learning Manager together with personnel shares and identifies good (learning) organizational practices with e.g. the help of the matrix.

The audit is preceeded by seminars in which the Learning Manager encourage reflection on action and practices, in order to identify and challenge underlying norms, structures, prac-

tices, goals, rules, mechanisms and assumptions. It is hence suggested (at the risk of being normative) that the organizations may benefit from a Learning Manager who not only coordinates and stimulates education, learning processes and the making of reflexive learning processes explicit, but also identifies, collects, preserves, presents, stimulates and shares 'good' learning experiences in order to enhance knowledge sharing and the creation of new knowledge, in order to stimulate reflexive learning processes and in order to make development processes explicit, transparent and available for all.

Learnification involves a process of linking learning to all possible contexts. The movement is occupied with relating and linking learning to societies, organizations, companies, cities, regions, villages, countries, states, politics, strategies, metaphors and systems. The uncritical idea is that all learning is good and the linkage with anything and practically everything brings more good. The uncritical learning movement here termed 'learnification' does not acknowledge learning from mistakes (Kolb 1984) or through double-loop learning (Argyris & Schön (1978). It does not involve deep reflection and/or question underlying mechanisms, purposes, goals, routines or practices. It simply advocates learning as the solution to almost anything and everything without deeper meaning or reflection. It does not acknowledge non-learning, unlearning, unwillingness or capacity problems, stress and other barriers that hinder learning. Learning is used as a rhetorical device without reflecting on any underlying mechanisms and/or structures without recognizing that all learning is not good.

Intentional inductive conversation is a process that involves the interviewer and the respondent. It is an open, intentional and conversational situation in which pre-understandings should not present any hinder for free conversation.

It is an interactive situation in which the participants are not fully equal, but closely intertwined in an intense, situational, contextual and specific situation. The participants may seem equal and they may seem to be having a conversation, but it is the interviewer who guides the situation and who poses questions. It is the interviewer who raises more specific questions and add-on questions. It is the interviewer who controls the conversation although the tone is conversational and the event is situational, specific, contextual and intense. The respondent, however, has the power in relation to responses. It is thus the interviewer's responsibility, ability and task to dig deeper, to involve reflection on practices and action, while creating an interactive, co-constructed and reflexive atmosphere. Intentional inductive conversation demands that the participants share an interest in the topic and has time for reflection. Furthermore, both participants should have an open mind, a positive attitude and the ability to listen, be sensitive to the situation, of the process and each other.

VERBAL ACCOUNTS

Interview with Respondent 1 HRM-Manager at law firm	10.5.200
Interview with Respondent 2 Partner at law firm	10.5.2003
Interview with Respondent 3 Partner at law firm	29.8.2003
Interview with Respondent 4 Housing Organization	0.10.2003
Phone interview LTT Research Oy	13.4.2005

PRINTED REFERENCES

Abrahamson, E. (1996) Technical and Aestetic Fashion I. In: Charniawska, B. and Sévon G. (Eds.) Translation Organizational Change. Berlin: de Gruyter

Alasuutari, P. (1995) et al. Laadullisen tutkimuksen risteysasemalla edited by Leskinen, J. Helsinki: Kuluttajatutkimuskeskus

Alasuutari, P. (1999) Laadullinen tutkimus. Tampere: Vastapaino

Alvesson, M. (1999) Education is the solution - what is the problem, Pedagogisk Forskning i Sverige, Vol 4, No 3

Argyris, C. and Schön, D. (1978) Organizational learning: A theory of action perspective. Reading, MA.: Addison-Wesley

Argyris, C. (1992) On Organizational Learning. Blackwell Publishers

Argyris, C. (1996). Unrecognised Defenses of Scholars: Impact of Theory and Research. Organization Science, 7 (1) pp.79-87

Argyris, C. and Schön, D.A. (1996) Organizational Learning II. Reading. MA:Addison-Wesley

Bagnall, R. (1990) Lifelong education. The institutionalisation of an illiberal and regressive ideology? Educational Philosophy and Theory, 11 (1):1-7

Bagnall, R. (2000), Lifelong learning and the limitations of economic determinism. International Journal of Lifelong Education 19(1) 20 – 35

Bender, B. (1998) Stonehenge: Making Space. Oxford New York.

