

University of Strathclyde
Department of Strategy and Organisation

Syn-kinesis:
an empirical inquiry in the relational process of leadership

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Date: 3/8/2015

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the relational process of leadership, problematising individual-centric thinking in leadership studies (e.g. Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2011b). Spanning from trait to collective theories, there remains an attachment to viewing leadership as determined by the acts of individuals. The thesis regards this individualistic stability as problematic in the fluctuating, ever-changing process of becoming (Chia & Holt, 2009), and proposes a relational understanding that goes beyond dualistic assumptions of separation.

On a meta-theoretical level, individualism in leadership is the founding premise of two broad literature streams, which in turn emphasise and extend the dominance of the individual. The first stream of individualism reduces leadership to the impact of the individual leader, and prescribes the route to effectiveness in terms of an ideal leader exerting control on external variables. For the second stream of inter-individualism, leadership starts from individuals and extends to a network of individuals. The thesis follows a third, emergent stream of relationality. Relationality eschews the assumption that leadership lies in bounded and self-contained individuals, suggesting instead a focus on relational processes. Such a focus proposes that leadership is an entangled process (Hernes, 2007), and ‘individuals’ are temporary expressions of their relations.

Conceptually, the thesis’ approach to the relational process of leadership rests on relational constructionism (Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2006, 2008, 2011a; Hosking, Dachler, & Gergen, 1995), which methodologically calls for a research approach different from individual-centric ones (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009) in order to address emergence and relational dynamics (Chia, 1996). This

implies following leadership from within in real-time, which is challenging, and could perhaps explain why empirical developments have not kept pace. An immersed episodic fieldwork methodology has been developed to highlight direct and real-time involvement in research that takes place in meetings in organisational settings. The unit of analysis is turning points that punctuate flow in relational dynamics, identified as such by research participants themselves.

Research took place in two research sites in the UK from May to October 2013, with the methods of non-participant observation (pre, post and during meetings), shadowing (in one research site) and reflective research notes. The empirical material included the analysis of 106 turning points, which were first analysed into leadership movements joined together with turning points dealing with the same issue, spreading across meetings. Turning points were then analysed in terms of Gergen's (2009c) responsive interplay, and their combinations composed 16 patterns that made up the four leadership expressions: challenging, creating, operating and progressing. Next, leadership movements were revisited and analysed in terms of the passage from one turning point to the next.

The main contribution this thesis seeks to make is to provide a new, dynamic way to talk about leadership from a relational constructionist perspective. This is conceptualised as *syn-kinesis*, which is an ongoing, polymorphic process in constant metamorphosis, in pursuit of direction. The *syn-kinetic* process of leadership emerges in relational dynamics, and does not belong to specific individuals or locations, rendering accountability present at each turning point. Along these lines, the proposition is not yet another leadership label, but rather a description of relating and working together.

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GLOSSARY

leadership	A relational process, expressed in the change of direction, moving across relational dynamics.
relational dynamics	They describe the ways leadership unfolds in relational processes as multi-beings (re)construct their connections (Gergen, 2009c).
co-action	Relational dynamics describing mutually defining and constitutive connections among multi-beings (Gergen, 2009c).
emergence	Relational dynamics describing the timely occurrence in the intersections of pasts and futures, and illustrating continuous (re)construction (Hernes, Simpson, & Söderlund, 2013; Hosking, 2011b; Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, & Van De Ven, 2013).
multi-being	Gergen's (2009c) conceptualisation of the 'individual' as embedded and fully engaged in the flow of relationships, constituting a temporary expression of them
responsive interplay	Dialogical process that constitutes a point of reference for approaching the relational dynamics of leadership. Gergen (2009c) theorised it in the combination of invitation – exploration – affirmation.
turning point	The unit of analysis in the empirical inquiry. It signals change in leadership direction and indicates a new, temporal configuration of relational dynamics.
leadership trajectory	An extended temporal flow that links turning points to reveal an unfolding leadership direction around a common storyline.
leadership expression	The empirical explanation of leadership, drawing on relational dynamics.
<i>syn-kinesis</i>	Derived from the compound Greek word meaning 'moving together with' (συγκίνηση, συν + κίνηση), it constitutes the thesis' main contribution based on its empirical insights. <i>Syn-kinesis</i> illustrates the relational process of leadership in the movement across multiple expressions of relational dynamics.

CHAPTER 1 | INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

1.1 Chapter introduction

This introductory chapter welcomes the reader to the pursuits of the thesis in preparation for its development in the following chapters. The chapter introduces in section 1.2 the problematisation motivating the thesis. This is followed by section 1.3, presenting the thesis' approach to leadership, as well as its aims and objectives. Next, section 1.4 highlights the significance of research and the thesis' contribution to knowledge. The chapter ends with section 1.5, which offers an overview of the thesis structure, as it progresses from one chapter to the next.

1.2 Background and statement of the problem, motivating research

Leadership has long been a theme of fascination for both organisations and academics, whose interest about the phenomenon of leadership has been increasing exponentially (Grint, 2005). Portrayed as the key determinant of success, the production of leadership is more or less the panacea for every issue facing organisation or society (Alvesson & Spicer, 2011c). Whatever the problem, the sought-after solution is effective leaders, who are ascribed extraordinary qualities. As Grint (2005, p. 5) noted "leadership, or the lack of it, seems to be responsible for just about everything these days". Meindl, Ehrlich, and Dukerich (1985) have famously called attention to a romantic attachment, crediting positive outcomes to leadership. Some authors (Czarniawska-Joerges & Wolff, 1991; Zaleznik, 1992) even position leadership as contrasting dull and old-fashioned conceptions of management: "managers are people who do things right, and the leaders are people who do the 'right thing'" (Bennis & Nanus, 1985, p. 21). 'Leadership' is purpose driven, with the leader

drawing on personal charisma to work with vision, novelty and emotional exchanges of motivation (Bryman, 1992). On the other hand, ‘management’ is objectives driven, with the manager drawing on the rationality of bureaucracy (formal position) to execute and control ordinary tasks (Bryman, 1992).

The presumed significance of leadership is typically coupled with strong individuals, who either produce leadership or empower others to produce it. Despite the proliferation of leadership studies, individual-centric conceptualisations dominate the field and practitioner understandings (Parry & Bryman, 2006). The state of the leadership domain is such that the attribution of leadership to individuals is both evident and unexamined; as long as leadership is tracked back to individuals, interdependence is hardly questioned (Alvesson, 1996). Acknowledging this peculiar mix of fascination and ambiguity around individualism, leadership scholars argue that there is still a lot to learn about leadership (Bolden, Hawkins, Gosling, & Taylor, 2011; Day & Antonakis, 2012; Jackson & Parry, 2011); specifically, in terms of relational orientations, beyond the lone and secluded figure of the leader (Ospina & Uhl-Bien, 2012a). This is where the author joins the discussion and sets out to problematise individualism in the course of the thesis.

While there is continuing research, leadership thinking nonetheless coheres around ambiguity. Alvesson (1996, p. 457) argued that the outcome of enormous efforts in thousands of studies “has been meagre”. The abundance of leadership studies has not succeeded in illuminating ambiguity: “leadership is the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” (Burns, 1978: p. 2) and “we still do not have a clear understanding about what leadership is” (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995: p. 221). Bennis and Nanus (1985, p. 4) highlighted this paradox of massive research and

inconclusive findings, by confessing that “never have so many laboured so long to say so little”. Rost (1993: p. 99) continued the criticism and added that “these attempts to define leadership have been confusing, varied, disorganised, idiosyncratic, muddled, and according to conventional wisdom, quite unrewarding”. Perhaps an aftermath of such an ambiguity is the tendency to equate leadership to individuals (Bolden, et al., 2011), reducing the social phenomenon of leadership to formulations of cause and effect (Wood, 2005). Such reifications are a common and recurring theme across a wide variety of theoretical lenses: from one-way linear performances of power in the traditional domain, to multi-directional relationships of influence in the collective streams (Hosking, et al., 1995).

Even though leadership theory has progressed from trait approaches to collective schemas, there is persistent attachment to containment, with a view of leadership as dependably determined by individual acts of control (Drath, et al., 2008). Gronn (2002, p. 319) described this tendency as “belief in the power of one” and highlighted the exaggerated reliance on the embodiment of leadership, where the individual leader is the sole owner of a vision (Raelin, 2006). From a practitioner perspective, besides the pressure on individuals in leadership positions to meet the extra-ordinary demands of such approaches, there are ethical concerns of hubris and narcissism when defining leaders in such heroic terms (Ciulla, 2004; Gemmill & Oakley, 1992). In both academic and practitioner discourses, the apotheosis of the individual implicates an imbalance of power between leaders and followers, since the latter are seen as inactive, without the former leading the way (Alvesson & Spicer, 2011c; Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2012; Ladkin, 2010). Therefore, the individual-centric focus in leadership studies is worthy of examination not because of the

dichotomies created between individuals per se, but rather because of the underlying assumptions rendering leadership a predefined deed (Collinson, 2014). In this respect, the first problematic motivating the thesis is the reification of leadership, which overshadows social relations (Ospina & Hittleman, 2011). Relational dynamics are not considered relevant, since individuals are recognised as the key signifiers in leadership.

The second problematic motivating the thesis arises from the ways individualistic rhetoric and its corresponding assumption privilege elitism, thus failing to include complexity and interdependence in leadership (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2010; Hosking, 2011a). Typically, individual-centric theories elucidate the conscious and measurable facets of leadership, where leaders exercise planned action, owing to their superiority (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011). Implicit in such conceptualisation is not only the hegemony of individuals, but also passiveness and dependence. At the same times, predictability underpins the conscious and measurable production of leadership (Karp, 2013). Effective individuals prevail across all times and places; thus, evoking leadership prescriptions from the past is enough to endorse present success. Therefore, predictability means that progress happens in an expected and step-wise manner, where the superiority of individuals is causally related to effective performance (Grint, 2005; Hosking, 2011a). Altogether then, individual-centric approaches portray leadership as a discrete phenomenon with fixed causal interactions to be observed, inherent in powerful individuals, predetermined structures and predictable outcomes (Carroll, Levy, & Richmond, 2008). In this respect, the second problematic motivating this thesis deals with the tendency to trace leadership in independent individuals with fixed boundaries, separating them into leaders and

followers. Such a tendency implicates that there is a clear-cut prescription about leadership, sitting outside relations.

To the extent that it is placed on individuals, there can usually be no leadership without these individuals. To what extent this is sustainable or viable in the dynamic world of organising remains largely unexplored (Gergen, 2010; Hernes, 2007; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002; Weick, 1999). Although individual-centric studies have enriched understanding about leadership, they still do not fully capture leadership as an evolving process since they address the ‘what’ and ‘why’, but not the ‘how’ of leadership (Chia & Holt, 2009). The individual-centric theorising of leadership in absolute isolation does not fit with the dialectical nature of organising (Tsoukas, 2009). Alongside individualism, process thinking offers another explanatory lens for leadership, where the rationalised and simplified equation of leadership to individuals reflects but a fraction of dynamics (Bolden & Gosling, 2006). When individualistic accounts refer to static and ready-made entities (Alvesson & Spicer, 2011c; Barker, 2001), process thinking conceptualises continuous becoming (Chia & Holt, 2009; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). This means that from a processual orientation, there is no universal and timeless prescription of leadership deriving from the primacy of the individual, irrespective of all other concerns (Bligh, Kohles, & Pillai, 2011). Therefore, the third problematic motivating this thesis is the individual-centric framing of leadership, which excludes emergent dynamics or the subtleties of organising (Browning & Mc Namee, 2012; Hosking, 1988).

Problematising the reification of leadership, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b, p. 359) wondered about “the possibility of the nonexistence of leadership”. They conducted a study on managers, collecting empirical evidence through

interviews with them, arriving at the conclusion that “there is not much leadership produced”, which suggested that “the possible existence of leadership... should not be taken for granted” (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003b, pp. 376, 380). Although Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b) acknowledged and criticised that most work about leadership is leader-centric, they too conducted research focused on individuals. So, when they came to the conclusion that managers did not exhibit much leadership, they indicated that leadership does not reside in the individual leader. It is rather socially constructed and hence the attribution of leadership to individuals is quite misleading. Gemmill and Oakley (1992) have also contested individual-centric approaches, which construe leadership as an ‘alienating social myth’. Such criticisms have been influential for the development of this thesis, and have strengthened the author’s motivation to approach leadership beyond individualistic conceptualisations of control and dependency.

The problematics, motivating the thesis, bring about another approach to leadership that recognises relational as well as contextual dynamics, shaping the process of leadership. Such an approach does not seek to reach a definite conclusion about ‘what’ leadership is; a concrete definition may even obscure understanding, as it would limit the ways to think and talk about leadership (Alvesson, 1996). Rather, the purpose of the thesis is to explore ‘how’ the relational process of leadership unfolds in practice, considering alternative conceptual possibilities beyond individualism (Hosking, 2006; Mabey & Morrell, 2011). To achieve this, the thesis follows an emergent stream of theories, eschewing individualism and focusing on the relational process of leadership. This body of thinking conceptualises processes such as leadership as emergent, fluid, sensitive to context and vitally perpetual (Helin, Hernes,

Hjorth, & Holt, 2014). Such a conceptual focus means that leadership is not an individual act, but a relational process that is not given nor stable; rather it is ever-changing and messy (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2011a). This approach, adopted by the thesis, is not claimed to be superior to individualism nor does it aim to falsify it; the motivation for research is simply to invite another possibility for approaching leadership and attending to its relational dynamics.

1.3 Thesis' approach, aims & objectives

The thesis draws on relational constructionism (Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2006, 2008, 2011a; Hosking, et al., 1995) with the aim to explore the relational process of leadership. In achieving its aim, the thesis is guided by three central ideas that orient the approach to leadership. These are understanding, practical doing of leadership and critical rejection of dualisms. Firstly, following a relational constructionist perspective, the author does not regard leadership as 'something' that can be captured and measured (Hosking, 2011a). Rather, the author describes leadership as flowing, and therefore seeks to approach its unfolding and endorse "a non-sequential, imaginative process of theory construction", based on process thinking (Nayak, 2008, p. 173). As Alvesson and Spicer (2011b, p. 4) put it, leadership "cannot be measured using some kind of standardised scale...This requires an ambition to go deeper, to acknowledge uncertainty, work with imagination and be quite open about our insights". Building on this recommendation, the second point of orientation deals with researching leadership in terms of its practical doing. As such, the thesis endorses an empirical inquiry in everyday settings; an approach which may not produce the heroic examples popularly narrated as leadership evidence (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003c). The thesis develops understanding about leadership and approaches its

unfolding in practice by means of an immersed, episodic fieldwork that is explained in Chapter 4.

The third point of consideration is to eschew and avoid dualisms. In addressing relational dynamics, the thesis sets aside conceptual separations and focuses on the variety of possibilities available. For clarification purposes, the author at certain parts of the thesis outlines the different possibilities offered by individualism and relationality. Such an outline does not seek to indicate superiority of relationality against individualism, nor does it seek to draw a dualism between the two notions. Rather, it serves heuristic purposes and conventions of writing, where the author's position becomes clear by highlighting its particularity when compared to other possible positions. With regard to the dualism of leadership versus management, the author sets aside the separation, which only intensifies the romance of leadership (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2011; Bligh, et al., 2011). The author considers leadership as a relational process unfolding in daily organisational activities (Mintzberg, 2011; Mintzberg & Waters, 1990), embedded into management practices: "leadership is better understood as embedded in management, than distinct from it" (Larsson & Lundholm, 2010, p. 160) .

Adopting a relational constructionist perspective, it is understandable why there exists such a plethora of definitions and conceptualisations of 'leadership'. In the discussion throughout the thesis, the label of leadership becomes meaningful in relation to the conceptualisation it derives from. It has an essentialist backdrop when considered from individual-centric approaches, which is different compared to the thesis' conceptualisation. The thesis conceptualises leadership as a relational process, expressed in the change of direction, moving across relational dynamics (Gergen,

1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2006, 2008, 2011a; Hosking, et al., 1995). The thesis' aim is to empirically explore leadership unfolding, which is achieved by focusing on the dialogical process of the responsive interplay, where turning points punctuate flows in leadership dynamics. As such, the thesis focuses on two objectives. The first one is the empirical expression of the relational process of leadership, which is pursued in the analysis of responsive interplays, where turning points punctuate change and indicate new configurations of relational dynamics. The second one is the progressive unfolding of leadership, which is pursued in the analysis of the movement from one turning point to the next. The thesis follows a direct, and real time involvement in the field, conducting the empirical inquiry in two research settings. This is in order to approach the fluidity in the relational process of leadership by exploring the richness and variations of relational dynamics. Considering these, the following two research questions drive the empirical inquiry.

1. How is the relational process of leadership expressed empirically?
2. How does the relational process of leadership unfold progressively?

The presentation and analysis of the empirical material is structured according to the sequence of the research questions, and develops in Chapters 5 to 8.

1.4 Significance of research & contributions to knowledge

The leadership field seems to be experiencing a crisis in itself with individualism being the dominant currency for discussion, while “missing the boat on matters of relationality” (Ospina & Uhl-Bien, 2012b, p. xiii). Conceiving the bounded individual as the absolute denominator, leadership studies tend to describe “observable interaction within clearly bounded organisational structures” (Tourish, 2014, p. 88). The author does not wish either to overemphasise or over-criticise individual-centric

thinking in leadership studies. Rather, she suggests that it might be an appropriate time to re-evaluate theorising in the light of relational processes, following the encouragement of Alvesson (1996, p. 458) for a “radical re-thinking” of philosophical assumptions underpinning the study of leadership. Considering relational dynamics in the study of organisational phenomena is a nascent development in organising, aimed at addressing complexity (Emirbayer, 1997; Simpson, 2009; Sugiman, Gergen, Wagner, & Yamada, 2008). As such, the author follows the relational turn in social construction, which epitomises an emphasis on “social as opposed to individual process, its multiple manifestations, its lodgement in culture and history, and its vital importance in addressing the future” (Sugiman, et al., 2008, p. 12). The thesis follows an emerging body of literature, conceptualising the relational process of leadership and questioning a range of dominant assumptions related to individualism (Gergen, 2009c; Helin, et al., 2014; Hosking, 1988, 2011a; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). While promising, this body of literature is also challenging as regards theorising that goes beyond the popular prominence of the individual (Day & Drath, 2012; Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2011b).

The thesis takes up this challenge and contributes to knowledge in terms of the conceptualisation, the methodology and the empirical inquiry of the relational process of leadership. Firstly, the thesis centres relational dynamics in the conceptualisation of leadership, and emphasises context and relational embeddedness. Such a conceptualisation proposes multiple, temporal and local expressions of leadership. The value of the proposed contribution lies in its generative potential, opening up to the possibilities of relational constructionism. What is more, the thesis adds to leadership theorising based on its empirical insights, which offer the conceptualisation of *syn-*

kinesis. *Syn-kinesis* describes movement across multiple expressions of relational dynamics, thus constituting a practical way to talk about ‘how’ the relational process of leadership unfolds. Secondly, the contribution to methodology lies in empirically addressing relational dynamics by means of an immersed, episodic fieldwork that has been devised so as to explore leadership, in the sense of what ‘unfolds’; not what ‘is’ or what ‘a representation looks like’. The methodological focus is on turning points, which punctuate flow in relational dynamics, indicating change in leadership direction. Thirdly, the thesis’ empirical inquiry contributes to knowledge as it is one of the very first studies to research the unfolding of the relational process of leadership in practice in everyday settings, in real-time and across all organisational functions (Denis, Langley, & Sergi, 2012; McNamee & Hosking, 2012).

1.5 Thesis’ structure

This thesis aims to provide understanding about the relational process of leadership, as outlined in section 1.3. To achieve this, the author works through 9 Chapters as follows.

Chapter 1 is this introductory chapter, which seeks to engage the reader with the core pursuits of the thesis, noting its orientation to the relational process of leadership. This involves the following: introducing the background to the research, highlighting the thesis’ motivation as regards the problematics of individual-centred theorising identified in leadership studies, outlining the thesis’ aim and objectives, presenting its significance and contribution to knowledge, and providing an overview of the thesis’ structure.

Chapter 2 presents a meta-theoretical literature review of the leadership field, discussing the implications of conceptualising leadership with association to

individuals. The review of the literature groups leadership theories into the three broad streams of individualism, inter-individualism and relationality. It aims at discussing the implications of individual-centric theorising to leadership thinking, and at navigating across theorising that can provide an anchor for the thesis to fulfil its research aim. In this respect, the literature stream of relationality is identified as a fruitful ground for pursuing the research aim of approaching how the relational process of leadership unfolds in practice.

Chapter 3 presents the conceptual foundations underpinning the thesis so as to pursue the research aim consistently. These are addressed as sensitivities for the author, rather than a rigid framework. The thesis' conceptual sensitivities are grounded in relational constructionism, and are described in the following five features: relational dynamics, co-action, emergence, responsive interplays and turning points. Together, they describe how the relational process of leadership is conceptualised in the context of the thesis. This conceptualisation emphasises context and relational embeddedness, thus contributing to leadership theory by proposing multiple, temporal and local expressions of relational leadership, where turning points mark change in direction and punctuate flow in relational dynamics.

Chapter 4 responds to the thesis' conceptual sensitivities and discusses an empirical inquiry, under the lens of relational constructionism. The empirical inquiry is described as immersed, episodic fieldwork to highlight direct and real-time involvement in research that takes place in meetings in organisational settings. A key aspect in the empirical inquiry is the unit of analysis, which is constituted of turning points in the unfolding of leadership, identified as such by research participants themselves. The chapter presents the process of research and theory development,

focusing in particular on how the empirical material was approached and analysed. In addition, the chapter evaluates the quality of research, identifies research limitations and addresses research ethics.

Chapter 5 starts the discussion about the empirical material, connecting the methodology with the findings chapters. It provides the reader with the research specifics to facilitate navigation through the analysis in the following two chapters. It develops in two parts. The first part describes the two research sites, and discusses their appropriateness to the research objectives. The second part presents the leadership trajectories, developed around turning points to reveal an unfolding leadership direction around a common storyline.

Chapter 6 presents the analysis of the empirical material relating to the first research question about exploring the relational process of leadership empirically. Drawing on the empirical material from the two research sites, as outlined in the previous chapter, turning points are analysed in terms of Gergen's (2009c) concept of the responsive interplay in the interwoven flows of invitation-exploration-affirmation. The analysis is developed in two parts. The first part focuses on each flow in the responsive interplay per turning point (invitation/ exploration/ affirmation), and presents analysis into respective constructs. The second part focuses on patterns composed by the different combinations in the responsive interplay and describes leadership expressions.

Chapter 7 presents the analysis of the empirical material relating to the second research question about the progressive unfolding of leadership. The chapter draws on the empirical material from the first research site, where turning points were joined together. The chapter is developed in two parts. The first part revisits leadership

trajectories and describes unfolding from one turning point to the next. Then, the second part analyses recurring patterns of movement across turning points. It is important to note that movement is not regarded as a discrete ‘move’, but rather as ‘moving’, which exemplifies relational dynamics.

Chapter 8 links together all the previous chapters, and discusses how the thesis has responded to and achieved its objectives. This is followed by a discussion of the thesis’ contributions to the field of leadership studies. Each research objective is reviewed and discussed in turn. Altogether, empirical insights are synthesised and the thesis’ main contribution is presented with the conception of *syn-kinesis*, which goes beyond causality to propose a new, dynamic way to talk about the relational process of leadership, grounded on relational constructionism.

Finally, Chapter 9 concludes the thesis. It provides a thesis’ summary which restates the concerns motivating the research, and explains how these are addressed in the empirical inquiry. Then, it outlines how the proposed conceptualisation of *syn-kinesis* contributes to theory, practice and research. Finally, it identifies key limitations and suggests potential avenues for future research.

To conclude, it is worth referring to the thesis’ writing style. The author refers to herself and the reader in third person because of her background. In the Greek culture, it is usual to refer to oneself in third person when referring the PhD journey to highlight the learning process. Thus, the author’s choice for writing in third person does not indicate separation from the research nor does it imply the stance of an external observer. As discussed in the next Chapter, the author develops a relational research practice, and uses third person only for cultural conventions.

CHAPTER 2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to critically review the leadership literature, problematising individualistic assumptions so as to build the case for the theoretical approach taken by the thesis. The chapter begins with section 2.2, providing an overview of the framework developed to analyse the literature, orienting the reader to the overall scope of the review. On the basis of a meta-theoretical appraisal, three literature streams are identified and presented in section 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5: individualism, inter-individualism and relationality. Each section overviews the stream's focus and state of studies. Finally, key findings are summarised in section 2.6, linking to the research questions guiding the thesis. The chapter concludes with section 2.7, recapping the purpose of the chapter.

2.2 Leadership arena and analytical framework

The literature review problematises individualism in the field of leadership studies, by addressing the assumptions behind key theoretical stances (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011; Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013; Sandberg & Alvesson, 2011), with the aim to understand how individual-centric assumptions influence leadership thinking. Considering the abundance of theories, advancing understanding about leadership does not come from counting or reporting the various perspectives (Dinh, et al., 2014). Rather, it comes from critically appraising “the stability and certainty that is typically found within the dominant leader-centric, global, trait-oriented thematic category that have defined the field” (Dinh, et al., 2014, p. 55). The literature review develops such a critical appraisal from a meta-theoretical perspective, based on Tsoukas and Knudsen

(2011a), through an analytical framework that questions the source of leadership (Drath, 2001; Wood, 2005) and categorises the leadership literature into three main streams of theories: individualism, inter-individualism and relationality. The boundaries between the three streams are not rigid, but rather blurry. The identified streams aim to demonstrate how the significance of individualism is understood in different ways across leadership theories.

The literature stream of individualism includes theories that equate leadership with the individual leader, who embodies it. The literature stream of inter-individualism includes theories that conceptualise leadership as starting from the individual leader and extending to a network of individuals. The literature stream of relationality includes theories that conceptualise leadership as a process developed in relational dynamics. Bodies of work under the streams of individualism and inter-individualism feature entitative approaches to leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006; Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012), conceptualising a hard differentiation of self and other (Hosking, 2011a, 2011b). This means that there are clear boundaries between the leader and his/her followers, who exist independently of each other. What is more, from an entitative conceptualisation, leadership is appreciated as the outcome of individual action. In individualistic theories, the role of followers is passive and leadership is the outcome of the leader's action. In inter-individualistic theories, the role of followers is active and leadership is the outcome of both leader's and followers' action. Bodies of work under the stream of relationality feature a processual approach to leadership (Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, 2007; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012), conceptualising a soft differentiation of self and other (Hosking, 2011a, 2011b). This means that individuals are not separated from each other, but are

rather connected in relational processes, from which leadership emerges. The analytical process is now introduced.

To organise the literature review, bibliographical sources were identified using a number of methods. Firstly, through the University of Strathclyde library and the online databases Web of Knowledge and ProQuest. Secondly, through discussions with the author's supervisors and colleagues at Strathclyde Business School, Department of Strategy and Organisation. Thirdly, through discussions in conferences and similar academic encounters. All the identified bibliographical sources were stored in Endnote, which is a reference management software tool. Endnote supported the development of the analytical framework in the following ways. All the references were stored in the software tool, and their content was analysed on the basis of the following thematic criteria: leadership source, leadership meaning, leadership expression, relevance to practitioners, and researchers' focus. Afterwards, the references were categorised into the three streams of individualism, inter-individualism and relationality. This was helpful not only in developing a meta-theoretical review of the literature, but also in examining theoretical, methodological and empirical trends in the field of leadership. All the stored references were retrievable by means of the thematic criteria and categorisation. The bibliography examined is contained in this chapter. The literature review is not exhaustive nor does it include everything published about leadership. Rather, it presents a comprehensive account of indicative theories, explaining the basis for the pursuit of the research objectives. Detailed reviews of leadership studies can be found in the following works: Bolden, et al. (2011); Collinson, Grint, and Jackson (2011b); Grint (2011); Northouse

(2013); Schedlitzki and Edwards (2014). The analytical process and its key findings are now explained.

The first thematic criterion for analysing the literature considers the source of leadership (Drath, 2001; Wood, 2005). The analysis shows that in the literature stream of individualism, leadership is located in the individual leader (Hosking, 1988, 2011b; Hosking & Morley, 1991; Uhl-Bien, 2006); in that of inter-individualism, leadership is located in interacting individuals (Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000; Ford & Seers, 2006); and in that of relationality, leadership is 'located' in relational dynamics (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2007, 2011a, 2011b). The second thematic criterion for the literature analysis is the conceptualisation developed for leadership. Theories in the individualistic stream of theories conceptualise leadership as the product and property of the individual leader (Collinson, Grint, & Jackson, 2011a). Theories in the inter-individualistic stream of theories conceptualise leadership as an exchange of leadership functions (Bolden, 2011). Theories in the relational stream of theories conceptualise leadership as an emergent process (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2007, 2011a). The third thematic criterion is concerned with the ways leadership is expressed. According to individualism, leadership is expressed in the leader's one way performance of power (Hunter, Bedell-Avers, & Mumford, 2007). Inter-individualism suggests that leadership is expressed in dyadic interactions of influence (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Relationality regards the expression of leaderships as flowing in relational dynamics (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2007, 2011a).

The fourth thematic criterion in the analysis of the literature addresses the relevance to practitioners. The individualistic stream of theories tends to prescribe a formula for personnel selection, and to propose training of the 'leaders' when this is

relevant (Hunter, et al., 2007). The inter-individualistic stream of theories focuses on the leader’s role in delegating the diffusion of leadership (Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2014). The relational stream of theories focuses on processes of leadership unfolding (Hosking, 2007). The final thematic criterion for the analysis of the literature examines the researchers’ focus. In the stream of individualism, researchers focus on the competencies and qualities of the leader (Bryman, 1992). In the stream of inter-individualism, researchers centre individual acts in organised interactions (Uhl-Bien, 2006). In the stream of relationality, research focus is on ‘how’ leadership is expressed, centring processes rather than outcomes (Ospina & Uhl-Bien, 2012a). Table 2-1 summarises the framework for the meta-theoretical analysis of the literature. The three literature streams are presented in the sections that follow.

Table 2-1: Analytical framework and key findings

Literature streams	Thematic criteria				
	Leadership source	Leadership concept	Leadership expression	Practitioners	Researchers
Individualism	individual leader	leader’s product & property	leader’s one way performance of power	personnel selection, leaders’ training	competencies & qualities of the leader
Inter-individualism	interacting individuals	exchange of leadership functions	dyadic interactions of influence	leader to delegate leadership diffusion	individual acts in organised interactions
Relationality	relational dynamics	emergent process	flows in relational processes	how leadership unfolds	how it is expressed; processes not outcomes

2.3 Literature steam: Individualism

This section discusses individualistic theories, which locate leadership solely in the individual leader. Individualistic thinking has been framed in entitative discourses that present leadership as existing by virtue of the leader (Hosking, 1988, 2011b; Uhl-Bien, 2006). Hosking and Morley (1991) described this entitative framing as the individualistic fallacy in organisational behaviour. The attribution of leadership to certain individuals has been hegemonic in the field (Bolden, et al., 2011; Jackson & Parry, 2011) in the sense that it remains the dominant way of thinking about leadership, despite the proliferation of theoretical stances (Alvesson & Spicer, 2011c). Even though individual-centric theories of leadership have aged, they have not gone out of date (Collinson, et al., 2011a); the exceptional persona of the individual leader still dominates leadership studies (Dinh, et al., 2014). The hegemony of individualistic thinking is also evidenced in the lengthy discussion that follows. The literature on the individualistic stream of theories is considerably larger, compared to the other two streams of inter-individualism and relationality. Here, individual-centric theories evaluate to what extent one can be considered a leader, and this is done by measuring birth and personality traits, behaviours, styles, situational and contingency reactions, intuition, charisma and humility.

To begin with, Great Man theories (Grint, 2011) hold that certain individuals are born with a particular personality, making them rise out of any circumstances to become leaders. In their earliest expressions, these theories present that the leader is born and that leadership abilities are inherited. Carlyle (1840 [1993]) introduced the concept of the ‘great man’ and associated the course of history with the impact of great men/heroes highlighting that “the history of the world is but the biography of great

men” (Carlyle, 1840 [1993]: 2, 13, 26). Carlyle (1840 [1993]) examined the lives of great leaders-historic figures based on the belief that they were destined to lead, gifted with exceptional qualities that seduced the common people. Similarly, theoretical stances within Great Man thinking describe the powerful personalities of great leaders (Bingham, 1917; Bingham & Davis, 1924; Bogardus, 1927; Bowden, Caldwell, & West, 1934; Wiggam, 1939; Woods, 1913). The main question addressed in Great Man theories is who is born to be a leader, with the word ‘man’ reflecting the fact that leadership has been viewed as a western male characteristic until the late 20th century (Grint, 2011). Still, although times have changed and viewpoints about the world have progressed, the mythical status of the leader is something familiar in leadership rhetoric. The strong persona of the leader continues to prevail in modern perceptions about leadership. For example, Howell (2013) discussed great leadership with reference to great leaders who were destined for the role, such as Steve Jobs and Nelson Mandela. This heroic elevation of the leader was captured by Yukl (1989, p. 276), who noted that “there is a mystical, romantic quality associated with leadership, similar to that for other stereotyped heroes in our culture, such as the lone cowboy who single-handedly vanquishes the bad guys, and the secret agent who acts alone to save the world from nuclear destruction”.

Trait theories extend the Great Man approach by examining traits commonly found in all leaders, under the premise that certain people are born with different characteristics than others and the mere presence of these traits makes a leader (Northouse, 2013). Parry and Bryman (2006, p. 448) highlighted that trait theories portray leadership as an intrinsic attribute of the leader, where “nature is more important than nurture”. The research agenda is concerned with identifying

characteristics that differentiate leaders from non-leaders (Bowden, 1926), focusing on birth (gender, height, physical energy and appearance) and psychological (authoritarianism, intelligence, need for achievement and power) traits (House & Aditya, 1997). A renowned representative of the trait approach, Taylor (1911 [1967]: p. 96) described the difference between good and bad management, singling out “the following list of the nine qualities which constitute a well-rounded man: brains, education, special or technical knowledge, manual dexterity or strength, tact, energy, grit, honesty, judgment or common sense and good health”. In a similar manner, trait theories set out to determine a list of qualities for the efficient leader (for example: Brown & Ghiselli, 1947; Mann, 1959; Rychlak, 1963).

In researching the leader’s traits, there are doubts whether such characteristics can ever be identified. Firstly, Jenkins (1947: 74-5) remarked that “no single trait or group of characteristics has been isolated which sets off the leader from the members of his group”. Secondly, Stogdill (1948 [2011]) reviewed 124 traits studies and noted that identifying a universal set of traits is a complex and inconclusive procedure. More than that, he mentioned that the leader’s traits are not in the opposite end of follower’s traits, and therefore, leadership does not result from a passive state of exhibiting certain traits. Rather, leadership can be viewed as “a working relationship among members of a group, in which the leader acquires status through active participation and demonstration of his capacity for carrying cooperative tasks through to completion” (Stogdill, 1948 [2011]: 72). Additionally, Jennings (1960) came to the conclusion that years of studies have not succeeded in formulating a composition of traits that differentiates leaders from followers.

Despite these findings, the trait approach is still popular, with studies such as the following: Boyatzis (2008) on competences, McClelland (1965) on motivation, McClelland & Boyatzis (1982) on motivation and success, Fiske (1949) on evaluating traits, Fraser (1978) on weak generalisations about traits, Goleman & Boyatzis (2008) on the predominance of certain traits, House, Spangler & Woycke (1991) on motivation and effective leadership on small, task-oriented groups, Kirkpatrick & Locke (1991) on traits and successful actions and Zaccaro (2007) on combinations of traits. The popularity of the trait approach and its prevalence in leadership discourse are also evidenced by the recent interest of leadership scholars in cognitive neuroscience, which is regarded as a promising path for identifying leadership based on biological traits (Arvey, Rotundo, Johnson, Zhang, & McGue, 2006; De Neve, Mikhaylov, Dawes, Christakis, & Fowler, 2013; Lee, Senior, & Butler, 2012; Peterson, Balthazard, Waldman, & Thatcher, 2008; Waldman, Balthazard, & Peterson, 2011).

Overall, the basic theoretical assumption in the trait approach is that since the leader has excellent qualities that are superior to those of followers, the former can be identified, thus distinguishing the leader from non-leaders. As in the Great Man theories, the focus is more on the leader than on leadership. The emphasis on personality traits produces a romantic fascination about the leader, sustaining an elusive conceptualisation of leadership (Meindl, et al., 1985). In other words, leaders dictate the way with their personality, and followers assume the passive role of receiving the leader's impact and meeting organisational goals. Furthermore, leaders are expected to fill certain profile criteria, while the presence of followers and organisational constraints are overlooked. The powerful image of the leader seems impossible to disregard, as organisations tend to be enamoured with the 'romance of

leadership' (Meindl, 1995). In this way, leadership exists in the leader and what organisations are preoccupied with is selecting the leader; someone who will be effective in every situation (Grint, 2011). An immediate consequence of this assumption is that training and development are irrelevant; what matters is composing a taxonomy of traits and a benchmark of what constitutes an effective leader.

Behavioural theories of leadership shift focus from the leader's attributes to the leader's behaviour. Research focus is mostly on classifying leader behaviours under the criterion of effectiveness (Gastil, 1994; Hernandez, Eberly, Avolio, & Johnson, 2011; Lewin, 1950). The research undertaken is mainly questionnaire-based and designed to measure effective leader behaviour, based on followers' perceptions (Fleishman, 1953; Halpin, 1957; Halpin & Winer, 1957; Hemphill & Coons, 1957) or leaders' self-appraisals (Katz, 1950; Likert, 1961). In summary, behavioural theories offer a prescriptive approach based on leader behaviour, seeking to establish a universal approach to leadership. This implies that leaders can be trained to be effective, to the extent that behaviours are associated with skills that can be developed (Parry & Bryman, 2006). While in trait theories organisations are preoccupied with selecting the leader, under behavioural approaches they are preoccupied with training him/her. Behavioural theories of leadership retain their attraction and preoccupy scholarly attention. Examples of recent pursuits include leader reward and punishment behaviour (Podsakoff, Bommer, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006), leader behaviour impacting on work motivation (Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, & Kramer, 2004; Güreker, Irlenbusch, & Rockenbach, 2009) and leader behaviour in teams (Burke, et al., 2006).

Situational & contingency theories suggest that there cannot be a certain leadership style/behaviour applicable at every situation. Instead, there is a different

style for every different situation, with leadership effectiveness being dependent on contextual factors (Fiedler, 1964). The focal point of concern is training the leader to be effective under different contingencies “We know that almost every manager in an organization can perform effectively, providing we know how to match his training and experience to available jobs – and providing we take the trouble” (Fiedler, 1972 [2011]: p. 202). Under House’s (1971) path-goal theory (based on Vroom’s (1964) expectation theory), motivation is the key contingency determining effective leader behaviour. While path-goal theory seeks to explain leader effectiveness in different situations, it has been criticised for its complexity and methodological difficulty (Szilagyi & Sims, 1974). Another contingency examined is followers’ developmental level, according to which the leader chooses his/her behavioural style (Adair, 1973; Hersey & Blanchard, 1984; Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958). The primary focus for this body of literature is recognising the contextual factors that determine the effectiveness of a specific leader style in each situation. This focus is further underpinned by the assumption that the leader objectively evaluates contextual variables, and adjust his/her style accordingly (Osborn, Hunt, & Jauch, 2002).

Present scholarly pursuits examine the contextual factors that constrain the leader’s behaviour (for example: Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003 examine the contextual factors of environmental risk, leader – follower gender, and leader hierarchical; Crossan, Vera, & Nanjad, 2008 conceptualise the transcendent leader who aligns the interrelated areas of environment, strategy, and organization; Hannah, Uhl-Bien, Avolio, & Cavarretta, 2009 examine extreme contexts and outline the factors of magnitude of consequences, form of threat, probability of consequences, location in time and physical or psychological–social proximity; while, finally, Lord,

Brown, Harvey, & Hall, 2001 suggest a connectionist cognitive model that integrates multiple cultural, organizational, and social constraints). From another perspective, Grint (2001) introduced the constitutive approach to leadership to challenge the objectivity assumed by contingency theories. He suggested that the leader subjectively interprets situations and develops appropriate behaviours, in the attempt to persuade followers that his/her interpretations are correct (Grint, 2001). This procedure of persuasion is based on the leader's intuition, placing the study of leader behaviour closer to the arts, than science.

Trait theories are rejuvenated under the notion of the transformational leader. Burns (1978, p. 20) suggested that transforming leaders pursue "a higher purpose". Burns' (1978) theory was further developed by ways of establishing clear links between the leader and his/her vision, suggesting that the transformational leader produces ideal leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). Hooper and Potter (1997) examined aspects of the emotional engagement of the transformational leader during change. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) examined 'pseudo-transformational' leaders, such as Adolf Hitler and Osama bin Laden, who followed their vision, but in a destructive manner. Another conceptualisation centring the leader's vision comprises charismatic theories of leadership. Weber (1968, pp. 1117-1119) described a charismatic leader as someone "who enjoys loyalty and authority by virtue of mission believed to be embodied in him". Principal to this body of work is the leader's recognition for a change, which he/she initiates and inspires (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1988). The charismatic leader has been studied by a number of researchers from various perspectives, with Northouse (2013) assembling the following four distinctive characteristics: powerful personality, role model attitude,

transmission of ideological aims with emphasis on morality, and great expectations from followers.

The charismatic illustration of the leader remains of interest to leadership studies, from either a positive (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bligh & Kohles, 2009; Bono & Ilies, 2006; Brown & Keeping, 2005; Nohe, Michaelis, Menges, Zhang, & Sonntag, 2013; Tosi, Misangyi, Fanelli, Waldman, & Yammarino, 2004; Yammarino, Dionne, Schriesheim, & Dansereau, 2008) or negative (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Deluga, 1997; Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, 2007; Ferris, Zinko, Brouer, Buckley, & Harvey, 2007; Mumford, et al., 2007; O'Connor, Mumford, Clifton, Gessner, & Connelly, 1995; Padilla, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2007; Paunonen, Lönnqvist, Verkasalo, Leikas, & Nissinen, 2006; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Shaw, Erickson, & Harvey, 2011; Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter, & Tate, 2012) outlook, or even an in-between stance (Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009). Attending to the morality of the leader (Graham, 1991), Greenleaf (1977) proposed the conceptualisation of the servant leader, whose priority was to serve others, dominated by humbleness and by the desire to follow a long-term pursuit of change (Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008). As such, there are two types of leaders: those who wish to serve first, as a result of their spirituality, and those who wish to lead first, out of an aspiration to gain power or personal satisfaction (Greenleaf, 1977). Further research includes Kool and van Dierendonck (2012) on commitment to change and Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2008) on assessing servant leadership.

This section has provided an overview of the literature that regards leadership as inherent to the leader. Individualistic theories provide various conceptualisations of leadership resulting from the exceptional figure of the leader, such as identifying

hereditary and personality traits, behaviours, styles, situational and contingency reactions, intuition, charisma and humility. The impact of the individual leader is so pervasive that there can be no such thing as leadership without a designated individual. The selection of the word 'thing' as reference to leadership highlights the entitative implications embedded in individualistic thinking. Here, leadership theories present an ideal leader exerting influence on external variables, suggesting a separation between those who are superior and are leaders, versus those who are inferior and are followers (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2011b). Characterised as natural, charismatic, visionary or transformational, leaders portray ideal individuals who are gifted to lead other, common individuals. This implies a one-way execution of leadership, as well as a strong dependence on the leader (Gemmill & Oakley, 1992). It also implies a fixed and static prescription of leadership (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002).