Best Workplaces in the EU 2003 and Special Awards, 27 March 2003

100 Best Workplaces in the EU & Three Special Awards 2003 http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/csr/eu100best.htm accessed on January 10, 2005

Borgert, L. (1992) Organiserandet som mode. Stockholm: Nerenius & Santérus

Bowker, G.C. 6 star, S.L. (1999) Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences. Parts II and III. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA

Brown, J.S., Collins, A. & Duguid, S. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. Educational Researcher, 18(1), 3

Bruner, J. (1986) Actual Minds, Possible Worlds. Cambridge. MA: Harvard University Press

Bruner, J. (1990) Acts of meaning. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Brunsson, N. (1989). The Organization of Hypocrisy: Talk, Decisions and Actions in Organizations. Chichester, England: John Wiley & Sons.

Burrell, G. & Morgan, G. (1979). Sociological paradigms and organisational analysis. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing

Callon, M (1980) Some elements of a sociology of translation: Domestication of the scallops and the fishermen of St Brieu's bay. In: Law, J. (ed.) Power, action and belief. A new sociology of knowledge? London: Routledge & Kegan Paul: 196-229

Chenail, R. J., & Maione, P. (1997, March). Sensemaking in clinical qualitative research [28 paragraphs]. The Qualitative Report [On-line serial], 3(1). Available: http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-1/sense.html

COM(2001) 678 final. Communication from the Commission, Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality. Brussels 21.11.2001

Cromby, John & Nightingale, David 1999: What's Wrong with Social Constructionism? In: David Nightingale & John Cromby (eds.) Social Constructionist Psychology. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1–20.

Crossan, M. M., Lane, H. W. & White, R. E. (1999). An organisational learning framework: From intuition to institution. Academy of Management Review, 24(3) pp522-537.

Czarniawska, B. & Sévon, G. (1996) Introduction In: Czarniawska, B. & Sévon, G. (eds.) Translating organizational change. Berlin: de Gruyter 1-17

Czarniawska, B. & Joerges, B. (1996) Travels of Ideas. In: Czarniawska, B. & Sevón, G. (eds.) Translating Organizational Change. De Gruyter Studies in Organization 56: Organizational theory and research. Berlin: de Gruyter 13 – 48.

Czarniawska Joerges, B. (1996) Anthropology and organisational learning (reseach report)

Czarniawska, B. (2002) Narrating the Organization: Dramas of Insitutitional Identity. (New Practices of Inquiry)

Czarniawska, B.(2005) En teori om organisering. Lund: Studentlitteratur

Czarniawska, B. & Sévon, G. (2005) Introduction In: Czarniawska, B. & Sévon, G. (eds.) Global ideas - How Ideas, Objects and Practices Travel in the Global Economy. Malmö: Liber 1-12

Cyert, R. & March, J. (1963) A behavioural theory of the firm, Englewood Cliffs, N:Prentice-Hall

Dachler, H.P. and Hosking, D.M. (1995), The primacy of relations in socially constructingorganizational realities. In D.M. Hosking, H.P. Dachler & K.J. Gergen (eds.), Managementand Organization: Alternatives to Individualism. Aldershot, England: Avenury.

Dave, R. (ed.) (1976) Foundations of Lifelong Education. Oxford: Pergamon

Delors J. UNESCO. Second (pocketbook) edition

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1994) (Eds.) Handbook of Qualitative Research, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2004) Handbook of Qualitative Research Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage

Dewey, J. (1916) Democracy and Education: An Introduction into the Philosophy of Education. New York: McMillan Pergamon.