From this outlook, followers' participation is passive and consists of recognising the leader and his/her authority (Wood & Case, 2006). Even when leadership is considered as a form of art, rather than science, there is no invitation to leadership but rather a procedure of seduction (Grint, 2001). It is assumed that the leader decides which way to steer leadership, with followers anticipating that his/her guidance is correct: there is a one-way allowance of trust. Focusing on the change initiated and executed by the leader, there are rational and emotional underpinnings in this literature stream. On the one hand, trait, behavioural and situational theories focus on the rationality of the leader, who controls the production and development of leadership. On the other hand, intuitive, transformational, charismatic and servant theories introduce an emotional element, in the sense that the leader does not appeal to logic, but to emotions. In addition to giving orders, the leader becomes an

inspirational icon: “Now we seem to be moving beyond leaders who merely lead; today heroes save. Soon heroes will only save, then gods will redeem. We keep upping the ante as we drop ever deeper into the morass of our own parochialism” (Mintzberg, 1999, p. 26). Therefore, it is questionable whether leadership can be treated as an individual’s property, when it can be argued that it does not reside solely in the leader, but rather develops socially (Bryman, 1992).

Turning to implications for practitioners, theories in the stream of individualism provide a formula to facilitate personnel selection (Hernandez, et al., 2011). That is, certain individuals are selected to fulfil the role of the leader. In a similar manner, if training is considered relevant (for example, trait theories claim that one is born a leader, while behavioural theories claim that one can be trained), it involves those labelled as leaders, since they are the ones who produce leadership (Day, 2000). The dichotomy between those who produce and those who receive leadership indicates the nature of interactions between leader and followers. It is a one way performance of individual power, which can take various formats, from positive (charisma) to negative (authority) sources (Gemmill & Oakley, 1992). This further suggests that the individual leader has the knowledge and responsibility to determine organisational goals as well as the behaviours suited to meeting these goals (Vanderslice, 1988). With regard to implications for researchers, the competencies and qualities of the leader are the focal concern (Hunter, et al., 2007). Research is focused on labelled individuals who portray leadership and, in doing so, everything there is about leadership is centred on the individual leader. This a priori attribution tends to produce idiosyncratic research (Jackson & Parry, 2011), which is rarely problematised

(Alvesson, 1996; Schruijer & Vansina, 2002), and which preserves the romance of leadership (Bligh, et al., 2011; Bligh & Schyns, 2007; Meindl, et al., 1985)

2.4 Literature stream: Inter-individualism

This section discusses inter-individualistic theories, which extend leadership from the one single source of the leader to other individuals. The extension in the ownership of leadership to multiple individuals marks a turn in entitative discourses (Hosking, 1988, 2011b; Uhl-Bien, 2006), which Hosking and Morley (1991) described as the culturalist fallacy in organisational behaviour. The entitative focus of inter-individualism suggests that leadership exists by virtue of the exchanges between leaders and followers. Here, theories examine the characteristics of individuals, who come to form interactions that result in leadership (Brower, et al., 2000; Ford & Seers, 2006). Therefore, leadership is the outcome of individual action and the focus of inquiry is individual agency. Interactions are secondary to individuals in the sense that the former “are enacted by subjects to achieve knowledge about, and influence over, other people and groups” (Dachler & Hosking, 1995, p. 3). The stream of inter-individualistic theories is informed by a plethora of different labels that refer to the phenomenon of leadership as Vertical Dyad Linkage –later renamed Leader Member Exchange, team, self-leadership, shared, integrative, co-leadership, distributed, and even draws from complexity theory. These various perspectives have common appreciations of individualism, but vary in the degree to which leadership is circulated. There is also the trend of different authors using the same label but with different meanings, or using different labels interchangeably for the same meaning. The present review does not investigate these bodies of work closely, but rather explores issues surrounding inter-individualism in leadership by reviewing representative

contributions. Detailed reviews of this literature stream have been provided by the following authors: Bolden (2011); Contractor, DeChurch, Carson, Carter, and Keegan (2012); Hernandez, et al. (2011); Pearce and Conger (2003).

Vertical Dyad Linkage (VDL) theory suggests that the leader does not exercise the same leadership style with all followers, but develops a closer interaction with certain ones. (Dansereau, 1995; Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). The selection for a closer interaction with the leader is based on the followers' "(a) competence and skill, (b) extent to which they can be trusted ..., (c) motivation to assume greater responsibility within the unit" (Liden & Graen, 1980, pp. 451-452). The development of closer dyads means that the leader allocates certain responsibilities to the selected followers. At the same time, the other followers (excluded from the dyad) receive the same leadership style, with the leader ensuring the performance of the whole group (Liden & Graen, 1980; Schriesheim, Castro, & Cogliser, 1999). The need for the leader to develop closer interaction with selected followers arises from limited time availability, while the engagement with the selected followers comes from the leader's control of resources (Green, Anderson, & Shivers, 1996). As such, the selected followers devote more effort to the assigned tasks. Against this backdrop of dyadic interaction between leader-follower, VDL theory is predominantly preoccupied with the negotiation between the two parties and the degree of input (for example, loyalty) each side provides (Dansereau, 1995; Liden & Graen, 1980).

The focus on vertical dyads is further developed and re-named as Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory of leadership, where the focus shifts from the negotiation to the reciprocal contribution of both parties (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Wayne, &

Stilwell, 1993; Sparrowe & Liden, 1997). These reciprocal contributions are described as “currencies of exchange” (Dienesch & Liden, 1986, p. 625) and signify that dyadic interactions are based on the exchange of desirable benefits that can be both tangible (for example: monetary rewards or incentives) and intangible (for example: job responsibility or assignment to particular tasks) (Graen, et al., 1982; Schriesheim, et al., 1999). In this way, the leader develops two versions of dyadic interactions based on motivation and consequent responsibilities between the leader and members of the team (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Henderson, Liden, Glibkowski, & Chaudhry, 2009). On one hand, there are those who are motivated by interacting with the leader and agree to extend their responsibilities beyond the ones associated with a specific task. On the other hand, there are those team members who are indifferent from their interaction with the leader and reserve themselves to fulfilling the responsibilities originally assigned to them at the specific task.

The basic thinking behind these two theories of dyadic interactions (VDL and LMX) is that leadership is a negotiation between leader and followers. The LMX approach views these exchanges as relating to the overall effectiveness of the organisation: creation of exchange relationships builds trust, engagement and job satisfaction, leading to further support by the leader (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Leadership is exchanged from leader to followers, whereby both sides are expected to negotiate their interest and establish their interactions accordingly. The leader and his/her followers can have two different types of interactions, with varying accompanying expectations. However, while identifying the existence of networks between leaders and followers, LMX theory fails to discuss what happens in-between leaders and followers in creating these networks (Anand, Hu, Liden, & Vidyarthi,

2011; Ladkin, 2010). Thus, there is the question about who participates in the networks (in- and out- groups) and how these are created (Henderson, et al., 2009). There is also a strong association between leadership and position in the sense that networks of exchange originate from the formally appointed authority. Finally, the measures that have been developed to evaluate the quality of dyadic relationship have been criticised for the criteria included (Bauer & Green, 1996; Liden & Maslyn, 1998; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001).

Following the idea of the leader developing some kind of interaction with the followers, the concept of team leadership arises. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) introduced the leader-facilitator, a team member occasionally taking over the role of the follower. Rather than acting as a controlling figure, the leader suggests inquiry (as opposed to providing solution), enables others to take leader-role (as opposed to holding control), and follows collective agreements (as opposed to imposing own will) (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993). Adding to this work, Belbin (1993) described the team leader as one sharing responsibility, valuing diversity, being interested in the personal development of followers and generating a sense of common mission. Along similar lines, Sims and Lorenzi (1992: p. 295) described leaders as “leading others to lead themselves”, and Kouzes and Posner (1993: p. 156) argued that “credible leaders -are those- who turn their constituents into leaders”. The central point of team leadership theories is the presence of the leader-facilitator. Leadership is shared, expanding outside and beyond formal roles. More importantly, leadership is not confined in a formal hierarchical position: hierarchy grants legitimacy, but it does not imply leadership, it merely constitutes authority (Rost, 1993). The leader is expected to delegate responsibilities and to be a role model, while the followers are expected to

respond to the leader's call and develop themselves according to his/her example. Therefore, leadership is perceived to evolve and spread around the leader-facilitator. Despite the circulation of leadership, each of these approaches has an entitative focus on the individual leader, who decides when and how the circulation happens.

The team context remains of interest to theories of self-leadership, self-management or self-managing work teams (Manz, 1986, 1992; Manz & Sims, 1980, 1984, 1987; Stewart & Manz, 1995). The version of leadership offered here is a substitute for the traditional view of the leader in charge. That is, the source of leadership is traced in individuals other than the formally appointed leader in certain environments, such as knowledge workers (Manz, 1986). In these environments, individuals influence themselves to achieve organisational goals and do not need the presence of a visionary individual (Bligh, Pearce, & Kohles, 2006). According to this thinking, the individual is evaluated against the team in a particular organisational context, where the need for authority and control is replaced by individuals who share responsibilities and motivation. While the production of leadership from a single source of appointed authority is questioned, a number of concerns arise, concerning the preconditions that need to be in place (Neck & Houghton, 2006). Specifically, the development of self-leadership is determined by managerial intervention, bestowing autonomy to work teams. Additionally, the individuals called to influence each other are assumed to have specific expertise in order to perform leadership functions on their own.

The theme of sharing leadership functions is further developed in theories discussing shared leadership (Lowe, 2006; Pearce, Conger, & Locke, 2008). Within the context of the team (Konradt, 2014; Morgeson, DeRue, & Karam, 2010), shared

leadership is seen as a series of exchanges between team members who negotiate about how to exercise it (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Carson, Tesluk, and Marrone (2007) noted that teams with high degrees of shared leadership not only shared leadership functions, but also rotated them over time, so that each individual member assumed different responsibilities in the team's life. In this respect, the domain around shared leadership evaluates the degree to which leadership roles are shared and the relevant implications for organisational performance (Burke, et al., 2006; Ensley, Hmieleski, & Pearce, 2006). Similar descriptions for sharing leadership roles are found under the labels of integrative (Crosby & Bryson, 2010) or co-leadership (Vine, Holmes, Marra, Pfeifer, & Jackson, 2008). The body of theories addressing shared leadership problematises the production of leadership from a single leader, and suggests a production of leadership from different positions in work groups (Pearce & Conger, 2003).

In the discussion about inter-individualism to this point, the circulation of leadership roles/functions is associated with particular organisational contexts and levels. In addition, under certain conditions, followers interact with the leader who produces leadership. In the theories that follow, under the umbrella of distributed leadership, circulation is extended to all organisational levels. Moreover, followers can substitute the leader in the production of leadership (Gronn, 2002). Gibb (1947, 1954) offered the first suggestions of such a description, by conceptualising leadership as a set of functions with three main characteristics: relevance to the situation, contribution to particular goals and shared stimulation between leader and followers. These functions are executed by a group, and, to the extent that they are distributed, leaders are "identifiable both in terms of the frequency and in terms of the multiplicity or pattern of functions performed" (Gibb, 1954, p. 884). The distribution of the roles is

associated with the greater organisational context, rather than with an appointed authority: “It is to be expected that group leadership, if unrestricted by the conscious hierarchical structure of the group, will be fluid and will pass from one member to another along the line of those particular personality traits which, by virtue of the situation and its demands, become, for the time being, traits of leadership” (Gibb, 1954, p. 902). Barry (1991, p. 34) added to the circulation of leadership functions and noted the possibility of multiple leaders existing at one time, carrying out complementary leadership functions: “It is assumed that each member has leadership qualities that will be needed by the group at some point”.

Gronn (2002) reviewed the literature on distributed leadership and suggested that the unit of analysis was not the individual, but rather the leadership group. He noted that division of labour is required, splitting leadership roles but ensuring coordination among them. Leadership then is conceptualised as a procedure of sense-making and guidance-mapping within the team, disconnected from organisational structure. In this respect, leadership is produced by “conjoint agency” and in “concertive action” (Gronn, 2002, p. 431), exceeding hierarchical constellations. Adding to this, Buchanan, Addicott, Fitzgerald, Ferlie, and Baeza (2007, pp. 1084-1085) proposed that the concertive action of distributed agency depended on a combination of factors, such as consistent signalling of priorities by top management.

A final set of theories to be considered under the stream of inter-individualism is that of Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT), as offered by Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey (2007). CLT proposes that in the knowledge era (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001) a different paradigm for leadership is needed, beyond bureaucratic arrangements. This is because individuals involved in leadership have limited

rationality, due to scarcity of information and time. Therefore, the key issue for CLT is to identify the mechanisms by which individuals engage in complex adaptive systems, which are the unit of analysis. CLT was also discussed by Wheatley (1994), who drew connections between physics and leadership, focusing on the notion of change and insisting on the value of reactivity. Overall, CLT adds to previous descriptions about distributing leadership outside formal positions, and coins individuals as agents in complex networks. While CLT recognises that it is not possible to locate leadership in one single source, the focus is still on individual agents acting intentionally as part of a greater network.

This section has overviewed the inter-individualistic stream of theories, which regards leadership as produced by interacting individuals, with the production of leadership available from others than the appointed leader. Depending on the focus of each theory, the quality of interactions between individuals varies, as does the distribution of leadership. Nonetheless, theories are underpinned by entitative conceptualisations that trace leadership back to individuals. The principal assumption is that one individual cannot embody all the capacity needed to deal with organisational reality (Hernandez, et al., 2011). Therefore, there is the need to diffuse leadership functions to other individuals to ensure organisational performance (Wood & Case, 2006). This diffusion suggests an entitative-centred arrangement of individuals in cause-effect interactions with feedback (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Interactions are understood as means for producing leadership, existing independently of the individuals constituting them (Hosking, 2011a; Uhl-Bien, 2006). This brings about certain implications for conceptualising leadership.

The first one is linked with the trend in shared leadership theories to identify conditions and consequences that result in positive organisational performance (Ensley, et al., 2006) and, thus, refrain from exploring leadership as it unfolds. The second implication is that the diffusion of leadership is a rational (individual-centric) choice, thus overlooking the possibility of emergence. It is assumed that individuals objectively decide about the nature of their interactions (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Therefore, individuals are portrayed to have a bounded rationality, clearly separated from others, which determines the exchanges between leaders and followers, both of whom share a unity of interests (Dachler & Hosking, 1995). Moreover, the participation in leadership and the breadth of diffusion are unclear. With an emphasis on individuals rather than leadership practice, the borders within which leadership happens are questionable. Likewise, it is questionable how different group members contest with each other for assuming leadership functions. Thirdly, it is not clear what happens with issues of accountability, and therefore who is to be praised in the event of success or who is to be blamed in case of failure (Denis, et al., 2012).

From a practitioner point of view, individuals develop dyadic interactions of influence, through which alignment to desired outcomes is achieved. Leadership concerns more than the appointed leader. It spreads outside formal hierarchical structures, it can be developed by followers as well, and it can also shift overtime. Conceptualised with reference to individuals, there exists the need to look for a leader to provide instructions and organise the diffusion of leadership (Lowe, 2006). Under the premise that the diffusion of leadership is a rational decision, researchers look for the individuals making up networks of leadership exchanges, with the aim to evaluating their interactions (Bryman, 2004; Lowe, 2006). Finally, given that

individuals and their interactions are assumed to be distinct entities, researchers study individual acts in organised interactions (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

2.5 Literature stream: Relationality

This section discusses the stream of relationality, which eschews entitative constructions of leadership and instead, conceptualises ongoing relational processes as the “moving location” of leadership (Hosking & Shamir, 2012, p. 465). The decentring of the individual marks a processual conceptualisation of leadership, emphasising ‘becoming’ rather than ‘being’ bounded in individuals (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). While individualism and inter-individualism regard leadership as the static outcome of individual qualities, behaviours or exchanges, relationality regards leadership as a dynamic and temporally evolving relational process (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2007, 2011a, 2011b). Therefore, individuals and their relations are co-constructed in relational processes; they are not pre-existing entities. This implies that context here is not a constraint nor a backdrop against which leadership is developed, as is the case for both the individualistic and inter-individualistic streams. Instead, context is embedded in the practice of leadership (Ospina & Uhl-Bien, 2012b). In discussing this conceptualisation, the terms ‘processual’, ‘relational’ and ‘relational constructionist’ are used interchangeably.

The body of work in this literature stream is a nascent development in the field (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012; Uhl-Bien, 2006, 2011a), and thus, there does not exist blocks of theories or vast amount of work, as is the case in the previous two streams. Gergen (2009c, p. 331) noted that “from a relational standpoint, we are barely at the beginning. This is so because the vast bulk of writing on leadership primarily represents variations on the single melody of bounded being”. What exists in the

literature domain are contributions from authors trying to reconceptualise leadership beyond individualism or inter-individualism. A key similarity in these contributions is grounding in social constructionism (Ospina & Uhl-Bien, 2012b). The philosophical interpretation of social constructionism varies among authors, producing a multiplicity of inquiries. Moreover, social constructionism includes both entitative (as seen in the previous stream of inter-individualism) and processual constructions of relationships. The present literature stream addresses relationality and, so, refers exclusively to processual constructions.

To begin with, Uhl-Bien (2006, p. 654) described the relational process of leadership as a “process through which emergent coordination (i.e., involving social order) and change (e.g., new values, attitudes, approaches, behaviours, and ideologies) are constructed and produced”. Her aim, which was further extended in Uhl-Bien and Ospina (2012), was to provide an overarching framework for leadership, bringing entitative and relational approaches of relations into convergence and integration. The drive for doing so was to overcome incommensurate differences between the two streams (Ospina & Uhl-Bien, 2012a). Although this view has its merits and research potential, the present thesis follows the view that the two streams are incommensurate (Gergen, 1994a; Hosking, 2011b). To illustrate the incompatibility between the two streams, Hosking explained in Shamir (2012, p. 526): “They are incommensurate in that (a) each makes totally different assumptions about self-other relations and how science can play a part in this; (b) each means different things by the same words (relation, relating, process etc); and (c) each invites very different questions in relation to different practical interests”. The distinction between entitative and relational approaches does not suggest that one is better than the other, nor does it draw dualisms.

Rather, the comparison between the two suggests that there are different possibilities for approaching leadership, and illustrates the differences that make up the potential of the thesis.

This section reviews the conceptual contributions of Hosking (1988, 2007, 2011a) and Gergen (2009c) who illustrate theoretically the processual underpinnings of relational leadership, as well as Wood (2005) who philosophically illustrates a processual orientation. Then, the three contributions from Drath, et al. (2008), Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011), Fairhurst (2007, 2009) are reviewed to highlight the attentiveness needed for consistency in thinking processually about leadership. Drath (2001) and colleagues (2008) propose a leadership ontology based on the concepts of direction-alignment-commitment, Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011) offer a philosophical stance for relational leadership, described as being in the world and relating to others, and Fairhurst (2007, 2009) offers the notion of discursive leadership. Next comes a focus on practice with Carroll, et al. (2008) who suggest a practice turn in leadership, Crevani, et al. (2010) who offer their practice-oriented approach and Raelin (2011) who suggests the notion of leaderful practice. In addition, critical leadership studies (Alvesson, 1996; Alvesson & Spicer, 2011c, 2012; Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2012; Spicer, Alvesson, & Kärreman, 2009) are reviewed for their contributions to appreciating performances of leadership. Finally, the literature domain includes the empirical contributions of Carroll and Simpson (2012); Koivunen (2007); and Koivunen and Wennes (2011).

Early foundations of relationality can be traced in Hosking's (1988, p. 147) work, where she argued that "we need to understand leadership, and for this, it is not enough to understand what leaders do. Rather, it is essential to focus on leadership

processes”. Hosking’s (1988) processual orientation is coined by the notion of skilful organising, which highlights that leadership is embedded in organisational context, rather than abstracted from it. Reviewed against the tenets of the previous two literature streams, the suggestion of embeddedness is critical for understanding leadership. In the previous streams, leadership was taken out of broader happenings and was reviewed as if it happened in vacuum. Here, Hosking (1988) proposes a view of leadership that is an entangled process (Hernes, 2007). Hosking (2007) also proposed a post-modern discourse of leadership, where leadership emerges through organising activities as a political process. Leadership constitutes a process of negotiating social order, which means that ‘leaders’ or ‘followers’ do not exist prior to leadership; they become in the process. The conceptualisation of leadership ‘becoming’ (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) is further presented as a soft differentiation between self and other (Hosking, 2011a).

Gergen (2009c) enriched views of relating, being predominantly concerned with conceptual inquiries, which are extended to the field of leadership. Although Gergen is not a scholar who would be commonly associated with the field of leadership, his contributions are particularly valuable for their orientation towards a processual view of relating (Gergen, 1994a, 1998, 1999, 2009a, 2009c; Gergen & Thatchenkery, 1996b, 2003; McNamee & Gergen, 1999). He (2009c, p. 16) noted that “all intelligible action is born, sustained, and/or extinguished within the ongoing process of relationship. From this standpoint there is no isolated self or fully private experience. Rather, we exist in a world of co-constitution. We are always already emerging from relationship; we cannot step out of relationship; even in our most private moments we are never alone”. In such a way, he offered another perspective

for thinking about individuals and leadership, compared to the previous literature streams of individualism and inter-individualism. From Gergen's (2009c) relational perspective, individuals are not the producers of leadership, they are participants in the process of leading. Such conceptual decentring of the role of the individual carries, according to Gergen (2009c), important implications for the issue of accountability in leadership. Holding specific individuals accountable for organisational performance – be it success or failure– becomes problematic, since individuals do not act on their own. Rather, what is described as leadership action emerges from relating to others.

Wood (2005) endorsed process thinking in leadership, and proposed that leadership can be understood as a creative process of becoming, drawing attention to the challenge posed for leadership studies by this ontological position. Wood (2005) put forward the idea of a relational identity, which was temporary and defined in relation to others. He highlighted that such a relational view could not be approached by conventional leadership research that had an individualistic lens. His encouragement to researchers was to detach themselves from the presumption that leadership is produced in individuals, and embrace the complexity of seeing leadership as a process. He concluded that a processual approach to leadership is indeed challenging, but is a way of avoiding the fallacy of placing leadership in bounded individuals. Drath (2001) was another leadership scholar to question the source of leadership and suggest a relational perspective. Drath (2001) acknowledged that Gergen (1994a) was his fundamental influence for understanding leadership from a relational perspective. In this respect, Drath (2001) described relational leadership as the deep blue sea and contrasted it with entitative traditions (which he called personal

leadership) that looked at the waves and whitecaps. He suggested that uniqueness was not manifested in one's traits, but in the ways of being with others.

The following contributions from Drath, et al. (2008), Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011), Fairhurst (2007, 2009) are process-inspired, but their discussions are not strongly processual in presenting the dynamics of leadership (Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, et al., 2013). Drath, et al. (2008) proposed an ontological framework for leadership that consisted of direction, alignment, commitment and contrasted the entitative focus on leader, followers, and common goals. The proposition was that leadership, conceptualised as such, transcended individuals and could be produced at any level. However, the proposed framework was focused on outcomes. This view does not fit under a processual perspective (Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, et al., 2013) and therefore, this contribution is closer to entitative approaches of leadership. A similar remark can be made for the contribution of Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011). The authors proposed a conceptualisation of leadership as relationally-responsive dialogical practices, but they associated these practices with the personification of a leader. They described at the very start of their work: "the leader holds herself/himself as always in relation with, and therefore morally accountable to others; recognises the inherently polyphonic and heteroglossic nature of life; and engages in relational dialogue" (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011, p. 1425). In this respect, since the individual leader comes before leadership, this approach is closer to entitative thinking. Finally, Fairhurst (2007, 2009) offered the notion of discursive leadership, proposing a focus on communication and discourse. However, this focus means that linguistic representations signify leadership in a structured manner. Under a processual perspective (Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, 2007; Hernes, et al., 2013), dialogue includes

both spoken and un-spoken, or verbal and non-verbal. As such, discursive leadership as presented by Fairhurst (2007, 2009) is closer to entitative approaches. Reviewing the three theoretical contributions addressed in this paragraph, the aim is to illustrate the challenges and complexities included in a processual appreciation of leadership. At the same time, the conclusion of inconsistency between philosophical positioning and its articulation signifies a point made in the introduction of the present section. That is, social construction theories of leadership span from entitative to processual orientations, including numerous variations. The thesis focuses on processual orientations, and therefore critiques the contributions of Drath, et al. (2008), Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011), Fairhurst (2007, 2009) for their entitative focus. However, the author decided to introduce them here so as to highlight the difficulties in approaching the relational process of leadership.

Turning to a focus on the practice of leadership, the contributions from the following authors are reviewed: Carroll, et al. (2008), Crevani, et al. (2010) and Raelin (2011). Firstly, Carroll, et al. (2008) proposed that an equally interesting paradigm to the one focusing on who did leadership (as presented in the previous two streams), was one that inquired about how to do leadership. The authors proposed that exploring leadership and its development should focus on praxis, practitioner and practice. This means researching the non-reflective and non-conscious, when individualism and inter-individualism focus on the rational. A similar emphasis on practice was pursued by Crevani, et al. (2010) who indicated that the focus of inquiry was leadership in action. For the authors, leadership is sensitive to contextual parameters, such as social, cultural and institutional conventions. These conventions influence leadership action, which is conceptualised as communicated and negated in everyday interactions.

Through this process, Crevani, et al. (2010) did not regard leadership as an outcome of interaction. They suggested that through interaction there emerges direction, co-orientation and action space. Adding to the leadership-as-practice perspective, Raelin (2011) introduced the notion of leaderful practice to highlight participation. Leaderful practice signified an ideological stance, endorsing that leadership is tied to participation. Raelin (2011) went beyond the practical doing and assumed a positive effect of leaderful practices in the sense that they would promote democratic values. A processual orientation (Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, 2007; Hernes, et al., 2013) of relationality (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2011a) does not wish to presuppose any positive or idealistic views. Such presumptions fall back into entitative thinking; instead, a processual approach engages with the complexities of leadership as it unfolds. Finally, critical leadership studies (Collinson, 2011) propose a focus on practice, problematizing entitative assumptions embedded in leadership. It is worth clarifying that research under the umbrella term of criticality includes contributions that both extend (previous stream of inter-individualism) and go beyond (present stream of relationality) individualism. Reference to critical studies is connected to this stream to the extent that the process of leadership is the main focus. In this respect, the works of Alvesson (1996); Alvesson and Spicer (2011c, 2012); Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2012); Spicer, et al. (2009) suggested that leadership was difficult to conceptualise, included ambiguities and could not be measured with standardised formulas. To overcome these ambiguities, the authors suggested studying leadership in everyday settings, and attending to its performances.

The review of the present literature stream points multiple complexities in the conceptualisation of leadership dynamics. To fully understand these complexities, it is

worth reviewing the empirical contributions of Carroll and Simpson (2012), Koivunen (2007) and Koivunen and Wennes (2011). These contributions provide ways of empirical inquiry, highlighting key issues of concern for researchers and practitioners. Carroll and Simpson (2012) theorised relational leadership using Mead's (1932) notion of sociality (further explained in Simpson, 2014), which described emergent practice with reference to frames. Drawing from online forum data of an 18-month long leadership development programme, Carroll and Simpson (2012) showed that leadership practice shifted between the frames of significant symbols, and was generated in terms of sociality. The authors suggested that leadership development should familiarise participants with frames and improve their capacity to move among them in conversation. Koivunen (2007) approached discourse in a different way. Drawing from data comprising two case studies of symphony orchestras, the author noted that there were many leadership discourses that were continuously negotiated in theory and practice. Koivunen's (2007) views were underpinned by the threads of critical studies (as described previously), and her contribution highlighted the ever-changing nature of leadership. Remaining in the field of symphony orchestras, Koivunen and Wennes (2011) presented an aesthetic analysis of leadership as an ongoing relational process between conductor and musicians. The authors showed that leadership does not reside in the minds of rational individuals, but rather emerges in relational processes.

This section has presented the body of leadership that eschews the assumption that leadership lies in bounded and self-contained individuals, suggesting instead a focus on relational processes. Conceptualising leadership from a processual perspective contests the hegemony of the bounded individual, as well as the separation

between leader and followers. That means that individuals are not producers of leadership, but are made in relational processes. In comparison to the entitative focus of the previous two literature streams, relationships here are not independent of the individuals making them. Instead, individuals are temporary expressions of their relationships (Gergen, 1994a, 2009c). These conceptualisations about individuals and their relationships implicate incommensurate differences between the two literature streams of inter-individualism and relationality (Gergen, 1994a; Hosking, 2011b). While inter-individualism addresses leadership as the outcome of interacting individuals, relationality discusses leadership as a process that becomes together with its participants.

From a processual appreciation of relationality, no participant in leadership has power over the others, or power over how one relates with others (Follett, 1996). Therefore, how leadership goes on cannot be determined in advance. Under the entitative lens of the previous two literature streams, the notion of ‘power over others’ is the case, in the sense that leadership is intentionally planned and produced by individuals who exist separated from each other, and who act on each other (Hosking, 2007). Individualism and inter-individualism treat leadership as the outcome of individuals, producing external change that signifies transition from one stable state to the other (Bolden & Gosling, 2006). The notion of power constitutes a common point of criticism in the relational stream of theories, with the suggestion that when the notion of power is absent, leadership disappears (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2012; Shamir, 2012). However, a relational perspective does not propose a tension-free approach to leadership. Rather, it proposes another possibility for approaching leadership, different from entitative configurations of power over individuals. Viewing

leadership beyond individual constellations means that researchers engage with processes, rather than leadership outcomes. Therefore, research attention focuses on ‘how’ leadership unfolds and ‘how’ it is expressed, not on its impact after it has happened or ‘who’ produces it (Mumford, 2011). As far as practitioners are concerned, approaching leadership in this way speaks to issues of practice, and sets asides elusive personifications. Relational theories of leadership do not speak about the ‘leader’ meaning that practitioners are not offered with a formula about ‘who’ can be a ‘leader’, but are rather encouraged to develop their social capital (Day, 2000).

2.6 Key findings from the literature review

Ending the meta-theoretical critique (Tsoukas & Knudsen, 2011a), problematising individualism in leadership studies, the key offerings of each literature stream are reviewed against the main objectives of the thesis to explore empirically the relational process of leadership as it unfolds. Under the first literature stream of individualistic theories, leadership is seen as a static, fixed entity which is in contrast to the relational process of leadership that the thesis seeks to address. Therefore, the literature stream of individualism cannot guide the pursuit of the thesis’ research objectives. Turning to the second literature stream of inter-individualistic theories, the formulation it proposes is individual acts present in organised interactions. Such a formulation can provide prescriptions about leadership, but does not offer a description of how it unfolds. On this account, the literature stream of inter-individualism cannot invite the pursuit of the thesis’ objectives. The mismatch between the first two literature streams and the thesis’ objectives arises from their entitative underpinnings, which restrains the study of how leadership unfolds.

Given the problematics resulting from the entitative underpinnings in individualistic and inter-individualistic literature streams, an alternative lens, conceiving leadership beyond individual constellations, is expected to constitute a meaningful contribution to knowledge. This is possible in the literature stream of relationality, which endorses process thinking and conceptualises leadership as relational process. The particular literature stream directly addresses the relational process of leadership, and therefore, provides the anchor for the thesis to pursue its objectives.

Studies on the relational process of leadership are still at an early stage of development, and empirical studies have to date been limited (Denis, et al., 2012; McNamee & Hosking, 2012; Ospina & Uhl-Bien, 2012b). Relationality calls out a new vocabulary beyond individual-centric orientations, which is something empirical studies are struggling with (Day & Drath, 2012). Pursuing an empirical inquiry for exploring the relational process of leadership, is thus, also expected to constitute a meaningful contribution to knowledge. On these grounds, the thesis proceeds with exploring the empirical expression of leadership and its progressive unfolding, centring on relational dynamics. To achieve these, the research questions guiding the empirical inquiry are the following:

1. How is the relational process of leadership expressed empirically?
2. How does the relational process of leadership unfold progressively?

2.7 Chapter Synopsis

This chapter has offered an orienting literature review of the leadership domain, problematising individualism. This is done by means of a meta-theoretical review, which indicates three main literature streams: individualism, inter-individualism and relationality. A range of assumptions and problematics have been discussed in each literature stream, demonstrating that the stream of relationality is the starting point for the thesis. Arising from the analysis of the literature, the relevance and potential of the empirical inquiry are indicated and conveyed in the research questions informing the thesis. To conclude, the discussion in the chapter highlights that approaching the relational process of leadership is particularly challenging, and thus, needs meticulous consideration and crafting of the conceptual and methodological. Chapter 3 presents the conceptual foundations of the thesis, and Chapter 4 follows with a presentation of the research methodology and design.

CHAPTER 3 | CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

3.1 Chapter introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the conceptual foundations, which inform the thesis' approach to leadership. It is critical for the development of the thesis to gain an understanding of constituting philosophical underpinnings, so that the author is consistent in the pursuit of the research objectives (Tsoukas & Chia, 2011). The chapter begins by outlining in section 3.2 the thesis' philosophical stance, which rests on relational constructionism. The concepts making up the thesis are further discussed in section 3.3 and 3.4, before moving to section 3.5 that synthesises the thesis' conceptualisation of leadership. Finally, the relevance of the conceptual development is drawn out in section 3.6. The chapter concludes with section 3.7, summarising the key points to take forward.

3.2 Relational constructionism

This section sets out to discuss the thesis' philosophical stance as regards sensitivities for the author, rather than a rigid framework. In a domain of studies with "multiple thinking spaces" (Hosking, 2011b; Hosking, Shamir, Ospina, & Uhl-Bien, 2012), the purpose of the discussion is to address the author's "way of talking" about leadership, which is not a "representation of the world" but rather, one possibility among others (McNamee & Hosking, 2012, p. xv). This possibility does not exclude other possible approaches, nor does it claim to make a stronger argument about leadership. The various possibilities for conveying the philosophy of science are featured in the notion of a paradigm, which reflects the assumptions that influence the phenomenon of study (Tsoukas & Chia, 2011). Paradigmatic communities of

leadership studies deal with different assumptions, and in doing so, use notions of power, relation, process and leadership to address different meanings. This is where the purpose of this chapter stands. It does not proceed with a typology of a conceptual framework, but with a reflection on the thesis' critical assumptions (Tsoukas, 2005; Tsoukas & Chia, 2011; Tsoukas & Knudsen, 2011b). Therefore, the notion of a paradigm here adheres to its Greek roots of 'παράδειγμα', illustrating a conceptual model in a particular context (Simpson & Edmund Weiner, 2014).

Other meanings of what a paradigm stands for include the works of Kuhn (1996) and Burrell and Morgan (1979). Kuhn (1996) discussed how science progressed and evolved over time. He described that at any given time the dominant paradigm captures what was real, until it breaks down in the light of a new one. The new paradigm, then, explains the phenomenon in question in a more effective way, and adds to previous knowledge. Kuhn (1996) suggested that the reality researchers can know is continuously evolving. From another perspective, Burrell and Morgan (1979) offered four fixed frames of knowing, classified as functionalist, interpretivist, radical humanist and radical structuralist. While Kuhn (1996) talked about the dominance of one paradigm, Burrell and Morgan (1979) proposed knowing through a kaleidoscope that gives different perspectives according to the selected paradigm. Acknowledging these, the meaning of a paradigm here departs from these two views, in the sense that it does not seek to determine a rigid framework, but rather a set of sensitivities that provide the background for pursuing research in the context of the thesis.

This thesis draws on relational constructionism (Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2006, 2008, 2011a; Hosking, et al., 1995), for which this section provides an overview; but one that does not account for all the variety within the field.

Firstly, this is because labels and related terminology have loose and broad meanings, as they are used by different researchers, for different purposes and more importantly, with different philosophical anchors. Thus, labels do not represent rigid linguistic conventions. Rather, labels gain their meanings in relation to the ways they are described and used in a particular context. To highlight the co-existence of multiple possibilities, Wittgenstein (1968) noted that words gain their meanings as they are used within ‘the game’. The author invites the reader not to stick to any categorical definitions, but to follow meanings as they develop in relation to the thesis. The author’s choice to prefer the term ‘relational constructionism’ over the term of ‘social constructionism’ comes from the focus on process thinking (Gergen, 2009c; Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, 2007; Hosking, 2011a, 2011b; Hosking & Shamir, 2012; McNamee & Hosking, 2012; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). As discussed in Chapter 2, social constructionism covers a broad scope of theories, ranging from entitative to processual constructions.

Secondly, the very nature of relational constructionism is characterised by multiplicity of social ‘realities’, allowing various possibilities in the ongoing construction of meaning. It would not be fruitful to provide an overarching definition, since it could not account for the diversity in the field or the various approaches that different authors take on the term. However, this is not to be appreciated as a futile quest, but an anticipation of where the specific possibility may take the discussion about leadership. In this respect, the thesis’ take on relational constructionism encourages the discussion about leadership to keep going with multiple possibilities co-existing. Gergen (2009a, p. 228) noted that “constructionism does not itself seek to

be a final word, but a form of discourse that will help us to avoid building a world in which there is an end to dialogue”.

The critical themes that make up the thesis’ conceptualisation come from Hosking, et al. (1995), Gergen (1994a, 2009c), and Hosking (1988, 2006, 2008, 2011a). On a very broad level, these authors open up to multiple constructed ‘realities’ in direct criticism to the positivists’ worldview of an independently existing reality that can be known once and for all. This stance criticises the claim that there is only one legitimate take on reality, and thus, only one legitimate possibility of doing research. Instead, ‘the real and good’ are ongoing constructions within a community, allowing many possibilities of doing research (Gergen, 2009a). In this form of inquiry, the focus is on relational processes. These are not constructed between entities as the means to achieving leadership. Rather, the construction of leadership is being produced and re-produced in ongoing relational processes.

A consequence of relational constructionism’s (Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2006, 2008, 2011a; Hosking, et al., 1995) processual orientation (Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, 2007; Langley, et al., 2013) is the disregard of dualisms, which juxtapose a thesis with an anti-thesis, suggesting superiority of the one over the other, and dichotomy between the two. Instead, there are multiple co-existing possibilities. This is the case not only theoretically, but also empirically since the researcher actively participates in the construction of meaning (McNamee & Hosking, 2012). In discussing the thesis’ conceptual foundations, there is the comparison between entitative and relational constructionist approaches. The comparison is not intended to draw a dichotomy between the two, nor is it the thesis’ aim to put forward ‘truth’ claims. Rather, the comparison stands for heuristic purposes to illustrate that

the two perspectives are different, and each one may be more or less relevant depending on the research questions.

The questions addressed in the thesis concern the interdependent, relational process of leadership. Typically the discussion about the philosophy of science covers ontological and epistemological underpinnings (Tsoukas & Chia, 2011). Ontology refers to the 'being' of the phenomenon under study (drawing on the notion of 'οντολογία' as explained in Simpson & Edmund Weiner, 2014), while epistemology seek for the appropriate ways to approach the phenomenon of interest (drawing on the notion of 'επιστημολογία' as explained in Simpson & Edmund Weiner, 2014). Relational constructionism offers another perspective and does not regard ontology as separated from epistemology, but rather as “wider than a theory, less monolithic than a paradigm, and more modest than a worldview” (Hosking, 2008, p. 669). The chapter develops the discussion about philosophical underpinnings in the following sections.

3.3 Relational dynamics

Relational dynamics carve up the research and provide the constitutive premises in the thesis' conceptualisation of leadership, describing the ways leadership unfolds in relational processes as multi-beings (re)construct their connections (Gergen, 2009c). Key in the discussion is the appreciation of self and other, differently approached by entitative and relational constructionist views. Entitative theories of leadership propose the dualism of subject and object (Hosking, 2011b), where the knowing subject is the leader who acts upon the passive objects. This dualism assumes superiority of the leader and presents leadership as a set of bi-causal interactions between static organisational entities (Hosking, 2011a). As discussed in Chapter 2, such dualisms offer prescriptions about leadership, but fail to address relational

dynamics. Gergen (1994a: p. 129) described such understanding as “opaque” and noted that relational dynamics need to be addressed. Relational constructionism describes self and other in a process of mutual and continuous (re)construction (Dachler & Hosking, 1995; Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 2006; Hosking, et al., 1995), conceptualising leadership as connecting organisational participants, rather than separating them (Hosking & Bass, 2001; McNamee & Gergen, 1999). Furthermore, organisational participants are not categorised into leaders versus followers, but are related and are constantly in the making. Thus, relational constructionism sets aside entitative assumptions about entities that exist independently of one another, and proposes an active view of relational processes (Dachler & Hosking, 1995).

In detail, entitative views hold a hard differentiation between self and other, where fixed individuals exist independently of one another (Hosking, 2006) and operate either based on their free will or determined by contingencies of different kinds (Wood, 2005). Individuals have certain static characteristics that can be defined once and for all, separating entities into ‘leaders’ and ‘followers’ (Gemmill & Oakley, 1992). Leadership, then, is the individual act of the leader and it signals the relation developed between leader and followers. As discussed in Chapter 2, this relation varies from a one way performance of power (literature stream of individualism) to a multi-directional net of influence (literature stream of inter-individualism). The importance in clarifying this entitative stance lies in the way relations are conceptualised, based on a separation of entities: leaders, followers and environments. Hosking (1988, 2011b) talked about entitative leadership with emphasis on abstraction from all other context, Uhl-Bien (2006) emphasised independence, and Gergen (2009c, p. xx) talked

about “separate units, the self and the other, the person and culture, the individual and society”. The primacy of individuals implies that relations are derived out of the separate entities, in such a way that individuals come first, and then come their relations. Therefore, the questions asked include the characteristics of the individuals and the characteristics of leadership as the outcome of entitative relations. Interesting as these questions may be, they do not speak about relational processes.

From a relational constructionist perspective, leadership is not produced out of individuals embodying it, but emerges in and through relational processes (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012; Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2011a; Uhl-Bien, 2006). Gergen (2009c, p. 397) explained that “in all that we say and do we manifest our relational existence. From this standpoint, we must abandon the view that those around us cause our actions. Others are not the causes, nor we their effects. Rather, in whatever we think, remember, create, and feel, we participate in relationship”. Considering Gergen’s (2009c) remark, there is a turn in the notions of agency and independence (Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012). Relations are not independent of the individuals making them; rather, individuals are temporary expressions of their relationships. Thus, conceptually, there is a shift from the notion of power/individual mind (literature stream of individualism) and influence/collective schemas (literature stream of inter-individualism) to the notion of relational processes (Dachler & Hosking, 1995; Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 2006; Hosking, et al., 1995).

Conceptualising beyond the individual or the community places relational process at the heart of understanding. Leadership is not associated with rational individuals who produce leadership as the outcome of their actions. Rather, “all that is meaningful grows from relationships” (Gergen, 1994a: ix). Following Gergen (1998,

1999, 2009c), leadership cannot be understood in solitude as no action has meaning in itself. To offer an example (expanding from Gergen, 2009c), one can think of a meeting occurrence within an organisation: if a participant says something but nobody else pays attention, then basically there is nothing communicated: a meaningless action or an empty gesture. Yet, when there is a response, meaning is injected in what was said. Therefore, meaning does not belong to a specific individual, but is dependent on the action/gesture that follows. All the same, the action/gesture that follows is without meaning, unless something was previously said. Hence, leadership cannot be pinned down to a certain individual; leadership is not one's without the other. Given these, individuals are not the place to study leadership (Hosking & Bouwen, 2000). Instead, the 'place' to study leadership are relational processes: "with a relational intelligibility in place, we can shift our attention to what transpires between people, not what is contained within them" (McNamee, 1998, p. 102).

Setting aside the subject/object division dualism gives way to Gergen's (2009c) notion of 'multi-beings', which illustrates the meaning that the notion of the 'individual' gets under a relational constructionist view. Multi-being' are not independent; they express relating with one another. Therefore, the notion of the 'individual' becomes an intersection of multiple relations that are in the making (Bradbury & Lichtenstein, 2000; Gergen, 2009c). Elaborating on the conceptual leap offered by the notion of multi-being, Gergen (2009c, p. 137) explained that "in the tradition of bounded being, the person was isolated; reason functioned most perfectly in a social vacuum. In contrast, the multi-being is socially embedded, fully engaged in the flow of relationship. For the bounded being, coherence and integration are virtues; the well-ordered mind is a signal of maturity. For the multi-being, coherence and

integration may be valued, but only within particular relationships”. Multi-beings are in motion and mutually connected, illustrating the relational dynamics from which leadership emerges.