Diamantopoulou Anna, (2003) IP/03/438

DiMaggio, P.J. & Powell, W.W. (1983) The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields. American Sociological Review. 48:147-60

Dixon, Nancy M. “The Hallways of Learning.” Organizational Dynamics 25 (Spring 1997): 22-33. (Available electronically through Wilson Select database at Maricopa Community College library web sites; access protocol varies.)

Dodgson, M. (1993) Organizational learning: a review of some literatures. Organization Studies, 14(3), 357-394

Easterby-Smith, M. (1990) Creating a Learning Organization. Personnel Review. 19:24-28

Easterby-Smith, M. (1997) Disciplines of Organizational Learning: Contribution and Critics. Human Relations, 50 (9), 1085-1113

Easterby-Smith, M; Snell, R.: Gherardi, S. (1998) Organizational Learning: Diverging communities of practice? Management Learning. 29 (3), 259-272

Easterby-Smith, M. and Araujo, L. (1999) In: Easterby-Smith, M., Burgoyne, J. and Araujo, L. (eds.) Organizational Learning and the Learning Organization. London: Sage: 3-5

Eccles, R.G. and Nohria, N. (1992) Beyond the Hype: Rediscovering the Essence of Management. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press

Edmonson, A. C. (1996). Three faces of Eden: The persistence of competing theories and multiple diagnoses in organizational intervention research. Human Relations, 49 (5), 571-595

Edwards, D. (1997) Discourse and Cognition. London: Sage Publications

European Commission Archives (2003). Http://ec.europa.eu/comm/archives/Commission_1999_2004/diamantopoulou/photos/ad270303.jgp

Fairclough, N. (1992a) Discourse and Social Change, Cambridge: Polity Press

Fairclough, N. (1992b) Text and Context. Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis. Discourse and Society, 3(2): 193-217

Fairclough, N. (1992c) Critical discourse analysis and the marketization of public discourse. Discourse and Society, 4(2):133-168

Faure, E. (1972) Learning to be. Paris: UNESCO

Fiol C.M. & Lyles M. (1985) Organizational Learning. Academy of Management Review. 10 (4), 803-813

Foucault, M. (1972), The Archaeology of Knowledge. Routledge, London

Gadamer, H-G (2004) Hermeneutiikka, ymmärtäminen tieteissä ja filosofioissa. Tampere: Vastapaino

Garavan, T. (1997) The learning organization: A review and evaluation. The learning Organization 4 (1), 18-20

Garfinkel, H. (1967) Studies in Ethnomethodology. Prentice Hall

Garnsey, E. and Rees, B. (1996) "Discourse and enactment: gender inequality in text and context." Human Relations, 49(8), 1041-1064

Garvin, D.A. (1993) Building a learning organization. Harvard Business Review, July-August, 78-91

Garvin, D. A. (1993) The five practices of a learning organization. Harvard Business Review, 1993: 271-282

Gee, J. P. (2003). What video games have to teach us about learning and literacy. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Geertz, C. 1980 Blurred genres: The refiguration of social thought. American Scholar 49(2):165-179.

Giddens, A. (1991) Modernity and Self Identity, London: Polity Press

Gioia, A.D., Donnellon, H. & Sims, H.P. (1989) Communication and Cognition in Appraisal: A Tale of Two Paradigms. Organization Studies. 10, 503-30

Grant, D., Keenoy. T and Oswick C. (eds.) (1998) Discourse and Organisation. London: Sage Huber 2 (1), 88-115

Grönfors M. (1982) Kvalitatiiviset kenttätyömenetelmät. Helsinki: WSOY

Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994a) Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In: N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (eds.) Handbook of qualitative research. USA: Sage, 105-117

Hager, P. (2003) Lifelong learning in the workplace? Challenges and issues. In: 3rd International Conference of Researching Work and Learning. Tampere: Juvenes Print

Hamel, G. and Prahalad. C.K. (1993). Strategy as Stretch and Leverage. Harward Business Review 71, 2, March – April, 75-84

Hammersley, M. (1990). Reading ethnographic research: A critical guide. London: Longman

Hawkins, D. (1994). Constructivism: Some History. In P.J. Fensham, R.F. Gunstone and R.T. White (eds). The Content of Science, 9-13, The Falmer Press

Heidegger, M. (1927/1996) Being and Time: A Translation of Sein und Zeit, (J. Stambaugh, Trans.), SUNY Press, Albany, NY.