Relational dynamics express ‘co-action’. Gergen (2009c, p. 37 emphasis in the original) explained that “in the process of co-action whatever there is takes shape as *something for us*... We cannot specify what exists before there is co-action, because the moment we try to enumerate these fundamentals we are indulging in the fruits of co-action... We co-create our scenario, unsure of its ultimate direction, and in doing so the wings of multi-being may be spread”. The notion of co-action is central in the pursuit of the research objectives. Firstly, co-action describes how leadership is co-created from mutually defining and constitutive relational dynamics. Secondly, co-action draws from previous relational connections, and thus, there can be appreciated an ongoing flow of relational dynamics. Gergen (2009c) suggested that co-action among multi-beings may take various –in fact, infinite– expressions. These expressions may range from expanding or contesting existing connections, to maintaining or supporting connections, and to even corrupting and breaking down the connections. In a similar manner, Shotter (1980) talked about joint action, where participants jointly created their interactional context. It appears that Shotter (1980) and Gergen (2009c) share the same interest in fluidity and motion; however, they approach it from their own lines of enquiry.

Co-action describes leadership emergence within local, cultural and historical conventions (Hosking, 2006). Hosking (2007, p. 13) linked leadership emergence to “the ongoing practices that (re)construct a particular form of life”. This implies that among the multiple, ongoing possibilities in leadership, what is co-acted emerges from

what is merited appropriate. Gergen (2009c, p. 37) noted that in the realms of co-action leadership emerges as “something for us”. Dachler and Hosking (1995: p. 4) argued that leadership may be “differently constructed in different relational and historical/cultural settings”. Therefore, leadership is continuously (re)constructed in relational processes, as are the local limits of what might be merited as appropriate co-action. This renders leadership emergence as timely, in the sense that the present is related to the past (the past reconstructed in the present), as well as the future (the future constructed in the present) (Hernes, et al., 2013). The point raised here by relational constructionism is the focus on the local over the universal, which is adopted by entitative accounts of leadership. From an entitative perspective, the primacy of fixedness implies that there is one particular and easily identifiable rationality and reality of leadership within an organisation (Wood, 2005). Leadership constitutes a linear description of past-present-future, and predictions can be put in place about the timeless properties of effective performance (Kelly, 2008). From a relational constructionist stance, no predictions can be put in place, since the processual orientation means that there is no start or end point for leadership (Langley, et al., 2013).

Setting aside modes of separation, relational constructionism brings together ‘knowing’ and ‘acting’ (Hosking, 2011b). Entitative traditions separate ‘knowing’ – which exists in the individual’s mind, from ‘acting’ – which is a consequence and an aftermath (Hosking, 2007). From a relational constructionist outlook, ‘knowing’ and ‘acting’ are joined together, and happen simultaneously in co-action (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2006; Hosking & Bouwen, 2000). Tsoukas and Chia (2002) referred to continuous motion as the process of becoming, suggesting perpetual flux (Helin, et al.,

2014; Hernes, 2007; Hernes, et al., 2013). Leadership, then, is not external to organising, but rather embedded in it. Conceptualised as continuous, leadership is not out there to be identified, nor does it happen in succession of stages: it emerges in co-action (Gergen, 2010; Gergen & Gergen, 2010; Hosking, 2010). The relational dynamics of emergence illustrate two important points of consideration for conceptualising the relational process of leadership. Firstly, they illustrate change in the flow of co-action (Gergen, 2009c). Drawing on Mead (1932), Simpson (2014) explained that without the notion of emergence there can be no understanding of the present. Therefore, the relational process of leadership is approached theoretically when its continuous (re)construction is punctuated. Secondly, the relational dynamics of emergence illustrate a particular expression of leadership (Gergen, 2009c). Multi-beings, as well as their relationships are continuously and mutually emergent in co-action, indicating different ways to participate in the relational process of leadership.

The preceding discussion about co-action and emergence brings about certain implications for research. To begin with, the processual underpinnings of relational constructionism focus on the different ways in which the past-present-future are weaved together and are continuously (re)constructed. This means that research concentrates on the fullness of time and on the context of what is included in leadership unfolding (Hosking, 2011b), which favours timely occurrence over chronology. The relational process of leadership emerges in the present, which intersects pasts with futures (Hernes, et al., 2013). Rather than approached in a sequence of stages, the relational process of leadership is ‘in the making’ in the intersection of past and future, neither of which can predict what unfolds (Garud, Kumaraswamy, & Karnoe, 2010; Garud, Simpson, Langlely, & Tsoukas, 2015). Dynamics of emergence reveal

continuity and persistence in time, so that leadership is accomplished through the diverse arrays of co-action (Hosking, 2011b). Questions about ‘how’ leadership emerges are answered through reciprocal co-action (Gergen, 2009c), which is always in the process of becoming (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). Such a focus of inquiry marks significant departure from entitative perspectives that research ‘what’ leadership is, and treat interactions or individuals (leaders and followers) as existing prior to leadership, which in turn obtains input from individual acts (Wood, 2005). With an entitative focus and its related assumptions, the research aim is to produce a general prescription about leadership (Bryman, Stephens, & Campo, 1996; Hunter, et al., 2007). This is not desirable from a relational constructionist perspective. Here, leadership gains different, equally interesting, local expressions (Hosking, 2006, 2011a, 2011b). Gergen and Hosking (2007, p. 301) together with Burr (1995, p. 3) cautioned that this does not imply that “anything goes”. Rather, it emphasises the appropriateness of co-action within local conventions.

3.4 Approaching relational dynamics

From a relational constructionist perspective, there is no boundary between ‘reality’ and the researcher observing it: “there is no privileged relationship between word and world” (McNamee and Gergen, 1999: x). Therefore, there are multiple ways to describe the relational dynamics of leadership, and the research aim is not to determine the optimal one way that answers the question. Rather, the researcher is called to evaluate which descriptions illustrate local traditions (Gergen & Thatchenkery, 1996a, 2006; Hosking & Pluut, 2010). The aim is to approach leadership with sensitivity to “the processes by which we come to know and the processes by which we justify claims to reality” (Dachler and Hosking, 1995: 1),

meaning that theorising and researching are themselves processes of relational construction. Dachler and Hosking (1995) proposed a focus on the dialogic framing of leadership so as to approach its relational dynamics through dialogical processes (Hosking, 2011a). This contrasts entitative perspectives, which focus on the individual dominance of rationality, implying a leader-driven monologue (Sampson, 1993).

Studies of dialogue in organisational contexts extend to a range of approaches and perspectives that co-exist and provide meaningful ways of exploring the field (Grant, Hardy, Oswick, & Putnam, 2004; Holman & Thorpe, 2003). The present discussion does not seek to capture the richness or variety of the field, but it wishes to explain how dialogue is conceptualised within a relational constructionist perspective. The purpose is to demonstrate how the notion of dialogue can be helpful in the exploration of leadership and its relational dynamics. Central to the notion of dialogue within a relational constructionist perspective is communication that constructs awareness of one another in unfolding co-action (Bakhtin, 1981; Gergen, 1994a, 2001a, 2011; Gergen & Gergen, 2010; Gergen & Thatchenkery, 1996a; Hersted & Gergen, 2013; Hosking, 2011a; McNamee & Gergen, 1999). Dialogue is conceptualised as constructing organisational becoming (Tsoukas, 2009), and as providing alternative understandings about organising and organisational processes (e.g., Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; Grant, Keenoy, & Oswick, 2001; Heracleous & Barrett, 2001; Oswick, Grant, Michelson, & Wailes, 2005; Taylor & Robichaud, 2004). The distinction from entitative perspectives is clear. Under an entitative lens, discussion is equated to ‘monologue’ (Sampson, 1993), where argumentation between entities serves as a means to achieve the production of leadership as an end point (Putnam & Cooren, 2004; Putnam & Nicotera, 2008). From the perspective of

relational constructionism, dialogue refers to temporal meanings (Hosking, 2008), creating space for the emergence of leadership (Shotter, 2010); a process that is ongoing and incomplete (Gergen, 2009c).

Bakhtin (1981) described dialogue as offering rich multiplicity, arising from pluralistic interpretations and, in contrast, noted that “monologue is finalised and deaf to other’s response, does not expect it and does not acknowledge in it any force. Monologue manages without the other, and therefore to some degree materializes all reality” (1984, pp. 292-293). Deetz (1995) added to this view of multiplicity in dialogue, by clarifying that it does not consist of information exchange, where the goal is to achieve a definite, rational reality. Rather, dialogue illustrates communication that is characterised by unfinished meanings, in the sense that they are always in the making. It is from these pluralistic interpretations that something new emerges (Bohm, 1996; Shotter, 2008). Emergence is not necessarily associated with positive outcomes, since co-action may vitalise or corrupt the connections among multi-beings (Gergen, 2009c). This is because meanings are created in co-action; they do not exist out there, nor can they be discovered (Shotter, 1980). It is co-action with others that differentiates dialogue from monologue (Shotter, 2003).

Monologue characterises entitative perspectives and describes ‘knowing’ separated from ‘acting’ (Hosking, 2011b), where ‘knowing’ comes from the leader’s mind, is about followers, and in turn, produces ‘acting’. From a relational constructionist perspective, dialogue characterises unfolding co-action (Gergen, 2009c), where ‘knowing’ and ‘acting’ are inseparably together, illustrated by responsiveness to one another (Hosking, et al., 1995). In such a way, meanings are not created in individual minds, but occur in relating to one another. Language is not

viewed as representing particular fixed meanings (Shotter, 2008). Rather, it derives its meaning from the ways it is used in co-action, as well as from the particular forms of co-action it supports (Gergen 1994). Language, then, is not meaningful in itself, but acquires meaning within the local.

What is more, language is not the product of the individual mind, but comes into meaning when multi-beings agree on certain conventions (Gergen, 2009c), signalling that it has a temporal character and may indeed have multiple interpretations. Gergen (2009a, p. 221) remarked that “until there is mutual agreement on the meaningful character of words or action, they fail to constitute language”. Thus, from a relational constructionist perspective, dialogue encompasses so much more than just language or words. Hosking (2007) illustrated dialogue as the practice and performance of relational dynamics, including any means of communicating with one another –both verbal and nonverbal concepts, spoken as well as written. Therefore, dialogue offers many possibilities and is inclusive of relational dynamics, gaining added importance in the process of (re)constructing leadership through making sense together. Relations and dialogue are inseparable and mutually emergent: engagement with one another reflects the quality of dialogue, and likewise, dialogue with one another reflects the quality of engagement. In such a way, dialogue eliminates the dualism between leaders and followers, as all contribute to leadership (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2007).

McNamee and Gergen (1999) described dialogue as being relationally responsive to emergent possibilities, with multiple voices heard and related to each other. Hosking (2011a) referred to ‘light structuring’, illustrating timely responsiveness (being in the now). Furthermore, Shotter (1993) talked about relating

with one another in mutually responsive ways, allowing fluidity and motion (Shotter, 2008). Being appreciative of and responsive to otherness co-acts the local meanings of leadership: “it is the particular way in which we voice our utterances, shape and intone them in responsive accord with our circumstances that give our utterances their unique, once-occurrent meanings” (Shotter & Cunliffe, 2003, p. 17). Responsiveness supports all local expressions of co-action to emerge, and participation does not favour one voice over the other, but focuses attention on the co-action of multiple voices (Gergen, 2009c). In such ways, responsive interplays constitute a point of reference for approaching the relational dynamics of leadership.

Responsive interplays have been theorised as text-con-text (Dachler & Hosking, 1995) or act-supplement (Gergen, 1994a), where the act of one invites the supplement of the other, which is ongoing in the sense that there are no limits to the supplement an act may invite (there is also the possibility of no supplement). Still, as seen previously, it is not a case of ‘anything goes’ (Burr, 1995; Gergen & Hosking, 2007), since local conventions bound the kinds of supplement that seem possible (Hosking, 2007). Weick (1979) also talked about the responsive interplay as act-interact-double interact. He paid particular attention to double interacts (the supplement of the supplement), which he viewed as reducing ambiguity. Simpson (2014, pp. 279-280) offered Mead’s notion of gestures, which includes physical actions and emotional expressions, besides what is spoken. The notion of gesture emphasises intersubjective engagement in dialogue, where the gesture of one, calls for a response from the other. Gergen (2009c) offered another version for responsive interplays, developed in the combination of invitation – exploration – affirmation, and focused on the ways multi-beings are attuned and interconnected with one another.

Co-action is not important in itself; rather it is important in its contribution to the relational process of leadership.

Invitation highlights the connectivity in co-action and signifies attention to multi-beings, rather than individuals. As Gergen (2009c) noted, research focus shifts from individual athletes to playing the game of leadership. To illustrate the significance of invitation for leadership emergence, Gergen (2009c, p. 34) asked “how often is there anything to say or do until there is some sort of invitation? It is when someone says ‘what do you think of this’ that you are animated. Suddenly, you are brimming with ideas, opinions, tastes and values”. Responding to the invitation, exploration conveys provisions for bringing leadership into becoming. Here, the focus is not on the content of words, but on how multiple voices make sense within the local context. Then, affirmation verifies the significance of meaning. In order for exploration to be something, it requires affirmation that endorses it as such. Therefore, invitation – exploration – affirmation can be regarded as flows of the responsive interplay, composing the co-active moment of leadership (Shotter, 2005).

According to Hosking and Bass (2001, p. 353) responsive interplays are performative in the sense that “a different supplement probably would have invited the process to go on in some other way”. In principle, any supplement is possible and thus, there can never be a full prediction of how a responsive interplay may develop, although local conventions bound the possibilities of co-action. Moving from one flow of the responsive interplay to the next is not a linear procedure; as much as any supplement is possible, so is the possibility of no supplement. This is a critical point of consideration in pursuit of the research objectives. Dynamics of emergence point to new direction, thus turning attention to complete processes of responsive interplays,

where act is complemented by supplement. This is also evident when considering that “leadership implies direction, and to have a direction is to be moving from one condition to a new” (Gergen, 2009c, p. 336).

Change in leadership direction is marked by turning points, which indicate a new, temporal configuration of relational dynamics. They punctuate the flow of relational dynamics and illustrate “signals of change” (Gergen, 2009c, p. 216). Turning points have also been characterised as moments of change (Shotter, 2003), or as striking moments (Katz & Shotter, 1996; Katz, Shotter, & Seikkula, 2004). According to Hareven and Masaoka (1988, p. 274) “a turning point is not an isolated event of short duration. Nor does it entail a sudden jump from one phase to another. A turning point is a process involving the alteration of...path”. Morgan (1923) linked the notion of the turning point to possibilities (he used the terms emergent for a turning point and resultant for a possibility). A turning point coins the co-action of a possibility, but given the fluid nature of leadership, there can be no prediction about which possibility is affirmed as a turning point: “There may often be resultants without emergence; but there are no emergents that do not involve resultant effects also. Resultants give quantitative continuity which underlies new constitutive steps in emergence. And the emergent step, though it may seem more or less salutary, is best regarded as a qualitative change of direction, or critical turning-point, in the course of events. In that sense there is not the discontinuous break of a gap or hiatus. It may be said, then, that through resultants there is continuity in progress; through emergence there is progress in continuity” (Morgan, 1923: p 2).

The notion of turning points illustrates a way of conceptually approaching leadership, as a “passing event” that punctuates the flow of co-action in the present,

through revising the past: “the passing event solidifies into the thing as it becomes in the present the fixed conditions of later occurrences...Thus the future is continually qualifying the past in the present” (Mead, 1932, p. 36). Therefore, temporality becomes key in appreciating the emergence of leadership, expressed at turning points: “we live always in a present whose past and whose future are the extension of the field within which its undertakings may be carried out. This present is the scene of that emergence which gives always new heavens and a new earth, and its sociality is the very structure of our minds” (Mead, 1932, p. 90). This temporal character has also been described as “once-occurrent” (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 29; Shotter & Cunliffe, 2003, p. 17).

3.5 The relational process of leadership

The previous two sections have discussed how leadership is conceptualised from a relational constructionist perspective by means of five distinctive features that serve as sensitivities for the author: relational dynamics, co-action, emergence, responsive interplay and turning points. Together, they describe how the relational process of leadership may be approached theoretically, providing the anchors for the empirical exploration. This section brings these features together to synthesise the conceptual foundations guiding the thesis. These features work together in conceptualising leadership; they are conceptually interrelated and it would be difficult to set them apart, or suggest where one concept ends and the other begins. They are presented here one after the other for illustrative purposes.

Firstly, relational dynamics serve as a resource for approaching leadership, privileging process over individuals (Dachler & Hosking, 1995; Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 2006; Hosking, et al., 1995). The particular emphasis on process

thinking (Helin, et al., 2014) seems vital for understanding leadership in motion. A relational constructionist approach to leadership rejects separation and boundaries between self and others (Hosking, 2011a). Relational processes are the centre of conceptualisation, meaning that leadership is not viewed against the individual or the community (Hosking, 1988, 2011b). Rather, leadership is approached in terms of its relational dynamics (Gergen, 2009c). Therefore leadership is not a one-sided, autarchic act driven by the leader and passively imposed on followers (Gemmill & Oakley, 1992); it emerges as a fluid and co-active process. The primacy of relations (Dachler & Hosking, 1995) describes co-active participants in leadership as multi-beings (Gergen, 2009c), characterised by multiple relations with one another.

Secondly, relational dynamics describe the ‘how’ of leadership, rather than the ‘what’. Since relations happen among multi-beings, and not from or by individuals, leadership is conceptualised in the relational processes among them (Gergen, 2009c). The relational dynamics of co-action illustrate connections among multi-beings that are in constant motion. Therefore, co-action may speak of combined, but not merged voices (Shotter, 2008). Rather than being produced in individual minds and acts (Sampson, 1993), ‘knowing’ and ‘acting’ are together, signalling attention to multiple co-existing possibilities in the relational process of leadership (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2006; Hosking & Bouwen, 2000). The relational dynamics of emergence illustrate change in the flow of co-action, and illustrate the present moment where leadership past meets with the future (Hernes, et al., 2013). Additionally, dynamics of emergence call attention to the ways leadership is co-acted out of multiple co-existing possibilities, which are bound by local conventions (Hosking, 2006, 2011a, 2011b). The preceding discussion indicates that the relational process of leadership is grounded

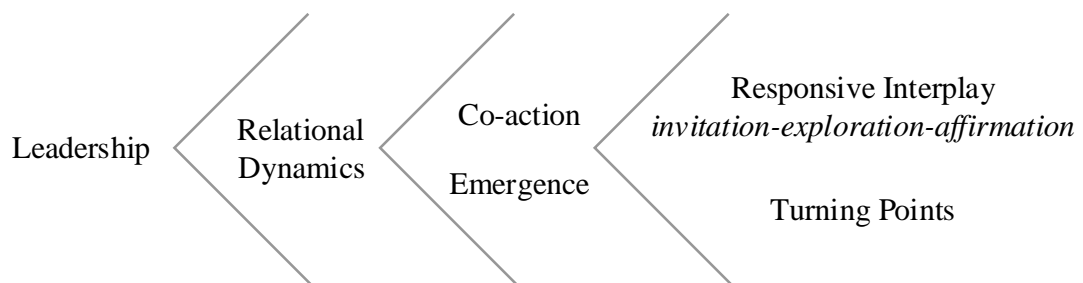
conceptually in the dynamics of co-action and emergence, specifying a focus on ‘how’ leadership unfolds.

The fourth feature in the conceptual foundations centres the dialogical processes of responsive interplay as the way to approach relational dynamics, contrasting the monological rationality of entitative perspectives (Hosking, et al., 1995). Responsive interplays serve as a point of reference for approaching the relational dynamics of leadership, and point to the co-action of multiple voices (Gergen, 1994a; Shotter, 1993; Shotter & Cunliffe, 2003). The thesis follows Gergen’s (2009c) development of responsive interplays in the combination of invitation – exploration – affirmation, which coins the co-active moment of leadership. Gergen (2009c) further noted that leadership is characterised by movement to new direction. Therefore, in pursuit of the research objectives, the thesis follows complete processes of responsive interplays, where the full combination of invitation-exploration-affirmation is expressed. This does not mean that the movement from one phase to the next is a linear procedure; it is only the approach developed in the thesis.

Finally, change in leadership direction is signalled by turning points, which coin the possibility of co-action in the present, through intersecting the past with the future (Hareven & Masaoka, 1988; Mead, 1932). Turning points point to new, temporal configurations of relational dynamics (Katz & Shotter, 1996; Katz, et al., 2004) and provide a theoretical anchor for the empirical expression of leadership. To conclude, leadership has been conceptualised from a relational constructionist perspective in a unique way. In addressing relational dynamics, leadership has multiple expressions rather than an optimal one, which is the case under a contrasting individualistic stance (Shotter, 2003). The present conceptualisation constitutes the

thesis' approach to leadership, which is explored empirically in the following chapters. Figure 3-1 offers a summative illustration of the five features constituting the conceptual foundations of leadership in the context of the thesis. The thesis' focus of inquiry is leadership, which is approached in terms of relational dynamics. They describe multi-beings' constitutive connections (co-action), which are continuously (re)constructed (emergence). The dialogical processes of responsive interplays offer a way to approach relational dynamics when leadership is at a turning point.

Figure 3-1: Conceptual foundations



3.6 Relevance

The proposed conceptualisation of leadership focuses on its relational dynamics. These do not result from the leader's rationality and are not transmitted from leader to followers as the capping stone in their relationships (Hosking, 2007). Instead, relational dynamics are co-acted among multi-beings through participation and mutual development in leadership (Gergen, 2009c). This orientation provides a different conceptual platform for considering and responding to the questions of leadership. Conceptually, the thesis attends to questions of 'how', placing emphasis on context and relational embeddedness. Therefore, it provides a different account of leadership, compared to the usual one under entitative lenses. While entitative traditions typically provide an epic, persistent and universal account of leadership

(Wood, 2005), the thesis aims to provide multiple, temporal and local accounts about the relational process of leadership (Hosking, 2011b).

To achieve these, turning points punctuate the flow of relational dynamics (Gergen, 2009c; Morgan, 1923). In this way, the present conceptualisation is primarily rooted in the practice of leadership, not the theory about it. The ‘how’ question, and the ways which seek to answer it, are juxtaposed in the flow of leadership. Turning points provide a meaningful basis for the analysis of relational dynamics, accounting for multiplicity (Shotter & Cunliffe, 2003) and temporality (Mead, 1932; Morgan, 1923). Additionally, responsive interplays illustrate the performativity of relational dynamics at turning points (Hosking & Bass, 2001), and the criticality of local context (Dachler & Hosking, 1995; Hosking, 2006, 2007).

Finally, the thesis is not able to predict leadership or claim any universal ‘truths’, given that such achievements are not relevant to the philosophical stance of relational constructionism (McNamee & Hosking, 2012). However, the value of the thesis lies in what Gergen (1994a, 1994b) described as generative potential. The thesis contributes to leadership studies to the extent that it challenges individualistic tenets, and is sensitive to the possibilities of relational constructionism. What is more, the generative character of the thesis’ conceptual foundations does not focus on radical philosophical underpinnings, but rather on the openness to other understandings. Therefore, the thesis offers rich insights to the present discussions about the relational process of leadership (Day & Drath, 2012).

3.7 Critical considerations

Having drawn attention to the conceptual sensitivities driving the thesis’ objectives, their implications for leadership thinking should be criticised. From an

entitative perspective, leadership goes on between individuals, such that focus is on distinct parameters (leader, followers, network structure, and individual knowledge). When communication between these parameters is examined, it often separates language, action, entities, events and leadership outcomes (Alvesson, 1996; Hosking, 2011a). Therefore, how leadership is can be studied by focusing on parameters which represent individual accomplishments or contributions. In the perspective of relational constructionism, communication is performative, meaning that multi-beings are (re)constructed in the process (Hosking, 2007; McNamee & Hosking, 2012). Communication has been discussed here as the dialogical process of the responsive interplay (Gergen, 2009c), which joins together language, action, entities, events and outcomes. The responsive interplay brings multi-beings and leadership into being, where the focus is on the relational implications of dialogue giving rise to direction. Therefore, Gergen's (2009c) notion of the responsive interplay guides the exploration of the ways multi-beings engage together in organisational activities. This means that leadership understanding lies in relational dynamics, not individual entities. A critical point of consideration, thus, is that the responsive interplay does not provide the conceptual means to explore parameters such as leaders, followers, outcome (success, failure) or network structures. Without these parameters, relational constructionism draws attention to synergies which may not be tension-free, but refrain from addressing configurations of power.

Another critical consideration of what relational constructionism implies for leadership thinking deals with co-action. The relational process of leadership requires a conceptual guide different from entitative parameters to talk about the relational dynamics of co-action. This is not only unsettling in terms of leadership discourses,

but also challenging for pursuing in practice. The conceptual guide proposed in this Chapter is Gergen's (2009c) notion of the responsive interplay, where the combination of invitation-exploration-affirmation signals the co-action of leadership. It is critical to note that the responsive interplay does not represent individual action, but the co-action of multi-beings: in the progression from invitation to exploration and affirmation, the analytical focus is on the dynamic effect of one phase to the next, and on the ways relational dynamics build up towards direction. The discussion about the co-action of leadership also brings about critical considerations as regards its emergence. While any co-ordination in the responsive interplay is possible, not all are equally appropriate to local conventions (Hosking, 2008, 2011b). Each phase of the responsive interplay is not meaningful in itself, but becomes meaningful in the ways it progresses or not to other phase (Gergen, 2009c), depending on the boundaries of local conventions. This means that the emergence of leadership does not only speak about the continuity of relational dynamics, but also about stability in terms of what is appropriate to local conventions. Therefore, it should be critically acknowledged that relational constructionism by means of the responsive interplay does not draw on any universal or predetermined characteristics that evoke or define leadership; it draws on what works for multi-beings in the present moment of leadership.

Finally, it is critical to note that the present moment of leadership does not indicate a point where the past ends and the future begins. It indicates a turning point where the future is (re)constructed in the present, which is a version of the past (Mead, 1932; Simpson, 2014). Therefore, the responsive interplay cannot provide answers about where leadership begins, where it comes from or where it ends. It gives multiple answers about the temporal punctuation of relational dynamics. This is not say that

‘anything goes’ in terms of leadership thinking (Burr, 1995; Gergen & Hosking, 2007); the argument would be more relevant to any predefined characteristics to which relational constructionism does not abide. By centring on the present moment of leadership, the critical point of consideration is the exploration of how local boundaries are (re)constructed in relational dynamics, such that power or hierarchy are only two of the possible connections among multi-beings. Interest does not lie in exploring how power or hierarchy determines the development of leadership. Rather, it lies in the ways multi-beings (re)construct leadership, as they are connected in power or hierarchical arrangements.

3.8 Chapter synopsis

This chapter has presented the conceptual foundations constituting the relational process of leadership in the context of the thesis. These conceptual foundations are anchored in relational constructionism and signify sensitivities for the author in progressing with the empirical inquiry. They are described in the five features of relational dynamics, co-action, emergence, responsive interplays and turning points. Firstly, relational dynamics provide a resource for approaching leadership as a co-active process among multi-beings, signifying continuity and multiplicity. Secondly, dynamics of co-action illustrate connections among multi-beings, continuously (re)constructed in local context. Thirdly, dynamics of emergence signify flow of co-action, which happens in the intersection of the past with the future.

Relational dynamics are approached with the notions of responsive interplays and turning points. Responsive interplays indicate dialogical processes with Gergen’s (2009c) description of invitation – exploration – affirmation, constituting the co-active moment of leadership. Finally, turning points punctuate the flow of relational

dynamics. The notion of turning points is a key theoretical challenge as leadership indicates movement to new leadership direction, and thus, implies complete processes of responsive interplays. Therefore, turning points coin new, temporal configurations of relational dynamics, indicating that leadership may have multiple expressions.

The above conceptualisation focuses on ‘how’ leadership unfolds, emphasising context and relational embeddedness, and proposing multiple, temporal and local expressions of leadership. The value of the proposed contribution lies in its generative potential, opening up to the possibilities of relational constructionism. Next, Chapter 4 addresses the conceptual foundations in the thesis’ research methodology and design.

CHAPTER 4 | RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

4.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter sets out the appropriate research methodology in consistency with the thesis' conceptual foundations. Described as applied philosophy, research methodology provides coherence from which to derive the process of inquiry and frame the ways of knowing (Hatch & Yanow, 2008). In pursuit of the research objectives, the chapter explains how the author dealt with the research process. Firstly, section 4.2 bridges the present chapter with the previous one, discussing the implications of the conceptual sensitivities for the research methodology. Then, section 4.3 presents the research methodology, characterised as immersed, episodic fieldwork. Next, section 4.4 discusses how the empirical material was approached, and section 4.5 goes on to evaluate the quality of the empirical inquiry. Following these, section 4.6 addresses the methodological limitations. Finally, section 4.7 outlines research ethics, and section 4.8 concludes with the key points to take forward in the next chapters.

4.2 Approaching leadership methodologically

The previous chapters have illustrated the different possibilities available to the research of leadership. Chapter 2 has presented a review of the literature in leadership studies, problematising individualism and revealing three dominant streams of theories (individualism, inter-individualism and relationality). Chapter 3 focused on the conceptual implications offered by the possibility of relationality. The present chapter explores the conceptual foundations in terms of the possibilities they offer to the author for engaging with research, while raising questions about other possibilities

underpinned by different conceptual foundations. The aim is not to claim the superiority of relational constructionism or the wrong-doing of other stances. First, it is to open up to the specific domain of relational constructionism, illustrating its implications for the research endeavour. Then, it is to articulate how the research decisions are framed within relational constructionism. They reflect how the author conceptualises and thinks of leadership; each demonstrating methodological rigour (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2014b).

Engaging with the thesis' conceptual sensitivities in the methodology, brings to the fore three key considerations. Firstly, relational dynamics describe leadership as an ongoing and unfolding process, placing emphasis on continuity, rather than to a point of arrival, or indeed a point of departure. Entitative perspectives conceptualise leadership as the end destination (Uhl-Bien, 2006). In these perspectives, related research is concerned with getting to the state of leadership, which is an established empirical depiction, sitting there a priori and waiting to be measured (Bryman, 2004; Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth, & Keil, 1988; Bryman, et al., 1996; Hunter, et al., 2007). Relational constructionism offers another possibility, with a research focus on constant relational dynamics among multi-beings, rather than their arrival at a state called leadership (Hosking & Shamir, 2012; Hunter, et al., 2007; Mumford, 2011). As discussed in Chapter 3, relational dynamics call attention to co-action, which, according to McNamee and Hosking (2012), can be approached in the practical doing of leadership, in every day settings. To highlight the practical orientation of such a methodological approach, Alvesson (1996, p. 476) encouraged research that studies "leadership action", rather than research that studies "talk about leadership or square-filled questionnaires". Therefore, the first methodological consideration deals with

approaching relational dynamics and points to the need to study leadership from within an organisational setting, paying attention to relational dynamics among practitioners.

The second methodological consideration addresses turning points. As discussed in Chapter 3, critical for understanding emergence are turning points that punctuate the flow of co-action, indicating change and new configurations of relational dynamics. It is in change that leadership is expressed, and therefore, the methodological consideration is how to observe turning points in organisational settings. Turning points occur in the dialogical processes of responsive interplays, and thus, meetings in organisations epitomise an appropriate observation place. Schwartzman (1989) described meetings as communicative events that organise interactions in distinctive ways, and Weick (1995) suggested that meeting talk is synonymous to organisational action. In addition, Boden (1994) regarded meetings as important and regular parts of everyday life, which works well with the practical orientation noted in the previous point of consideration. In this respect, formal and informal gatherings in organisational settings are the places to look for turning points and, therefore, the relational dynamics in leadership. Online meetings are also considered in the sense that relating with one another does not necessarily require physical presence (Gergen, 2009c). Thus, the second methodological consideration indicates that meetings in organisational settings offer an appropriate platform for observing the development of turning points and, thus, the unfolding of leadership.

The third consideration for the research methodology has to do with the complete processes of responsive interplays at turning points. To restate the discussion in Chapter 3, the emergence of leadership indicates newness, which implies a complete process of the responsive interplay from invitation to exploration and affirmation

(Gergen, 2009c). The critical consideration, then, is attending to complete processes, and setting aside incomplete responsive interplays. The processual orientation of the research (Helin, et al., 2014) does not presuppose a step-wise development of the responsive interplay, as there is also the possibility of not supplementing invitation with exploration, or not confirming exploration with affirmation; possibilities which are described as incomplete. The decision to follow complete processes of responsive interplays at turning points is associated with the need to draw boundaries on the research focus. It is also associated with the research objective of attending to leadership as it unfolds, which is appreciated in the change of direction punctuated by turning points that express complete processes of responsive interplays. On these grounds, the author approaches leadership empirically as an ongoing process of coordinating relational dynamics, which do not provide an a priori indication of what leadership 'is'. Instead, the author follows leadership as it unfolds in real time to describe "the situated, moment by moment, construction of direction that becomes interesting" (Crevani, et al., 2010, p. 81). This is different from the "mental models or inner representations" (Uhl-Bien, 2006, p. 661) used in entitative studies of leadership. Thus, the third methodological consideration about complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points indicates a need to engage with research in real-time, attending to emergent flow.

Synthesising these three considerations, the methodological implications are direct involvement in the field, in organisational meetings and in real time. In determining how to conduct research with these challenges, other research studies have been evaluated. Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien (2012) proposed discourse analysis to approach their conceptualisation of relational leadership. However, they addressed the

organising properties of language in use, where the focus was on convergence of meanings through sequential and regular patterns of discourse. Reviewed against the discussion in Chapter 3, this type of structured language analysis is not the same as dialogue, which creates rather than merely analyses meanings. Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien (2012) regarded action in dialogue as structured and occurring in identifiable turns, which has a different –though, equally interesting– orientation compared to co-action within flux, which is at the heart of the present thesis. Weick (1983, 2004) made similar remarks by noting that such a take on discourse may convey a more static connection between context and action. Rather, he suggested acting thoughtfully (1983) or acting discursively (2004) as ways of studying dynamic and evolving dialogue. Therefore, discourse analysis offers another possibility; that of describing the ways words construct relations (McNamee & Hosking, 2012). However, according to the thesis' conceptual sensitivities, relating is more than language; it is living and continuous co-action. For that reason, the present thesis sets aside the possibility of discourse analysis.

Czarniawska (2004) proposed using an action net, where organisations are made by different actions that periodically connect to form temporary knots that construct actors. These actors are drawn together by the same drive, and extend beyond hierarchical or organisational positions. The common drives in action nets are institutionalised practices at a given time and place. Czarniawska (2004) explained that the concept of the action net includes elements of new institutional theory (Czarniawska, 1997) and the sociology of translation (Latour, 2005). As far as institutional theory is concerned, Czarniawska (2004) noted the durability of institutions as critical in the composition of actors. Institutions are seen as more

durable than, and prior to actors, who gain their identity through their participation in the institutions (Lindberg & Czarniawska, 2006). Turning to Actor-Network-Theory, the difference from Latour's (2005) approach is that action nets extend beyond the specific space of an organisation, and they address connections that are developing, whereas a network looks at stabilised connections. The similarity between action nets (Czarniawska, 2004) and actor networks (Latour, 2005) is the translations that makes connections happen. Translation is a mechanism that connects various actions with one another, including not only words translated into actions but also, actions translated into words. From this brief overview, it becomes evident that action nets and relational dynamics offer different possibilities, which do not fit with the conceptual foundations of the thesis. Considering that Latour (2005) and Gergen (2009c) are key contributors in the respective approaches, it is interesting to mention the comment of Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009, p. 31) who say that "Gergen provides a contrast and represents something of a counter pole to Latour".

To recap, the thesis follows a processual orientation to empirical inquiry that rests on relational constructionism (Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2006, 2008, 2011a; Hosking, et al., 1995). Engaging with research from this orientation calls for considering how to address relational dynamics, turning points and complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points in the research methodology. Firstly, relational dynamics characterise leadership as a fluid and co-active process, which calls for a pluralistic research approach (McNamee & Hosking, 2012). There is no single frame that the author can capture. Rather, the author is required to follow the flow of leadership, with methodological focus on its practical doing. For these reasons, the author has decided to engage with research from within the organisational setting

(Alvesson, 1996), paying attention to relational dynamics among practitioners. Secondly, a point of reference for researching leadership is responsive interplays in dialogical processes, where turning points punctuate change and indicate new configurations of relational dynamics. The methodological consideration lies in approaching turning points empirically, rendering meetings in organisational settings an appropriate observation place (Boden, 1994; Schwartzman, 1989; Weick, 1995), including formal and informal gatherings, as well as online meetings. Thirdly, the research focus on leadership emergence implies attention to complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points, and an overturn of incomplete responsive interplays. The suggestion is to follow turning points as they occur in real time (Crevani, et al., 2010), which indicates a real-time presence in the field.

Synthesising the above three considerations, the proposition for the research methodology is direct, real time involvement in the field, and in particular, in organisational meetings. Drawing on other research studies, the aim is to clarify the way to empirically work with the research methodology. Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien (2012) proposed discourse analysis, which approached action in dialogue occurring in identifiable and structured turns. Such a proposition takes a different view of dialogue and action, when the thesis' emphasis is on co-action which emerges in responsive interplays. Then, Czarniawska (2004) offered the idea of action nets, which placed emphasis on structuring action, whereas this thesis places emphasis on relational dynamics. Given these, the methodological focus of the thesis' research is on relational dynamics in responsive interplays, where turning points punctuate the expression of leadership. The empirical inquiry does not deal with the content of dialogue, but with its emergent relational implications.

4.3 Research methodology: Immersed episodic fieldwork

The discussion at various parts of the thesis indicates that different conceptual orientations offer different possibilities for engaging with the empirical inquiry, resulting in different approaches to knowing the phenomenon of research. This is also explored in the literature with various terms, some of which include the language of modernism and post-modernism to address different philosophical perspectives and their approaches to empirical inquiry (McNamee & Hosking, 2012; Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012). Such a terminology invites an in-depth discussion, which is beyond the scope of this thesis; however, it is worth engaging in a brief discussion to address the approach to knowing that the thesis aims to achieve. Following the explanation of McNamee and Hosking (2012), modernism corresponds to a way of knowing that either mirrors ‘reality’ or offers a representation of it. Linking this description of modernism with the discussions in Chapters 2 and 3, it can be said that modernist ways of knowing relate to the literature streams of individualistic and inter-individualistic theories, as they are preoccupied with determining ‘what’ leadership is (Bolden, et al., 2011).

Another possibility is offered by post-modernism, as described by McNamee and Hosking (2012). McNamee and Hosking (2012) described an approach to empirical inquiry grounded in their version of post-modernism that rests on relational constructionism. Here, knowing is a process of co-constructing local understandings, which relates to the literature stream of relationality. Consistent with the thesis’ conceptual sensitivities, this is the methodological approach to be followed for the research. It is important to articulate this, because it clarifies the questions that the author aims to answer. The author does not seek to answer what leadership is; rather,

she seeks to explore how ongoing dynamics (re)construct the relational process of leadership.

With this methodological orientation, it is timely to recall that the discussion in the previous section indicates a call for a direct, real-time research engagement in organisational meetings. To fulfil these purposes, the remaining of this section connects the methodology with the methods, which are discussed further in the following sections. Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2014b) referred to methodology as applied philosophy, and to methods as the tools for engaging with the empirical material. Accounting for real-time and direct involvement in the field to conduct research in the leadership domain requires methods that eschew methodological individualism (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009) to address emergence and relating (Chia, 1996). Alvesson and Deetz (2000, pp. 28-31) described methodological individualism as “elite/ a priori”, where the researcher was the sole author of the empirical inquiry. In contrast, the authors described a relational constructionist inquiry as “local/ emergent”, where the researcher (re)constructed the empirical inquiry together with participants, allowing multiple voices to be heard. Bryman (2004, p. 764) observed that recognising the departure from individualism is merely the beginning: “qualitative researchers have made their points about the deficiencies of questionnaires and other components of the quantitative researchers’ armoury – it is now time to move on”.

Moving on, then, means how to go about doing research that remains loyal to the methodological considerations and conceptual sensitivities of the thesis. Fairhurst and Antonakis (2012) noted that researchers need to get out of their comfort zones to carry out research about the relational process of leadership. Browsing the leadership literature for exemplar research on the relational process of leadership, it seems that

empirical exploration lags behind theoretical developments, which has also been noted by Uhl-Bien (2006), and discussed in Uhl-Bien and Ospina (2012). The present thesis engages with the challenge to devise an empirical exploration, taking up Weick's (1979, p. 261) encouragement to complicate oneself. By complication, Weick (1979) suggested that departing from methodological individualism is challenging and requires coherence between research intentions and how they are enacted. Gioia (2006, p. 1711) clarified this methodological focus by noting that "as interested observers, we are prompted to focus on 'processes of becoming' rather than 'states of being'".

Following Weick's (1979) encouragement and acknowledging the related challenges, the research methodology for engaging with empirical exploration, in the context of the thesis, is described as immersed, episodic fieldwork. The choice to make up such characterisation for the methodology is not to produce yet another label, or to complicate the discussion. Instead, the purpose is to convey the research philosophy, which is also in keeping with methodological rigour (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2014a). The characterisation of 'immersed' stands for direct and real-time involvement in the empirical inquiry (as opposed to archival research), 'episodic' illustrates the focus on meetings, (as opposed to a more broadly focused ethnography or interviews) and 'fieldwork' explains that the empirical inquiry takes place in organisational settings (as opposed to laboratories, or questionnaires). Altogether, the methodological approach of immersed, episodic fieldwork aims to illustrate that the empirical inquiry and the researcher's knowing are not the individual product of the author. Rather, the author is relationally immersed in fieldwork and (re)constructs understanding together with research participants (McNamee & Hosking, 2012).

Continuing the discussion about the research methodology, one parameter that needs to be determined is the unit of analysis. In the context of the present study, the unit of analysis is turning points in the unfolding of leadership. As described previously here and in Chapter 3, turning points punctuate the flow of leadership and indicate change and new configurations of relational dynamics. Empirically, turning points were marked as the moments that changed the course of co-action in the flow of leadership. For analytical purposes, it is worth noting here that turning points were identified as such by research participants themselves. That is, during meetings participants made a note of the decisive turns in their discussions (in the first research site, SocialORG, research participants called these notes ‘to-act’, and in the second research site, PublicORG, action was noted by confirming the meeting minutes). These turns were recognised by participants as changing the ways they dealt with the issues at stake. The discussion comes back to these in more detail in sections 4.4 and 4.5, but the reason this is raised here has to do with its significance to the methodology.

When research participants themselves identify the turning points that are of interest to the author, they become co-authors of the empirical material. Turning points strike the author, as they strike participants themselves (Shotter, 2006). Therefore, the author engages with the empirical material irrespective of any expectations: she does not hold any preconceived views about leadership, but rather, she approaches leadership in the co-active moment of its expression. Furthermore, the author does not control the description of turning points. Rather, she engages with the present moment of turning points in all their fullness, together with the research participants (Shotter, 2005). This practice does not imply that the author views or talks about the ‘reality’ (Yanow, 2014b) of turning points. Far from this, it describes turning points as such for

the specific participants engaged in responsive interplay in the specific moment of its emergence. Therefore, turning points are context-specific (McNamee & Hosking, 2012). This is not to say that other participants or the author alone would identify turning points in the same way. Nevertheless, the author has decided to proceed with approaching turning points in the way described here, considering it appropriate to the methodological assumptions of multiplicity and relational construction.