Heidegger, M. (1959) Unterwegs zur Sprache. Der Weg zur Sprache lecture at the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, January

Hein, G. E. (1991). Constructivist Learning Theory. Institute for Inquiry. http://www.exploratorium.edu/IFI/resources/constructivistlearning.html
(accessed on 1.10.2005)

Housing organization brochure - Competence development plan
Housing organization Greenhouse competence development 2000-2002
Housing organization, Congratulations to all of us – pamphlet 2003

Huber, G. (1991) Organisational Learning: The contributing process and a review of the iterative organisation Science. 2:1, 88-115

Hughes, Christina and Malcolm Tight (1995): The Myth of the Learning Society in British Journal of Educational Studies, vol. 43 no.3, pp.290-304

Huzzard, T. (2000a), “From partnership to resistance: unions and organizational learning at Ericsson Infocom”, Management Learning, 31 (3), 353-73

Jacobson, W. (1996). Learning, culture, and learning culture. Adult Education Quarterly

Jarvis, P. (2004) Adult Education & Lifelong Learning, Theory and Practice 3. Edition. London and New York: RoutledgeFalmer

Jessup, F. (1969) Lifelong learning: a symposium on continuing education. Oxford: Pergamon

Jokinen, A., Juhila, K. & Suoninen, E. (1999) Diskurssianalyysi liikkeessä. Tampere: Vastapaino

Joergensen Winther, M. and Phillips, L. (2000) Diskursanalys som teori och metod. Lund: Studentlitteratur

Kerka, S. (1995) The learning organization: myths and realities

Eric Clearinghouse, http://www.cete.org/acve/docgen.asp

Kim, D.H. (1993) The link between individual and organizational learning. Sloan Management Review, 35:37-50

KM 1983: 62 Jatkuvan koulutuksen toimikunnan mietintö. Helsinki

KM 1993:36 Kansallinen sivistysstrategia. Opetusministeriön asiantuntijaryhmän ehdotus sivistyspolitiikan perustaksi. Komiteanmietinto 1993:36. Helsinki

KM 1995:13 Elinikäinen oppiminen tietoyhteiskunnassa. II osamietintö: strategiset valinnat. Helsinki

Kolb, D.A. (1984) Experiential Learning. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall

Kristensson Uggla (2002) Slaget om verkligheten: filosofi – omvärldsanalys – tolkning. Stockholm: Symposium

Kusch, Martin. 1986. Ymmärtämisen haaste. Jyväskylä, Pohjoinen.

La Belle, T.J. (1982) Formal, non-formal and informal education: a holistic perspective on lifelong learning. International Review of Education, 159- 175

Lant, T.K. and S.J. Mezias (1992). An organization learning model of convergence and reorientation. Organization Science 3, 47-71

Latour, B. (1986) The powers of association. In: Law, John (ed.) Power, action and belief. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul: 261-277

Latour, B. (1987) Science in Action. Harvard University Press Cambridge, MA

Latour, B. (1992) The next turn after the social turn… In: The Social dimensions of science, edited by McMullin, E. University of Notre Dame Press: 272-292

Latour, B. (1998) Artefaktens återkomst. Stockholm: Nerenius & Santérus

Latour, B. (2002) Gabriel Tarde and the end of the social. In: Joyce, Patrick (ed.). The social in question. London: Routledge, 117:132

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) Situated Learning - Legitimate Peripheral Participation. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

Law firm magazine 1/2003
Law firm competition material 1.1.1999 and 25.8.2003

Lehtisalo, L. & Raivola, R. 1999. Koulutus ja koulutuspolitiikka 2000-luvulle. Helsinki: WSOY

Lehtonen, M. (1996) Merkityksen maailma. Tampere: Vastapaino

Levitt, B. & March, J.G. (1988): Organizational Learning. Annual Review of Sociology 13, 318-340.