Another parameter that needs to be addressed concerns the levels of analysis. Hosking (1997, p. 315) argued that “leadership cannot be abstracted from the organisational processes of which it is a part”. Given the processual nature of the research (Gergen, 2010; Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, et al., 2013), there arises the question whether there even needs to be an issue about levels of analysis. From a processual stance, it seems that the conception of analytical levels assumes entities that are there to be researched: individuals, groups, community, organisation, institution and so on. That means the separation between self and other (leader and followers) or/and the separation between process and context (leadership and the rest of organising), which is the case, for example, in the following studies: DeChurch, Hiller, Murase, Doty, and Salas (2010); Dionne, et al. (2014); Lichtenstein and Plowman (2009); Markham (2010).

Aside from separation, the conception of analytical levels raises concerns about temporality. Locating research in levels of analysis presupposes sequential time, where leadership happens in identified occasions (Hosking & Shamir, 2012). This can be understood under the streams of individualism and inter-individualism, where the researcher can locate leadership in or between individuals, and can proceed accordingly with the empirical inquiry (Hunter, et al., 2007; Mumford, 2011).

However, another possibility is available from the stance of relational constructionism. Here, leadership has a temporal nature and research deals with emergence (Hernes, et al., 2013). This indicates a focus on relational dynamics, which renders the notion of analytical levels incomprehensible. Research does not take place in one level or the other, nor in a combination of them, because such consideration cannot work with the processual nature of the thesis. The research aim is to describe leadership “without considering that each use, however diverse and confusing, may be orderly and investigable in its own right” (Kelly, 2008: 774).

In summary, this section has outlined the research methodology to be followed in the thesis, which is grounded on the version of post-modernism offered by McNamee and Hosking (2012), and which rests on relational constructionism. Endorsing this methodological orientation indicates that research does not intend to answer what leadership is; it intends to explore how ongoing relational dynamics (re)construct the relational process of leadership. To fulfil its purposes, the research eschews methodological individualism and accounts for real-time and direct involvement in the field. This is done by devising an empirical exploration described as immersed, episodic fieldwork. The characterisation serves to carry the thesis’ conceptual sensitivities, by illustrating direct and real-time involvement in research that takes place in meetings in organisational settings.

The unit of analysis is turning points in the unfolding of leadership, identified as such by research participants themselves. Such an approach renders the unit of analysis specific to the participants engaged in the responsive interplay in the specific moment of its emergence. Furthermore, it is one out of many other plausible ways to approach the turning points. It is selected owing to its appropriateness to the

methodology, which considers multiplicity of possibilities and their relational construction. Turning to the question of analytical levels, it seems that it is not a consideration that fits with the processual nature of the research. This is because the conception of levels of analysis assumes separation into distinct entities, together with sequential time. To conclude this section, it is important to note the contributions the methodology aims to achieve. Firstly, the methodology presented here is among the first to engage with a relational constructionist orientation and follow leadership as it unfolds (McNamee & Hosking, 2012, p. 21). With regard to this, the methodological focus is on the flow of leadership and its practical doing, which is punctuated by turning points. Therefore, the research aim is to explore leadership, in the sense of what ‘unfolds’; not in the sense of what ‘is’ or what ‘a representation looks like’.

4.4 Empirical material

This section discusses how the author has engaged with the research methodology in the field. A typical discussion about fieldwork starts with reference to the ‘data collected’ during research. The quote marks around the words ‘data’ and ‘collected’ are inserted to highlight related concerns for the discussion about research. Firstly, Alvesson (1996, p. 468) directly questioned the meaning of data collection, as it resembled a “mushroom picking” image for him. He noted that this stance refers to a reality out there waiting to be discovered, and instead, he preferred to talk about the researcher dealing with what is going on in the field. The mushroom picking metaphor was revisited by Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009), who warned that such a stance may indicate a trap the researchers can fall into. That is, the metaphor of data collection may guide researchers to unreflectively think that through capturing and manipulating data, a clear-cut formula is guaranteed, such that “the raw material are acquired to

make a delicious dish that can be prepared according to the recipe book” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009, p. 309).

The authors (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009) clarified that it is not the metaphor per se that is problematic, but rather what it tells, in the way it is used by researchers, to describe the research process. A research approach that draws on the metaphor of a cooking recipe assumes a separation between the researcher and what is researched, such that knowledge becomes available to the researcher. Reviewing this metaphor against the methodological considerations described previously in this chapter, it becomes evident that it describes a possibility to research different from the one pursued in the thesis. A relational constructionist approach to the cooking metaphor talks about the process of what goes on, serving as an illustration for the researcher to focus on how to cook (do research) in the context of a cake (research setting). The importance in this illustration lies in that the researcher is part of the cooking (research process), not separated from it.

In a similarly reflective manner, Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2014b) preferred the metaphor of ‘accessing’ data, over the conventional ‘collecting’ data. They argued that ‘collecting data’ resonates with a view of doing science in a lab, where ‘data’ can be picked up and transferred from one location to another, much like the mushrooms Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009) talked about. Instead, Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2014b) referred to accessing in the sense that the researcher focuses on what to view as ‘data’. In this case, what is ‘brought back’ is the researcher’s work, rather than something given. Research findings do not pre-exist and are discovered by the researcher; rather, they are co-constructed by the researcher and the research participants, and they are local.

Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2014b) see the researcher accessing data sources, and data being generated in the research process. Emphasising the relation of the researcher with the material collected, Law (2004) and Hernes (2007) referred to 'capta', which signify living data that capture the researcher's attention. To indicate the difference, the authors suggested that the word 'data' hints at findings that appear independently of the way the researcher arrives to them. Law (2004) and Hernes (2007) also noted that the meaning of 'data' assumes linearity in the research process, where data collection precedes data analysis. Furthermore, the construction of 'data' by the researcher was commented by Czarniawska-Joerges (1992), who proposed that the meaning of the research process is described in a better manner as 'insight gathering'.

Synthesising the above, the discussion about 'data collection' echoes the demands of methodological rigour, meaning that the words illustrate the researcher's conceptual foundations. Acknowledging this, the author has chosen to use the words 'empirical material' for the research work undertaken for the thesis. Besides acknowledging the researcher's involvement in the field, the words aim to address the processual nature of the methodology. Empirical material stands for insights to continuously work with, where work does not proceed in a step-wise manner, but is constantly (re)constructed in the process of research. This approach to empirical enquiry was described by McNamee and Hosking (2012, p. 48) as working with "minimal structures and improvisation". Following these and Hernes (2007), the author approached and analysed the empirical material simultaneously, not sequentially, through induction and abduction (Pettigrew, 1997) as discussed later in this section.

The discussion about the research process continues with accessing the field, which is a continuous challenge for the researcher (Bryman, 2013; Buchanan, Boddy, & McCalman, 2013; Czarniawska, 2014; Feldman, Bell, & Berger, 2003). In accessing the field, the researcher focuses on the critical aspects of the research methodology, while being flexible about how to achieve these. Therefore, matters of accessing the field are important to the research not only for providing the empirical material, but also for constituting ways of focusing research attention. Given the relational constructionist perspective of the thesis (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2011b; McNamee & Hosking, 2012), accessing the field does not sit outside the research process nor does it happen before fieldwork; it is not a fixed threshold the researcher needs to get past, after which research starts. It is better explained as a dynamic relational process, where there is continuous effort to develop and enrich the relations the author and the research participants are engaged in.

This process includes different requirements depending on the study's development. For example, Buchanan, et al. (2013) described access to the field as getting in, getting on, getting out and getting back. 'Getting in' refers to the requirement from the researcher's part to describe the research objectives and the resources needed from the prospective setting. Once there is mutual agreement between the researcher and the research site, 'getting on' refers to the practice of conducting fieldwork and the requirement to navigate oneself in the field. Finally, the 'getting out' signals the closure of the fieldwork, and 'getting back' points to maintaining the option of returning to the research site for further fieldwork. Feldman, et al. (2003) focused attention on preparation and on relations' development,

suggesting the description of making initial contact, developing rapport and ending the relationship.

Czarniawska (2014, p. 73) proposed a less structured description about accessing the field, and talked about surviving in the field where “the two factors behind every successful field study [are] chance and persistence”. She hints to the challenges of gaining access and to the continuity of the process. The element of chance does not talk about convenience, but rather refers to the practicalities of fieldwork; elsewhere described as the “darker realities of field research work” (Buchanan, et al., 2013, p. 67). Feldman, et al. (2003, p. 8) made similar comments, referring to “persistence, flexibility and luck”, and Buchanan, et al. (2013, p. 55) referred to fieldwork as “the art of possible” to highlight working with the opportunities offered in the research setting. In this respect, the research design is continuously (re)constructed by issues of access, reflecting the practicalities of working in the field. Bringing together these observations about accessing the field, the research design is a combination of work and flexibility, where the researcher works to maintain consistency in the methodology, while being flexible to the ways the methodology can be enacted in the field.

The discussion continues with outlining the research sites accessed for fieldwork. Firstly, the research sites were selected owing to their relevance to the theory being explored. The thesis’ research aim is to explore how the relational process of leadership unfolds, which is further analysed into the two research themes of exploring how leadership is expressed empirically and how different expressions of leadership unfold progressively. To approach these empirically, it was critical to explore the richness and variations of relational dynamics, which occurred during

organisational meetings, as discussed previously in this chapter. Preparation for engaging with fieldwork lasted about a year (June 2012 to April 2013) and included making contact with potential research organisations, which was facilitated by the author's supervisors' offering two contacts from the industry, SocialORG and PublicORG.

These two organisations were familiar with the practice of academic research and were favourable to offering access to the author. Research began in May 2013 in SocialORG, an organisation that operated in the third sector, in the field of social care in the UK. This organisation was characterised by the established and frequent practice of meetings, with participants being fully engaged during their occurrence. At this point, it is worth recalling that the researcher had set out to explore turning points in the flow of leadership. During research in SocialORG, what emerged was that leadership patterns at turning points gave different expressions of leadership, prompting the researcher to explore leadership expressions and how they unfold progressively. Therefore, the research design was not preconceived at the outset, but was gradually (re)constructed in the research process. The research observations were highly context-dependent; thus, to enhance the richness of the empirical material, the researcher proceeded to the second research site in September 2013. The second research site, PublicORG, had a different style for the practice of meetings. PublicORG was a long-standing public institution in the UK, where meetings served as means of approving important action and reflected lines of authority in social arrangements. Further details about the specifics of each research site are discussed in Chapter 5.

Continuing the discussion about the research process, methods were the tools for engaging with the empirical material (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2014b). The methods used were observation of meetings (non-participant, synchronous) and online material (non-participant, asynchronous, in SocialORG), shadowing (on opportunistic occasions in PublicORG) and the author's reflective records. These methods became the resources that helped the author orient herself in the field in ways that gave prominence to relational dynamics. The primary use of methods was helping the author orient towards exploration; methods were never regarded as tools for controlling research or adhering to a research plan (McNamee & Hosking, 2012). The author did not focus on planning how to use the tools; she focused on how to respond to insights emerging from methods. Therefore, the author regarded methods as ways of being relationally responsive to developing research.

Starting with the method of observation, it has been described as “the fundamental base of all research methods” in social sciences (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 389). This has been because its key characteristic is that the researcher is not distant from the empirical material, but is on the research site, with the purpose to know about social relations (Angrosino & Rosenbrg, 2011). There have been numerous versions and degrees of researcher's engagement with the empirical material (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2013). It is beyond the scope of the present discussion to address them all; rather it is helpful to acknowledge Czarniawska's (2014, p. 43) remark that “there are indeed variations in observation techniques, although they tend to blur in the field...the choice is always of the researcher, and it is often an ethical as much as a methodological choice”. Observation, in the context of the research, was direct and non-participant, and included synchronous observation of meetings (during, pre and

post) in both research sites (Flick, 2009), as well as asynchronous observation (Hewson & Laurent, 2011) of posts on the online communication platform in SocialORG. Empirical material from synchronous observations was audio recorded and selectively transcribed (the process is further discussed in the next subparagraphs). Empirical material from asynchronous observations was notes recorded.

Turning to shadowing, it involved “following selected people in their everyday occupation for a time” (Czarniawska, 2014, p. 17). This method was used in PublicORG, where meetings were infrequent, helping the researcher engage more with the ways the relational process of leadership could be explored in that context. Empirical material was recorded in written notes as shadowing happened (as previously, the process is further discussed later). Additionally, the author kept reflective notes during fieldwork for both SocialORG and PublicORG. The purpose was to enable the author to engage with the empirical material; research was not just what went on in the field, but also what went on between the author and the focus of interest (Hernes, 2008). Finally, the author spent time to familiarise herself with the organisational contexts of fieldwork. In doing so, she was able to experience the everyday practice of leadership, described by Alvesson and Spicer (2011a), and Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003c) as mundane and unspectacular.

The process of engaging with the empirical inquiry was developed in induction and abduction, which illustrated how approaching and analysing happened simultaneously and informed each other (Pettigrew, 1997). Not only was theory generated from the empirical material, but it was also developed in relation to the empirical material during research. Theory was developed with intense analysis of the empirical material, refined and redefined with theoretical consultation, reflection and

further analysis. Peirce (1958) proposed that a research inquiry may be approached by three modes of inference: deduction, induction and abduction. Deduction seeks to determine the implications from certain facts, induction seeks to address the repetition of certain facts and abduction seeks for possible explanations for taking on a certain claim. Peirce (1935, p. 171, emphasis in the original) described the different focus of each approach by noting that “abduction is the process of forming an explanatory hypothesis. It is the only logical operation which introduces any new idea; for induction does nothing but determine a value, and deduction merely evolves the necessary consequences of a pure hypothesis. Deduction proves that something *must* be; Induction shows that something *actually* is operative; Abduction merely suggests that something *may* be”. Following these, the thesis’ analytical approach focused on the processes of induction and abduction. The author engaged in an inductive analysis to demonstrate patterns or regularities in the empirical material. She also engaged in an abductive analysis to explore the patterns or regularities in the empirical material, examining not just their occurrence but their meaning for the particular research context, thus developing probable, new knowledge (Reichertz, 2014). The research process and theory development evolved as follows.

The author started research in SocialORG and began with empirical material about the core theme of turning points. As discussed previously in the chapter, turning points were declared as such by participants themselves during meetings. After the meetings in SocialORG, the list of turning points was published in the organisational online communication platform, which was accessed by the participants involved. The author had also been granted access. In this way, she could return to the identified turning points in the recordings. As empirical material from different meetings and

different workgroups accumulated, it occurred to the author that turning points became meaningful in the context they emerged. Turning points across meetings and workgroups showed the similarity of dealing with a particular issue at stake, and thus changing the flow of leadership at every occurrence. The author constructed trajectories that presented leadership as it unfolded across turning points, which dealt with the same issues. It is important to highlight that leadership trajectories transcended specific meetings, running for several months during the research process. During meetings, several turning points were observed, belonging to different or same leadership trajectories. Leadership trajectories were joined together with numerous turning points from various meetings, as the same issue spread across SocialORG (1). The construction of leadership trajectories followed an inductive analysis, where the empirical material was recollected in order to be explored under the aspect of turning points joined together by a common storyline.

Next, the author worked abductively to make sense of the responsive interplay at each turning point. Having identified turning points, the author went back to the recordings to explore the responsive interplay at turning points, described conceptually by the flows of ‘invitation’, ‘exploration’, and ‘affirmation’ (2). The author analysed the dynamic effect of each flow in the responsive interplay by proceeding abductively from the empirical material to empirically grounded constructs. These constructs described the momentary expression of relational dynamics at each flow, demonstrating the relational implications of dialogue (not just regularities in the empirical material, which would follow an inductive analysis as was the case for the leadership trajectories).

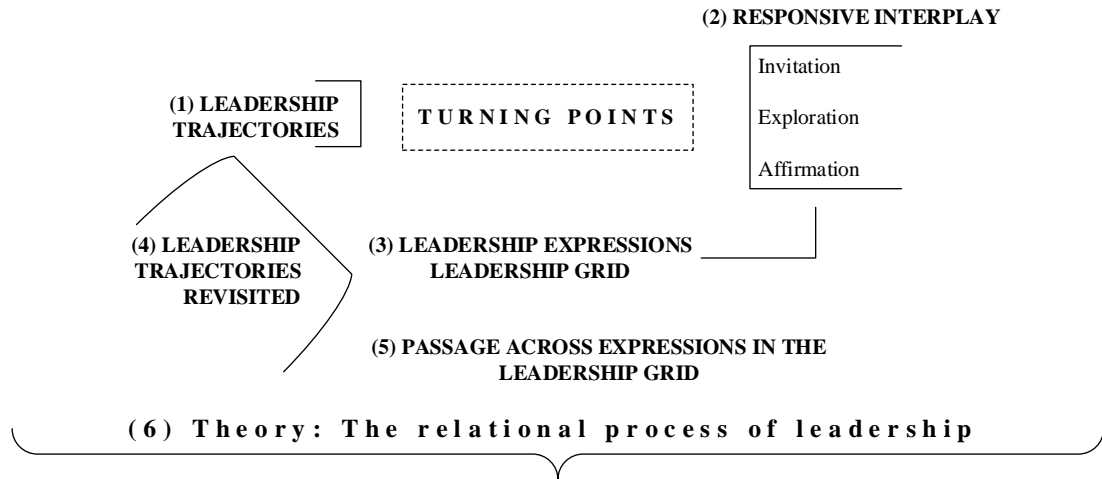
In a similar abductive manner, the author proceeded with analysing the insights from the responsive interplay at turning points, drawing on the build-up of relational dynamics, which was analysed into leadership expressions (including patterns which were empirically both present and absent) (3). Leadership expressions were further sketched in the leadership grid to illustrate multiplicity. At that point, the author responded to the first research objective about how the relational process of leadership was expressed empirically. The author revisited the leadership trajectories and analysed them inductively under the aspect of leadership expressions (4). Then analysis followed an abductive manner by analysing patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid, in the movement from one turning point to the other. This analysis responded to the second research objective about how different expressions of leadership unfolded progressively (5).

Turning to the research process in PublicORG, the author modified the ways she engaged with the empirical material. Starting with the core theme of turning points, research participants in PublicORG declared turning points as such, with their confirmation of the meetings' agenda. The author had access to specific meeting forums, and therefore, could not follow the development of turning points as she had in SocialORG. That meant that leadership trajectories could not be developed in the same way as in SocialORG, spreading across meetings and across the organisation. Rather, a broader leadership trajectory was constructed inductively, consisting of turning points at discrete meetings that were not joined together with the same issue (1). Therefore, the leadership trajectory in PublicORG did not show movement from one turning point to the other, as was the case in SocialORG. Instead, it indicated broader observations about leadership, which were considered important to the

research objective about how leadership is expressed empirically. Next, the author proceeded in the same ways as in SocialORG. She analysed the identified turning points abductively from the lens of the responsive interplay, and the flows of ‘invitation’, ‘exploration’, and ‘affirmation’ (2). Then, leadership expressions at turning points were analysed abductively, drawing on the build-up of relational dynamics (3). That was where the author concluded the research process in PublicORG, as she could not revisit the leadership trajectory (4), nor could she analyse patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid (5), since there was no discernible movement from one turning point to the other.

Bringing together the insights from SocialORG and PublicORG, the research process exemplified the development of theory about the relational process of leadership (6), where turning points served as the conceptual guide around which all insights became interrelated. The analysis is explanatory in the sense that it accounts for the relational implications of dialogue, and provides empirical insights against analytical constructs that were not observed in the empirical material. However, the explanation is not a causal one: it does not predict, but rather accounts for co-action which becomes meaningful in the context it developed. Figure 4-1 illustrates the process of research and theory development. The numbers on Figure 4-1 do not indicate sequential steps, but the process of developing theory as research progressed. They are also helpful for communicating with the reader about the research process.

Figure 4-1: Research process and theory development



Engaging with the empirical material in this manner required laborious and intensive work, and for that reason, the author introduced the following technological means to facilitate the analytical procedure. Firstly, all empirical material was recorded (both audio and notes) with a smartpen, which is a hardware device that provides the functionality of notes-writing, like a regular pen, and has the added feature of linked recording audio. The collected recordings (both written and audio) were transferred, via usb cable, to the author’s computer, where they were accessed using the related software. The useful characteristic was that the author accessed and engaged with a ‘live document’. That is, the author could see the notes playing like a video in parallel to the sound. Also, the researcher could click on any particular part of the notes and listen to the audio that was recorded at the time the notes were written. These functionalities facilitated the management of the empirical material. The particular smartpen brand used during research was Livescribe. Secondly, theory from the empirical material was developed using GIT-SCM (Software Control Management) software. The software was used as a point of entry for the empirical material, which was tagged according to existing or new insights. The reason the software was selected

was that it stored the history of tagging, meaning that the researcher could create different repositories and go back to previous versions at any time. This was particularly useful, as the empirical material compiled and new insights complemented theory development.

The purpose of research process was to develop theory that offers understanding about the relational process of leadership. Acknowledging that research is an ever-developing process, it became key to consider when or how the process ceases, given that the insights that could emerge were “potentially infinite” (Buchanan, et al., 2013, p. 64). McNamee and Hosking (2012) suggested that the richness of empirical material is important, encouraging researchers to approach the phenomenon of interest embedded in its respective context. That meant that the developed theory was not dependent on specific or extensive amount of empirical material. Talking specifically about closure, Glaser and Strauss (2012 [1967]) suggested that research could come to an end when theoretical saturation has been reached. For Glaser and Strauss (2012 [1967]), theoretical saturation describes a stage in the research process, where the researcher cannot develop further insights from additional empirical material.

This suggestion should be appreciated with caution, and in relation to the thesis’ methodology. It cannot be claimed that theoretical saturation implies that the author has found ‘the’ theory, or that ‘the’ theory cannot be further refined. Reviewed against the thesis’ methodology, the notion of theoretical saturation signifies that the empirical insights and their interrelations have been accounted for, and in doing so, the developed theory has met the research objectives. Therefore, theoretical saturation reflects the quality of the methodology and stands as a practical reminder for the

author. Following O'Reilly and Parker (2012), the only expectation from theoretical saturation should be to gain sufficient depth of empirical material to describe the phenomenon of study, which cannot be evaluated by a particular numeric measurement. The author achieved theoretical saturation in October 2013 after analysing 106 turning points, which included 100 turning points in SocialORG, and 6 turning points in PublicORG.

In conclusion, this section has outlined how the author engaged with the research methodology during fieldwork. To begin with, the author chose to use the words 'empirical material' for the research work, illustrating the thesis' conceptual foundations. These include the author's involvement in the field, as well as the continuous (re)construction of insights during the research process. The research sites accessed for fieldwork were selected based on their relevance to the theory explored, following the author's supervisors who offered two contacts from the industry. Critical for the research process was exploring the richness and variations of relational dynamics in organisational meetings. Research started in May 2013 in SocialORG, which was characterised by a frequent and established practice of meetings, and continued in September 2013 in PublicORG, which was characterised by an infrequent and procedural practice of meetings. The tools for approaching the empirical material were the following methods: non-participant observation (synchronously pre, post and during meetings, and asynchronously for online posts), shadowing (in PublicORG) and reflective research notes.

The process of engaging with the empirical material was developed in induction and abduction (Pettigrew, 1997), where approaching and analysing material happened simultaneously and informed each other. Drawing on turning points, the

author constructed leadership trajectories (1). In SocialORG, leadership trajectories were joined together with turning points dealing with the same issue, spreading across meetings and across the organisation. In PublicORG, the leadership trajectory consisted of discrete turning points that were not joined together, but rather offered broader observations about leadership. Then, turning points were analysed from the lens of the responsive interplay (2), and as such, patterns of leadership expressions were recognised together with the leadership grid, illustrating multiplicity (3). In these stages of analysis, the author responded to the first research objective about how leadership is expressed empirically. Next, analysis progressed only in SocialORG, where there was movement from one turning point to the other. The author revisited leadership trajectories (4) and analysed leadership patterns in the grid (5). In doing so, she responded to the second research objective about how different expressions of leadership unfold progressively.

Bringing together the insights from SocialORG and PublicORG, theory about the relational process of leadership was developed (6), where all insights became interrelated around the conceptual guide of turning points. An illustration of how the process of research and theory development progressed is offered in Figure 4-1. Furthermore, the research process was facilitated with the technological means of a Livescribe smartpen. The smartpen offered the functionality of recording notes and audio, which could be transferred via usb cable to a computer, and accessed as a 'live document', thus facilitating the management of the empirical material. In addition, GIT-SCM software was used to store the empirical material, facilitating theory development by allowing navigation across previous versions of analysis. The author ended the research process when the empirical insights and their interrelations had

been accounted for, and the developed theory had met the research objectives. This was achieved in October 2013 after analysing 106 turning points.

4.5 Evaluating quality

This section evaluates the quality of the research study. The long-established tradition of positivism evaluates research quality with the standards of rigour (internal validity), generalisability (external validity), reliability and objectivity (Schwartz-Shea, 2014; Yanow, 2014a). For researchers eschewing positivism, there are two routes: one that proposes parallel equivalents (credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability), and one that proposes evaluating research against its own conceptual foundations (Schwartz-Shea, 2014). This thesis adheres to the second stance. It is not appropriate to evaluate the research study under the criteria of generalisation, objectivity or rigour, as they are conceptualised in a positivist lens (Schwartz-Shea, 2014; Yanow, 2014a). It is important to highlight the stance the author takes on the discussion about evaluating research quality, because, despite the incompatibility of conceptual foundations, there are still arguments for reviewing all research efforts under the criteria of objectivity and rigour, which produce reliable and valid research with the view to generalising it (Czarniawska, 2014; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Sub-section 4.5.1 illustrates the incompatibility and the futility of such discussion, by comparing relational constructionist and positivist stances. The distinction between the different possibilities for evaluating quality does not assume superiority or rightness of one perspective over the other. Rather, it serves to clarify and explain the stance adopted in the present thesis.

4.5.1 Criteria

The discussion about objective research starts with positivism's conceptual foundations. The researcher is detached from research, seeks to capture reality and produce valid research (Yanow, 2014b). However, a paradox exists, when rigorous research is based on the detachment from the researcher's philosophical stance. Positivists claim that the controlled procedure of research automatically guarantees rigour (Gergen, 2001b). However, precision is not the only rigorous way to do research (Yanow, 2014b). From a relational constructionist stance, research has an improvisational style, where insights emerge both inductively and abductively to say something about the topic of research (as discussed in the previous section 4.4). Neither of these procedures is more rigorous than the other; it is simply a case of different examples of rigorous research (McNamee & Hosking, 2012; Yanow, 2014a). The thesis' research is to be evaluated against its analytic rigour, which constitutes the way insights are presented. Therefore, reviewing the discussion in the previous sections about the ways empirical insights are offered, and linking it to the conceptual foundations presented in Chapter 3, the thesis' research exhibits the related quality of analytic rigour.

Another issue of objectivity concerns the impact the researcher's presence may have on the research process. Positivism's stance on objectivity is a distanced researcher, who is separated from the context of study and can directly address reality (Hosking & Bass, 2001). Relational constructionism invites another possibility, where the researcher and the researched are co-constructed, in terms of both philosophical and practical considerations (McNamee & Hosking, 2012). The researcher participates in relations that cannot be broken, such as societal background or education. At the

same time, the researcher has constrained resources for doing research, such as time or access. Therefore, research cannot be value-free (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011); however, values can be reflectively acknowledged. In light of these, it is worth reflecting on the author's position. Grounded in relational constructionism (Hosking, 2011b; McNamee & Hosking, 2012), the author could not separate self from research. Instead, theory developed in relation to the research context, in such a way that author and research participants (re)constructed together the local insights that were meaningful to them (van der Haar & Hosking, 2004).

As discussed earlier in this section, the author did not draw a distance from the research participants, nor did she decide to follow disconnected interpretations. Rather, she followed participants' thinking about turning points. In addition, the author discussed the empirical material with research participants so that insights could be (re)constructed in relation to one another. These discussions included decisions about patterns, as well as integration of patterns and the developed theory, facilitating the author to include and appreciate multiplicity of voices during research (Gergen & Gergen, 2000; Hosking, 2011a; McNamee & Hosking, 2012). Developed theory did not mirror any reality; it celebrated otherness and drew "attention to the multiplicity of ways in which the world is and can be constructed" (Gergen, 1994a, p. 82). Therefore, it was important for the author to discuss with research participants, as well as the thesis' supervisors, so as to reflect on alternatives and appreciate the scope of insights, together with their limitations (Gergen, 2009a). The author's research notes also helped to reflect on decisive moments (Weick, 2002) while research progressed.

On these grounds, reflexivity was not an individual act of the author, but rather a relational practice "in relation to the multiple local conventions, norms and interests

of the various participating ‘forms of life’ ”(Hosking & Pluut, 2010, p. 62). This practice was a way of raising awareness about the research process, and appreciating the multiplicity of research insights, or as Heraclitus noted “the one in the many” (quoted in Chia, 1997, p. 75). However, reflexivity was not a way of detecting bias that could distort the quality of research, as such effort follows positivist thinking. This is because distortion of research caused by the researcher’s bias is an issue in an objective reality, sitting outside the researcher. Therefore, reflexivity is not associated with the notion of internal validity, as described by Yin (2014). In the relational constructionist orientation of this research (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2011b; McNamee & Hosking, 2012) ‘reality’ is a continuously (re)constructed process, with an appropriate metaphor being that the author steps into a river, where each stepping can never be the same (Heraclitus quoted in Nayak, 2014, p. 37). For these reasons, research cannot provide prognoses for the future, as such predictions would assume an external reality.

Synthesising the above, the discussion reaches the question of trustworthiness, meaning the research’s potential to provide insights upon which future research can expand or practitioner recommendations can be suggested (Yanow, 2014a). The quality of trustworthiness handles critiques about the researcher producing idiosyncratic research that cannot be relied upon (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). In response, “procedural systematicities” (Yanow, 2014a, p. 77) rise above the researcher’s idiosyncrasies. The procedural systematicities the author followed to account for trustworthy insights are the following: the purposeful decision to follow participants’ interpretations of turning points in leadership flow, the analytical process of induction and abduction, the reflections from a pilot study (discussed in the next

sub-section 4.5.2), the incorporation of feedback from members of the academic community (also discussed in the next sub-section 4.5.2), the observations from multiple vantage points (various and different forms of relating), the faithfulness to participants' voices, as well as to conceptual foundations, and the relational practice of reflexivity. All these systematicities have been discussed to a degree in this Chapter, and their meanings will be fully apprehended in the following three Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that present empirical material. Brought together, the procedural systematicities of the research indicate its trustworthy insights, which can serve as the base for subsequent endeavours, both research and practitioner oriented.

4.5.2 Feedback on research methodology & design

This section outlines the feedback the author incorporated in the research methodology and design, from a pilot study she conducted and from the academic community. To begin with, a pilot study was undertaken for a period of three months: November 2012 to January 2013 with a consulting organisation in the UK. The purpose was to experiment with the research design and refine it, so that it practises the research methodology in a more effective manner. The pilot was an opportunity for the author to connect with the critical elements of her research, and also try out different methods of approaching empirical material. The author's key reflections concerned the ways questions were addressed in the field, and the need to improvise in the research process. During the pilot study, the author understood that methods provide a map for orienting herself in the field, but "the map is different from the territory" (Bateson, 1987, p. 460). Methods were developed in relation to emerging insights in the field, helping the author engage with the latter. For example, coming into the pilot study, the author had thought of including interviews in the methods.

However, after the pilot study, it became apparent that they did not enrich understanding about the relational process of leadership, because they offered a different take on relational dynamics. Instead, the author chose to focus on observational methods. Additionally, the author appreciated the practicalities of research, and looked for technological means to support the empirical material, as the research process was an exhaustingly laborious task. That brought about the author's decision to use the Livescribe smartpen and GIT-SCM software to assist with managing the empirical material.

Besides the pilot study, the author obtained useful feedback from the academic community in conferences and seminars, allowing her to reflect on the development and progress of the research process. Reflection on the feedback composed four thematic categories. Firstly, a key reflection for the author concerned the organisation of analysis around a conceptual basis. In the thesis, this is achieved with the notion of turning points, as has been discussed in the present and previous Chapters. Secondly, the author reflected on the feedback from the academic community about including complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points, so as to focus the discussion on the relational process of leadership. In the early stages of the PhD journey, there was the consideration of analysing both complete and incomplete responsive interplays. The decision about complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points should not be regarded as assuming a linear procedure, going from invitation to exploration and affirmation. Rather, the flows of the responsive interplay constitute a seamless whole, with the specific decision reflecting matters of practicality and focus. The third reflection for the author was caution about creating dualisms between entitative and relational constructionist traditions. This is

addressed in the thesis with the clarification that the comparison serves for heuristic purposes, but the author herself does not adhere to the dualism. Finally, feedback from the academic community encouraged the refinement of the writing, so as to communicate with the reader effectively and fulfil the thesis' potential. This has been a constant challenge for the author, who hopes that she has written up the thesis in such a way that the reader engages with and appreciates its potential.

4.5.3 Section recap

To recap, this section has discussed the criteria under which the quality of the research can be evaluated. The basis for the evaluative critique is coherence and consistency with the research's conceptual foundations. Firstly, the thesis is evaluated against analytic rigour, which describes the presentation of research insights. Against this criterion, the research is considered to exhibit related quality, as evidenced in the discussion in the present and previous Chapters. Secondly, the author's position is discussed. In the developed theory, the author and the research participants (re)constructed together insights meaningful to them. The author does not see her position as inserting bias in the research process; rather, she has reflectively reviewed how her practice developed in the research process. Thirdly, the relational practice of reflexivity is a way to raise the author's awareness about the research process, discussing with both research participants and research supervisors about the scope and limitations of insights. Research notes, also, helped the author reflect on decisive moments. Bringing these three points together, the research produces trustworthy insights to be followed with further research or practitioner work. Trustworthiness is evidenced through the research's procedural systematicities, which are the following: the decision to follow participants' interpretations about turning points, the reflections

from a pilot study, the incorporation of feedback from members of the academic community, the observations from multiple vantage points (various and different forms of relating), the faithfulness to participants' voices, as well as to conceptual foundations, and the relational practice of reflexivity.

Regarding the procedural systematicity of the pilot study, it helped the author refine the research questions, and appreciate improvisation during the research process. The author engaged with methods in ways that allowed her to orient herself in the field. Moreover, the pilot study brought forward practical considerations concerning the research process, which the author addressed by using the technological means of Livescribe smartpen and GIT-SCM software to assist engagement with the empirical material. Turning to the feedback from the research community, it provided four helpful themes of reflection for the author. The first one was the organisation of the analysis around a conceptual basis, which is addressed in the thesis with the notion of turning points. The second theme of reflection deals with focusing the discussion on the relational process of leadership, which is addressed in the thesis by analysing complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points. Thirdly, the author found feedback useful for clarifying that the comparison between the different possibilities offered by different traditions serves heuristic purposes, and does not demonstrate the author's commitment to dualisms. Finally, the author attended to feedback asking that writing-up communicates effectively with the reader. This particular theme has been a recurring reflection and a constant challenge, which the author hopes has been successfully addressed in the writing-up.

4.6 Research limitations

Returning to the research process, there is a number of limitations that characterise the empirical inquiry. Firstly, the research study follows the local conventions of the academic community (McNamee & Hosking, 2012). The requirements of the doctoral thesis demand a certain style and structure of writing, meaning that the author needs to adhere to certain guidelines. These guidelines indicated that the research process needs to include specific stages (respective chapters) and follow an established format. These guidelines restrain elements of creativity and conform to given standards. In retrospect, doctoral studies have been a significant learning curve for the author, who has grown familiar with the process of undertaking a research project. However, establishing a degree of familiarity with the research process is not an easy transition, but an ongoing achievement the author has been struggling with.

Another community that dominates the research process is that of relational constructionism. The community's particular interests and conceptual orientations open up the possibility of exploring the relational process of leadership, but in doing so, they simultaneously close down other possibilities. For example, the research cannot speak of 'leaders' or 'followers', as these notions are not compatible with the community's philosophy. At the same time, the author's own interests in relational constructionism show up in the research. Although the author's position is not an issue for the quality of research (as described in the previous section 4.5), it is the driving force for the research decisions, starting with the aims and objectives of the study. For example, similar to the previous observation, the author's position opens up the possibility of an immersed, episodic fieldwork, but in doing so, closes down the

possibility to explore other forms of relational dynamics, such as interviews. Additionally, a focus on relational constructionism poses a challenge to leadership audiences, from both academic and practitioner communities. The line of thinking presented in the thesis can prove unsettling to these communities, who are used to individual-centric discourses that have dominated the field of leadership (as discussed in Chapter 2).

Turning to the specifics of the research project, a major limitation was issues of access in PublicORG. The author was granted limited access, compared to the requirements of the research design. That is, the author required access to various and multiple meetings for exploring various forms of relational dynamics. However, she was only granted access to specific meetings (described in detail in Chapter 5), which resulted in slight changes in the research design (discussed in detail in section 4.4). Still, the author has decided to include the observations from PublicORG, under the premise that she learnt different things from the different engagement with the empirical material.

Another limitation concerns the research focus on complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points. Working from that basis excluded insights from incomplete processes, which were encountered in the field. Furthermore, such a focus demanded clarification about responsive interplays. Analysis regarded the flows of invitation, exploration and affirmation as whole. However, this whole did not mean that leadership had an effortless or linear expression. Rather, it was possible to talk about the seamless combination of invitation-exploration-affirmation to the extent that it expressed the emergence of leadership. Nonetheless, research focus excluded attention to incomplete combinations, which could offer other interesting insights.

4.7 Research ethics

Research ethics were reviewed in the formal procedure for obtaining ethical approval in the University of Strathclyde. The author submitted a proposal for the research study, which underwent assessment to ensure all criteria were met. Broadly speaking, research ethics included three dimensions. Firstly, research participants were informed about the nature of research and its research objectives. This included an introductory presentation for approving the research, and further questions throughout the duration of the research. Secondly, participants' involvement was voluntary and they could withdraw at any point. Although it would be challenging to account for a participant's withdrawal, it was important to offer this option. Thankfully, no participant decided to take the option of withdrawal. Thirdly, participants were asked for their permission to record the empirical material; a condition to which all participants agreed. The audio recordings were stored securely, protected with password and were accessed solely by the author. Finally, participants were provided with two copies of a document, outlining the above: one was signed and returned to the author, and the other one was kept by each research participant. The document contained the author's contact information so that participants could communicate with her at any time. A template of the Participant Information & Consent Form document that was used in the research can be seen in Appendix 1. Besides adhering to the formal requirements for undertaking research as a member of Strathclyde University, the author followed an ethical research practice (Flick, 2009), respecting participants' privacy and remaining sensitive to the recordings of their daily activities.

4.8 Chapter synopsis

This chapter has discussed the research methodology and design. Based on relational constructionism, the research focus is on relational dynamics, turning points and complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points. Firstly, relational dynamics indicate engagement with research from within the organisational setting, so as to follow the unfolding of leadership. Secondly, turning points are approached empirically in meetings in organisational settings. Thirdly, following complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points calls for the author's real time presence in the field. To fulfil these, the author has devised an empirical inquiry described as immersed, episodic fieldwork to highlight direct and real-time involvement in research that takes place in meetings in organisational settings. The unit of analysis is turning points in the unfolding of leadership, identified as such by research participants themselves. The question of analytical levels does not fit with the processual nature of the research, since it assumes separation into distinct entities. The author started the research process in SocialORG in May 2013, and continued it in PublicORG in September 2013. The methods for approaching the empirical material were non-participant observation (synchronously pre, post and during meetings, and asynchronously for online posts), shadowing (in PublicORG) and reflective research notes. The process of engaging with the empirical material was developed in induction and abduction, as outlined in Figure 4-1. The author concluded the research in October 2013 after analysing 106 turning points.

The basis for evaluating the quality of research is coherence and consistency with its conceptual foundations. Firstly, the research is characterised by the quality of analytic rigour, as evidenced in the presentation of research insights. Furthermore,

regarding the author's position in the research, the author (re)constructed the developed theory together with research participants. She also reflectively reviewed her practice in the research process, addressing the scope and limitations of insights. Synthesising the above, the research has produced trustworthy insights that can be followed up with future research or practitioner work. Trustworthiness is evidenced through the following procedural systematicities: the decision to follow participants' interpretations of turning points, the reflections from a pilot study, the incorporation of feedback from members of the academic community, the observations from multiple vantage points (various and different forms of relating), the faithfulness to participants' voices, as well as to conceptual foundations, and the relational practice of reflexivity.

The research also has certain limitations. The first one concerns the need to adhere to the conventions of the academic community, where specific style and structure are required for writing the thesis. Conforming to these requirements enables the author to learn about the process of undertaking a research project, which is an ongoing achievement. The second limitations results from adhering to relational constructionism, which opens up the possibility for exploring relational leadership, while simultaneously, it closes down other possibilities, such as speaking about 'the leader'. Likewise, the author's own interest in relational constructionism opens up the possibility of an immersed, episodic fieldwork, and simultaneously, closes down the possibility to explore other forms of relational dynamics, such as interviews. Thirdly, the thesis' focus on relational constructionism may unsettle leadership audiences, accustomed to individual-centric discourses of leadership. Fourthly, access issues in PublicORG have been a major limitation, which also resulted in modifying the

research process. Lastly, a final limitation comes from focusing on complete processes of the responsive interplay at turning points, which excludes analysis of incomplete combinations. In conclusion, turning to ethical considerations, the research has been granted ethical approval by the University of Strathclyde, and the author followed an ethical research practice.

CHAPTER 5 | LEADERSHIP TRAJECTORIES

5.1 Chapter introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with an understanding of the empirical material for navigating through the analysis in the following two chapters, connecting the methodology with the findings chapters. The chapter develops in two parts. Firstly, section 5.2 describes the two research sites, SocialORG and PublicORG, and discusses their appropriateness to the research objectives. Secondly, section 5.3 introduces the leadership trajectories. The chapter closes with section 5.4.

5.2 Research sites: Description and relevance

This section presents the research sites, where the empirical inquiry took place, as well as their relevance to the research objectives. The discussions in Chapters 3 and 4 indicated a research focus on context and multiplicity to explore the richness and variations of relational dynamics. SocialORG was selected as the primary research site, owing to its practice of meetings, which were frequent and constituted an established way of working. As discussed in Chapter 4, a methodological requirement for the research was meetings' observation. SocialORG granted access to all meeting forums and allowed the author to attend and record all aspects of organisational life. Additionally, the author was granted access to the online communication platform, organisational archives and intranet. The levels and degrees of access were critical for conducting research in real-time and from within, as deemed appropriate in the discussion in Chapter 4. Therefore, the author was able to approach and analyse a

broad and rich range of empirical material, allowing the realisation of the research methodology and design.

To complement the exploration of multiplicity in the relational process of leadership, a second research site was selected, PublicORG. Considering the methodological requirements, PublicORG was a challenging selection, posed a number of difficulties for the author, and dealing with them yielded interesting insight for the empirical inquiry. The difficulties included the lengthy period of negotiating access and the limited access granted to the author. The author presented the research project and requirements to PublicORG in May 2013. The organisation was interested in the research project and allowed the author to include PublicORG in her research design. Still, discussions about negotiating access began in May and, although the organisation was favourable to the research, they were not finalised until August 2013. Access was limited to one department in the organisation, where the author was allowed to research four meeting forums. It is worth noting that these meeting forums followed a hierarchical structure, contrasting vividly with the cross-functional and multi-meeting practice of SocialORG. Therefore, in pursuit of the empirical inquiry, PublicORG not only added to the research objectives, but also prompted reflection for future exploration.

The following sub-sections 5.2.1-5.2.4 provide a description of the two research sites, SocialORG and PublicORG, with an overview of their organisational background and an outline of research specifics. In doing so, the sub-sections demonstrate how and why the organisations offered appropriate research settings for the objectives of this thesis. Complementing these, there follows an overview of the empirical material analysed by the author to indicate the volume and breadth of

analysis. This overview aims to introduce the next section 5.3, where the empirical material is analysed to synthesise leadership trajectories.