Lesser, E. L. and Storck, J. (2001) 'Communities of practice and organizational performance', IBM Systems Journal 40(4)

Lindeman, E. C. (1926a) The Meaning of Adult Education, New York: New Republic. Republished in a new edition in 1989 by The Oklahoma Research Center for Continuing Professional and Higher Education

Lisbon European Council, Presidency conclusions, 23 and 24 March 2000

Longworth, N. & Davies, W.K. (1996). Lifelong Learning. London: Kogan Page

LTT-Tutkimus Oy 2004 seminar material

Luostarinen, H. & Väliverronen, E. (1991), Tekstinsyöjät. Tampere: Vastapaino

Madill, A., Jordan, A., & Shirley, C. (2000). Objectivity and reliability in qualitative analysis: Realist, contextualist and radical constructionist epistemologies. British Psychological Society 91, 1-20.

March, J.G./Olsen, J.P. (1975) The Uncertainty of the Past - Organizational Learning under Ambiguity. European Journal of Political Research 3, 147 - 171

March, J.G. & Olsen, J.P. (1976) Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations. Bergen: Universitatsforlaget

Marquardt, M. (1996). Action learning: Foundation for organizational learning and corporate success. Training & Development in Australia 11: 7-12.

Marsick V. & Watkins K. (1990) Informal and Incidental learning in the workplace, London and New York: Routledge

Marsick V. and Watkins K. (1992) Continuous Learning in the Workplace.
Reflective Practione. January (9-12)

Marsick V. & Watkins K. (1999) Facilitating Learning Organizations: Making Learning Count, Gowe Press: Aldershot

Marsick, V. J., & Volpe, M. (Eds.) (1999). Informal learning on the job. Advances in Developing Human Resources. Williston, VT: Berrett-Koehler.

Matheson D. and Matheson C. (1996) Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Education. A Critique" Research in Post-Compulsory Education 1 (2)

McGivney, V. (2001) Fixing or Changing the Pattern. NIACE. www.niace.org.uk

McHoul, A. and Grace, W. 1993. A Foucault primer: discourse, power and the subject. London: UCL Press

McKee, D. (1992) An Organizational Learning Approach to Product Innovation. Journal of Product Innovation Management 21, 5-17

Medel-Anonuevo, C., Ohsako, T., Mauch, W. (2001). Revisiting Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education

Merriam, S., and Caffarella, R. (1999) Learning in Adulthood (2nd Ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Meyer, J. W., and Rowan, B. (1977) Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony. American Journal of Sociology 83 (2):340-363.

Ministry of Reconstruction (1919; 1956) Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction, London: HMSO. (Republished in an edited version as A Design for Democracy, London: Max Parrish - editor: R. D. Waller).

Mir, R. and Watson, R. (2000) Strategic management and the philosophy of science: Towards a constructivist methodology. Strategic Management Journal 21 (9), 941-953

Mocker, D. W., and Spear, G. E. (1982) Lifelong Learning: Formal, Nonformal, Informal, and Self-Directed. Information Series No. 241

Moreland, R.J. (1999) Towards a Learning Society: the role of formal, non-formal and informal learning. In: Oliver, P. (Ed) Lifelong and Continuing Education. Aldershot: Ashgate, 159-180

Mumford, A. (1992) Individual and Organizational Learning: The Pursuit of Change. Management Decision 30, 143-148

Müllern, T. (1994) Den föreställda organisationen – om kulturella processer i och kring organisationer. Stockholm: Nerenius & Santérus

Müllern, T. & Östergren, K. (1995). Lärandekulturer - En studie av organisatorsik lärande under olika institutionella betingelser. Umeå: Umeå universitets tryckeri

Müllern, T. (2006). Personal communication

Nonaka, I. (1994). A dynamic theory of organizational knowledge creation. Organization Science, 5 (1), 14-37

Nonaka, I. & Takeuchi, H. (1995). The Knowledge-Creating Company. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc OECD (1996 b) Lifelong Learning for all, a report published by the OECD Education Committee at Ministerial level, Paris, OECD

Oliver (1994) Teaching and Learning Law: Pressures on the Liberal Law Degree'. In Birks (ed): Reviewing Legal Education (Oxford).

Oliver, P. (1999) The Concept of Lifelong Learning In: Oliver P. (ed.) Lifelong and Continuing Education. Ashgate Arena. Aldershot.

Ollila, M-R. (2002) Erheitä ja virheitä. WSOY

Palmer, R.E. (1969) Hermeneutics. Evanston,IL: Northwestern University Press. Spiro, R.J., Feltovich, P.J., Jacobson, M.J. and Coulson, R.L. (1991). Cognitive fiexibiltiy, constructivism, and hypertext. Educational Technology 21, 24-33.

Pantzar, E. (1991) Jatkuvaa koulutuksesta tunnistamassa. Aikuis- ja nuorisokasvatuksen laitoksen julkaisuja 28/1991. Tampereen yliopisto: Tampere

Parker, I. (ed) (1998) Social Constructionism, Discourse and Realism. London: Sage. [cited]

Pedler, M., Burgoyne, J. and Boydell, T. (1991) The Learning Company : a strategy for sustainable development, McGraw-Hill. Maidenhead, Berkshire

Pedler, M., Burgoyne, J. G. and Boydell, T.(1997)

Den Lerende Virksomhed: en strategi til baeredygtig udvikling. Denmark, Forlaget Ankerhus

Pietilä, V. (1986) Diskurssianalyysista. Tiedotustutkimus 1/1986, 48-57.

Polanyi, M. (1962) Personal Knowledge. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul

Polanyi, M. (1969) Knowing and Being. Edited with an introduction by Marjorie Grene. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Potter, J. & Wetherell, M. (1987) Discourse and Social Psychology, London: Sage

Prange, C. (1999) 'Organizational learning – desperately seeking theory?' in M. Easterby-Smith, L. Araujo and J. Burgoyne (eds.) Organizational Learning and the Learning Organization, London: Sage

Ricoeur, P. (1976) The Conflict of Interpretation—Essays in Hermeneutics. Evanston: Northwestern University Press

Rorty, Richard, 1989. Contingency, irony, and solidarity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rottenburg, R. (2005), chapter 14, In: Czarniawska, B. & Sévon, G. (eds.) Global ideas - How Ideas, Objects and Practices Travel in the Global Economy. Malmö: Liber 1-12

Rubenson, K. (2000) Adult's Readiness to Learn: Questioning Lifelong Learning for All, University of British Columbia (paper)

Rövik, K.A. (1996) Deinstitutionalization and the Logic of Fashion In: Czarniawska, B. & Sévon, G. (Eds.) Translating Organizational Change. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter

Rövik, K.A. (2000) Moderna organisationer; trender inom organisationstänkandet vid milleniumskiftet. Malmö: Liber

Salling Olesen, H. (1999) Lifelong learning and Collective Experience: Lifelong learning in a New Dress. European Conference. University of Bremen.

Salomon, G. and Perkins, D. (1998) Individual and Social Aspects of Learning. Review of Research in Education, 23

Sauquet, A. (2004) Learning in Organizations: Schools of Thought and Current Challenges in Dynamics of Organizational Change and Learning. John Wiley.

H. Scarbrough & Swan, J., (2001) Explaining the diffusion of knowledge management: The role of fashion. British Journal of Management, 12(1): 3-12.

Schein, E. (1996) Strategic Pragmatism: The Culture of Singapore's Economic Development Board. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Schutz, A. (1996) Heritage Transportation Canal Corridors. Proceedings of the International Meeting of Experts 15 to 19 September 1994. Ottawa: Department of Canadian Heritage, 1996. (E/F)

Schutz, A. and Luckmann, T. (1973). The Structures of the Life-World. Translated by Zaner, Richard M. and Engelhardt Jr., H. Tristram. Northwestern University Press: Evanston.