5.2.1 SocialORG: Organisational background

This sub-section offers a brief overview of SocialORG's background so as to communicate the particular context, where the empirical inquiry took place. SocialORG was established in 2001 and operated in the third sector, in the field of social care in the UK. Its mission and purpose was to provide supported living services for adults with learning difficulties and/or mental health problems, while gradually facilitating their moving out of long stay institutions to secure settings. During the first years of its organisational life, SocialORG's core business centred primarily on helping people through the transition period. Gradually, as people moved out from institutions, SocialORG's core business evolved into supporting people becoming part of their societal surroundings. On its ten-year anniversary, SocialORG recognised that the policies and practices had changed considerably since its founding days, and began a route of reviewing and revisiting established norms to coordinate its values with working reality.

The review process was an ongoing labour and included all aspects and features of the organisation, from revisiting strategic goals to developing a clear marketing plan and increasing the aspirations of Supported Members. Furthermore, the reviewing process developed progressively: key areas were prioritised for review, but others emerged while examining existing practices and work. At the time of fieldwork in 2013 (May-October), the organisation was still in that process of change. Turning to operational matters, SocialORG supported 70 individuals, employed 130 employees, operated from three locations in the UK, and had a total budget of 20 million pounds.

Appreciating SocialORG's background enabled the author to familiarise herself with the practicalities of everyday life, which was helpful for understanding dominant organisational discourses, priorities and values. These aspects were secondary to the research objectives; nonetheless, since the empirical inquiry was a relational practice, getting a feel of the organisation helped the author to navigate herself comfortably in the research site, thus facilitating the realisation of the research design.

5.2.2 SocialORG: Research specifics

Critical for the pursuit of the research objectives were the ways relational dynamics developed in SocialORG. Meetings were the locus of organisational becoming (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) in SocialORG, regarded as communicative practices and means of being active in social arrangements. They were a regular and respected practice with certain organisational principles attached to them. Firstly, attendance in meetings varied. It was rare that a full workgroup would attend a meeting. There was no average rule for absence or specific members that tended to be absent. As revealed by participants, this was their practicing format: meetings would happen to keep the organisation going. Thus, the principle was that meetings would not depend on certain individuals' presence. Secondly, there were meetings' support practices. Prior to the meeting, a suggested agenda was populated on the online communication platform. Group members were required to prepare and upload supporting material for the standard agenda items. Additionally, they were invited to add items outside the agenda, such as participation to external events or conferences, ideas, suggestions or concerns. When items on the agenda concerned workgroups other than the one having the meeting, the agenda and supporting material was made

available to them as well, with the option to contribute. Thus, preparation and awareness for the meetings were actively sought.

Thirdly, during the meetings, the online communication platform mediated co-action in three ways. The first one was that it was used for keeping minutes of the meeting. The minutes were typed as the meeting progressed and they were then made available to participants of the work group(s). The second way the online platform mediated co-action in meetings was by keeping track of the actions changing leadership direction. This practice of monitoring action indicated the turning points in the unfolding of leadership, as discussed in Chapter 4. It is worth recalling that the author based the analysis of turning points on this practice of action listing, which indicated participants' voice about what is to be analysed. The third way the online communication platform mediated co-action in meetings was by enabling the chair to navigate through the agenda items and the supporting material, facilitating flow in the discussion. The three practices of minute taking, action listing and chairing were carried out by different participants at each meeting. These three practices were considered critical for the author, focusing her attention to the subtleties of relational dynamics. Participants' contribution to the research was of equal criticality, as it was important for the author to approach and include multiple voices in the relational process of leadership.

The empirical inquiry took place by observing meetings and gatherings throughout SocialORG, as explained in detail in Chapter 4. The online communication platform was also regarded as a meeting forum and was monitored asynchronously. Other research methods (general pre and post meeting observations, and research diary) helped the author understand the research context, as did informal discussions

with participants. Access was granted for the whole of SocialORG, across all organisational functions and workgroups. Such degrees of access were beneficial for the research objectives, as they allowed exploration of processes, avoiding precarious separations between leadership and individuals (Hernes, 2007). Besides, the unit of analysis -turning points- did not focus on individuals, but on relational dynamics. Lastly, Tables 5-1, 5-2 and 5-3 outline the workgroups and meeting forums in SocialORG, recording the meetings observed by the author. The information from these Tables is useful for following the leadership trajectories presented in section 5.3. It also indicates the richness of the empirical material, as well as the author's immersion in SocialORG.

Table 5-1 lists the information about workgroups in SocialORG, including:

- the workgroup's name and its code, devised by the author for the analysis
- the work focus summarising the workgroup's area of work in SocialORG
- the meeting forums each workgroup participated in.
- participants' codes, devised by the author for the analysis. All participants code are in the following format P00.00, where the first set of numbers stands for the workgroup, and the second set of numbers stands for participation in the work group. For example, P10.3 represents the third member in the External Contractors (ECs) workgroup. The numbers do not include any ordering; they are simply used for coding purposes.

It is worth noting the variety of different meeting forums, which are the bases of work organisation at SocialORG. As illustrated in Table 5-1, workgroups participated in multiple meeting forums. Therefore, meeting forums had an inclusive and reciprocal element, where multiple organisational parts met. For example,

Leadership meetings were attended by the workgroups of Middle Managers (MMs) and Senior Leaders (SLs), while All Staff meetings were attended by all workgroups.

Table 5-1: Work groups & meeting forums in SocialORG

Work group	Work group code	Work focus	Meeting forums	Participant codes
External Contactors	ECs	External to the organisation, partnerships	Leadership, Operations, MMs briefing (Joint Management Meeting), All staff	P10.1 to P10.14
Volunteers	VLs	Offer volunteer work for specific projects	Suggestions Club, Project G, All staff	P7.1, P7.2
Supported Members	SMs	Offer suggestions and opinions about support	Board, Suggestions Club, Project G, Recruitment, All Staff	P6.1 to P6.30
Admin Team	AD	Admin support	Training, Training events, Stand-In, All staff, Recruitment	P11.1, P11.2
Front-Line Employees	FLEs	Provide support to supported individuals	All staff, Training Events	P5.1 to P5.50
Project C	P9	Specific Project	Project C meeting	P9.1 to P9.15
Project G	P8	Specific Project	Project G meeting	P8.1, P8.2, P8.3
Middle Managers	MMs	Supervise, mentor and support FLEs	MMs briefing (Joint Management Meeting), Training, Training events, Stand-In, All staff, Recruitment, Task group	P4.1 to P4.13
Senior Leaders Central Team	SLs	Supervise, mentor and support MMs, ensure values and vision embedded in work	Board, Annual General, Leadership, Operations, Project C, Project G, Assessment Exercise (recruitment), MMs briefing (Joint Management Meeting), Training, Training events, Stand-In, All staff, Recruitment, Task group	P3.1 to P3.13
Co-ordinators	COs	Finance and IT	Board, Annual General, Leadership, Operations, MMs briefing (Joint Management Meeting), Training, Training, Stand-In, All staff, Recruitment	P2.1 to P2.5
Board Members	BMs	expertise on particular organisational objectives	Board, Annual General	P1.2 to P1.9

Table 5-2 records the 86 meetings observed in SocialORG, with the following information:

- meeting name with its corresponding code, devised by the author for the analysis
- workgroups that typically participated in the related meetings (coding as presented in Table 5-1)
- frequency with which the meetings occurred
- style of the meeting, which describes a standing team (existing and continuing meeting forum), emerging team (did not exist as a meeting forum, but emerged during research), project team (existing forum for the purposes of a specific project) or a varying team (existing forum that interchanges between a standing or a project team, depending on the task)
- number of meetings observed during research

Table 5-2: Meeting observations in SocialORG (86)

Meeting	Participants	M/ing code	Frequency	Style	# observed
Leadership	SLs, MMs	A	Weekly/Bi-weekly	Standing Team	20
Operations	SLs, MMs	B	Weekly/Bi-weekly	Standing Team	15
Project C	P8, SLs	C	Quarterly	Project Team, dissolved	2
MMs briefing/ Joint Mgt	SLs, MMs	D	Bi-weekly	Standing Team	10
Stand In	SLs, MMs	E	Six-weekly	Emerging Team	3
Suggestions Club	SMs, FLEs, VLs	F	Six-weekly	Standing Team	3
Project G	SMs, P9, VLs	G	Quarterly	Project Team	6
Board	BMs, SLs, SMs	H	Six-weekly	Standing Team	2
Training Events	MMs, FLEs	I	Monthly	Varying	4
Recruitment Map	SLs, MMs	II	Quarterly	Varying	2
All staff	all work groups	J	Quarterly	Varying	2

Annual General Meeting	BMs, SLs, MMs	K	Annually	Standing Team	1
Training	SLs, MMs	L	Quarterly	Varying	2
Assessment Exercise	SLs	M	when appropriate	Project Team, dissolved	2
Recruitment	SLs, MMs	N	Monthly	Emerging Team	7
Task Group	SLs, MMs	O	Bi-weekly	Emerging Team	5

Table 5-3 records the 159 posts in the online communication platform, observed in SocialORG, with the following information:

- workgroups that had a folder on the online communication platform (coding as presented in Table 5-1), where they stored content and communicated with the participants that had access to the folder .
- participants that had access to the corresponding online workgroup’s folder (coding as presented in Table 5-1). It is worth noting that access to folders was not restricted only to participants that typically attended related meetings. For example, Senior Leaders (SLs) had access to the Project G’s online folder, while they did not typically participated in the related meetings. Likewise, Supported Members (SMs) had access to Training’s online folder.
- number of posts observed during research

Table 5-3: Online communication platform posts in SocialORG (159)

Online workgroups	Participants	# observed
Project G	SLs, P9, SMs, VLs	16
SLs	SLs	42
Project C	SLs, P8	28
Board	BMs	9
MMs	MMs, SLs	54
Suggestions Club	SMs, SLs	1
Recruitment	SLs, MMs, SMs, COs	7
Training	SLs, MMs, SMs, COs	2

5.2.3 PublicORG: Organisational background

This sub-section offers a brief overview of PublicORG's background and communicates its particular context. PublicORG was a specific department of a long-standing public institution in the UK, dating back to 1895, restructured in 1975 for the first time and restructured again to its current state in 1996. Within the structure of the public sector in the UK, PublicORG belonged to local authorities and its main role was regional development. This involved services such as development and property management, housing investment and environmental management, all linked with the economic and business growth of the particular region. Fulfilling such a role, PublicORG had particular objectives that included delivering sustainable and wide-ranging benefits to its people (region's population), ensuring efficient regulation and public safety, enhancing its people's quality of life (evaluated against social, economic and environmental well-being indicators) and managing work in the optimal economic way (value for money).

At the time of fieldwork in 2013 (September-October), PublicORG was experiencing the implications of the financial crisis with increased scrutiny on public expenditure and performance. The organisation had identified that a major underpinning for continuing work was the delivery of high quality services in a cost effective manner. Turning to operational matters, PublicORG serviced a regional population of 600.000 people, employed 430 employees (downsizing from 650) and had a budget of 400 million pounds. An understanding of PublicORG's background enabled the author to familiarise herself with the practicalities of everyday work, which was helpful for modifying the research design as appropriate to the specific context (discussed in Chapter 4).

5.2.4 PublicORG: Research specifics

The practice of meetings in PublicORG was strikingly different compared to SocialORG, which was the principal reason for selecting the former as the second research site. Meetings were regarded as means of approving important action and reflected lines of authority in social arrangements. They were administrative practices within the organisation, and to a certain degree reviewed guidelines which came from the national government. Attendance in meetings was compulsory, and they would only go on if the full team were present. As encountered during research, if a member was absent, the meetings would be postponed. This meant that the frequency of the meetings would vary, depending on participants' availability. This posed a significant challenge for the author, as it was difficult to set dates for observing meetings. On certain occasions, meetings that the author had planned to observe were cancelled. Meetings were formally documented with a detailed agenda sent out to participants and minute taking during the meetings. The agenda was standardised and circulated by the responsible secretary, who was also responsible for minute taking. The primary research method was observing workgroup formal meetings in PublicORG, as explained in Chapter 4. Other research methods (general pre and post meeting observations, shadowing, and research diary) helped the researcher understand the research context, as did informal discussions with participants. Finally, access in PublicORG was limited to four workgroups.

Tables 5-4 and 5-5 outline the workgroups and meeting forums in PublicORG, and list the meetings observed by the author. The information provided by the Tables is useful for following the trajectories presented in section 5.3. It is also indicative of PublicORG's particular context. As indicated in Table 5-4, workgroups did not

communicate with each other in shared meetings. Senior Managers were each responsible for their division and held corresponding meetings with their Middle Managers. This set up was challenging for the author, but she hoped to gain insights into the variances of relational dynamics.

Table 5-4 lists the information about workgroups in PublicORG, including:

- the workgroup’s name and its code, devised by the author for the analysis
- the work focus summarising the group’s area of work in PublicORG
- the meeting forums each workgroup participated in. It is worth noticing that workgroups participated only in their respective meeting forums.
- participants’ codes, devised by the author for the analysis (following the same coding principles as in SocialORG).

Table 5-4: Work groups & meeting forums in PublicORG

Work group	Work group code	Work focus	Meeting forums	Participant codes
Senior Managers	SMs	departmental strategy	Senior Management Team meeting	Q1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4, Q1.5, Q1.6, Q1.7
Division A	DA	corporate services	Division A meetings	Q1.1, Q2.1, Q2.2, Q2.3, Q2.4, Q2.5, Q2.6, Q2.7, Q2.8
Division B	DB	economic services	Division B meetings	Q1.3, Q3.1, Q3.2, Q3.4, Q3.5, Q3.6
Division C	DC	building services	Division C meetings	Q1.6, Q4.1, Q4.2, Q4.3, Q4.4, Q4.5, Q4.6, Q4.7

Table 5-2 details the 6 meetings, observed in PublicORG, with the following information:

— meeting name with its corresponding code, devised by the author for the analysis.

It should be noted that the code for the workgroup and its meeting forum is the same, as only the workgroup’s members participated in the respective meetings.

— participants in the meeting (coding as presented in Table 5-4)

— frequency with which the meetings occurred. All meetings in PublicORG had a varying frequency, depending on participants’ availability.

— style of the meeting. All the meetings constituted a standing team (existing and continuing meeting forum).

— number of meetings observed during research

Table 5-5: Meetings observed in PublicORG (6)

Meeting	Participants	M/ing code	Frequency	Style	# observed
Senior M/mgmt. Team	Q1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4, Q1.5, Q1.6, Q1.7	SMT	varying (availability)	Standing Team	3
Division A	Q1.1, Q2.1, Q2.2, Q2.3, Q2.4, Q2.5, Q2.6, Q2.7, Q2.8	DA	varying (availability)	Standing Team	1
Division B	Q1.3, Q3.1, Q3.2, Q3.4, Q3.5, Q3.6	DB	varying (availability)	Standing Team	1
Division C	Q1.6, Q4.1, Q4.2, Q4.3, Q4.4, Q4.5, Q4.6, Q4.7	DC	varying (availability)	Standing Team	1

5.2.5 Section recap

This section has demonstrated how and why SocialORG and PublicORG offered appropriate comparative research sites for the purpose of the thesis. Firstly, SocialORG operated in the third sector, in the field of social care in the UK and, was actively changing at the time of fieldwork. Meetings in SocialORG were viewed as means of being active in social arrangements. They would not depend on individuals' presence, but would occur at their established frequency. In preparation for each upcoming meeting, participants populated the related agenda on the online communication platform for all interested parties to review and modify. Additionally, the online communication platform mediated relational dynamics in meetings by facilitating minute taking, action listing and chairing, carried out by different participants at each meeting. The specific practice of action listing served as the basis for the identification of turning points, conveyed in participants' voices. The author was granted access across all organisational functions and workgroups in SocialORG, observing 86 meetings and 159 posts in the online communication platform (constituting online meetings).

The second research site was PublicORG, which served as a contrasting site. PublicORG operated in the public sector, within local authorities in the UK, and underwent increased scrutiny at the time of fieldwork. Its meetings' practice was strikingly different compared to SocialORG. Meetings were regarded as administrative tasks to confirm direction, with their frequency depending on participants' availability and attendance. They were formally documented with a prescribed agenda and minute taking, handled by the responsible secretary. Research access was limited, allowing the author to research only four workgroups in

PublicORG and observe 6 meetings. Finally, the descriptions of the two research sites are complemented with Tables 5-1 to 5-5, presenting the empirical details for SocialORG and PublicORG. Based on these, section 5.3 discusses the analysis of the empirical material in terms of leadership trajectories.

5.3 Leadership trajectories

This section presents leadership trajectories and communicates the richness of the empirical material (Langley, et al., 2013). As discussed in Chapter 4, leadership trajectories developed around turning points that were declared as such by research participants. In SocialORG, leadership trajectories show the relational process of leadership unfolding across turning points that deal with the same issue, spreading across meetings and across the organisation. Therefore, a trajectory is an extended temporal flow that links turning points to reveal an unfolding leadership direction around a common storyline. The analytical process through which the author composed leadership trajectories is as follows. Linking to the discussions in Chapter 4 and sub-section 5.2.2, research participants in SocialORG established action points during meetings, and noted a related comment in the online communication platform (practice of action-listing). These action points corresponded to the author's conceptualisation of turning points, to the extent that they marked an emergent change in leadership direction. After each meeting, a list of action points (i.e. turning points) was published and was accessible to all participants, as well as the author. In this way, the author could go back to the turning points identified by participants. It should be clarified that, during each meeting, multiple turning points were noted, belonging to various issues that participants were dealing with. Likewise, turning points dealing with the same issue were linked across various meetings from different workgroups.

As research progressed, the author tagged turning points to specific issues. In total, there were 15 issues that recurred in the various meetings from the different workgroups. The author extracted the tagged turning points and grouped together those belonging to the same issue. This produced 15 potential storylines, out of which 4 were selected for further analysis. The selection was based on the richness offered by the empirical material, reflected in the number of meetings around which leadership unfolded, the duration of this unfolding and the different facets of organisational life described by the trajectories. The first trajectory described an unplanned organisational response, where leadership unfolded around the restructuring of Middle Managers' areas of supervision. The second trajectory addressed a planned organisational response, where leadership unfolded around Recruitment Review. The third trajectory showed leadership developing around the working practice of the Stand-In Service. Finally, the fourth trajectory described the unfolding of leadership as participants revised the working practice of Joint Management meetings. All four trajectories transcended single meeting forums and spread across the organisation.

In PublicORG, the author composed just one leadership trajectory around the common storyline of pursuing cost effectiveness. As discussed in Chapter 4 and explained further in section 5.2.4, the author had access to specific meeting forums, and therefore, could not follow the development of turning points as she had in SocialORG. In PublicORG, turning points were declared as such by research participants, as they confirmed meetings' conclusions. Therefore, the leadership trajectory here does not spread across the organisation and across meetings. Rather, it consists of discrete turning points that concern single meeting forums, and that mark a change in leadership direction.

The four leadership trajectories from SocialORG and the one from PublicORG are presented in the sub-sections that follow. They are not purely descriptive, but rather introduce the story, abstracting sufficiently from the empirical material to allow further analysis in Chapter 6 and 7.

5.3.1 Middle Managers' Workload Reconfiguration (MM)

The trajectory presented in this section describes leadership emerging from SocialORG's continuous effort to cope with the changes in its environment, as described in section 5.2.1. A new regulatory framework was imposed by the national government, triggering reflection about the effectiveness of organisational structures. The new regulations themselves did not ask for any re-structuring. Rather, in the process of considering how to implement the regulations, participants found themselves thinking about the ways their work was organised. At the same time, participants had to account for new incoming work, which was unlike previous situations they had serviced. Reflections about how to organise incoming work arose during the later developmental stage of the trajectory.

The leadership trajectory outlines changes in the pattern of Middle Managers' scope of supervision, considering regional location as determinant of allocation. In the beginning of the trajectory, the norm was that Middle Managers supervised teams in several geographical areas. However, in light of the changes, existing organisational structures were reviewed with concerns for community building, enhanced flexibility and monitoring, due to increasing amount of new work. A re-distribution of areas of responsibility was considered with the criterion of locality, with each Middle Manager being responsible for one specific local area. Table 5-6 summarises the development of the leadership trajectory across its turning points, as follows:

- The leadership trajectory is developed in the chronological succession of turning points, which occurred during a specific period of time in SocialORG. In this way, the leadership trajectory is characterised by both chronological (author's framing for research purposes, as discussed in Chapter 4) and timely occurrence (temporality in turning points, as discussed in Chapter 3).
- The trajectory developed across 20 turning points, which have been coded by the author as MM-TP1 to MM-TP20. The coding represents ascending chronological succession, starting from June 2013 and ending in October 2013.
- For each turning point, Table 5-6 lists the meeting at which it occurred (coding as presented in Table 5-2), and the participants that attended the meeting (coding as presented in Table 5-1). The information about the participants includes the reference to who carried out the practices of chairing, minute-taking and action-listing. The meeting code is followed by numeric digits, which represent its chronological occurrence. For example, B4 represents the fourth Operations meeting, which occurred on 3/7/2013. When there is an additional digit in the numeric code, it is a reminder for the author. For example, meeting B32 signals that there was additional material added in the agenda, as requested in the previous meetings B3. This is only important to the author for representational purposes; it is noted here for clarity and for communicating how to read the Tables.
- Finally, there is a brief description for each turning point, outlining the change in leadership direction.

Table 5-6: MM trajectory, turning points

Turning point	M/ing	Date	Participants	Turning point description
MM-TP1	B3.2	14/6/2013	P3.4 (chair), P3.1 (min), P3.3 (to-act), P3.2, P3.11, P3.9, P3.5, P3.12	detailed info needed to consider the proposition
MM-TP2	A3.3	26/6/2013	P3.11 (to-act), P3.5, P3.6, P3.3, P3.7 (min), P3.2 (chair)	service mapping needed
MM-TP3	B4	3/7/2013	P3.7, P3.6 (to-act), P3.10, P3.3, P3.12 (chair), P3.9 (min), P3.5, P3.2	take it to next week's MMs' meeting; "let us see what they come up with"
MM-TP4	D4	1/8/2013	P3.4 (chair), P3.8 (to-act), P3.6 (mins), P4.6, P4.12, P3.7, P4.4, P4.7, P4.3, P4.11, P3.10, P3.1	MMs to feedback personal preferences looking at the SWOT
MM-TP5	Online	6/8/2013	P4.7, P3.3, P3.11, P4.3, P4.1, P3.6, P3.7, P4.13, P4.1, P4.11, P4.12, P4.9, P4.6	agreement in principle
MM-TP6	D4.1	8/8/2013	P4.3 (chair), P4.1 (to-act), P4.6 (mins), P3.4, P3.5, P4.9, P4.5, P4.4, P4.12, P3.12, P3.7, P3.10, P4.11, P3.11, P4.10, P3.1 (joined for the last hour)	task group identified
MM-TP7	O1	13/8/2013	P4.6, P4.11, P4.4 (to-act), P3.4 (chair), P3.7 (mins)	timescales for transition, possibility of a roaming position
MM-TP8	A9	21/8/2013	P3.8, P3.11, P3.6, P3.9, P3.4, P3.5, P3.3 (min), P3.12 (chair), P3.1 (to-act)	consultation with MMs
MM-TP9	D5	22/8/2013	P4.13, P4.5, P3.12, P3.13, P4.12, P3.6, P4.1, P4.3, P4.11, P3.4, P4.4, P4.6, P3.10 (to-act), P3.8 (mins), P3.1 (chair), P3.5	re-allocation criteria propositions
MM-TP10	O2	28/8/2013	P4.4, P3.12 (mins), P4.11 (mins), P3.4, P3.11 (chair)	re-allocation criteria specifics (financial information and breakdown)
MM-TP11	D6	5/9/2013	P3.7, P4.13, P4.5, P4.11, P3.12, P3.6, P4.1, P4.3, P4.7, P3.1, P3.11, P3.4, P4.6 (to-act), P3.8 (mins), P4.8 (chair)	deliverable management hours
MM-TP12	A11.1	11/9/2013	P3.8 (chair), P3.1 (to-act), P9.3, P3.6, P3.11, P3.12, P3.10, P3.5, P3.13, P3.7 (mins), P8.1	resources and procedures for deliverable management hours
MM-TP13	O3	12/9/2013	P3.7 (mins), P4.4, P3.5 (chair), P4.6 (to-act)	timescales for transition + financial resources
MM-TP14	D7	19/9/2013	P4.11 (to-act), P4.8, P4.7, P4.3, P3.5, P3.1, P3.6, P4.13, P4.4, P4.1, P4.6 (chair), P4.12 (mins)	inconclusive proposal, roaming role needs defining
MM-TP15	O4	19/9/2013	P4.6, P4.11 (chair), P4.7, P4.12 (mins + to-act)	roaming role defined
MM-TP16	A13	25/9/2013	P3.8 (mins), P3.10, P3.5 (mins), P3.13, P4.12 (in & out), P4.13 (in & out), P3.12, P3.4, P3.3, P3.1 (chair), P3.6	panel meeting to resolve inconclusive proposal
MM-TP17	Online	27/9/2013	P4.4, P4.13, P4.12, P4.1, P4.3, P4.6, P4.11	MMs to re-try and come up with final decision

MM-TP18	A14	2/10/2013	P3.9 (mins), P3.7 (to-act), P3.11, P3.6, P3.1 (chair), P3.3, P3.8, P3.5, P3.13, P3.10	any decision made to be posted online
MM-TP19	D8	2/10/2013	P4.1 (chair), P4.13 (mins), P3.13 (to-act), P3.5, P4.6, P4.4, P4.8, P4.3, P3.11, P3.7, P3.6, P2.4 (in and out)	closure to the process: final proposal
MM-TP20	O5	6/10/2013	P3.5 (mins), P4.4, P3.7, P3.1 (to-act), P4.11, P4.6 (chair)	latest observed trail: proposal endorsed, official letters out

The unfolding of the specific trajectory allowed for exploring the flow of leadership as it emerged and evolved over time in an unplanned organisational response. Preliminary thoughts about reconfiguring Middle Managers' areas of supervision were raised during Operations and Leadership meetings with MM-TP1 and MM-TP2, while reviewing existing structure owing to new regulations and new work. In the beginning of this development and for about the first two months (from MM-TP1 to MM-TP4), any relevant discussions were in parallel to other occurrences. Leadership had a subtle expression; there were cautious steps in the direction of reconfiguring MMs' scope of supervision. However, there was no apparent conclusion for the idea: the different workgroups (Senior Leaders and Middle Managers) were trying to make sense of the proposition (MM-TP1), what it would mean for working practices (MM-TP2), how it would be relevant to organisational purposes (MM-TP3) and if it was a route worth pursuing (MM-TP4).

Two months after the proposition was first introduced, MM-TP5 signalled a transition to happenings: the discussion now did not question if the proposition was a good idea, but shifted attention to the relevance of the idea to the organisation, its values and future sustainability. Leadership at this turning point reflected the coordination of multiple voices. This was achieved through the online platform (MM-

TP5), where an agreement in principle was confirmed, with detailed planning needed to operationalise the proposition. From MM-TP5 and onwards leadership had an intense expression: intense relational dynamics underpinned turning points and direction was sought in pursuit of an operational reform. Before MM-TP5, leadership emerged around potential destinations and relational dynamics sketched potential orientation (“could this be?”). Once the proposition was a plan to be operationalised, leadership direction was accelerated and relational dynamics gave rise to multiple turning points along the way, synchronised around the direction of the proposition. Leadership did not predetermine the next steps, but there was synchrony in co-action, as participants increasingly became familiar with the arrays of their relational dynamics.

In the process of making future together, it transpired that certain issues needed greater discussion and analysis than time and information permitted during meetings (MM-TP6). A task group emerged with representatives from both the workgroups of Middle Managers and Senior Leaders. The task group was charged with the following: establishing feasible timescales for implementing the transition (MM-TP7), formulating criteria for making the change (MM-TP10), re-thinking financial resources and creating a questionnaire with personal preferences for the reconfiguration (each Middle Manager to fill in the questionnaire with preferred locality of supervision against the determined criteria, MM-TP13). For all these milestones, there were lively relational dynamics among the workgroups and meeting forums, highlighting reciprocity. Navigating through the turning points, the locality-based proposition had been shaped around the preceding co-created arrangements. Eventually, participants gathered at meeting D7 with the aim to negotiate and

formulate re-distribution of each Middle Manager to a specific region. Far from accomplishing this, MM-TP14 illustrated the unique dynamics of leadership emergence: a conclusive proposal could not be reached as Middle Managers contested specific regions and all related discussions were over-shadowed by the possibility of a roaming position.

Similar to the initiation of the trajectory (MM-TP1 to MM-TP4), leadership emerged out of intense relational dynamics. Leadership at MM-TP16 reflected profound frustration that the proposal remained unresolved, suggesting that Senior Leaders would try to mediate the inconclusive proposal, based on the established criteria and their judgements. At the same time, the online communication platform took over, with MMs changing the temporary direction of the movement (MM-TP17). They wanted a 'retry' meeting to work on impasses and provide the task panel with a conclusive decision. At the same time, the roaming role was defined and could be included in the negotiation process (MM-TP15). The relational process of leadership was a continuous effort, rather than a straightforward deed (Hosking, 2011b). In the end, MMs came together again, re-worked the proposal, and were able to produce a conclusive proposition with specific Middle Managers attached to specific locations, along with transition guidelines (MM-TP19). This conclusive plan was brought to an emergent task group meeting, which was the last observed trail of the leadership trajectory (MM-TP20). The proposal was approved and the next step in leadership direction was the issue of formal letters, informing all interested parties about the new working practices.

5.3.2 Recruitment Review (RR)

This section presents the leadership trajectory around an established bi-annual review of recruiting needs, established to keep the organisation focused on its values. The trajectory features the ways leadership emerged around a planned organisational initiative, and was favourable to studying how context and relational dynamics were associated with each other. The working norm in SocialORG was a review every six months, examining the recruitment needs of the organisation. There was an extensive assessment to evaluate if services were operating under organisational values, and to consider if corrective action was necessary (this assessment has been coded as MAP exercise). Resulting action included both re-distributing employees to service teams and recruiting new employees. SocialORG did not have a separate Human Resources Department that handled relevant recruiting issues. Instead, the norm was that every six months the state of the organisation would be reviewed and action would be planned accordingly.

At the time of fieldwork, the Recruitment Review was additionally influenced by the parallel organisational development of restructuring and increasing amount of new work. What is more, although the recruitment review was arranged for specific intervals during the year, it was held back a few months. Table 5-7 summarises the development of the leadership trajectory across its turning points, following the same principles as Table 5-6. The Recruitment Review trajectory unfolded across 50 turning points, spreading across SocialORG for six months.

Table 5-7: RR trajectory, turning points

Turning point	M/ing	Date	Participants	Turning point description
RR-TP1	Online	24/5/2013	P3.7, P3.5, P3.6	undertake Recruitment MAP exercise
RR-TP2	Online	27/5/2013	P3.8, P3.6	pull together each team's composition
RR-TP3	B2	28/5/2013	P3.7, P3.8, P3.9, P3.5, P3.4, P3.1 (to-act), P3.12 (chair), P3.3 (mins), P3.2	MAP exercise: composition
RR-TP4	II.1	28/5/2013	P3.1, P3.2, P3.4, P3.5	MAP: connections across teams
RR-TP5	D1	30/5/2013	P4.1, P4.3, P4.4, P4.5, P4.6, P3.8 (chair), P3.6, P3.4, P3.1, P4.7	review monthly evaluations for MAP exercise
RR-TP6	II.2	30/5/2013	P4.1, P4.3, P4.4, P4.5, P4.6, P4.7, P3.6, P3.4, P3.1	MAP exercise results: actions need to be in place
RR-TP7	Online	2/6/2013	P3.5, P3.1, P3.11, P3.12, P3.6, P3.7, P3.9	MAP exercise results: shocking
RR-TP8	B3	5/6/2013	P3.1, P3.6 (mins), P3.9 (chair), P3.4, P3.5, P3.11, P3.10 (to-act)	"get back to our values"
RR-TP9	B3.1	13/6/2013	P3.5 (chair), P3.8 (mins), P3.11, P3.12 (to-act), P3.2, P3.4, P3.6, P3.7, P3.9, P3.1, P3.3	explain MAP exercise results with MMs
RR-TP10	D1.1	13/6/2013	P3.1, P3.5, P4.1, P4.8, P4.9, P4.4, P4.7, P4.6, P4.5, P4.11, P4.3, P3.4, P3.2, P3.7 (chair), P4.10, P3.3	MAP exercise results: meanings
RR-TP11	B3.2	14/6/2013	P3.4 (chair), P3.1 (min), P3.3 (to-act), P3.2, P3.11, P3.9, P3.5, P3.12	generic recruitment advert to be released
RR-TP12	B3.3	26/6/2013	P3.12, P3.5, P3.6, P3.3 (to-act), P3.7 (min), P3.2 (chair)	timeline for screening applicants
RR-TP13	D2	27/6/2013	P4.5, P4.9, P4.7, P4.10, P4.6, P3.5, P4.3, P4.1, P3.6 (chair), P3.7 (min), P2.4 (external update)	timeslots for interviews
RR-TP14	A4	3/7/2013	P3.7, P3.6 (to-act), P3.10, P3.3, P3.12 (chair), P3.9 (min), P3.5, P3.2	emergence of recruitment sub group to review aims and objectives
RR-TP15	B4	3/7/2013	P3.7, P3.6 (to-act), P3.10, P3.3, P3.12 (chair), P3.9 (min), P3.5, P3.2	matching information to go live and to be kept up to date
RR-TP16	B5	10/7/2013	P3.7 (to-act), P3.12, P3.6, P3.9, P3.8, P9.1, P3.3, P3.4, P3.5 (min), P.10, P3.11 (chair), P3.1	include supported members in the recruitment procedure
RR-TP17	E2	11/7/2013	P4.3, P3.5, P3.8	shadowing period for new recruits about Stand In Service
RR-TP18	Online	16/7/2013	P3.7, P3.11, P3.12	monthly statistics pointing at hidden vacancies for recruitment
RR-TP19	A6	17/7/2013	P3.12 (to-act), P3.1, P3.10, P3.5, P3.8, P3.4 (min), P3.6 (chair)	recruitment plan for new services

RR-TP20	B6	17/7/2013	P3.12 (to-act), P3.1, P3.10, P3.5, P3.8, P3.4 (min), P3.6 (chair)	vigilance for applications completed by agencies
RR-TP21	N1	28/7/2013	P3.2 (mins), P3.5 (chair), P2.4, P3.3 (to-act), P3.6	aims and objectives of the subgroup for moving the recruitment drive, pass information to workgroups as recruitment is a joint responsibility
RR-TP22	B8	31/7/2013	P3.9, P3.7, P3.6 (to-act), P3.10, P3.4, P3.12, P3.3, P3.1 (min), P3.8 (chair)	list of services against 'hot spots' and new candidates
RR-TP23	D4	1/8/2013	P3.4 (chair), P3.8 (to-act), P3.6 (mins), P4.6, P4.12, P3.7, P4.4, P4.7, P4.3, P4.11, P3.10, P3.1	prepare 2 nd stage interviews
RR-TP24	Online	3/8/2013	P4.7, P3.4, P3.5	flow chart and procedure for 2 nd stage interviews
RR-TP25	N2	5/8/2013	P3.5 (to-act), P2.4 (chair), P2.3 (mins)	cost comparative exercise with previous recruitment drives, include other organisational members into the procedure
RR-TP26	A8.1	7/8/2013	P3.11, P3.6, P3.10 (mins), P3.4 (to-act), P3.7, P3.12 (chair), P3.3, P3.5	new services against recruitment
RR-TP27	D4.1	8/8/2013	P4.3 (chair), P4.1 (to-act), P4.6 (mins), P3.4, P3.5, P4.9, P4.5, P4.4, P4.12, P3.12, P3.7, P3.10, P4.11, P3.11, P4.10, P3.1 (joined for the last hour)	decided on 2 nd stage reviewers and dates
RR-TP28	F3	13/8/2013	P5.23, P6.1, P6.2, P6.3, P6.4, P6.25, P7.1, P3.7 (guest), P3.5 (guest)	update questions asked to candidates
RR-TP29	B8.1	14/8/2013	P3.7 (chair), P3.8, P3.3 (to-act), P3.4, P3.12, P3.11, P3.5, P3.10, P3.13, P3.6	absence during 2 nd stage interviews
RR-TP30	N3	16/8/2013	P3.5 (chair), P4.12 (mins), P3.13, P2.4 (to-act), P4.13, P2.3	interview template and content
RR-TP31	D5	22/8/2013	P4.13, P4.5, P3.12, P3.13, P4.12, P3.6, P4.1, P4.3, P4.11, P3.4, P4.4, P4.6, P3.10 (to-act), P3.8 (mins), P3.1 (chair), P3.5	split successful candidates into areas/services
RR-TP32	Online	22/8/2013	P2.4, P3.5, P3.3	updated template to the recruitment subgroup
RR-TP33	N4	23/8/2013	P2.4 (chair), P2.3 (to-act), P3.5 (mins), P3.3, P4.13	interview questions updated to incorporate feedback from Suggestions Club
RR-TP34	Online	29/8/2013	P2.4, P3.3	feedback on interview template
RR-TP35	Online	29/8/2013	P2.3, P2.4, P3.3	job fare attendance
RR-TP36	Online	29/8/2013	P2.3, P4.13, P4.5, P2.4	interview training
RR-TP37	Online	3/9/2013	P2.4, P3.1, P3.7, P4.13, P3.13	changed meeting date

RR-TP38	D6	5/9/2013	P3.7, P4.13, P4.5, P4.11, P3.12, P3.6, P4.1, P4.3, P4.7, P3.1, P3.11, P3.4, P4.6 (to-act), P3.8 (mins), P4.8 (chair)	matching procedure
RR-TP39	N5	13/9/2013	P2.4 (mins), P3.5 (chair), P4.13, P6.3, P3.13	need for clear vision
RR-TP40	A12	18/9/2013	P3.5, P3.4, P3.1, P3.12 (mins), P3.6, P3.9, P3.11 (to-act), P3.7 (chair)	email invitation for recruitment vision meeting
RR-TP41	D7	19/9/2013	P4.11, P4.8, P4.7, P4.3, P3.5, P3.1, P3.6, P4.13, P4.4, P4.1, P4.6 (chair), P4.12 (mins)	update recruitment spreadsheet with candidate info from 2 nd stage interviews
RR-TP42	Online	24/9/2013	P3.3, P3.11, P3.5	recruitment progress
RR-TP43	B10	25/9/2013	P3.8 (chair), P3.10, P3.13, P3.12 (to-act), P3.4, P3.3, P3.1 (mins), P3.6	list and timeline about hidden vacancies
RR-TP44	N6	27/9/2013	P3.5, P2.4, P2.3, P6.3(chair), P4.13 (mins), P3.3 (to-act)	vision statement
RR-TP45	A14	2/10/2013	P3.9 (mins), P3.7 (to-act), P3.11, P3.6, P3.1 (chair), P3.3, P3.8, P3.5, P3.13, P3.10	apply vision statement to align values with actions
RR-TP46	D8	3/10/2013	P4.1 (chair), P4.13 (mins), P3.13 (to-act), P3.5, P4.6, P4.4, P4.8, P4.3, P3.11, P3.7, P3.6, P2.4 (in and out)	quality check: purpose behind each recruitment
RR-TP47	N7	4/10/2013	P3.11 (to-act), P3.5 (chair), P3.3, P2.4, P3.7 (mins), P3.12, P4.13 (irregular meeting)	no new work for area LN until evaluation of current state
RR-TP48	Online	4/10/2013	P3.11, P3.7, P3.6, P3.1	observations and recommendations from Recruitment meeting
RR-TP49	Online	4/10/2013	P4.2, P6.3, P3.13, P2.3, P6.3	arrangements for future meetings
RR-TP50	Online	4/10/2013	P3.5, P3.12, P3.1, P3.9	invite for MAP exercise

The leadership trajectory was initiated online with RR-TP1 and RR-TP2 directing attention to the upcoming update, signalling focus on what needed to happen. This was followed in RR-TP3, where intense and polyphonic exploration set the scene for the future. Subsequent exploratory meetings were set up with the mission of uncovering how to proceed further in pragmatic and practical terms. The mission was fulfilled at RR-TP4 and RR-TP6 with Recruitment MAP exercises, where each service team was outlined with the aim to identify gaps and malfunctioning, in terms of

overworking or working outside expertise. The MAP exercise allowed for exploring the service teams beyond the surface, evaluating the greater picture of where Front Line Employees were working. The results of the exercise were shared online, as well as in B3, B31 and D11 meetings, where leadership at the related turning points indicated mismatch with organisational values.

Besides observations about fulfilling organisational values, the MAP exercise uncovered gaps and the corresponding need for new employees. Leadership shifted away from contemplating values, and focused on the pragmatics of the recruitment, spreading across Operations, Leadership and Joint Management meetings. Practicalities were set in motion: designing the advertisement to go out (RR-TP11), determining the timeline of the procedure (RR-TP12) and arranging timeslots for interviews (RR-TP13). Movement in and across meetings, for three months, navigated towards the emergence of a recruitment task group for attending to the particularities of the procedures (RR-TP14). The task group was not a temporary one: it did not emerge for the specific occasion and would then dissolve. Rather, it emerged in the light of the specific recruitment drive and the aim was to incorporate thinking about recruitment into a regular organisational agenda (RR-TP21). Therefore, while logistically moving forward with the recruitment initiative, leadership was oriented around broader organisational values (RR-TP16, RR-TP17).

From RR-TP21 onwards, leadership unfolded through strong interplay among the workgroups for the next two months. In comparison to the previous trajectory (MM) where exploration was prominent for progressing, here leadership was primarily practically oriented. Having been through the recruitment procedure (RR-TP22 until RR-TP38), direction emerged around the recruitment vision (RR-TP39), and an

invitation was sent out for participating in a creative meeting (RR-TP40). During N6, a vision statement was formulated, together with certain principles for working with future recruitment initiatives (RR-TP45). Following the vision-setting session, leadership in meetings A14 and D8 was directed towards rethinking work in LN area. Under the mutually created vision, work in LN posed a challenge. An irregular meeting of the recruitment task group was arranged to review working prospects in area LN (N7), and leadership oriented towards refraining from new work in area LN until further planning was established to align with the broader vision (RR-TP47). Six months after initiating the Recruitment Review, the final trail observed was on the online communication platform with posts directing attention to the new and upcoming round of the recruitment review (RR-TP48, RR-TP49 and RR-TP50).

5.3.3 Stand-In Service Development (SSD)

This sub-section presents the leadership trajectory around an existing organisational practice. The trajectory describes the development of the Stand-In Service, which referred to organisational practices for Supported Members (SM) outside working hours, handling both emergencies and work as usual. Gradually, alongside the typical requirements of the service, there were parallel organisational occurrences that mediated the development of the Service, such as Middle Managers' changing role, Recruitment Review and Project C. The Stand-In Service was a repetitive organisational occurrence, in the sense that the specific practice was not a new development, but an established and on-going practice. The trajectory was favourable to studying the aspects of connectedness and interdependence, as it included not only the specific workgroup meetings (E), but also meetings from other workgroups; remarkably, the trajectory transcended the whole of the organisation

throughout the different meetings. It unfolded across 21 turning points, spreading across the organisation for five months. Its development is presented in Table 5-8, following the same presentational principles as Tables 5-6 and 5-7.