Schön, D. A. (1963) The Displacement of Concepts. London: Tavistock

Schön, D. A. (1967) Invention and the evolution of ideas. London: Tavistock (first published in 1963 as Displacement of Concepts).

Schön, D. A. (1973) Beyond the Stable State. Public and private learning in a changing society. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Schön, D. A. (1983) The Reflective Practitioner. New York: Basic Books

SEC(2000) 1832 Memorandum on lifelong learning Commission Staff Working Paper, European Commission, Brussels, 31.10.

Senge, P. M. (1990) The Fifth Discipline. The art and practice of the learning organization. London: Random House

Senge, P.M. (1992) The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization. New York: Currency Doubleday

Serres, M.(1982) The parasite. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press

Sévon, G. (1996) (1996) Organizational imitation in identity transformation. In: B. Czarniawska and G. Sevón (eds.) Translating organizational change. Berlin: de Gruyter, 49-67.

Silvennoinen, H. (1998) Oppiminen työelämässä. In: Silvennoinen, H. & Tulkki, P. (Eds.) Elinikäinen oppiminen. Tampere: Gaudeamus

Silvennoinen H. & Tulkki P (1998) Elinikäisen oppimisen diskurssit ja todellisuudet In: Silvennoinen H. and Tulkki P. (Eds.) Elinikäinen oppiminen. Tampere: Gaudeamus

Silvennoinen, H. Tulkki, P. & Honkanen, P. (1998) Jälkikirjoitus: iloisesti oppien hyvään elämään In: Silvennoinen, H. & Tulkki, P. (Eds.) Elinikäinen oppiminen. Tampere:Gaudeamus

Silverman, D. (1993) Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction. London: Sage

Silverman, D. (2004) Interpreting Qualitative Data, Second Edition. Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction. London: SAGE

Sim, S. (1998) The Icon Critical Dictionary of Postmodern Thought, St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin

Simon, H.A. (1991) Bounded rationality and Organizational Learning Organization Science 1, 125-134

Suchodolski, B. (1976) Lifelong education – some philosophical aspects. In: R.H. Dave (ed.) Foundations of lifelong education. UNESCO institute for education. Exeter: Pergamon press

Suoranta, J. (1991) Piileekö kasvatus kielessä? diskurssianalyysista kasvatustieteellisenä lähestymistapana. Kasvatus 22 (5-6/1991), 410-419

Suoranta, J. & Eskola, J. (1992) Kvalitatiivisten aineistojen analyysitapoja luokittelemassa eli noin 8 tapaa aineiston erittelyyn. Kasvatus 23 (3/1992), 276-280

Sydänmaalakka, P. (2004) Älykäs johtajuus: ihmisten johtaminen älykkäissä organisaatioissa. Helsinki: Talentum

Talja, S. (1997) Constituting “information” and “user” as research objects: a theory of knowledge formations as an alternative to the information man-theory, Proceedings of an international conference on Information seeking in context, August, 67-80, Tampere

Talja, S. (1998): Analyzing qualitative interview data: The discourseanalytic method. Manuscript submitted to Library & Information Science Research. August

Talja, S., Tuominen, K. & Savolainen, R. (2004) “Isms” in information science. Journal of Documentation, special issue: Information science and philosophy of science. In press

Tappan, M. (1997) Language, culture, and moral development: a Vygotskian perspective, Developmental Review 17, 78-100

Tarde, G. (1890/1962) The laws of imitation. New York: Henry Holt

Tesch, R. (1990). Qualitative Research. New York: The Falmer Press

Thompson, H. (2001) “Cyberstemic Learning. Radical Pedagogy 3 (2)

Tough, A. (1971). The Adult’s Learning Projects: A Fresh Approach to Theory and Practice in Adult Learning. Toronto: OISE

Tuomi, J.& Sarajärvi, A. (2004) Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi. Jyväskylä: Gummerus