Table 5-8: SSD trajectory, turning points

Turning point	M/ing	Date	Participants	Turning point description
SSD-TP1	B1	22/5/2013	P3.1, P3.2 (to-act), P3.3, P3.4 (chair), P3.5, P3.6 (mins)	protocol needs clarified
SSD-TP2	B2	28/5/2013	P3.7, P3.8, P3.9, P3.5, P3.4, P3.1 (to-act), P3.12 (chair), P3.3 (min), P3.2	emergency protocol to be written up
SSD-TP3	E1	30/5/2013	P4.6 (to-act), P3.8, P3.3(chair), P3.5 (mins)	reminders to be set up
SSD-TP4	B3	5/6/2013	P3.1, P3.6 (mins), P3.9 (chair), P3.4, P3.5, P3.11, P3.10 (to-act)	performance management
SSD-TP5	B5	10/6/2013	P3.7 (to-act), P3.12, P3.6, P3.9, P3.8, P9.1, P3.3, P3.4, P3.5 (min), P.10, P3.11 (chair), P3.2	contingency plan
SSD-TP6	D1.1	13/6/2013	P3.1, P3.5, P4.1, P4.8, P4.9, P4.4, P4.7, P4.6, P4.5, P4.11, P4.3, P3.4, P3.2, P3.7 (chair), P4.10, P3.3	update organisational files
SSD-TP7	B5.1	10/7/2013	P3.7, P2.2, P3.6 (chair), P3.8, P9.1, P3.3 (to-act), P3.4 (mins), P3.5, P.10	update templates
SSD-TP8	E2	11/7/2013	P4.3 (chair), P3.5 (mins + to-act), P3.8	quality assurance
SSD-TP9	D4	1/8/2013	P3.4 (chair), P3.8 (to-act), P3.6 (mins), P4.6, P4.12, P3.7, P4.4, P4.7, P4.3, P4.11, P3.10, P3.1	feedback sheets
SSD-TP10	A8.1	7/8/2013	P3.11, P3.6, P3.10 (mins), P3.4 (to-act), P3.7, P3.12 (chair), P3.3, P3.5	discuss at Joint: team perceptions
SSD-TP11	D4.1	8/2013	P4.3 (chair), P4.1 (to-act), P4.6 (mins), P3.4, P3.5, P4.9, P4.5, P4.4, P4.12, P3.12, P3.7, P3.10, P4.11, P3.11, P4.10, P3.1 (joined for the last hour)	discuss at all-staff: team perceptions
SSD-TP12	B8.1	14/8/2013	P3.7 (chair), P3.8, P3.3 (to-act), P3.4, P3.12, P3.11, P3.5, P3.10, P3.13, P3.6 (mins)	post historic info for Project C
SSD-TP13	D5	22/8/2013	P4.13,P4.5, P3.12, P3.13, P4.12, P3.6, P4.1, P4.3, P4.11, P3.4, P4.4, P4.6, P3.10 (to-act), P3.8 (mins), P3.1 (chair), P3.5	training: requirements for notifiable info

SSD-TP14	E3	22/8/2013	P4.3 (mins), P4.12 (chair), P3.8, P4.6, P3.13, P4.13 (to-act), P4.12	pilots
SSD-TP15	D6	5/9/2013	P3.7, P4.13, P4.5, P4.11, P3.12, P3.6, P4.1, P4.3, P4.7, P3.1, P3.11, P3.4, P4.6 (to-act), P3.8 (mins), P4.8 (chair)	training presentation at all-staff
SSD-TP16	Online	6/9/2013	P3.7, P3.8, P4.1, P4.7, P4.6, P3.6, P4.11, P4.12, P4.5	personal experiences & understanding
SSD-TP17	J2	19/9/2013	P5.36, P5.37, P5.38, P5.39, P5.40, P5.41, P5.42, P5.43, P5.44, P5.45, P5.46, P5.47, P5.48, P5.49, P5.50, P5.25, P5.17, P5.31, P3.7 (chair + to-act), P4.4 (mins), P4.1, P4.3, P4.5, P10.12	training sessions needed
SSD-TP18	A13	25/9/2013	P3.8 (mins), P3.10, P3.5 (mins), P3.13, P4.12 (in & out), P4.13 (in & out), P3.12, P3.4, P3.3, P3.1 (chair), P3.6	update organisational files (MMs' reconfiguration)
SSD-TP19	B10	25/9/2013	P3.8, P3.10 (to-act), P3.13, P3.12 (mins), P3.4, P3.3, P3.1 (chair), P3.6	Project C: policy update
SSD-TP20	A14	2/10/2013	P3.9 (mins), P3.7 (to-act), P3.11, P3.6, P3.1 (chair), P3.3, P3.8, P3.5, P3.13, P3.10	induction training
SSD-TP21	D8	3/10/2013	P4.1 (chair), P4.13 (mins), P3.13 (to-act), P3.5, P4.6, P4.4, P4.8, P4.3, P3.11, P3.7, P3.6, P2.4 (in and out)	follow the break-down in data sheets

The trajectory began with SSD-TP1 and SSD-TP2, where incidents concerning health and safety matters indicated the need for updating the Stand-In protocol. This was followed up at the specific Stand-In meeting (E1), where deeper issues were explored about how emergency could and should be handled. SSD-TP3 indicated that the system would be devised with continuous reminders through multiple forums about particularities of the procedures. Leadership emerged in a similar way in the following turning points: performance management (SSD-TP4), contingency planning (SSD-TP5), filling updates (SSD-TP6 and SSD-TP7), quality assurance (SSD-TP8) and feedback reporting (SSD-TP9). Leadership spanned across the specific time-space dedicated to the Stand-In meeting forum and developed over other organisational

gatherings. Such emergence and expression of leadership indicated reciprocity in relational dynamics, where multiple organisational happenings shaped leadership direction.

Given the reciprocal dynamics of leadership, concerns were raised, in parallel meetings, about how different teams and Front Line Employees perceived and implemented the Stand-In Service (SSD-TP10, SSD-TP11, SSD-TP12). A relevant agenda item was arranged for the all-staff meeting (SSD-TP15), where leadership direction marked the requirement of necessary training (SSD-TP17). In such a way, the unfolding of leadership was shaped by compound relational dynamics in and across meetings. While there was a specific forum dedicated to the Stand-In Service (E), matters concerning the service were often discussed during other forums as well. The reciprocal dynamics of leadership were also expressed by overlapping with other organisational happenings, as can be appreciated in the following turning points: SSD-TP18 overlapping with MMs' Workload Reconfiguration, SSD-TP19 overlapping with Project C and SSD-TP20 overlapping with Recruitment Review. Five months after exploring the Stand-In Service Development trajectory, the last trail observed was during D8 with leadership direction around data sheets' reporting (SSD-TP21).

5.3.4 Emergence of Joint Management Meetings (JMM)

This sub-section describes the leadership trajectory around re-developing a working practice. The trajectory featured the emergence of Joint Management Meetings (JMM) and was favourable to studying the recreation of social bonds. This is because the movement was very short and sharp, conveying radical change in Middle Managers' meeting forum, revisiting its format, context and composition. Initially, the specific meeting forum had the setup of a briefing session, where the

purpose was to go over information. Gradually, there were signs of frustration among participants, which were mentioned and discussed at three different meetings before a major shift from the existing practice took place. The revived meeting setup had the purpose of a creative space, where the organisation would be made, instead of talked about. The interest for theorising leadership lays in the description of the future enacted in the present, when Middle Managers drastically altered the status quo. The trajectory unfolded across 9 turning points, spreading across the organisation for two months. Following similar representational principles as Tables 5-6, 5-7 and 5-8, Table 5-9 outlines the development of the JMM trajectory across its 9 turning points.

Table 5-9: JMM trajectory, turning points

Turning point	M/ing	Date	Participants	Turning point description
JMM-TP1	B2	28/5/2013	P3.7, P3.8, P3.9, P3.5, P3.4, P3.1 (to-act), P3.12 (chair), P3.3 (min), P3.2	concern: meeting format
JMM-TP2	B3.2	14/6/2013	P3.4 (chair), P3.1 (min), P3.3 (to-act), P3.2, P3.11, P3.9, P3.5, P3.12	concern: info amount
JMM-TP3	B4	3/7/2013	P3.7, P3.6 (to-act), P3.10, P3.3, P3.12 (chair), P3.9 (min), P3.5, P3.2	concern: meeting not in sync
JMM-TP4	D3	11/7/2013	P4.3 (to-act), P4.7, P4.9, P4.5, P3.6, P3.7 (mins), P4.1, P3.1, P3.5 (chair), P3.8, P3.11	this forum is not working, the emergence of the Joint Management Meeting
JMM-TP5	A7	24/7/2013	P3.12 (min), P3.3 (chair), P3.9 (to-act), P3.6, P3.11, P3.1	Operations meeting every second week, shared agenda with Joint Management
JMM-TP6	B7	24/7/2013	P3.12 (min), P3.3 (chair), P3.9 (to-act), P3.6, P3.11, P3.1	modify Operations Meeting agenda against the reshaped Joint Management
JMM-TP7	B8	31/7/2013	P3.9, P3.7, P3.6 (to-act), P3.10, P3.4, P3.12, P3.3, P3.1 (min), P3.8 (chair)	agenda additions for next day Joint Management
JMM-TP8	D4	1/8/2013	P3.4 (chair), P3.8 (to-act), P3.6 (mins), P4.6, P4.12, P3.7, P4.4, P4.7, P4.3, P4.11, P3.10, P3.1	synchrony in action: Joint Management Meeting working
JMM-TP9	A8.1	7/8/2013	P3.11, P3.6, P3.10 (mins), P3.4 (to-act), P3.7, P3.12 (chair), P3.3, P3.5	positive feedback

Scheduled every fortnight, Middle Managers' meeting practice was initially a briefing session, where Middle Managers would gather in a room, and one or two Senior Leader(s) would brief the former about organisational occurrences. The meeting practice was a relatively new incidence for SocialORG, set up 4 months prior to the research period. Over the span of two months, the practice was radically changed. Both workgroups (Middle Managers and Senior Leaders) expressed initial concerns and questions about the meeting forum, driving its drastic reform. From then onwards, a renewed meeting practice emerged, renamed Joint Management to highlight Middle Managers' participation in organising.

The sparks for rethinking Middle Managers' meeting setup emerged at three Operations meetings in the course of a month (B2, B3.2, B4), where participants questioned the relevance and engagement at Middle Managers' meetings (JMM-TP1, JMM-TP2, JMM-TP3). Discussing about the Middle Managers' meeting forum was not an agenda item for Operations meetings, and was not reviewed with a specific focus. While concerns were raised in Operations meetings, Middle Managers' meetings happened as normal. Eventually, distress was expressed at the end of the D3. Middle Managers themselves felt uncomfortable and disappointed with their meetings, questioning if the forum was working. Such a questioning led to a re-visioning of the purpose and format of the meeting, which re-emerged as Joint Management meeting (JMM-TP4). Simultaneously, the Operations meeting agenda was reviewed, with some items transferred to the newly reformed Joint Management (JMM-TP5, JMM-TP6, JMM-TP7). Ultimately, this was an impactful and transitory movement with its last trails observed in JMM-TP8 and JMM-TP9, as the revived organisational practices were taking shape.

5.3.5 PublicORG (PO)

Compared to the leadership trajectories presented as part of the research in SocialORG, similar descriptions could not be developed in PublicORG. Turning points were identified to the extent that they marked confirmation of meetings' conclusions. Therefore, the trajectory here does not narrate the development of leadership in the direction of a specific issue. Rather, it describes specific turning points in pursuit of organisational objectives, prescribed by the national government. The particular objective underpinning all turning points is the delivery of cost efficiency. The trajectory consists of 6 discrete turning points, as outlined in Table 5-10, following similar representational principles as Tables 5-6 to 5-9.

Table 5-10: PO trajectory, turning points

Turning point	M/ing	Date	Participants	Turning point description
PO-TP1	TMT1	3/9/2013	Q1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4, Q1.5, Q1.6, Q1.7	confirm: internal graphic design team
PO-TP2	DA	9/9/2013	Q1.1, Q2.1, Q2.2, Q2.3, Q2.4, Q2.5, Q2.6, Q2.7, Q2.8	confirm: new employees' probation period
PO-TP3	TMT2	1/10/2013	Q1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4, Q1.5, Q1.6, Q1.7	confirm: notification for legal requirements
PO-TP4	DB	2/10/2013	Q1.3, Q3.1, Q3.2, Q3.4, Q3.5, Q3.6	confirm: festive regional decoration
PO-TP5	TMT3	22/10/2013	Q1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4, Q1.5, Q1.6, Q1.7	confirm: performance indicators + frameworks
PO-TP6	DC	30/10/2013	Q1.6, Q4.1, Q4.2, Q4.3, Q4.4, Q4.5, Q4.6, Q4.7	confirm: sports event progress report

At PO-TP1, the Top Management Team (TMT) confirmed the establishment of an internal graphic design team. The initiative aimed at achieving cost efficiency from eliminating the outsourcing of design services for graphic projects. The TMT confirmed the team's areas of work (graphic design, photography and video production), scope of services (initial concept, design development and final production), and the internal procedure to be followed. The internal procedure

consisted of three main steps: approaching the design team (initial discussion and brief), allocating the project to the appropriate designer (concept development and corresponding cost analysis) and concluding the service (distribution of the developed material and project dismantling). At the next turning point (PO-TP2), Division A confirmed clear guidelines for the probation period of new employees. The rationale for issuing the guidelines was to enhance employees' well-being and introduce evaluation for interns. In this way, interns could be considered for permanent roles, thus eliminating costs related to attracting and hiring personnel. The guidelines set in place a 3-step procedure, involving monthly meetings between the new employee and his/her supervisor (notes forwarded to line manager), an evaluation performed by the supervisor at the end of the probation period and a check-list completed by the line manager (noting the requirement to extend the probation period, performance concerns and training requirements).

Cost minimisation was at the centre of PO-TP3, when the TMT confirmed that there needs to be a sensible notification to Legal Services for new projects. The notification was aimed at ensuring compliance with legislation and cost-efficient project management. It was also linked directly to staff reduction, which had resulted in the difficulty to deliver legal work at short notice. At the next turning point, the budgeting requirements for festive decorations were confirmed by Division B (PO-TP4). The available budget covered decorative materials and seasonal staffing requirements. Planning for the new financial year, the TMT confirmed the performance framework with updating performance indicators, and clarifying procedural matters (PO-TP5). The update regarding performance indicators involved financial targets, broken down to Divisions and to individual employees. The update

regarding procedural matters included simplifying the internal database, and formalising communication protocols. Finally, Division C at PO-TP6 confirmed a progress report about the building requirements for an upcoming sports event. The progress report covered the state of sports' facilities and athletes' accommodation.

There were two underpinnings characterising relational dynamics in PublicORG. The first was the mandates prescribed by the national government. PublicORG could determine the ways to implement these mandates; however, organisational success was not evaluated against efficiency in implementation, but against meeting the mandates. What is more, as regards the implementation process, the mandates reached executive functions in the hierarchy, and were then passed over to other functions in PublicORG. The second underpinning was that participation in leadership was not meetings-based, as was the case in SocialORG. In PublicORG, informal encounters or email communication replaced the usual degrees of engagement encountered during meetings in SocialORG. Instead of deliberating in an open forum, discussions took place behind closed doors or meetings that were not open to all (the author was not granted access to these). Therefore, certain aspects of relational dynamics in PublicORG remained 'invisible' for the author.

5.3.6 Section recap

The section has communicated the richness of the empirical context, by presenting its analysis in terms of leadership trajectories. The specifics of each leadership trajectory are outlined in Tables 5-6 to 5-10, which summarise unfolding across turning points. In SocialORG, leadership trajectories are joined together by turning points dealing with the same issue, spreading across meetings and across the organisation. Four leadership trajectories are extracted from the empirical material in

SocialORG. The first trajectory deals with the Middle Managers' Workload Reconfiguration, and illustrates the ways leadership emerged and evolved in an unplanned organisational response. The second trajectory addresses the Recruitment Review in SocialORG. Leadership started from a planned organisational initiative and developed over multiple directions, with vivid relational dynamics in various gatherings. The third trajectory focuses on the working practice of the Stand-In Service, highlighting reciprocity. The fourth trajectory describes leadership unfolding around the revision of Joint Management meetings, featuring the recreation of social bonds. In PublicORG, there is one leadership trajectory developed from the empirical material, consisting of discrete turning points that are not joined together in the direction of a specific issue. Rather, turning points all follow the direction of delivering cost efficiency. Relational dynamics in PublicORG are underpinned by mandates from the national government and by participation that is not meetings-based. As such, given that the empirical design centred meetings, the author was not 'introduced' to certain aspects of relational dynamics.

5.4 Chapter synopsis

This chapter has communicated an understanding of the empirical material, bridging the methodology and the findings chapters with the aim to facilitate navigation through the analysis in the following two chapters. Developed in two parts, the first has described the research sites (SocialORG and PublicORG) and their appropriateness to the research objectives. Research specifics for both sites are outlined in Tables 5-1 to 5-5, together with the coding devised by the author. The second part has presented the analysis of the empirical material in leadership trajectories. In SocialORG, four leadership trajectories have been devised from the

empirical material; all joined together by turning points dealing with the same issue, spreading across meetings and across the organisation (MMs' Workload Reconfiguration, Recruitment Review, Stand-In Service Development, and Joint Management Meetings). In PublicORG, one leadership trajectory has been developed, consisting of discrete turning points in the direction of cost efficiency. The specifics of all leadership trajectories are outlined in Tables 5-6 to 5-10, which summarise their unfolding across turning points.

Chapter 6 proceeds with analysing the responsive interplay at turning points in the identified trajectories, discussing the different ways the relational process of leadership is expressed empirically.

CHAPTER 6 | LEADERSHIP EXPRESSIONS

How is the relational process of leadership expressed empirically?

6.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the empirical material relating to the first research question, exploring how the relational process of leadership is expressed empirically, in terms of Gergen's (2009c) responsive interplay. The chapter draws on the empirical material from SocialORG and PublicORG, and analyses turning points in the interwoven flows of invitation-exploration-affirmation, uncovering the different ways the relational process of leadership is expressed. To fulfil its purpose, the chapter develops in two parts. The first part, section 6.2, presents the empirically grounded constructs for analysing the responsive interplay in its interlinked flows of invitation, exploration and affirmation. These are taken forward to section 6.3, which presents different patterns of leadership expressions, as characterised by the combinations in the responsive interplay. Finally, the chapter closes with a synopsis in section 6.4, summarising key insights relating to the first research question.

6.2 Responsive interplay

Restating the thesis' conceptual foundation, analysis holds that dialogue during meetings is creative of the relational process of leadership (Dachler & Hosking, 1995; Gergen, 1994a). Analysis does not deal with the content of dialogue (McNamee & Gergen, 1999), but evaluates relational dynamics (Hosking, 2011a). This is achieved with Gergen's (2009c) concept of the responsive interplay, which is developed in the combination of invitation – exploration – affirmation. Based on the discussion in Chapter 3, the responsive interplay refers to the process of participants being attuned

to the ways they are interconnected, which Hosking (2011a, p. 463) also described as “being in the now”. Therefore, analysis here attended to the ways relational dynamics were temporarily manifested at a particular flow in the responsive interplay, devising respective constructs. Starting with invitation, the author analysed unplanned and planned triggers with the constructs of ‘developing’ and ‘preceding’ Exploration was analysed as the response to invitation, conveying provisions for leadership emergence. The author analysed the ways participants elaborated on invitation with the constructs of ‘differentiating’, ‘adapting’, ‘stabilising’ and ‘integrating’. Finally, affirmation was analysed with reference to verifying the significance of exploration. The author analysed the acceptance of exploration with the constructs of ‘linking’ and ‘selecting’ affirmation. In such a way, analysis pointed to the dynamic effect of each flow in the co-active moment of leadership.

The constructs per flow of the responsive interplay are discussed in the following sub-sections 6.2.1 to 6.2.3. Each sub-section offers examples that illustrate the meanings arising from the empirical material. Examples from different turning points are used, giving prominence to the particular description, rather than the event described. Owing to space limitations, two to three illustrative examples are presented for each construct with an explanation of what happened at each example. In the presentation of examples, information is given for the turning point, during which the respective flow of the responsive interplay occurred. Further details about each turning point are available by linking to the previous Chapter and Tables 5.6 to 5.10. Participants’ names are left out from the dialogue, to focus attention on its flow and responsiveness. Such a style in presentation is intended to avoid associating leadership with specific individuals, thus placing emphasis on relational processes. Moreover,

each sub-section is complemented with a table that outlines the empirical material related to the meanings described.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the author consulted with participants about the development of constructs. The author also consulted with her supervisors, who had a greater view of the research process, besides the empirical material. Discussions among the author and her supervisors strengthened the quality of analysis. Although presented in consecutive sub-section, the flows of the responsive interplay are interlinked both empirically and theoretically. Additionally, analysis only concerned responsive interplays that were complete, going from invitation to exploration and affirmation. Appendices 2 to 6 summarise the analysis of the responsive interplay in the leadership trajectories discussed in Chapter 5. The discussion about the emergent constructs follows in the next sub-sections.

6.2.1 Invitation

Invitation highlighted the connectivity in relating and signified analytical attention to multi-beings, rather than individuals. The author approached it empirically by going back to the turning points and looking for triggers to co-action. She uncovered two constructs associated with unplanned and planned triggers, which she labelled as ‘developing’ and ‘preceding’ invitation. Table 6-1 outlines their occurrences in the empirical material. From the 106 turning points that were analysed, 32 were characterised with the ‘developing’ construct of invitation and 74 were characterised with the ‘preceding’ one. The number of occurrences does not signify any measurement per each construct; numerical information simply conveys the richness of the empirical material.

Table 6-1: Empirical overview of invitation in the responsive interplay

Responsive interplay flow: Invitation	Occurrences	Empirically Grounded Definition
developing	32: MM-TP1, MM-TP8, RR-TP9, RR-TP11, RR-TP14, RR-TP15, RR-TP17, RR-TP-19, RR-TP26, RR-TP31, RR-TP40, RR-TP41, RR-TP43, RR-TP45, RR-TP46, SSD-TP1, SSD-TP2, SSD-TP4, SSD-TP5, SSD-TP7, SSD-TP9, SSD-TP10, SSD-TP11, SSD-TP12, SSD-TP18, SSD-TP19, SSD-TP21, JMM-TP1, JMM-TP2, JMM-TP3, JMM-TP4, JMM-TP5	unplanned trigger
preceding	74: MM-TP2, MM-TP3, MM-TP4, MM-TP5, MM-TP6, MM-TP7, MM-TP9, MM-TP10, MM-TP11, MM-TP12, MM-TP13, MM-TP14, MM-TP15, MM-TP16, MM-TP17, MM-TP18, MM-TP19, MM-TP20, RR-TP1, RR-TP2, RR-TP3, RR-TP4, RR-TP5, RR-TP6, RR-TP7, RR-TP8, RR-TP10, RR-TP12, RR-TP13, RR-TP16, RR-TP18, RR-TP20, RR-TP21, RR-TP22, RR-TP23, RR-TP24, RR-TP25, RR-TP27, RR-TP28, RR-TP29, RR-TP30, RR-TP32, RR-TP33, RR-TP34, RR-TP35, RR-TP36, RR-TP37, RR-TP38, RR-TP39, RR-TP42, RR-TP44, RR-TP47, RR-TP48, RR-TP49, RR-TP50, SSD-TP3, SSD-TP6, SSD-TP8, SSD-TP13, SSD-TP14, SSD-TP15, SSD-TP16, SSD-TP17, SSD-TP20, JMM-TP6, JMM-TP7, JMM-TP8, JMM-TP9, PO-TP1, PO-TP2, PO-TP3, PO-TP4, PO-TP5, PO-TP6	planned trigger

6.2.1.1 'Developing' invitation

Starting with the 'developing' expression of invitation, it referred to an unplanned trigger. Empirically, this was observed as a trigger for co-action that was unexpected in the frame of meeting agenda, but flowed from other co-action. The following example at turning point RR-TP14 illustrates the empirically grounded definition of 'developing' invitation.

- *Where do we stand with the tasks of the recruitment procedure for this position?*
- *The assessment centre has been put back a week now, due to the other activities that are taking place.*
- *Do we have a timeline then?*
- *Obviously, it's important to deal with it as soon as possible.*
- *It is not good for our reputation either to stand on it for a long period.*
- *Sure, but other than these, do we see how it will happen?*
- *I get what you are trying to say, do you believe this is getting bigger than us?*
- *It sort of implies that maybe a dedicated group needs to take this forward.*
- *Are we talking about a task group then?*
- *Yes, that would make sense.*
- *Much better compared to what we have now, all of us running around. We cannot keep on top of it.*

The example of invitation at RR-TP14 showed participants going over the specifics of the recruitment review, during which the complexity of the procedure raised questions. The requirements of recruiting seemed overwhelming for participants, who also dealt with other organisational issues at the time. To deal with these difficulties, participants started looking for other ways to pursue the procedure, contemplating the formulation of a dedicated task group. Thus, the possibility of a task group came from a parallel discussion, an unplanned trigger, characterised as ‘developing’ invitation.

Another example for the ‘developing’ construct of invitation is the following, which occurred at turning point MM-TP1.

-Where are all these developments taking us? Middle Managers’ role has changed, and with developing the new services, there may be a discussion to be had?

-Well, we need to think how all that will affect our supported members. What would they need then?

-Right, so if we are reconsidering Middle Managers’ role, what is the basis of our thinking? What are we talking about and what would that practically mean?

-I am wondering if Middle Managers need to take a locality-based role.

Invitation at turning point MM-TP1 brought participants together in contemplating new possibilities about Middle Managers’ role, triggering the emergence of leadership. Participants questioned the impact new developments had for the organisation, generating dialogue around novel routes for co-action. The

questioning gave rise to a spark for coordinating co-action in pursuit of direction, and in doing so, the particular example from the empirical material illustrates the ‘developing’ construct of invitation.

6.2.1.2 ‘Preceding’ invitation

The ‘preceding’ construct of invitation refers to a planned trigger, which was empirically observed as a pre-determined agenda item, around which co-action was triggered. A regular agenda did not presuppose ‘preceding’ invitation; to be regarded as such, invitation needed to be completed by exploration and affirmation. The following example at turning point RR-TP4 illustrates the empirically grounded definition of ‘preceding’ invitation.

- *We are here to review the existing structure; make sure that values are instilled into the processes.*
- *[while they review the data] It is like people are dancing.*
- *Well, yes! The organisation is moving and so is everyone.*
- *We are flexible; but where is this taking us?*
- *Well, yes. It is one thing to be flexible and another thing knowing the ‘why’ for it.*
- *We need to review what the cross-overs between teams mean.*
- *Certainly, we cannot keep going like this, we do not know what we are managing.*

Invitation at turning point RR-TP4 set the scene for co-action. Participants were gathered to review existing information and take relevant co-action about the recruitment procedure in the organisation. The purpose of the meeting was pre-established and known to all participants. Therefore, invitation gained its significance

not from triggering novelty, but from coordinating attention to what needed to be accomplished. This was observed as participants progressed their dialogue, moving from concerns about flexibility, to explaining what instances of flexibility meant. Thus, the coordinating effect of invitation rendered this example from the empirical material an illustration of the ‘preceding’ expression.

Likewise, ‘preceding’ invitation signalled attention in the next example at turning point SSD-TP9, where co-action started from a regular agenda item.

- Here are the details for last week’s service; thoughts?

- Some days have not been filled in.

- It is kind of urgent to know what the service feeds back to the organisation.

What do we make of this?

- I would start with insisting to fill in the sheets.

- Yes, even if there is no incident, just write that down.

- Simple as that, we need the information first.

Invitation at turning point SSD-TP9 showed participants reviewing the feedback sheets from the Stand-In Service during the latest week to that date. Invitation directed attention to the explanation needed for the blank feedback sheets. In doing so, invitation introduced the background for co-action and coordinated attention around work as usual. Therefore, the ‘preceding’ expression of invitation was appreciated for its coordination effect on the relational process of leadership.

6.2.1.3 Invitation recap

In summary, invitation in Gergen’s (2009) responsive interplay was approached in this research with the empirically grounded constructs of ‘developing’ and ‘preceding’. Respectively, they referred to unplanned and planned triggers for co-

action, suggesting responsiveness to the possibilities of co-action and setting leadership in motion. The two empirically grounded constructs of invitation are brought forward to section 6.3, where different combinations in the responsive interplay are reviewed to describe expressions of leadership per turning point.

6.2.2 Exploration

Following Gergen (2009c), exploration conveyed provisions for bringing leadership into becoming and indicated a movement towards mutual understanding. Analysis shifted from individualistic traditions (Hunter, et al., 2007): the focus was not on the content of words, but rather on the process of relational co-ordination, producing mutual understanding. This was observed empirically as participants' voices made sense and co-ordinated understanding within the local and temporary context. The author approached exploration empirically attending to the ways participants elaborated on invitation, identifying the following four constructs of exploration from the empirical material: 'differentiating', 'adapting', 'stabilising' and 'integrating'. The distinctions between the four expressions were subtle, and the author's decision to place instances of exploration under a certain construct was reinforced by relevant discussions with participants (as explained in Chapter 4). The discussion about exploration is accompanied with Table 6-2, outlining its occurrences in the empirical material. In the 106 turning points that were analysed, there were 12 expressions of 'differentiating' exploration, 31 expressions of 'adapting' exploration, 39 expressions of 'stabilising' exploration and 24 expressions of 'integrating' exploration. The number of times each expression occurred does not stand for any measurement, but rather demonstrates the richness of the empirical material.

Table 6-2: Empirical overview of exploration in the responsive interplay

Responsive interplay flow: Exploration	Occurrences	Empirically Grounded Definition
differentiating	12: MM-TP1, RR-TR11, RR-TR14, RR-TR19, RR-TR41, RR-TR43, SSD-TP1, SSD-TP4, SSD-TP10, SSD-TP18, JMM-TP1, JMM-TP2	diverging meaning
adapting	31: MM-TP2, MM-TP3, MM-TP4, MM-TP5, MM-TP7, MM-TP9, MM-TP14, MM-TP16, MM-TP17, MM-TP19, RR-TP4, RR-TP6, RR-TP9, RR-TP12, RR-TP17, RR-TP21, RR-TP24, RR-TP28, RR-TP33, RR-TP39, RR-TP44, RR-TP49, SSD-TP3, SSD-TP8, SSD-TP9, SSD-TP11, SSD-TP14, JMM-TP3, JMM-TP4, JMM7	reframing connections
stabilising	39: MM-TP6, MM-TP8, MM-TP12, MM-TP15, MM-TP18, RR-TP1, RR-TP3, RR-TP8, RR-TP10, RR-TP18, RR-TP20, RR-TP22, RR-TP23, RR-TP25, RR-TP26, RR-TP29, RR-TP34, RR-TP35, RR-TP37, RR-TP38, RR-TP42, RR-TP45, RR-TP48, RR-TP50, SSD-TP5, SSD-TP7, SSD-TP12, SSD-TP15, SSD-TP16, SSD-TP19, SSD-TP20, JMM-TP8, JMM-TP9, PO-TP1, PO-TP2, PO-TP3, PO-TP4, PO-TP5, PO-TP6	converging meaning
integrating	24: MM-TP10, MM-TP11, MM-TP13, MM-TP20, RR-TP2, RR-TP5, RR-TP7, RR-TP15, RR-TP16, RR-TP27, RR-TP30, RR-TP31, RR-TP32, RR-TP36, RR-TP40, RR-TP46, RR-TP47, SSD-TP2, SSD-TP6, SSD-TP13, SSD-TP17, SSD-TP21, JMM-TP5, JMM-TP6	embedding meaning to existing connections

6.2.2.1 'Differentiating' exploration

Starting from the 'differentiating' expression of exploration, it referred to participants holding diverging meanings towards mutual understanding. 'Differentiating' exploration signalled that participants apprehended the matter at stake from different perspectives. These differences were the basis of exploration, out of which leadership emerged towards mutual understanding. The empirically grounded definition of 'differentiating' exploration is illustrated in the following example at turning point RR-TP43.

-How about a list of questions where we can clarify things?

- It needs to target hidden vacancies.

- There is already a list in the system I think...

- It doesn't cover hidden vacancies though.

- What would the questions be?

- Wait, is it about the questions or the workgroups involved?

- I don't see a dilemma here, it is a massive concern anyway!

- It needs a re-vamp, and that came up from the recent recruitment drive.

- This needs more people in the room however...

At this turning point, participants held divergent views about how to approach the emergent issue of hidden vacancies. For example, one view was that there already existed a list in the system, while another view remarked that the particular list did not address the issue of hidden vacancies. Considering that the list did not address hidden vacancies, dialogue developed around potential questions that could be included in the list. Again, a divergent view enquired if it was the questions or the groups that were pertinent to the issue. The criticality of the issue was not commonly accepted: while one participant made a clear distinction between questions in the list and the

workgroup to formulate these questions, another participant noted that both aspects were important for the issue of hidden vacancies. Despite their differences, participants engaged in dialogue and recognised each other as participants in their dialogue. Even with different views, relational dynamics were not interrupted; rather, questions built on one another, giving leadership the possibility to emerge out of divergence. Therefore, exploration was termed as ‘differentiating’ because it allowed participants to engage with the invitation in pursuit of mutual understanding. This particular expression of exploration illustrated relations in the making, while participants came from divergent viewpoints.

Another example to illustrate the ‘differentiating’ expression of exploration is the following, at turning point SSD-TP18.

- *Do you think the Service needs to be updated because of this?* [this=Middle Managers reconfiguration proposal]

- *I do not know about an update; it will take time to see.*

- *Adjustments will need to be made for sure.*

- *Yeah, well we have to see; because, in essence we are not changing how we work.*

- *You are saying that we are not changing the philosophy of it, but actually we are trying to make it better.*

- *What do we do next?*

- *How about timescales?*

- *It depends on the priorities that we set.*

- *I would say it is more about our values.*

- We need to consult with the task group though, see where they are with the reconfiguration plans.

In the above example, participants discussed potential implications to the Stand-In Service owing to the changes in Middle Managers areas of supervision. With the specific issue at hand, there were various opinions about what to consider (ranging from updating the Service altogether, to making adjustments), and about the necessity to do so (ranging from views about the changing nature of work, to prioritising action, and to focusing on organisational values). More importantly though, relational dynamics developed in such a way that leadership emerged in pursuit of mutual understanding. This possibility of leadership out of differences rendered the specific example an appropriate illustration of the ‘differentiating’ expression of exploration.

Similar observations were made during the following example of ‘differentiating’ exploration at turning point SSD-TP4.

- Holiday leave is becoming problematic, as some Middle Managers have already been given or have asked for annual leave.

- Who gave authorisation? There are certain issues to discuss before coming to that.

- I am not sure I see the problem here; this is only relevant to certain teams.

- Maybe, but this is not the way we work; with every right comes responsibility.

- Do we have an idea about exact numbers and teams?

- Have I got this wrong, because I thought we were talking about rotation?

- This is only the minimum.

- Should we bring it up to the next Joint meeting and see what Middle Managers have to say about it?

- *Is this enough?*
- *Enough for now or rotations?*
- *Maybe more people are needed in the room to say.*

At turning point SSD-TP4 participants focused attention on the issue of holiday leave and its connection to determining rotation of work shifts. Different suggestions were offered, with views contesting between determining rotation, against work values. During the divergence of viewpoints, dialogue kept going and leadership emerged towards determining the next steps of co-action. In doing so, participants engaged in dialogue in pursuit of mutual understanding and ‘differentiating’ exploration illustrated that divergence was the background to the unfolding of leadership.

6.2.2.2 ‘Adapting’ exploration

‘Adapting’ exploration, referred to re-framing the connections in relational dynamics towards mutual understanding. While the previous expression of ‘differentiating’ exploration was primarily concerned with meanings, this expression described the development of relational dynamics as a result of changing meanings. The following example from turning point SSD-TP11 illustrates the definition of ‘adapting’ exploration.

- *We have opened a can of worms here.*
- *It seems that there are practical issues around some teams. We are missing something in the working policies; the practical evaluation of recording data sheets is missing.*
- *A successful Stand-In is few incidents recorded, not what people have done.*

- *Should we then make clear that if no assistance is required, then there is no need to notify the Stand-In?*

- *Absolutely. Records will be retained anyway, but there is no need to inform Stand-In if there is nothing to note and follow-up.*

- *How often is this checked? The danger is that we may put it in place, but fail to follow.*

- *Let us keep it simple then, and make sure that feedback sheets are checked monthly.*

- *Simple works.*

- *Simple and understandable, so that we can follow it.*

Here, participants shuffled their relational connections as they reviewed how the working policy of updating service records was perceived amongst colleagues, because numerous incidents were reported without being notifiable. They addressed the issue of the working policy by re-arranging their relational ties around it: looking to simplify the procedure towards reporting incidents that required assistance from the organisation. In this respect, the ‘adapting’ expression of exploration illustrated valuable insights for leadership emergence in the sense of juxtaposing local context with the nexus of participants’ relational connections. In this specific turning point, participants recognised the requirements of notifiable incidents and adapted to them, by suggesting the recording of the ones needing follow-up. Therefore, ‘adapting’ exploration indicated engagement with the invitation by re-arranging relational connections in pursuit of mutual understanding.

Similar remarks were made during the next example of ‘adapting’ exploration, at turning point MM-TP17.

- *Do you feel that the discussions have concluded sufficiently?*
- *There are still too many matters undecided.*
- *How do we figure it out?*
- *I would like us to try again, get a minimum basis going.*
- *We can go to second and third choices, until we come to resolution.*
- *Yes, we also need to bring in the criteria that we have established.*
- *Sure we have gone a long way since the beginning, but we cannot lose it now.*
- *We owe it to our work for so long to try again; it is not about personal preferences, but a viable future.*
- *Should we come back with second and third preferences then?*
- *If we are all determined to make it work, I would come along.*

In the above example, participants communicated via the online communication platform and shared their thoughts about their failure to provide a conclusive plan for the reconfiguration proposition. They dealt with the issue by re-arranging their relational connections: recognising that a working plan was not about personal preferences, but about the organisational future as determined with the criteria they had established themselves. Participants adapted by committing to a second attempt, where all possibilities would be exhausted, taking into account second and third preferences. In this respect, the example illustrated the ‘adapting’ expression of exploration, where participants engaged with the invitation by re-arranging their relational connections in pursuit of mutual understanding.

Another example for ‘adapting’ exploration is from turning point RR-TP13.

- *So the question is how to proceed with the interviews. What is best for arranging the timeslots?*

- *I would like to see a match between candidate and Middle Manager interviewing.*

- *Yes, that would make sense.*

- *And it would be time effective also, instead of me feeding back to you about someone. Because you will work with them after all.*

- *Should we look for candidate per service?*

- *Not just yet, but we can keep it in mind for the next round.*

- *Good idea.*

- *I like that, if we have the successful ones evaluated against the services, we are right on top of it.*

- *Should we have a look at the profiles then and split them between us?*

- *Yes, and then look at our diaries.*

- *And we can help each other out with the dates.*

At turning point RR-TP13 participants discussed the arrangement of interviews for a first screening of the candidates, who had applied for the positions advertised. They adapted to the issue at hand by firstly, specifying who would perform the interview and secondly, specifying the related timeslot. Local context was crucial in the re-arrangement of their relational connections, as time effectiveness was the driver for deciding to proceed in that way. In this respect, ‘adapting’ exploration illustrated a movement towards mutual understanding, by re-arranging relational connections.

6.2.2.3 'Stabilising' exploration

'Stabilising' exploration referred to participants holding converging meanings towards mutual understanding. Participants approached the matter at stake from similar perspectives, which provided the basis for exploration, out of which leadership emerged towards mutual understanding. The following example is illustrative of the specific definition for 'stabilising' exploration. It occurred at turning point JMM-TP9.

- *So how is the new format going?*
- *It is going well!*
- *Pleasant flow and everyone is engaged*
- *Agendas?*
- *Both synchronised with each other.*
- *And the new timelines are working fine.*
- *What about shared learning?*
- *I think we are looking for constructive change, not cramping everything in.*
- *So, it is making sure that the agenda is still meaningful.*
- *And sign posting to certain issues.*
- *It will evolve; if you have it online, it will evolve.*
- *The same with roaming roles.*
- *We can start with that and see how it goes over the weeks.*
- *We definitely need to keep updating both agendas.*
- *Yes, it needs more work in the beginning; it will then grow on us.*
- *Good start and then it will be a while until we look at it again.*

In this example, participants appreciated the progress and new experience of the Joint Management Meeting with similar views. Specifically, participants reviewed the changed format of the Joint Management Meeting, sharing and evaluating with

each other their thoughts and observations. In this respect, the ‘stabilising’ expression of exploration illustrated valuable insights for leadership emergence in the sense of building rapport, giving emphasis to meanings and co-action. At the specific turning point, participants endorsed the revitalised practice of the Joint Management Meeting by adding to each other’s thoughts. Therefore, ‘stabilising’ exploration indicated engagement with the invitation by reinforcing meanings in pursuit of mutual understanding.

The next example offered similar observations for ‘stabilising’ exploration, and it occurred at turning point MM-TP8.

- *We don't have a master plan, we are trying to create something.*
- *Some people will say 'just tell me what to do' but that's not enough.*
- *That was always the plan; eventually, we will reach a point where we say 'we are definitely doing this' and we discuss the how to.*
- *It's a strategic discussion more than anything.*
- *Creating something that would work.*
- *That's why it is really important to say what you think, because there is no master plan.*
- *It will take time, yeah, but we can figure it out with Middle Managers.*
- *Ok, so looking at the proposal then, we have the task group feedback to discuss with Middle Managers.*
- *Yes, it is the course of action from now on: we gather thoughts and information, but all decisions are made in the Joint.*
- *The same goes for them.*
- *Absolutely; and we also have E-hub [the online communication platform].*

Here, participants discussed the next steps for implementing the reconfiguration proposition. They followed the same lines of thinking that it was a developmental procedure, where consultation determined the next steps. They also recognised that progress would be determined together with Middle Managers. Therefore, ‘stabilising’ exploration reinforced the meanings they shared for the development of the proposition and leadership emerged in pursuit of mutual understanding.

6.2.2.4 ‘Integrating’ exploration

‘Integrating’ exploration referred to participants embedding meaning to existing relational connections. It gave prominence to clarifying and developing meanings within familiar relational arrays. While ‘differentiating’ exploration was primarily concerned with meanings, ‘integrating’ exploration described the development of relational dynamics as a result of changing meanings. The following example illustrates the empirically grounded definition of ‘integrating’ exploration, helping to appreciate the subtle nuances compared to the other expressions of exploration. It occurred at turning point RR-TP16.

- *We need to be thinking better about how to move logistically with the recruitment.*
- *It is about being proactive, rather than reactive.*
- *Now that we are getting back on, we should be looking to be more creative with aims and objectives.*
- *It should be more than someone looking for a couple of hours.*
- *We need to be thinking better than that, and then we do not want to lose people off.*

- *Something more like: 'we will make sure that we develop the service around you, not that we make the service fit you'.*
- *Yeah, 'we are working for you, we are here for you'.*
- *The way this recruitment is going, we need to be quick.*
- *So, it is not just for us to determine this; they [=Front Line Employees] should also catch up.*
- *How could we do that then? Is it during the recruitment or in the training after? But then, you cannot train someone who does not see this or does not believe in this. I see something here, good point raised.*
- *Yeah, we do not want to be caught up in ambitious plans here. I would look to see it during the recruitment. We already have Middle Managers in control, choosing for their own services; I would expect it at some stage there.*
- *Interesting, let us look at what we have again [opening up spreadsheet with information from the first round of recruitment, which is visible to all from the projector].*
- *First step is there, I like Middle Managers' involvement.*
- *Yeah, but are we missing a link? Who are we developing the services for? What do Supported Members have to say? What about them?*
- *That's it; nice. They would be able to help us. I mean who knows their needs better than them.*
- *I like the way this is going, we definitely need to include this; what do you think?*
- *Yes, it is the right thing to do.*

- *Now we have the task group, they can facilitate this; set up a meeting and introduce what's happening.*
- *We need to be quick though, we do not want to be sitting on this for long.*
- *Absolutely, they [=task group] will take it on and have it ready for the next round of interviews.*

At turning point RR-TP16, participants enriched their relational connections with meanings about the recruitment procedure. They sought to define aims and objectives for moving forward from the first to the second stage of interviews. They started by looking at logistic requirements and proceeded by considering that Front Line Employees should be committed to their work, rather than doing random shifts. Such consideration developed into including Supported Members in the procedure, incorporating their feedback at the second stage of interviews. In such a way, participants approached the future by re-defining their aspirations for the recruitment review and building meaning into their relational connection. Therefore, 'integrating' exploration indicated engagement with the invitation by enriching relations with meanings in pursuit of mutual understanding.