UNESCO (1998) “Policy Paper”, World Conference on Higher Education. Paris, UNESCO

UNESCO´s World Reports http://t21.ca/education/tp.htm. Accessed 06/2005

Uusi sivistyssanakirja (1991) 10. painos. Otava, Keuruu

Van Dijk. T. (1997a) The study of discourse In: Discourse As Structure and Process. Discourse Studies. A Multidisciplinary Introduction I. London: Sage

Vaill, P.V. (1996). Learning as a way of being: Strategies for survival in a world of permanent white water. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Vera, D. and Crossan, M. (2003) Organizational learning and knowledge management toward an integrative framework. In M. Easterby-Smith & M. Lyles (eds.) Handbook of organizational learning 122-141. Oxford: Blackwell

Wain, K. (1987) Philosophy of Lifelong Education, London: Croom Helm

Waterman, R. (1994) Frontiers of Excellence — Learning from companies that put people first. London: Brealey

Watkins K. & Marsick V. (1993) Sculpting the Learning Organization, San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass

Weber, S. (1986) The nature of interviewing. Phenomenology and Pedagogy, 4(2), 65-72

Weick, K. (1995) Sensemaking in Organizations. London: Sage

Weick, K. (1997, November). Karl E. Weick Vita. (Available from the University of Michigan, School of Business Administration

Weick, K. (2000) Making Sense of the Organization. Oxford: Blackwell Business

Wenger, E. (1998) Communities of Practice Learning as a Social System in June 1998. Accessed Dec 30, 2002

Wetherell, M. & Potter, J. (1988) Discourse analysis and the identification of interpretive repertoires, in A. Antaki (ed.): Analysing Everyday Explanation.
A Casebook of Methods, London: Sage

Wilson, A.L. (1993) The Promise of Situated Cognition. In S. Merriam (Ed.), An Update on Adult Learning Theory. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, no. 57, San Francisco. Jossey-Bass

World Conference on Adult Education 1960 www.unesco.org/education/eduprog/50yr/brichure/:3
accessed 1.10.2005

www.UNESCO.org/education/educprog/50yr/brochure/:3) 1.10.2005
www.law firm..fi accessed 07/2005, 10/2005, 06/2006

Yeaxlee, B. (1929) Lifelong Education. A sketch of the range and significance of the adult education movement, London: Cassell and Company

In spring 2003 a Finnish law firm was certified by the European Union (EU) as the best organization in Europe in the area of lifelong learning, in applying and in implementing a lifelong learning (LLL) strategy among its personnel. The firm was astonished and taken by the award. The firm had participated in the "Best workplaces in Europe 2003"® contest, but was not aware of any of the Commission's special categories at the time of the contest. As the law firm had not consciously implemented a LLL strategy among its personnel, they thus formed their conceptual understanding and created their meaning of lifelong learning after the award. The process of translation in this case was thus triggered by an external event.

The intent of this study is to depict how and why an idea (LLL) is (re)born at an institutional level, how it travels and changes in a process of translation, how it lands in two specific organizations and how it is perceived and described by local actors in two specific contexts. The focus of this study is predominantly on single actors perception of a controversial concept in a local context. It is about an idea, about its travel and about local perceptions related to this idea.

Theoretically (lifelong) learning theory, sociocultural theories and organizational learning theories do not often meet. In this study they interrelate and interact. These theories form a bond and framework in the understanding of how an idea is talked of and perceived, interpreted, made sense of and understood in an organizational context by individual actors.

This study shows that LLL in organizations is more than merely about individual competence development. It shows how LLL is constructed in an organizational context by single actors in a complex process involving not only social and local context, purpose, interest, practice, work and people, but also the institution and the surrounding society. The institution and practice interrelate. They are interdependent on one another. Single actors perception and talk of lifelong learning in an organizational context hence involves the organization in addition to its institutional field. Moreover, it involves imitative processes, benchmarking and learning from best practices.

Åbo Akademis förlag
ISBN 951-765-350-6
9789517 653503

Åbo Akademi University Press