Similar observations were noted in the next, lengthy example of 'integrating' exploration, which occurred at turning point MM-TP10.

- *These are the descriptions that we have. Our task today is to clarify what we need from them.*
- *And maybe set aside some of them.*
- *How to determine that? What is the best way to do that? I guess I am asking how we make it robust. So that every Middle Manager can see the rationale, and there are no dark spots.*

- *Let us start with that, I think it will make it easy to determine what to set as the criteria.*
- *I agree, let us set the basis first. We need to be very clear about that.*
- *I would prefer if we talked business; like in five years' time, what would it look like?*
- *You mean in terms of sustainability?*
- *Yeah, I suppose. I mean, if somebody leaves, how do we know who to recruit?*
- *Ok, so let us have a look at the Middle Manager's job description as it is now. What does the proposed re-allocation say about the job description?*
- *Yeah, I wonder if we should change the job description...*
- *It actually interprets it better, don't you think? In terms of ties with the local community and Supported Members?*
- *That's true, a locality-based role would help Middle Managers perform their duties more effectively. They could capitalise on the connection with the local community. And they could spend time developing these ties, instead of going from one place to the other.*
- *Sure, it takes some investment of time to make a relationship work. And at the moment, Middle Managers do not have that opportunity.*
- *So the job description does not need to change then?*
- *No, no need for that. The change actually interprets it better!*
- *I want to get back to the community focus then. I would like to get full scope of the areas we are talking about.*
- *And from these descriptions, we can determine the best Middle Managers for that area.*

- *Yes, the decision would be why one over the other from a business sense? What does that one know about the area or how do the skills match with the requirements of the services?*
- *I suppose there is also the impact on the supported member from the relationship that has already been established.*
- *I agree, but it's not just about now, but about moving forward. The relationship is important, but how do we maintain it? I would say that a stable person is better than re-creating a new relationship every time.*
- *Different transition periods then?*
- *Yes! That is a brilliant point, the transition will not take place at the same time for all services. There needs to be careful planning for that, and for what needs to be in the hand-over.*
- *Ok and we need the area profile also, a precise list of all the services that we have to date.*
- *But also future forecast, what do we anticipate that the area will become.*
- *So, existing and potential profile.*
- *Ok, then, I suggest that we collate all these and post it for consultation. All decisions are based on business rationale, why does it make sense from a business perspective, there needs to be evidence from that. We also need a map of each area; Middle Managers can decide how they want to do this, but the information to come back should cover existing and potential profile.*

This lengthy example offered a detailed description of participants integrating meaning about the reconfiguration procedure. They started by looking at the data gathered at that point, and proceeded with determining the criteria necessary to move

the proposition forward. Exploration developed gradually and participants built meaning by clarifying that the basis for all decision was business rationale. From that basis, they then considered that re-allocating Middle Managers required a profile mapping of each area, so that the best person is allocated in every location. On these grounds, participants co-created the development of the proposal by re-defining the criteria for the reconfiguration and building meaning into their relational connections. Therefore, ‘integrating’ exploration illustrated the way participants engaged with invitation, enriching relational connections with meanings in pursuit of mutual understanding.

6.2.2.5 Exploration recap

To summarise, exploration in Gergen’s (2009) responsive interplay was approached in this research with the empirically grounded constructs of ‘differentiating’, ‘adapting’, ‘stabilising’ and ‘integrating’. They referred to how meanings and relational connections were in the making in pursuit of direction. The constructs of ‘differentiating’ and ‘stabilising’ gave emphasis on meanings, while the constructs of ‘adapting’ and ‘integrating’ gave emphasis on relational connections. These four empirically grounded constructs of exploration are brought forward to section 6.3, where different combinations in the responsive interplay are reviewed to describe expressions of the relational process of leadership per turning point.

6.2.3 Affirmation

Gergen (2009c) explained that affirmation was critical for co-action, as it verified the significance of meaning. In order for exploration to be something, it required affirmation that endorsed it as such. The author approached affirmation empirically by looking for acceptance of meaning, but did not equate it with

agreement. Rather, affirmation underlined the potential to proceed, and therefore, the author looked for confirmation of moving forward. Two constructs of affirmation stemmed from the empirical material, associated with moving forward in pursuit of leadership direction. These two constructs were characterised as ‘linking’ and ‘selecting’. Table 6-3 outlines the occurrences of affirmation in the empirical material. From the 106 turning points that were analysed, there occurred 58 expressions of ‘linking’ affirmation and 48 expressions of ‘selecting’ affirmation. The number of occurrences does not signify any measurement per each expression; rather, it conveys the richness of the empirical material.

Table 6-3: Empirical overview of affirmation in the responsive interplay

Responsive interplay flow: Affirmation	Occurrences	Empirically Grounded Definition
linking	58: MM-TP1, MM-TP2, MM-TP3, MM-TP4, MM-TP6, MM-TP10, MM-TP13, MM-TP14, MM-TP15, MM-TP16, MM-TP17, MM-TP20, RR-TP2, RR-TP3, RR-TP4, RR-TP5, RR-TP7, RR-TP8, RR-TP9, RR-TP10, RR-TP11, RR-TP12, RR-TP14, RR-TP16, RR-TP18, RR-TP23, RR-TP27, RR-TP30, RR-TP32, RR-TP35, RR-TP36, RR-TP37, RR-TP38, RR-TP41, RR-TP43, RR-TP44, RR-TP47, RR-TP48, RR-TP49, RR-TP50, SSD-TP1, SSD-TP3, SSD-TP4, SSD-TP6, SSD-TP8, SSD-TP9, SSD-TP10, SSD-TP13, SSD-TP15, SSD-TP17, SSD-TP20, JMM-TP1, JMM-TP2, JMM-TP3, JMM-TP6, JMM-TP7, JMM-TP8, JMM-TP9	renewing invitation
selecting	48: MM-TP5, MM-TP7, MM-TP8, MM-TP9, MM-TP11, MM-TP12, MM-TP18, MM-TP19, RR-TP1, RR-TP6, RR-TP13, RR-TP15, RR-TP17, RR-TP19, RR-TP20, RR-TP21, RR-TP22, RR-TP24, RR-TP25, RR-TP26, RR-TP28, RR-TP29, RR-TP31, RR-TP33, RR-TP34, RR-TP39, RR-TP40, RR-TP42, RR-TP45, RR-TP46, SSD-TP2, SSD-TP5, SSD-TP7, SSD-TP11, SSD-TP12, SSD-TP14, SSD-TP16, SSD-TP18, SSD-TP19, SSD-TP21, JMM-TP4, JMM-TP5, PO-TP1, PO-TP2, PO-TP3, PO-TP4, PO-TP5, PO-TP6	conclude exploration

6.2.3.1 'Linking' affirmation

'Linking' affirmation referred to renewing the invitation. With 'linking' affirmation, participants renewed the invitation to explore mutual understandings in pursuit of direction. The following illustrative example from the data elaborates the empirically grounded definition of 'linking' affirmation, drawing on turning point MM-TP1.

- *If we cannot see what this is, there is prep work needed.*
- *Yes, it seems that we need some background to this.*
- *Perhaps, follow it up at next week's Leadership [meeting]?*
- *For sure, we need to resume and open again with more input for this.*
- *Yes, we need more detail to discuss about it.*
- *Agree; let us put it into the agenda and follow it up with concrete information.*
- *Ok, so I am taking an action for next Leadership [meeting].*

At turning point MM-TP1, participants ended exploration and renewed the invitation. The discussion about the prospect of Middle Managers' reconfiguration proposal brought about diverging views, and participants realised that they needed more information and background before concluding about the idea. Therefore, they renewed the invitation for another round of exploration with enhanced information. In doing so, affirmation was characterised as 'linking'.

Another example to illustrate ‘linking’ affirmation is the following, which occurred at turning point RR-TP5.

- *The question becomes what to do with the monthly evaluations and how to connect them with observations from the MAP exercise?*
- *We need feedback for the evaluations before proceeding with the MAP.*
- *I would like to see what others make of my services also. And I would like to see other services too.*
- *That needs more time then?*
- *I will post on E-hub [=online communication platform] and get feedback before we go live with the MAP.*
- *Yeah, we need that to see how the evaluations are received.*
- *Ok, everyone make your notes and we will resume again for this.*

In this example, participants renewed the invitation for another round of exploration. They recognised that feedback was needed for monthly evaluations so that the related observations could be connected to the results from the MAP exercise. This connection of the present exploration with the future one rendered the above example an appropriate illustration of ‘linking’ affirmation.

6.2.3.2 'Selecting' affirmation

'Selecting' affirmation referred to participants concluding exploration towards a specific leadership direction. The following example from turning point RR-TP31 elaborates the definition of 'selecting' affirmation.

- Is everyone satisfied then? This is something to affect all of our teams; do you have any concerns about the arrangements?

- No, we should proceed as we discussed here. My only concern is for everyone to take time and have a look at their interviewee's comments beforehand.

- Agree, I do not think there is more to add.

- Besides, we have all tried to match the profiles with our needs.

- That's it then! I am circulating the list with the timeslots to everyone and that's the plan.

- Brilliant!

Here, participants engaged in a long discussion about arranging timeslots for the second stage of interviews with successful candidates. Exploration ended when all endorsed the list created, marking a particular direction for leadership. In this respect, 'selecting' affirmation revealed participants' mutual commitment to progressing with the recruitment drive.

Similar observations for ‘selecting’ affirmation were made in the following example at turning point JMM-TP4.

- *That’s the plan in place, how does everybody feel about it?*
- *Great, now let us see how it goes.*
- *It is the right thing to do at the moment. Just about time.*
- *Absolutely right, especially in the prospect of growing.*
- *I’m up for that, get this forum sorted.*
- *Me too, I want to see this agenda and get the opportunity to say ‘yes done’ and move on.*
- *That is us, I would like to work like this.*

In the above example, affirmation marked the end of exploring a revised format for the Middle Managers’ meeting forum. Exploration ended when all participants endorsed the changes discussed, marking a specific direction for leadership towards a renewed format. In such a way, ‘selecting’ affirmation illustrated participants’ commitment to establishing a meeting format that worked for them.

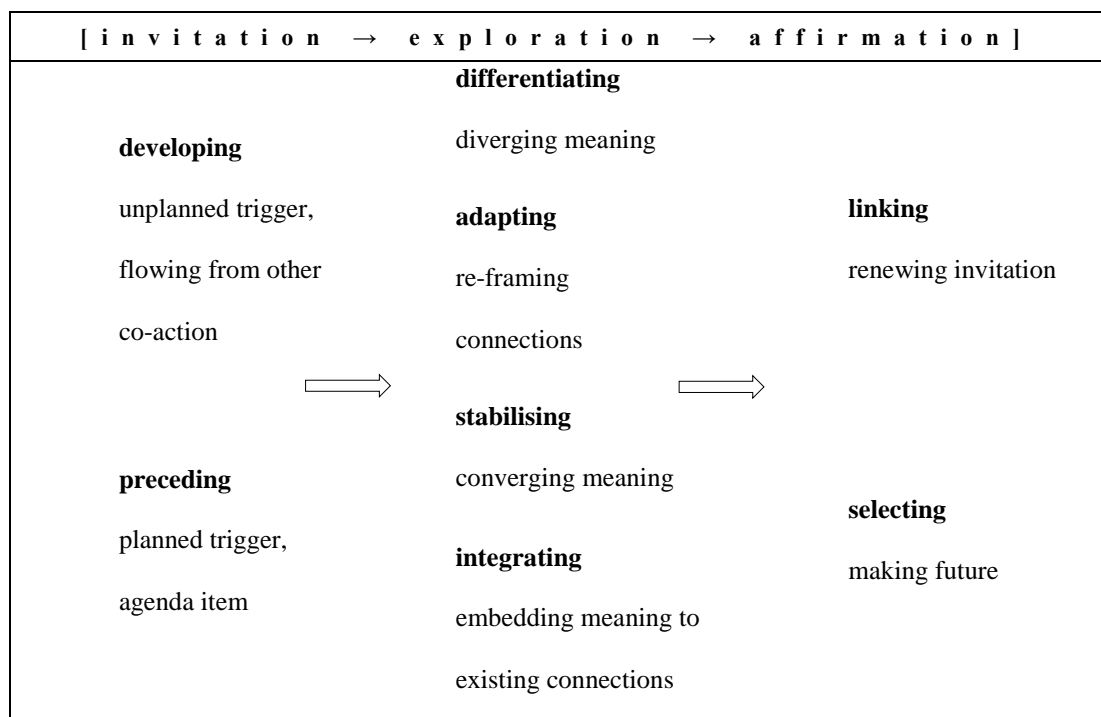
6.2.3.3 Affirmation recap

To summarise the above, affirmation in Gergen’s (2009) responsive interplay was approached in this research with the empirically grounded constructs of ‘linking’ and ‘selecting’. They referred to temporary confirmation of moving forward, with the first construct renewing the invitation, and the second ending exploration towards a specific direction. Together with the expressions of the other phases in the responsive interplay, the two empirically grounded constructs of affirmation are brought forward to section 6.3, where different combinations in the responsive interplay are reviewed to describe expressions of leadership per turning point.

6.2.4 Section synthesis & recap

This section has introduced the analysis developed for the responsive interplay, by means of Gergen’s (2009c) interlinked flows of invitation – exploration – affirmation. In this research, invitation referred to an introduction to relating that signalled co-action, with the empirically grounded constructs of ‘developing’ and ‘preceding’. Next, exploration referred to how meanings and relational connections were in the making towards mutual understanding, with the empirically grounded constructs of ‘differentiating’, ‘stabilising’, ‘adapting’ and ‘integrating’. Finally, affirmation referred to temporary confirmation of moving forward, with the empirically grounded constructs of ‘linking’ and ‘selecting’. To recap the analysis for the responsive interplay, Figure 6-1 presents an overview of the constructs per flow in the responsive interplay, with their respective definitions.

Figure 6-1: Responsive interplay



To conclude, it should be noted that the seamless combination of invitation – exploration – affirmation expressed leadership. Each of the flows was not an action in itself; the supplement of one with the other created leadership as a continuous whole. Therefore, the notion of reciprocity could be appreciated: leadership was not contained in separate actions or words; it derived from the relational process of co-ordinating co-action. The responsive interplay did not represent an ideal whole, nor was it a strict representation of leadership. Rather, it was considered an illustration of the co-active moment of leadership. For analytical purposes, invitation, exploration and affirmation were reviewed separately; however, theoretically and empirically, they have been interrelated and mutually constituent.

6.3 Patterns of leadership expressions

The analysis from the previous section is brought forward in this section to describe how different combinations in the responsive interplay compose patterns of leadership. There is a significant difference in the way the discussion here deals with turning points, compared to section 6.2. In the previous section, the discussion focused on a particular flow in the responsive interplay per turning point (invitation/ exploration/ affirmation) to present how the empirical material was analysed into respective constructs. The focus was on the ways relational dynamics were temporarily manifested at a particular flow in the responsive interplay, illustrating the dynamic effect of each flow in the co-active moment of leadership. Here, section 6.3 focuses on the ways relational dynamics build up at the responsive interplay, drawing on the wholeness of a turning point to illustrate the co-active moment of leadership. In this respect, the responsive interplay is presented in its totality in the different ways the relational process of leadership is expressed empirically. In the combination of

[invitation →exploration →affirmation], unfolding from one flow to the next signified pursuit of direction in the following ways. Invitation set leadership in motion, and the build-up to the other two flows developed leadership in motion. The flow to exploration signified re-arrangement in participants' relational connections, as described by the constructs of 'differentiating', 'adapting', 'stabilising' and 'integrating'. Then, the flow to affirmation signified orientation to the future, as described by the constructs of 'linking' and 'selecting'. It should be noted that analysis focused on the build-up of relational dynamics, as illustrated by the two arrows in the responsive interplay ([invitation →exploration →affirmation]).

Following the analysis from the previous section, 16 combinations were possible from the constructs per each flow in the responsive interplay, signifying patterns of leadership expressions. The 16 leadership patterns are discussed in subsections 6.3.1 to 6.3.16, with particular examples from the empirical material. The subsections are complemented with Appendices 2 to 6, which outline patterns of the responsive interplay per turning point, per leadership trajectory. Table 6-4 outlines their occurrences in the empirical material, where the number of occurrences does not carry any meaning for analytical purposes; it simply illustrates the richness of the empirical material. As noted in Table 6-1, 5 patterns were not observed in the empirical material from SocialORG and PublicORG ([developing →stabilising →linking], [developing →integrating →linking] [preceding →differentiating →linking], [preceding →differentiating →selecting], and [preceding →integrating →selecting]). Recognising that these patterns were possible theoretically, according to the analysis of the responsive interplay, the author tried to explain their 'absence' from the empirical material. In discussion with the research participants and the empirical

material, the author appreciated that the expression of leadership was closely related to the relational ties among participants. The discussion is extended in the related subsections. The presentational principle in Table 6-4 is ordering combinations in the responsive interplay, starting from the constructs in the invitation.

Table 6-4: Leadership patterns in the empirical material

Leadership Patterns	Occurrences (106)
1. [developing →differentiating →linking]	10: MM-TP1, RR-TP11, RR-TP14, RR-TP17, RR-TP43, SSD-TP1, SSD-TP4, SSD-TP10, JMM-TP1, JMM-TP2
2. [developing →differentiating →selecting]	2: RR-TP19, SSD-TP18
3. [developing →adapting →linking]	3: RR-TP9, SSD-TP9, JMM-TP3
4. [developing →adapting →selecting]	3: RR-TP17, SSD-TP11, JMM-TP4
5. [developing →stabilising →linking]	<i>not observed empirically</i>
6. [developing →stabilising →selecting]	7: MM-TP8, RR-TP26, RR-TP45, SSD-TP5, SSD-TP7, SSD-TP12, SSD-TP19
7. [developing →integrating →linking]	<i>not observed empirically</i>
8. [developing →integrating →selecting]	7: RR-TP15, RR-TP31, RR-TP40, RR-TP46, SSD-TP2, SSD-TP21, JMM-TP5
9. [preceding →differentiating →linking]	<i>not observed empirically</i>
10. [preceding →differentiating →selecting]	<i>not observed empirically</i>
11. [preceding →adapting →linking]	13: MM-TP2, MM-TP3, MM-TP4, MM-TP7, MM-TP13, MM-TP17, RR-TP4, RR-TP12, RR-TP44, RR-TP49, SSD-TP3, SSD-TP8, JMM-TP4
12. [preceding →adapting →selecting]	13: MM-TP5, MM-TP7, MM-TP9, MM-TP11, MM-TP19, RR-TP6, RR-TP13, RR-TP21, RR-TP24, RR-TP28, RR-TP33, RR-TP39, SSD-TP14
13. [preceding →stabilising →linking]	15: MM-TP6, MM-TP15, RR-TP3, RR-TP8, RR-TP23, RR-TP10, RR-TP35, RR-TP37, RR-TP38, RR-TP48, RR-TP50, SSD-TP15, SSD-TP20, JMM-TP8, JMM-TP9
14. [preceding →stabilising →selecting]	17: MM-TP12, MM-TP18, RR-TP1, RR-TP18, RR-TP20, RR-TP22, RR-TP25, RR-TP29, RR-TP34, RR-TP42, SSD-TP16, PO-TP1, PO-TP2, PO-TP3, PO-TP4, PO-TP5, PO-TP6
15. [preceding →integrating →linking]	16: MM-TP10, MM-TP13, MM-TP20, RR-TP2, RR-TP5, RR-TP7, RR-TP16, RR-TP27, RR-TP30, RR-TP32, RR-TP36, RR-TP47, SSD-TP6, SSD-TP13, SSD-TP17, JMM-TP6
16. [preceding →integrating →selecting]	<i>not observed empirically</i>

6.3.1 Leadership pattern [developing →differentiating →linking]

The leadership pattern of [developing →differentiating →linking] appeared 10 times in the analysis of 106 turning points. The particular leadership pattern illustrated provocation of relational dynamics, as participants questioned each other. The flow to ‘differentiating’ exploration marked the unfolding of leadership through a process of relational coordination, which revealed the significance of mutual understandings. At the same time, the flow to ‘linking’ affirmation marked continuity of participants’ connections, as appropriate to the context of co-action.

In the flow to ‘differentiating’ exploration, participants challenged each other, while trying to accommodate different perspectives to their relational connections, dealing with equivocal meanings. For example, at turning point JJM-TP2, participants held dissimilar views of the amount of information included in the MMs’ meeting format, ranging from overload to procedural reviews and pace of exchanging information. Leadership did not seek to accomplish a shared understanding about the ‘reality’ of information included in the meeting forum, but aimed at reaching mutual understanding about the desired amount of information and the relational implications of such discussion. This was achieved by questioning the relational context of the meeting format in the attempt to grasp the dissatisfaction, which was helpful for coordinating co-action around the sources of problems. The leadership pattern of [developing →differentiating →linking] illustrated that the local context of work was reviewed together with the local context of relational connections among participants. Relational coordination offered an encompassing perspective that allowed leadership to continue, overcoming the differences among participants.

In the flow to 'linking' affirmation, moving forward did not presuppose converging to shared understandings. Rather, participants moved towards mutual understandings, which indicated continuity of relational connections. Drawing on the same example of turning point JMM-TP2, participants ended exploration by coming to mutual understanding that dealing with the issue at stake required more information. Thus, they renewed the invitation and leadership direction was oriented to another round of exploration. The pattern of [developing →differentiating →linking] suggested that leadership did not reside in the 'reality' of a situation, but rather on reaching mutual understandings about the relational implications of the situation. In this respect, different views on the issues at stake were set aside, in favour of relevance to relational connections. Leadership emerged out of divergent views, to the extent that the new temporary direction was connected to the wider nexus of participants' relational connections. The new temporary direction signified acceptance of mutual understandings and continuity in participants' connections.

6.3.2 Leadership pattern [developing →differentiating →selecting]

The leadership pattern of [developing →differentiating →selecting] appeared 2 times in the analysis of 106 turning points. It exemplified the expansion of relational dynamics, as participants questioned their connections. Participants explained to the author that the basis of their questioning was apprehending their relational connections, resulting from their engagement with the issue at stake. As appreciated in the examples of turning points RR-TP19 and SSD-TP18, participants made sense of pluralistic views, co-acting a new leadership direction that was appropriate to their relational arrays.

In the flow to ‘differentiating’ exploration, participants questioned each other, while trying to accommodate different perspectives that originated from accumulated relational connections. Different perspectives dealt with meanings that had mounted up from previous relational encounters. At turning point RR-TP19, participants held dissimilar views about how to proceed with a recruitment plan for the new services, ranging from following the principles used in existing services, to refraining from recruitment until the full scope of the services was evaluated. Likewise, at turning point SSD-TP18 participants raised different perspectives about updating organisational files, ranging from central-focused to team-focused accounts. Leadership aimed at reaching mutual understandings about the relational implications of the issues at stake. This was achieved by the engagement participants had for getting on with the identified problems, which illustrated relational coordination. As such, leadership conveyed an encompassing perspective that eschewed differences, owing to the engagement to move beyond trivialities.

Turning to the flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation, relational coordination marked a clear direction for leadership, by bounding the possible routes of co-action with the local limits of relational connections. In the example of turning point SSD-TP18, participants filtered the available routes (central or team-focused update) against their appropriateness to co-action. Thus, a central-focused approach to updating organisational files was selected, which was also relevant to the parallel development of Middle Managers’ reconfiguration proposal. Therefore, the pattern of [developing →differentiating →selecting] suggested that leadership did not rest on the best possible route, but rather on evaluating the relational implications of the selected one.

Leadership direction was not important for its superlative qualities, but rather for its distinctiveness from other possibilities available.

6.3.3 Leadership pattern [developing →adapting →linking]

The leadership pattern of [developing →adapting →linking] appeared 3 times in the analysis of 106 turning points. It featured challenges in relational dynamics, as participants adjusted their connections to cope with new meanings. The flow to ‘adapting’ exploration showed participants making sense of divergent views in light of new meanings, bounding possibilities of co-action against their relational implications. The flow to ‘linking’ affirmation indicated continuity in participants’ connections with a renewal of invitation, thus marking a tentative leadership direction.

In the example of turning point JMM-TP3, the quality of communication at Middle Managers’ meeting forum was examined with possible routes of co-action reviewed, such as questions of prioritising, timing and preparation before the meeting. The flow to ‘adapting’ exploration illustrated reconfiguration of participants’ connections, as fitting to new meanings. The possible routes of co-action were not points of reference, around which leadership emerged. Rather, they were equivocal context for leadership, in the sense that possibilities for co-action were reviewed against their relational implications. For instance, preparation before the meeting was explored because, in the particular context, it was linked to engagement with work undertaken during the meeting.

Regarding the flow to ‘linking’ affirmation, leadership continued with renewal of invitation. In the same example of turning point JMM-TP3, participants acknowledged that the meeting forum was not synchronised with the rest of the organisation and suggested waiting until the following Middle Managers’ meeting.

Such route was fitting with participants' connections that asked for all interested parties' feedback before deciding on altering working practices. Therefore, participants' relational connections limited the scope of possible leadership routes. Renewing the invitation also illustrated the temporal nature of leadership: direction emerged from continuously reconfiguring relational connections and was, thus, tentative.

6.3.4 Leadership pattern [developing →adapting →selecting]

In the analysis of 106 turning points, the leadership pattern of [developing →adapting →selecting] appeared 3 times. It demonstrated the expansion of relational connections as participants adjusted them to cope with accumulated meanings. The flow to 'adapting' exploration illustrated the co-action of leadership through a process of relational coordination that addressed accumulated meanings. The flow to 'selecting' affirmation marked urgency for co-action in the new leadership direction.

Specifically, the flow to 'adapting' exploration showed participants rearranging their connections to accommodate meanings that had accumulated from relational encounters. In the example of turning point JMM-TP4, the accumulated concerns about the meeting format directed co-action to a radical redefinition of the meeting format. This was achieved by evaluating the relational implications of the identified concerns. As such, leadership was stimulated to the extent that it accounted for the demands of accumulated meanings. Accumulated meanings were not a mere point of reference, but the backdrop against which leadership pointed to a new direction. Similar observations were made at turning point RR-TP17, where concerns had accumulated about the ways new recruits could tune into organisational values. These concerns were addressed by reconsidering the induction training to include

shadowing of periods, where the subtleties of working practices could be appreciated. As such, leadership coped with accumulated concerns, by co-acting a new way for relational connections.

The flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation indicated urgency for co-action. At turning point JMM-TP4, participants pursued radical change to their meeting format, suggesting immediate answers to their concerns. The selected leadership direction marked change in the status quo, and a new way of connecting to one another. The same was the case at turning point RR-TP17, where induction training was radically reconsidered. Such co-action of new leadership direction indicated timely responses from participants. Participants discussed with the author that the selected route was co-acted because it directly addressed the issues of concern, thus suggesting that urgency bounded the possibilities of co-action. Other routes might have been possible, but leadership direction was limited to the one fitting with participants’ relations.

6.3.5 Leadership pattern [developing →stabilising →linking]

The leadership pattern of [developing →stabilising →linking] did not appear in the analysis of the empirical material in SocialORG and PublicORG. Therefore, the description here is not grounded in the empirical material, but is rather recreated from insights arising from the analytical process. The particular pattern seems to exemplify sustainment of relational dynamics in pursuit of co-acted directions. The flow to ‘stabilising’ exploration suggests maintenance of participants’ connections, while the flow to ‘linking’ affirmation suggests continuity, as appropriate to the context of co-action.

The author attributed the ‘absence’ of [developing →stabilising →linking] to the relational ties among participants in SocialORG and PublicORG, which did not

allow its expression. The discussions with research participants' and the empirical material in SocialORG indicated that the idiosyncrasies of participants' connections established reminders for the execution of everyday work (basic frames of reference). However, the pattern of [developing →stabilising →linking] is more appropriate to establishing reminders for the execution of extraordinary work (entangled frames of reference). This is also supported by the observations made for the leadership pattern of [preceding →stabilising →linking] in section 6.3.13. Therefore, an appropriate research context for the development of this pattern would be meetings of an emergent task group, dealing with an emergency situation (there no such occurrence in SocialORG during fieldwork). In PublicORG, the meetings observed by the author did not intend to link to organisational happenings, but rather go over them and confirm them.

6.3.6 Leadership Pattern [developing →stabilising →selecting]

The leadership pattern of [developing →stabilising →selecting] appeared 7 times in the analysis of 106 turning points, and exemplified the persistence of relational dynamics. This pattern was grounded on participants' sophisticated connections, as they coordinated co-action towards important aspects of work. The flow to 'stabilising' exploration illustrated the ways that participants were interdependent on the rest of the organisation, thus, signalling that leadership carried implications for other organisational happenings. The flow to 'selecting' affirmation marked that the new leadership direction was rooted in sophisticated relations and expressed pursuit of organisational priorities.

Examples from the Stand-In Service Development trajectory (SSD-TP5, 7, 12, 19) showed that the flow to 'stabilising' exploration illustrated interdependence in

established relational ties among participants to the extent that they connected co-action to other organisational developments. In the development of the Stand-In Service trajectory, it was evident that leadership did not concern only the specifically dedicated meeting forum (E); rather, it underpinned various working practices and unfolded in numerous, different relational encounters. As such, leadership carried implications for multiple organisational happenings, and introduced important aspects of work. These included contingency planning (SSD-TP5), templates updating (SSD-TP7) and Project C updates (SSD-TP12 and SSD-TP19).

The flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation illustrated a new direction of leadership in pursuit of organisational priorities. The examples mentioned earlier indicated that important aspects of work were followed up when they were recognised as important in co-acting distinctive new routes. For example, the suggested update to the templates, introduced at turning point SSD-TP7, altered the ways the update was perceived and executed until that moment in time. Leadership emerged towards a new direction that signified the coordination around important aspects of work. As explained by participants, coordination was rooted in established relational ties, out of which connectedness to the rest of the organisation was possible.

6.3.7 Leadership pattern [developing →integrating →linking]

The leadership expression of [developing →integrating →linking] did not appear in the analysis of the empirical material in SocialORG and PublicORG. Therefore, its meaning is not grounded in the empirical material, but is rather recreated from insights arising from the analytical process. The particular pattern seems to exemplify sustainment of relational dynamics in pursuit of direction. The flow to ‘integrating’ exploration seems to feature the ways participants supported coherence

in their existing relations, while the flow to ‘linking’ affirmation suggests continuity of relating, as appropriate to the context of co-action.

The author attributed the ‘absence’ of [developing →integrating →linking] to the relational ties among participants in SocialORG and PublicORG, which did not allow its expression. The discussions with research participants’ and the empirical material in SocialORG indicated that the idiosyncrasies of participants’ connections provided a working basis to support coherence for the execution of everyday work (basic frames of reference). However, the pattern of [developing →stabilising →linking] is more appropriate to supporting coherence for the execution of extraordinary work (entangled frames of reference). This is also supported by the observations made for the leadership pattern of [preceding →integrating →linking] in section 6.3.15. Therefore, an appropriate research context for the development of this leadership pattern might be organisational meetings dealing with an emergency situation (there no such occurrence in SocialORG during fieldwork). In PublicORG, the meetings observed by the author did not intend to support coherence in participants’ connections, but rather inform them about organisational happenings.

6.3.8 Leadership Pattern [developing →integrating →selecting]

The leadership pattern of [developing →integrating →selecting] appeared 7 times in the analysis of 106 turning points, featuring persistence of relational dynamics in participants’ dedication to progress with the issue at hand. The flow to ‘integrating’ exploration showed participants inserting meanings to support coherence in their existing relations. The flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation marked new leadership direction, as participants grew familiar with the context of change.

Drawing on turning point JMM-TP5, the flow to ‘integrating’ exploration showed participants assimilating meanings as they reflected on the changes in the Middle Managers’ meeting format. As explained by participants, the basis for such consideration was established relational ties, which enabled them to orient co-action to making change in the state of affairs to support the coherence in their connections. At JMM-TP5, leadership emerged in the direction of updating the Operations meeting agenda to reflect the recent changes in the Joint Management meeting. In doing so, the flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation marked a distinctive departure from previous directions. Similar observations were made at turning point RR-TP46, where the purpose of recruitment was explored and participants radically changed the status quo, by selecting a quality check before each recruitment initiative. In this respect, leadership prompted co-action towards reaching the direction that would support relational ties in the context of change. Participants discussed with the author that the selected direction was bound by participants’ commitment to progress and thus, leadership direction was selected owing to its appropriateness to the change discussed. In the light of appropriateness, other available routes were disregarded because they did not fit with the existing relational ties.

6.3.9 Leadership pattern [preceding →differentiating →linking]

The leadership pattern of [preceding →differentiating →linking] did not appear in the analysis of the empirical material from SocialORG and PublicORG. Therefore, the description presented here is not grounded in the empirical material, but is rather recreated from insights arising from the analytical process. The pattern seems to exemplify provocation of relational dynamics in pursuit of the requirements for co-action. The flow to ‘differentiating’ exploration suggests the unfolding of leadership

through a process of relational coordination, pointing to the significance of mutual understandings. At the same time, the flow to ‘linking’ affirmation suggests continuity in participants’ connections, as appropriate to the context of co-action.

The author attributed the ‘absence’ of [preceding →differentiating →linking] to the relational ties among participants in SocialORG and PublicORG, which did not allow its expression. The discussions with research participants’ and the empirical material in SocialORG indicated that owing to meeting practices and preparation, it was unlikely that participants would leave a planned agenda item unexamined, if its content provoked their connections to a great extent (flow from ‘preceding invitation’ to ‘differentiating’ exploration). This is also supported by the observations related to the pattern of [preceding →adapting →linking], presented in 6.3.11. In PublicORG, the meetings observed by the author did not intend to (re)construct agenda items, but rather go over them and confirm them. Perhaps, an appropriate research context for the development of the leadership pattern of [preceding →differentiating →linking] would be inter-organisation meetings, examining collaborative arrangements. An example from the literature is the meetings examining the agreement of goals for collaborations between public and non-profit organisations, as presented by Eden and Huxham (2001).

6.3.10 Leadership pattern [preceding →differentiating →selecting]

The leadership pattern of [preceding →differentiating →selecting] did not appear in the analysis of the empirical material from SocialORG and PublicORG. Therefore, its descriptions here is not grounded in the empirical material, but is rather recreated from insights arising from the analytical process. The pattern seems to exemplify expansion of relational dynamics towards a new leadership direction. The

flow to ‘differentiating’ exploration seems to illustrate pluralistic views as participants engage with the issues at stake, while the flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation seems to signify a new leadership direction, emerging by bounding the possible routes of co-action with the local limits of participants’ connections.

The author attributed the ‘absence’ of [preceding →differentiating →selecting] to the relational ties among participants in SocialORG and PublicORG, which did not allow its expression. The notes made in 6.3.9 about the organisations’ meeting setup are relevant to this pattern as well. In addition, discussion with participants from SocialORG indicated that an appropriate research context for the development of this leadership pattern would be inter-organisational meetings with public authorities, in the interest of their Supported Members. Such meetings would happen when SocialORG took over a Supported Member’s service from another care providing organisation (none of these meetings occurred during fieldwork). The meeting setup would be appropriate for the development of [preceding →differentiating →selecting] since it constitutes a one-off process of negotiation, which needs to reach an immediate resolution or compromise (flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation).

6.3.11 Leadership pattern [preceding →adapting →linking]

The leadership pattern of [preceding →adapting →linking] appeared 13 times in the analysis of 106 turning points, featuring adjustments in participants’ connections, as they determined the requirements of co-action, by linking them to broader organisational concerns. In such instances, leadership emerged through filtering available possibilities. The flow to ‘adapting’ exploration illustrated adjustments in participants’ connections co-action, by drawing from others to cross-reference possibilities against local context. For example, at turning points SSD-TP3

and SSD-TP8, leadership emerged in the attempt to define the requirements for the Stand-In Service (at SSD-TP3 the requirement was service reminders, and at SSD-TP8 the requirement was quality assurance guidelines). The possibilities for co-action were subject to the local context of an upcoming procedure of external evaluation, which indicated that participants' connections needed to be reconfigured. At the same time, the flow to 'linking' affirmation indicated the renewal of invitation, with leadership direction oriented towards dealing with organisational imperatives. Dealing with them aligned co-action with certain working principles. In the example of turning points SSD-TP3 and SSD-TP8, leadership aligned with the requirements of service reminders and quality assurance guidelines, recognising important issues and linking them back to the rest of the organisation.

6.3.12 Leadership pattern [preceding →adapting →selecting]

The leadership pattern of [preceding →adapting →selecting] appeared 13 times in the analysis of 106 turning points, highlighting reciprocity amongst participants, as they expanded their relational connections in pursuit of immediate accomplishments. This pattern illustrated participants' engagement in the co-active moment of leadership. The flow to 'adapting' exploration exemplified relational coordination in pursuit of sharp direction, while the flow to 'selecting' affirmation highlighted the distinction of the selected direction, compared to its counter-alternatives.

Drawing on turning points in the Middle Managers' Reconfiguration trajectory (MM-TP5, 7, 9, 11 and 19), and also in the Recruitment Review trajectory (RR-TP6, 13, 21, 24, 28 and 33), leadership unfolded in multiple rounds of co-action, where participants dealt with immediate organisational happenings. At these turning points,

the flow to ‘adapting’ exploration featured participants’ engagement to meet organisational demands, by cross-referencing their connections with the local context of work. For example, at turning point MM-TP19, participants demonstrated engagement with bringing the reconfiguration proposal to closure, and adapted their connections so that a working plan could be formulated. The significant observation for relational coordination here was that leadership went beyond reaching mutual understandings. Participants did not deal only with the trivialities in their connections; they went one step further to put their trivialities into perspective, formulating a conclusive proposal. The flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation marked the distinction of the selected direction compared to other available possibilities. In the example of turning point MM-TP19, participants explored a multitude of possibilities that could be co-acted; the selected one (the final proposal) indicated appropriateness to local context, matching their connections with the specified allocation criteria.

6.3.13 Leadership pattern [preceding →stabilising →linking]

The leadership pattern of [preceding →stabilising →linking] appeared 15 times in the analysis of 106 turning points. It exemplified sustainment of relational connections, as participants followed orderly plans in pursuit of co-created directions. The flow to ‘stabilising’ exploration illustrated responsiveness to local contexts, with participants maintaining their connections. The flow to ‘linking’ affirmation showed a tentative leadership direction, which established reminders about ongoing changes and offered clarity to participants for the execution of everyday work.

In the example of the Recruitment Review movement (RR-TP3, RR-TP8, RR-TP10, RR-TP23, RR-TP35, RR-TP37, RR-TP38, RR-TP48, and RR-TP50), the flow to ‘stabilising’ exploration offered support to changes occurring in the organisation.

Participants endorsed organisational happenings, to which they responded by following orderly plans, and maintaining their connections. In the same example, the flow to ‘linking’ affirmation indicated a tentative leadership direction, with the renewal of invitation establishing reminders about recurring changes. These reminders did not predetermine the emergence of leadership or its direction; rather, they helped participants focus attention on the everyday requirements of work. In discussions with the author, participants noted that the renewal of invitation sustained basic frames of reference, which offered clarity about the changes taking place.

6.3.14 Leadership Pattern [preceding →stabilising →selecting]

The leadership pattern of [preceding →stabilising →selecting] appeared 17 times in the analysis of 106 turning points. It exemplified persistence of relational dynamics in sophisticated connections among participants, as they confirmed co-action towards important aspects of work. Linking to Table 6-9, it is worth noting that this pattern is the only one observed in PublicORG. The flow to ‘stabilising’ exploration illustrated idiosyncratic relations, based on which participants marked acceptance of organisational happenings. The flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation marked new leadership direction in pursuit of organisational priorities.

In PublicORG (PO-TP1, PO-TP2, PO-TP3, PO-TP4, PO-TP5, PO-TP6), the flow to ‘stabilising’ exploration directed attention to the important aspects of work, which needed confirmation. Participants familiarised themselves with parallel organisational happenings, enabling the examination of the cues for co-action. Leadership emerged as participants assimilated information, with the selected direction consisting of maintaining organisational guidelines. Similar observations were made in SocialORG, where the leadership pattern of [preceding →stabilising

→selecting] featured confirmation of organisational changes. For example, at turning point during the Recruitment Review trajectory (RR-TP18, 20, 22, 25, 29, 34, and 42), the flow to ‘stabilising’ exploration marked the acceptance of happenings related to recruitment initiatives. The flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation in PublicORG (PO-TP1, PO-TP2, PO-TP3, PO-TP4, PO-TP5, PO-TP6), marked the acceptance of the meeting conclusions. The closure to the meetings indicated a new leadership direction, through which the organisation would “carry on” (in the participants’ words). In SocialORG, the new leadership direction also included the coordination around important aspects of work, as exemplified at turning points during the Recruitment Review trajectory (RR-TP18, 20, 22, 25, 29, 34, and 42).

6.3.15 Leadership pattern [preceding →integrating →linking]

The leadership pattern of [preceding →integrating →linking] appeared 16 times in the analysis of 106 turning points and it exemplified sustainment of relational connections, as participants embedded meanings in pursuit of co-created directions. The flow to ‘integrating’ exploration illustrated idiosyncratic connections among participants, in the sense that they reinvigorated meanings in the orientation of existing connections. The flow to ‘linking’ invitation showed leadership following a tentative direction, and renewing the invitation. Thus, leadership was sustained by virtue of altering meanings.

In the flow to ‘integrating’ exploration connections were sustained to the extent that participants (re)constructed meanings carrying forward co-created changes. This (re)construction provides clarity for the execution of everyday work (basic frames of reference). For example, during the Stand-In Service Development trajectory, the issue of training became a pressing matter, and leadership confirmed different aspects as

important in different relational encounters (SSD-TP6 organisational files, SSD-TP13 notifiable incidents, SSD-TP17, training sessions). The flow to ‘linking’ affirmation demonstrated continuity in participants’ connections. Leadership followed a tentative direction as participants re-created meanings in alignment with their existing connections. Such an alignment did not presuppose the emergence or direction of leadership. Rather, it indicated a working basis around which leadership was rooted. In this respect, leadership developed around reciprocal relations, confirming co-acted direction.

6.3.16 Leadership pattern [preceding →integrating →selecting]

The leadership pattern of [preceding →integrating →selecting] did not appear in the analysis. Therefore, its meaning is not grounded in the empirical material, but is rather recreated from insights arising from the analytical process. The pattern seems to endure participants’ connections in pursuit of a new leadership direction, aligned with organisational change. The flow to ‘integrating’ exploration seems to illustrate coherence in participants’ existing connections, while the flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation suggests a new leadership direction, emerging by bounding the possible routes of co-action with the local limits of relational connections.

The author attributed the ‘absence’ of [preceding →integrating →selecting] to the relational ties among participants in SocialORG and PublicORG, which did not allow its expression. The discussion with participants from both SocialORG and PublicORG indicated that an appropriate research context for the development of [preceding →integrating →selecting] would be inter-organisational meetings for collaborative working arrangements (partnership or alliance) with another organisation in pursuit of joint purposes. SocialORG formed collaborative working

arrangements with other organisations to support the community integration of its Supported Members. PublicORG formed collaborative working arrangements to address environmental concerns. Unfortunately, the author did not observe such meetings during fieldwork. Their context would be appropriate for the development of the leadership expression [preceding →integrating →selecting] since there is the demand for commitment to progress (flow from ‘preceding’ invitation to ‘integrating’ exploration) with immediate and clear new steps forward (flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation).

6.3.17 Synthesis: Leadership expressions

The previous sub-sections have described patterns of leadership expressions, drawing on the wholeness of a turning point to illustrate the co-active moment of leadership. The discussion has sought to approach the empirical expression of leadership, through analysing relational dynamics in the ways multi-beings (re)construct their connections in relational processes. Following the constructs developed in section 6.2, the analysis produced 16 different combinations in the responsive interplay composing patterns of leadership expressions. Table 6-4 outlines their occurrences, pointing to the richness of the empirical material. It should be noted that 5 patterns were not observed in the empirical material from SocialORG and PublicORG ([developing →stabilising →linking], [developing →integrating →linking] [preceding →differentiating →linking], [preceding →differentiating →selecting], and [preceding →integrating →selecting]). The author explained their ‘absence’ in the empirical material owing to the particular relational ties among participants SocialORG and PublicORG.

The analysis focused on the build-up of relational dynamics, setting leadership in motion in the flow to exploration, and then to affirmation. The flow to exploration signified fluctuation in participants' connections ('differentiating', 'adapting', 'stabilising' and 'integrating'), while the flow to affirmation signified orientation to the future ('linking' and 'selecting'). The analysis of the empirical material showed similar characterisations among leadership patterns, in terms of the flows to exploration and affirmation. Analysing fluctuation in participants' connections showed that the flow to exploration alternated between divergence ('differentiating', 'adapting') and convergence ('stabilising', 'integrating'). Analysing the orientation to the future showed that the flow to affirmation alternated between continuity ('linking') and newness ('selecting'). Synthesising the 16 leadership patterns around their common characterisations, brought about the following 4 types of leadership expressions.

1) The patterns of [developing →differentiating →linking], [developing →adapting →linking], [preceding →differentiating →linking] and [preceding →adapting →linking] were characterised by divergence in the flow to exploration, and continuity in the flow to affirmation. Owing to these characterisations and the analysis in sub-sections 6.3.1/6.3.3/6.3.9/6.3.11, the author described the leadership expression encompassing these patterns as 'challenging' to illustrate provocation of relational dynamics in pursuit of mutual understandings. Drawing on Table 6-4, there were 26 occurrences of the 'challenging' expression of leadership in the analysis of 106 turning points.

2) The patterns of [developing →differentiating →selecting], [developing →adapting →selecting], [preceding →differentiating →selecting] and [preceding

→adapting →selecting] were characterised by divergence in the flow to exploration, and newness in the flow to affirmation. Owing to these characterisations and the analysis in sub-sections 6.3.2/6.3.4/6.3.10/6.3.12, the author described the leadership expression, encompassing these patterns, as ‘creating’ to illustrate expansion in relational dynamics, while participants coordinated relationally to achieve immediate direction. Linking to Table 6-4, there were 18 occurrences of the ‘creating’ expression of leadership in the analysis of 106 turning points.

3) The patterns of [developing →stabilising →linking], [developing →integrating →linking], [preceding →stabilising →linking] and [preceding →integrating →linking] were characterised by convergence in the flow to exploration, and continuity in the flow to affirmation. Owing to these characterisations and the analysis in sub-sections 6.3.5/6.3.7/6.3.13/6.3.15, the author described the leadership expression, encompassing these patterns, as ‘operating’ to illustrate sustainment of relational dynamics by providing reminders of change from basic frames of reference. As noted in Table 6-4, there were 31 occurrences of the ‘operating’ expression of leadership in the analysis of 106 turning points.

4) The patterns of [developing →stabilising →selecting], [developing →integrating →selecting], [preceding →stabilising →selecting] and [preceding →integrating →selecting] were characterised by convergence in the flow to exploration, and newness in the flow to affirmation. Owing to these characterisations and the analysis in sub-sections 6.3.6/6.3.8/6.3.14/6.3.16, the author described the leadership expression, encompassing these patterns, as ‘progressing’ to illustrate endurance of relational dynamics, as participants pursued familiarity with the context

of change. Drawing on Table 6-4, there were 31 occurrences of the ‘progressing’ expression of leadership in the analysis of 106 turning points.

These four leadership expressions, featuring 16 patterns, indicated the scope of the relational process of leadership, and the multiple possibilities of relational dynamics. To complement the synthesis of leadership expressions, the author composed the graphical abstraction of the ‘leadership grid’ in Figure 6-2, following the suggestions of Langley (1999) that visual graphical representations are an attractive way to describe processual phenomena. The author recognises significant benefits in providing the graphical illustration, associated with illustrating the multiplicity in the relational process of leadership. At the same time, she acknowledges that a graphical abstraction carries certain limitations, such as ordering leadership expressions. In Figure 6-2, there does not exist any ordering among the different expressions, nor is there a separation of opposites. The graphical abstraction merely aims at illustrating different possibilities co-existing and harmonising each other, as indicated with the different leadership expressions (the patterns that were not observed in the empirical of SocialORG and PublicORG are presented in italics font). On these grounds, Figure 6-2 is not a model; rather, it is the author’s attempt to communicate the analysis of the empirical material, visualising multiplicity.

Figure 6-2: Leadership grid

exploration: divergence	LEADERSHIP EXPRESSION: CHALLENGING [developing →differentiating →linking] [developing →adapting →linking] [preceding →differentiating →linking] [preceding →adapting →linking]	LEADERSHIP EXPRESSION: CREATING [developing →differentiating →selecting] [developing →adapting →selecting] [preceding →differentiating →selecting] [preceding →adapting →selecting]
	LEADERSHIP EXPRESSION: OPERATING [developing →stabilising →linking] [developing →integrating →linking] [preceding →stabilising →linking] [preceding →integrating →linking]	LEADERSHIP EXPRESSION: PROGRESSING [developing →stabilising →selecting] [developing →integrating →selecting] [preceding →stabilising →selecting] [preceding →integrating →selecting]
	affirmation: continuity	affirmation: newness

In the light of the leadership grid and its four expressions (challenging, creating, operating and progressing), the discussion proceeds by explaining Figure 6-2 and synthesising empirical insights. Firstly, the challenging expression of leadership consists of the corresponding patterns of [developing →differentiating →linking], [developing →adapting →linking], [preceding →differentiating →linking] and [preceding →adapting →linking]. The patterns are characterised by divergence in the flow to exploration, and continuity in the flow to affirmation. The analysis in subsections 6.3.1/6.3.3/6.3.9/6.3.11 brings forward empirical insights about the significance of relational coordination. In the flow to exploration, leadership emerged as participants questioned (‘differentiating’ exploration), or re-arranged their connections (‘adapting’ exploration), holding divergent views. Questioning or re-arranging connections did not erode relational dynamics, but rather provided the basis

for reaching mutual understandings. This is distinctively different from reaching shared understandings, which assume a single frame of reference among participants.

Therefore, the challenging expression of leadership characterises the relational process of leadership as open to differences. Drawing on the flow to ‘linking’ affirmation, renewal of invitation was achieved though divergent meanings as participants reconfigured their relational ties, not the context of understanding. Thus, the emergence of leadership did not require an appointed authority to indicate a way out; the relational process of leadership was open to differences, as long as relational coordination reached appropriate co-action. This was achieved as the local context of participants’ connections bounded the possibilities of co-action. The renewal of invitation was one out of the many possible directions, which was co-acted by cross-referencing the requirements of co-action against the context of relational ties.

Secondly, the creating expression of leadership consists of the corresponding patterns [developing →differentiating →selecting], [developing →adapting →selecting], [preceding →differentiating →selecting] and [preceding →adapting →selecting]. The patterns are characterised by divergence in the flow to exploration, and newness in the flow to affirmation. Based on the analysis in sub-sections 6.3.5/6.3.7/6.3.13/6.3.15, there are empirical insights to consider about the engagement with the issue at stake, illustrated in relational coordination, which did not only stay at reaching mutual understanding. In the flow to exploration, mutual understandings were put into perspective, as participants engaged with the issue at stake, by questioning (‘differentiating’) or re-arranging (‘adapting’) their connections. The emergence of new orientation to the future directly addressed the issues of concern, indicating urgency for co-action. In the flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation, the

new leadership direction was distinctive from its counter-alternatives, owing to its appropriateness to the (re)constructed relational ties. In the process of relational coordination, accumulated relational ties were examined and confronted against the requirements of co-action in pursuit of immediate accomplishments.

Thirdly, the operating expression of leadership consists of the corresponding patterns of [developing →stabilising →linking], [developing →integrating →linking], [preceding →stabilising →linking] and [preceding →integrating →linking]. The patterns are characterised by convergence in the flow to exploration, and continuity in the flow to affirmation. The analysis in sub-sections 6.3.5/6.3.7/6.3.13/6.3.15 brought about empirical insights as regards the perpetuity of relational dynamics. The relational process of leadership was expressed as participants sustained their connections with reminders of change, constituting basic frames of reference. The flow to exploration illustrated responsiveness to ongoing change as participants maintained their relational ties ('stabilising') or (re)constructed meanings to align with their existing connections ('integrating').

In such ways, participants proceeded to becoming adept in the new contexts of change, establishing reminders and offering clarity for the execution of everyday work (basic contexts of reference). Leadership was expressed in the execution of an orderly plan, emerging tentatively with the renewal of invitation. In the flow to 'linking' affirmation, leadership leaned towards the future following a tentative direction, which illustrated that the relational process of leadership was never finalised. Rather, it opened up participation as its tentativeness signalled that there was no pre-fixed direction. Therefore, the renewal of invitation did not precondition leadership, but rather supported the continuity of relational dynamics.

Fourthly, the progressing expression of leadership consisted of its corresponding patterns of [developing →stabilising →selecting], [developing →integrating →selecting], [preceding →stabilising →selecting] and [preceding →integrating →selecting]. The patterns are characterised by convergence in the flow to exploration, and newness in the flow to affirmation. The analysis in sub-sections 6.3.6/6.3.8/6.3.14/6.3.16 brought forward empirical insights about idiosyncratic relational ties, based on which participants marked acceptance of organisational happenings. Examples from PublicORG and SocialORG indicated that the progressing expression of leadership illustrated embeddedness in the social order of each organisation, with leadership direction signalling ‘the way things were done’. In the flow to exploration, participants drew on idiosyncratic connections to familiarise themselves with the context of change and direct co-action to the important aspects of work. By enduring their relational connections, participants pursued organisational priorities, and coordinated co-action to the rest of the organisation. Therefore, the flow to ‘selecting’ affirmation marked new leadership direction that carried implications for parallel organisational happenings.

6.4 Chapter synopsis

This chapter has presented the analysis of the empirical material relating to the first research question about exploring how the relational process of leadership is expressed empirically. Drawing on the empirical material from SocialORG and PublicORG, turning points have been analysed in terms of Gergen's (2009c) concept of the responsive interplay in the interwoven flows of invitation-exploration-affirmation. Focused only on responsive interplays that were complete, going from invitation to exploration and affirmation, the analysis has developed in two parts. Section 6.2 focuses on each flow in the responsive interplay per turning point (invitation/ exploration/ affirmation), and presents analysis into respective constructs. These are taken forward to section 6.3, which analyses leadership expressions on the basis of patterns composed by the different combinations in the responsive interplay. Both analytical processes were enhanced by discussing with research participants, as discussed in Chapter 4. Complementing the discussion, Appendices 2 to 6 list the analysis of the responsive interplay in the leadership trajectories discussed in Chapter 5.

In section 6.2, the analytical process evaluated relational dynamics temporarily manifested at each flow in the responsive interplay. The author analysed invitation as trigger to co-action, with the empirically grounded constructs of 'developing' and 'preceding', outlined in Table 6-1. Exploration was analysed in the ways participants elaborated on invitation, with the empirically grounded constructs of 'differentiating', 'stabilising', 'adapting' and 'integrating', outlined in Table 6-2. Affirmation was analysed as regards the acceptance of exploration with the empirically grounded constructs of 'linking' and 'selecting', outlined in Table 6-3. For analytical purposes,

invitation, exploration and affirmation were presented separately; however, theoretically and empirically, they were interrelated and mutually constituent. Their seamless combination illustrated the co-active moment of leadership, not as an ideal whole nor as a strict representation; but as continuous whole, deriving from relational processes. A summative outline of the constructs in the responsive interplay is offered in Figure 6-1.

The combinations in the responsive interplay have been brought forward to section 6.3, discussing the different ways the relational process of leadership is expressed empirically. Table 6-4 outlines 16 different combinations in the responsive interplay, composing patterns of leadership expressions, and pointing to the richness of the empirical material. It should be noted that 5 patterns were not observed in the empirical material from SocialORG and PublicORG ([developing →stabilising →linking], [developing →integrating →linking] [preceding →differentiating →linking], [preceding →differentiating →selecting], and [preceding →integrating →selecting]). Their ‘absence’ in the empirical material has been attributed to contextual particularities of the research sites (SocialORG and PublicORG), where the relational ties among participants did not produce the ‘missing’ patterns of leadership expressions.

The analysis focused on the build-up of relational dynamics, setting leadership in motion in the flow to exploration, and then to affirmation. The flow to exploration signified fluctuation in participants’ connections, alternating between divergence (‘differentiating’, ‘adapting’) and convergence (‘stabilising’, ‘integrating’). The flow to affirmation signified orientation to the future, alternating between continuity (‘linking’) and newness (‘selecting’). Leadership patterns produced similar

characterisations, according to which they synthesised the following four leadership expressions: challenging, creating, operating and progressing. The four leadership expressions illustrated the multiplicity of leadership, highlighting that there are various possibilities of relational dynamics, which co-exist and harmonise each other. This is demonstrated in the graphical abstraction of the leadership grid offered in Figure 6.2.

Having answered the first research question about how the relational process of leadership is expressed empirically, the thesis now proceeds to the second research question, and explores how leadership unfolds across the grid (Figure 6.2). This is done in Chapter 7, by revisiting the leadership trajectories, and analysing leadership unfolding from one turning point to the next in the leadership grid.

CHAPTER 7 | LEADERSHIP MOVEMENT IN TIME

How does the relational process of leadership unfold progressively?

7.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the empirical material relating to the second research question, exploring the progressive unfolding of the relational process of leadership. The chapter revisits the leadership trajectories and analyses patterns of leadership expressions unfolding from one turning point to the next in the leadership grid (Figure 6-2). It draws on the leadership movements identified in SocialORG, because progressive unfolding from one turning point to the next was not evident in PublicORG (as discussed previously in Chapters 4 and 5). The chapter consists of two parts. The first part in section 7.2 revisits the four leadership trajectories from SocialORG (Middle Managers Reconfiguration, Recruitment Review, Stand-In Service Development, and Emergence of Joint Management Meetings) and describes the relational process of leadership as it is expressed in the unfolding of turning points. The four trajectories are presented in sub-sections 7.2.1-7.2.4, together with graphical abstractions of their development in the leadership grid. The second part of the chapter analyses patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid in sub-sections 7.3.1-7.3.4, together with their graphical abstractions. Finally, the chapter closes with a synopsis in section 7.4, summarising key points to take forward.

7.2 Leadership movements: revisited

This section revisits the leadership trajectories from SocialORG, presented in Chapter 5, and analyses the relational process of leadership as it unfolds from one turning point to the next. It is worth restating that the great potential offered in the

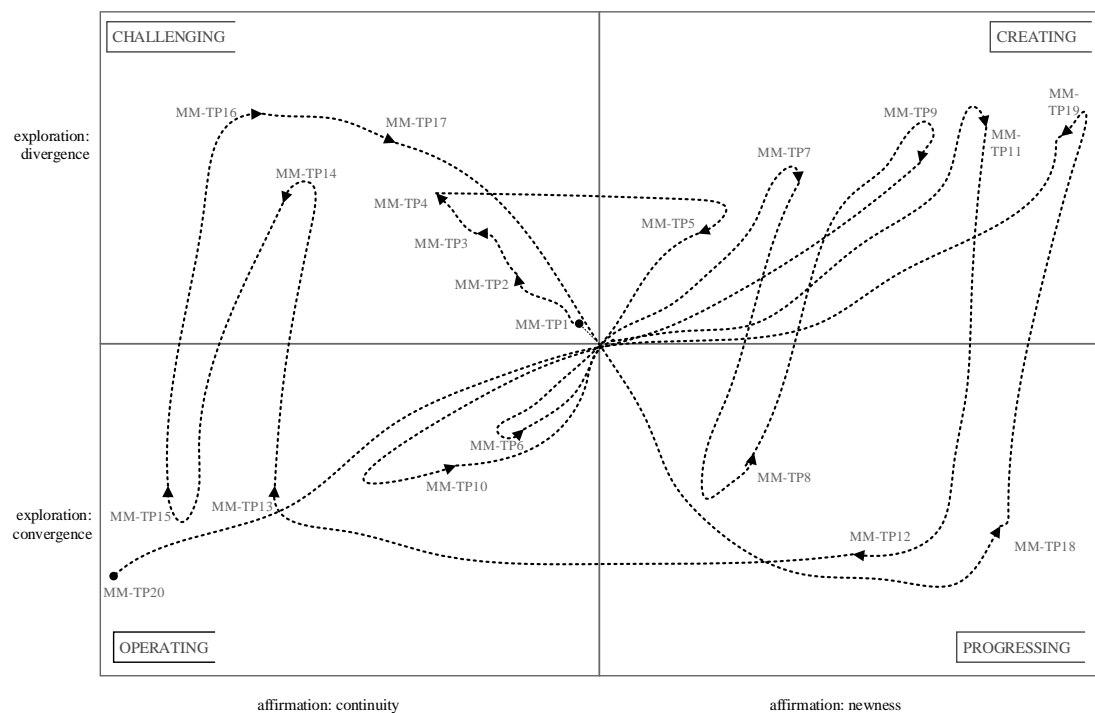
trajectories is that they join together turning points that spread outside and beyond a single meeting forum. From this outlook, the section describes leadership as it unfolds through space and time, and adds a new theme to the discussion about the relational process of leadership. By focusing on the unfolding from one turning point to the next, the analysis illustrates an ongoing flow of relational dynamics. Sub-sections 7.2.1 to 7.2.4 discuss unfolding in the passage across expressions in the leadership grid, as turning points unfold over time. To accompany the discussion, each sub-section includes a graphical abstraction of the respective leadership trajectory. The aim is to stimulate thinking about empirical insights, which talk about leadership emerging from continuous relational processes. Therefore, the graphical abstraction is not a model; rather, it is the author's way of communicating the analysis of the empirical material, visualising complexity and flow. The reader is encouraged to look at the movement in the graphical abstraction, not strict points.

7.2.1 Middle Managers' Workload Reconfiguration (MM)

This sub-section revisits the Middle Managers' Workload Reconfiguration trajectory and describes leadership as it unfolds in its different expressions within the leadership grid. Figure 7-1 offers a graphical abstraction, which can be read alongside the discussion to help the reader engage with the insights from the empirical material. The author recognises the related limitations that are included in the graphical abstraction illustrating leadership movement in the grid. For instance, in Figure 7-1 both MM-TP1 and MM-TP2 are exemplars of the challenging expression of leadership; however, MM-TP2 is positioned above MM-TP1. The different positions are only used for drawing purposes, given that the author has worked with the conventions of 2x2 axis. There are no measurements, comparisons or structuring in

turning points. Rather, the author has used the convention that she started from the centre of the axis and continued drawing the movement, going to the extremes of the axis. Therefore, the position of turning points carries conventions of drawing, but does not imply any separation of leadership expressions. To help the reader engage with the graphical abstraction, the arrows on the Figure indicate turning points as they progress over time, while the two dots show the first and last observed turning points.

Figure 7-1: MM leadership movement in the grid



Initiating the movement, leadership was characterised by divergence in the flow to exploration, in the attempt to grasp the possibility of reconfiguring Middle Managers' areas of supervision (MM-TP1 to MM-TP5). In the unfolding of leadership from MM-TP1 to MM-TP4, the flow to affirmation indicated continuity, signifying that change was associated with establishing new connections among participants. For the first four turning points, leadership unfolded within its challenging expression and

illustrated participants provoking each other about the proposition. A number of possible ideas were processed, as the proposition was under consideration. With regard to progressing with the proposed change, leadership had a tentative orientation to a future plan (continuity in affirmation), as invitation was renewed successively.

In the gradual development of leadership from MM-TP1 to MM-TP4 the making of relational ties revealed an unthought-of novelty. As explained by participants, the proposition for the reconfiguration was not a pre-conceived plan under scrutiny. Rather, it arose in their attempt to deal with implications of changes in their financial and regulatory environment. Participants recognised the proposition as novelty, because it changed the ways they worked and thought about their working practices. Therefore, the unfolding of leadership from MM-TP1 to MM-TP4 illustrated relational coordination as participants communicated different views, while seeking to achieve coherence. Next, leadership shifted from processing ideas to proceeding with a definite plan, as indicated in the movement from MM-TP4 to MM-TP5. Divergence in the flow to exploration was accompanied by newness in the flow to affirmation, sketching a way forward with the creating expression of leadership. A shift in the orientation to the future could be appreciated, moving from tentative ideas about the proposition, to a clear statement that the proposition was a viable option to pursue.

From MM-TP5 until MM-TP15, leadership unfolded around the grid, as participants pursued ways to implement the proposition for the reconfiguration. In successive planning rounds, leadership direction developed as participants cross-referenced the proposition against their relational ties and against organisational criteria. In the movement from MM-TP5 to MM-TP8 leadership unfolded across its operating, creating and progressing expressions, indicating distinct changes in relational

dynamics. These leaps across the leadership grid showed participants carefully tuned to coordinating co-action around the reconfiguration plan (MM-TP6: task group identified, MM-TP7: timescales for transition and MM-TP8: consultation with MMs). Next, relational dynamics eased, as leadership unfolded from its creating to its operating expression, illustrating co-action around the proposition, with specifying the reallocation criteria (MM-TP9 to MM-TP10). Such a leadership unfolding seemed to indicate reminders for co-action, as relational dynamics comfortably softened. From there, leadership shifted from divergence to convergence in the flow to exploration (MM-TP11, creating to MM-TP12, progressing), as participants maintained orientation to the future and proceeded with the reconfiguration plan.

At that unfolding in the leadership movement (MM-TP11 to MM-TP12), there seemed to emerge stable connections among participants, who were, then, considering the deliverable management hours for the reconfiguration plan. These connections were questioned in the unfolding from MM-TP13 to MM-TP15. The shift from convergence to divergence in the flow to exploration illustrated immersion in relational connections, with participants being attuned to finalising the proposition. In the process of finalising, tensions arose and signalled a temporal direction of inconclusiveness, as participants could not come to an agreement about re-distributing Middle Managers to new locations of supervision (MM-TP14). Accumulated relational ties were illustrated as participants defined the role of roaming Middle Managers, which was a critical prerequisite for deciding about the re-distribution to new locations (MM-TP15).

Participants' connections were fuelled again with leadership unfolding across the grid from challenging to progressing expressions (MM-TP16 to MM-TP18), as

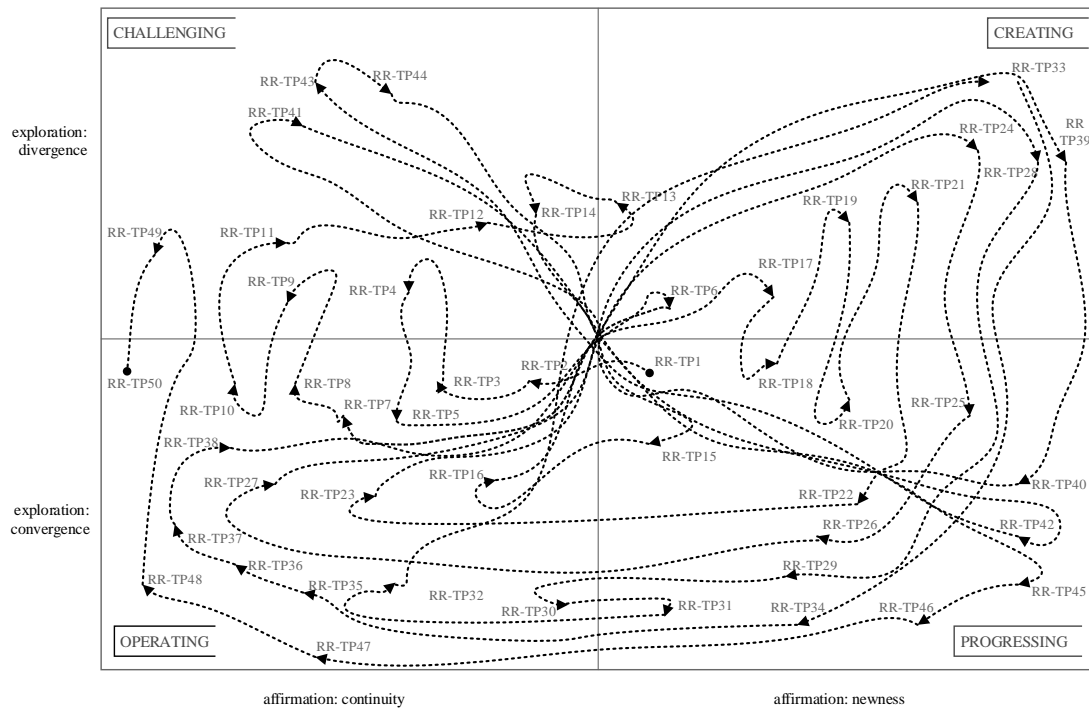
participants considered the next steps for a review plan. Eventually, a resolution was achieved, owing to participants' commitment to the plan. In the unfolding from MM-TP19 to MM-TP20, participants proposed a way out with the leadership direction of a final proposition. The unfolding from the creating to the operating leadership expression illustrated immersion in the proposed plan and cohesiveness among participants. Altogether, the fluidity of the leadership movement can be appreciated in Figure 7-1, which shows leadership unfolding from pluralistic interpretations to collective commitment, while formulating a plan based on a novel proposition.

7.2.2 Recruitment Review (RR)

This sub-section revisits the Recruitment Review trajectory and describes leadership as it unfolds across its expressions from one turning point to the next in the leadership grid. The discussion draws on Figure 7-2, offering a graphical illustration of the leadership movement for helping the reader engage with the empirical insights. A review of Figure 7-2 provides certain preliminary observations. In the unfolding of leadership, the first part of the movement is scattered across the grid with an interchange in the four leadership expressions (RR-TP1 to RR-TP20). Then, leadership unfolds around three quarters of the grid in its creating, progressing and operating expressions (RR-TP21 to RR-TP40). In the final part, leadership unfolds in the other three quarters of the grid in its progressing, operating and challenging expressions (RR-TP41 to RR-TP50). It is also worth noting the relative weighting of the four expressions in the leadership movement, considering that this trajectory shows an established working practice. Drawing on Figure 7-2, there are 9 occurrences of the challenging expression of leadership, 9 occurrences of the creating expression of

leadership, 18 occurrences of the operating expression of leadership and 14 occurrences of the progressing expression of leadership.

Figure 7-2: RR leadership movement in the grid



During the Recruitment Review trajectory, leadership unfolded around a planned organisational initiative. Its successive turns from one turning point to the next wove together relational ties with the local context of recruiting. In the beginning of the movement, leadership oriented towards clearing up relational ties among participants (RR-TP1 to RR-TP10). The MAP exercise brought together participants in determining a recruitment plan. At first, the unfolding from the progressing to the operating expression of leadership indicated convergence in the flow to exploration, by sustaining participants' connections around the development of a basis upon which to focus efforts (RR-TP1 to RR-TP2). That basis emerged from the MAP exercise, which was formulated in the unfolding of leadership from RR-TP3 to RR-TP5. The

unfolding from the operating to the challenging and back to the operating expression of leadership ensured continuity in the flow to affirmation, giving prominence to formation of a recruitment plan.

With a basis from the MAP exercise, leadership was expressed with divergence in the flow to exploration, indicating participants' attempt to familiarise with the requirements of relating (RR-TP6). This was achieved with rooting participants' connections in the results of the MAP exercise and their meanings for working practices (RR-TP7 to RR-TP10). Next, divergence in the flow to exploration expressed synchrony among participants in looking to determine the next steps (RR-TP11 to RR-TP13). Relational dynamics were further motioned with the formulation of a dedicated work group, tasked with carrying forward the requirements of the recruitment (RR-TP14). Then, leadership unfolded primarily with its creating and progressing expressions (RR-TP16 to RR-TP22): newness in the flow to affirmation clarified the work that needed to be done and facilitated the transition to desired outcomes of recruiting. Similar characteristics continued in the expression of leadership, which unfolded in the creating, progressing and operating parts of the grid (RR-TP23 to RR-TP40). At this developmental stage, leadership carried the implications of the Review for other organisational happenings, thus illustrating the breadth of relational dynamics. For example, interview questions were updated after consulting with the Suggestions Club (RR-TP25, RR-TP28, and RR-TP30 to RR-TP34).

Next, leadership unfolded across the grid from its challenging to its progressing expression, illustrating how participants dealt with equivocal meanings (RR-TP41 to RR-TP45). Leadership movement until then unfolded around the practicalities of the recruiting. From here onwards, besides the immediate requirements of recruitment,

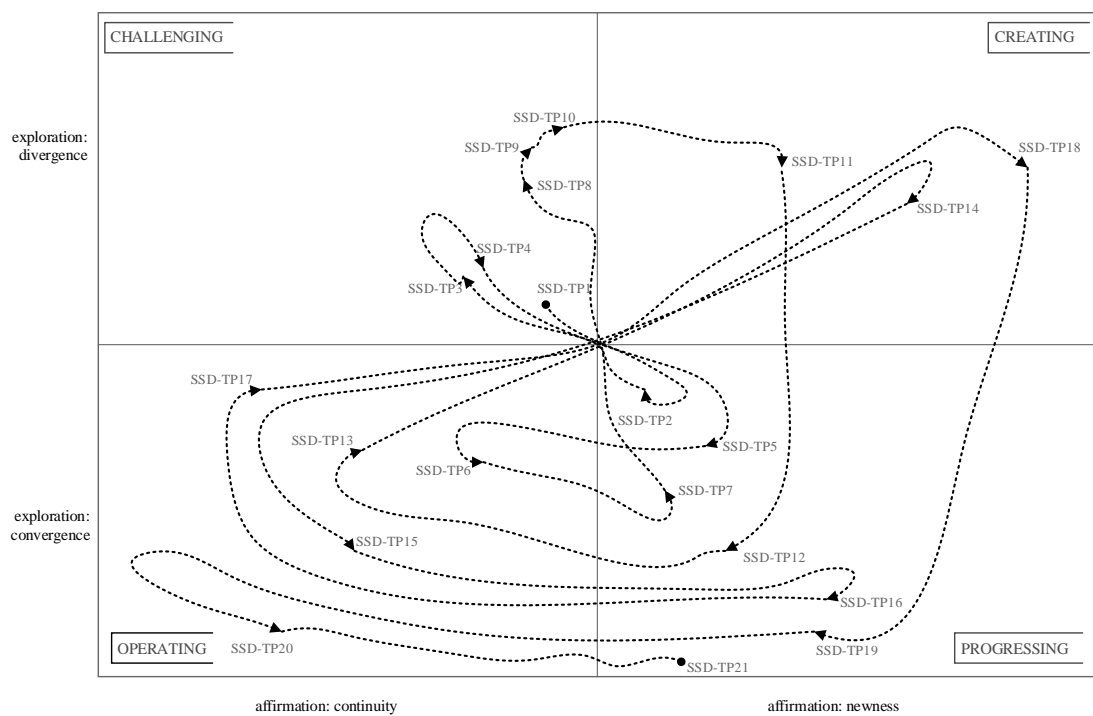
leadership unfolded around the broader connections to the organisation. These connections included relevance of new work to organisational expertise (RR-TP43), as well as a vision to guide the recruitment practice (RR-TP44 to RR-TP45). Such comparison to organisational values stabilised relational dynamics, and the orientation to the future focused on evaluating current state of work, moving from the progressing to the operating expression (RR-TP46 to RR-TP47). Participants indicated that no further work would be undertaken until the evaluation of current work was completed. The latest observed trail of leadership unfolded across convergence in the flow to exploration (RR-TP48, operating to RR-TP50, challenging), feeding back the previous recommendation and announcing the next round of recruitment review.

In summary, this sub-section has presented a particularly lengthy movement that unfolded during a six-month period. Through its successive turns, leadership illustrated compound relational dynamics and the reciprocal effects with local context, as presented in Figure 7-2. For its greater part, leadership highlighted the issues to be resolved and devised all relevant local details of the recruitment review. These specific parts of the movement underlined that participants held a minimum degree of common understanding about the work to be carried out, based on previous relational ties (from previous rounds of recruitment review). However, this common understanding was only a departing position, as participants constantly (re)constructed their connections. Finally, it was profoundly noted that participants did not seek to find the best possible answers, but the ones that worked within their existing connections. Therefore, leadership moved to directions that supported ongoing relational dynamics.

7.2.3 Stand-In Service Development

This sub-section reviews the Stand-In Service Development trajectory and analyses leadership as it unfolds progressively from one turning point to the next in the leadership grid. The discussion is complemented with Figure 7-3, offering a graphical illustration of the leadership movement. It aims to help the reader engage with the insights from the empirical material, and can be read alongside the discussion. A first review of Figure 7-3 offers certain preliminary observations. The first part of the leadership movement develops primarily across the challenging and progressing expressions (SSD-TP1 to SSD-TP10, with the exception of SSD-TP6), while the second part develops across the creating, progressing and operating expressions (SSD-TP11 to SSD-TP21).

Figure 7-3: SSD leadership movement in the grid



In the beginning of the movement, leadership unfolded across the grid from challenging to progressing expressions (SSD-TP1 to SSD-TP5), moving from divergence to convergence in the flow to exploration, and from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation. The Stand-In Service was a regular working practice concerning the whole of the organisation (through the different meetings), besides its respective workgroup (E). From this perspective, the movement from the challenging to the progressing leadership expression illustrated how directions were accomplished from drawing on others, reflecting reciprocity in relational dynamics. Participants' relational ties developed across organisational meetings, linking important aspects of their work to the Stand-In Service while recognising the centrality of the Service for the organisation. For example, working practices were reviewed in the movement from SSD-TP3 to SSD-TP5, in directions of reminders set-up, performance management and contingency planning.

Maintaining these relational ties, leadership unfolded, from the operating to the progressing expression (SSD-TP6 to SSD-TP7), addressing the implications of an external review, which demanded updates in the organisational files and related templates. In this nexus of relational connections, leadership carried implications for multiple organisational happenings. Unfolding within its challenging expression (SSD-TP8 to SSD-TP10), leadership triggered reflections among participants. These reflections directed leadership to the immediate requirements of co-action, evolving around the appraisal of the Service across the organisation. Next, the movement from the creating to the progressing expression of leadership (SSD-TP11 to SSD-TP12, movement across newness in the flow to affirmation) indicated relational coordination around collecting feedback from various colleagues about their practice at the Stand-

In Service. Feedback indicated that various aspects of the Service needed review, with primary focus on training. Moving across the grid, leadership developed from the operating to the creating, and back to the operating expression (SSD-TP13 to SSD-TP15), illustrating how direction was sustained in clarifying relational context against the local context of work.

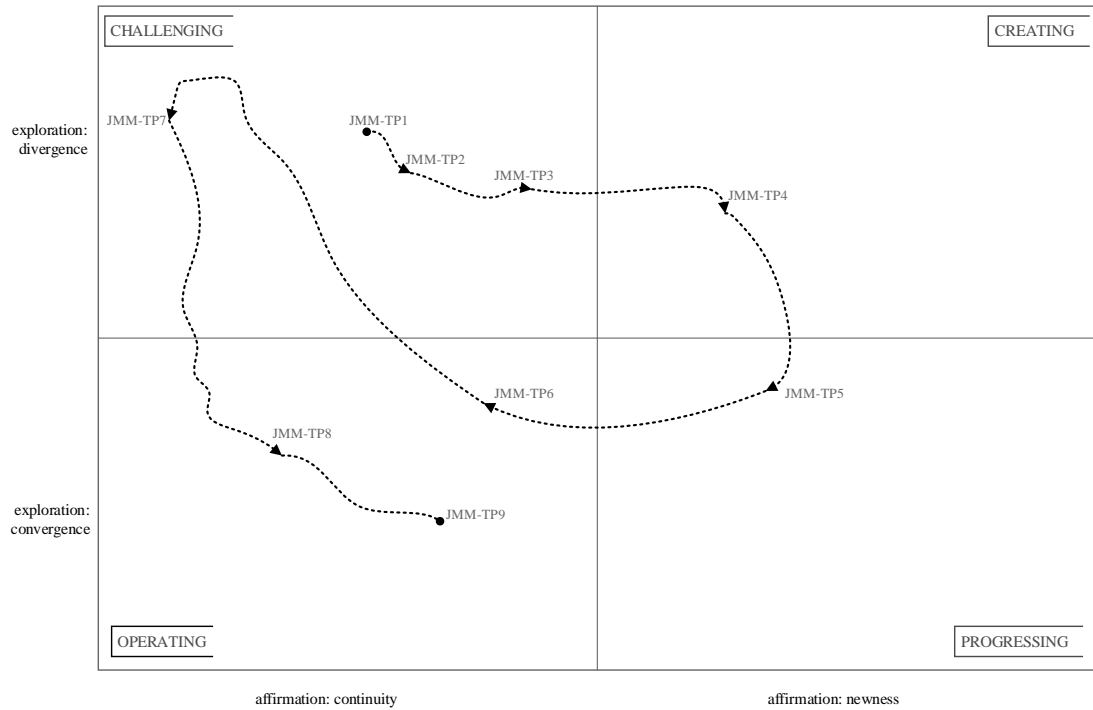
The focus on training was further sustained, as leadership moved from its operating to its progressing expression (SSD-TP16 to SSD-TP17) and from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation. Working around training requirements (SSD-TP18 to SSD-TP19), leadership oriented towards updates to match the development of training (policy and organisational files). Finally, the leadership movement from the progressing to the operating expression sustained participants' connections (SSD-TP20 to SSD-TP21). Altogether, this sub-section has presented leadership as it moved progressively from one turning point to the next, featuring an established work practice. Figure 7-3 illustrates the flow of the leadership movement, highlighting reciprocity as the movement extended to the whole of the organisation across all meeting forums.

7.2.4 Emergence of Joint Management Meetings

This sub-section revisits the trajectory about the Emergence of Joint Management Meetings and analyses leadership as it unfolds progressively from one turning point to the next in the leadership grid. Figure 7-4 adds to the discussion by offering a graphical illustration of the leadership movement, with the aim to help the reader engage with the empirical insights. It can be read alongside the discussion. Reviewing Figure 7-4, the first part of the leadership movement develops across the challenging and creating expressions (JMM-TP1 to JMM-TP4), while the second part

develops primarily across the operating and progressing expressions (JMM-TP5 to JMM-TP9, with the exception of JMM-TP7).

Figure 7-4: JMM leadership movement in the grid



The leadership movement, featuring the emergence of Joint Management Meetings, illustrated the recreation of social bonds by radically changing the working practice of Middle Managers’ meeting forum. Initially, leadership moved within its challenging expression (JMM-TP1 to JMM-TP3), introducing concerns about the relevance of Middle Managers’ meeting forum as reflecting accurately Middle Managers’ role and contribution to organising. In this respect, leadership introduced new meanings for participants’ connections. Then, leadership was oriented towards triggering renewed relational connections [contemplations about a free-thinking space (JMM-TP1), the amount of information reviewed in meetings (JMM-TP2) and the quality of communication during meetings (JMM-TP3)].

Renewed relational connections were taken forward in the movement across the creating and progressing expressions of leadership (JMM-TP4 to JMM-TP5). Continuity in the flow to affirmation indicated a drastic change in the orientation to the future. Participants re-defined the meeting format and re-established their connections around it (JMM-TP4). Next, leadership was directed to progressing with the modification, and related outcomes were reviewed (JMM-TP4 to JMM-TP5, movement from divergence to convergence in the flow to exploration). This included the review of interconnected working practices. For example, Operations meeting agenda was reviewed to reflect the change in the Joint Management Meeting.

At this developmental phase of the movement, a shift in the flow of relational dynamics could be appreciated. In the beginning of the movement intense dynamics prevailed, whereas the opposite was the case later. From JMM-TP5 onwards, leadership was characterised by convergence in the flow to exploration, indicating that participants had strengthened their relational connections and were focused on maintaining momentum in the changing format. Leadership unfolded from its operating to its challenging expression, and then, had successive unfolding within its operating expression (JMM-TP6 to JMM-TP9). Participants' connections offered the basis for participating in the newly developed change: leadership was coordinated towards the direction of the new meeting format, while participants were rooted in the context of change. Gradually, this leadership movement illustrated the recreation of social bonds. It was rather short and sharp, compared to the previous movement, and it presented a radical change of a working practice. Altogether, leadership expressed rich relational dynamics, flowing across the grid, as observed in Figure 7-4.

7.2.5 Section Synthesis & Recap

This section has revisited the leadership movements constructed from the empirical material in SocialORG, and has described successive unfolding in the passage across expressions in the leadership grid. The critical point of consideration is the way relational dynamics play out in the unfolding of leadership. Describing the movement from one turning point to the next, though the leadership grid, illustrates the ongoing flow of relational dynamics and their relational implications for the unfolding of leadership. Such descriptions do not presuppose causality or determinism for leadership expression; rather, they highlight relationality. Figures 7-1 to 7-4 add to the discussion with a graphical abstraction, which identifies the various leadership expressions that arise in the course of relational dynamics.

Turning to the specifics of the leadership trajectories, each one has different story to orient its development. The Middle Managers' Reconfiguration trajectory conveys the unfolding of leadership from diverse interpretations to collective commitment in the formulation of a novel proposition. The Recruitment Review trajectory is a lengthier movement, illustrating compound relational dynamics and correspondence to local context. It highlights that leadership unfolds in directions that support relational dynamics, which are continuously (re)constructed. The Stand-In Service Development trajectory develops around an established working practice and highlights reciprocity, as the unfolding of leadership extends to the whole of the organisation. Finally, the Emergence of Joint Management Meetings trajectory presents a radical change of a working practice, featuring the ways leadership recreates social bonds. These descriptions of the four leadership trajectories uncover specific patterns in the passage across expressions in the leadership grid: horizontally,

vertically, diagonally and within expression. They are taken forward and explored further in the next section.

7.3 Patterns of passage across leadership expressions

The previous section describes leadership unfolding progressively across the four expression in the grid. Therefore, it becomes apparent that leadership is not a one-off spark, but an ongoing relational process. Likewise, leadership is not standing alone; it is embedded in the local context, and it is developed alongside participants' relational connections. Leadership evolves from one turning point to the next in continuous movement; not as a discrete 'move' but as ongoing 'moving'. This section analyses leadership in the patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid.

The previous section has illustrated the following patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid, which reappeared in the four leadership trajectories: horizontally, vertically, diagonally and within expression. In detail, 100 turning points (empirical material from SocialORG) have been analysed and the following 99 patterns of passage in the grid have occurred: 26 patterns of passage horizontally in the leadership grid, 28 patterns of passage vertically in the leadership grid, 25 patterns of passage diagonally in the leadership grid, and 20 patterns of passage within expression in the leadership grid. They are discussed in sub-sections 7.3.1-7.3.4, together with a description of the context they are embedded in, and of the developing relational connections. Each sub-section is accompanied with the following two resources: a Table, noting their occurrences and an empirically grounded description, and a Figure, illustrating the patterns in the leadership grid.

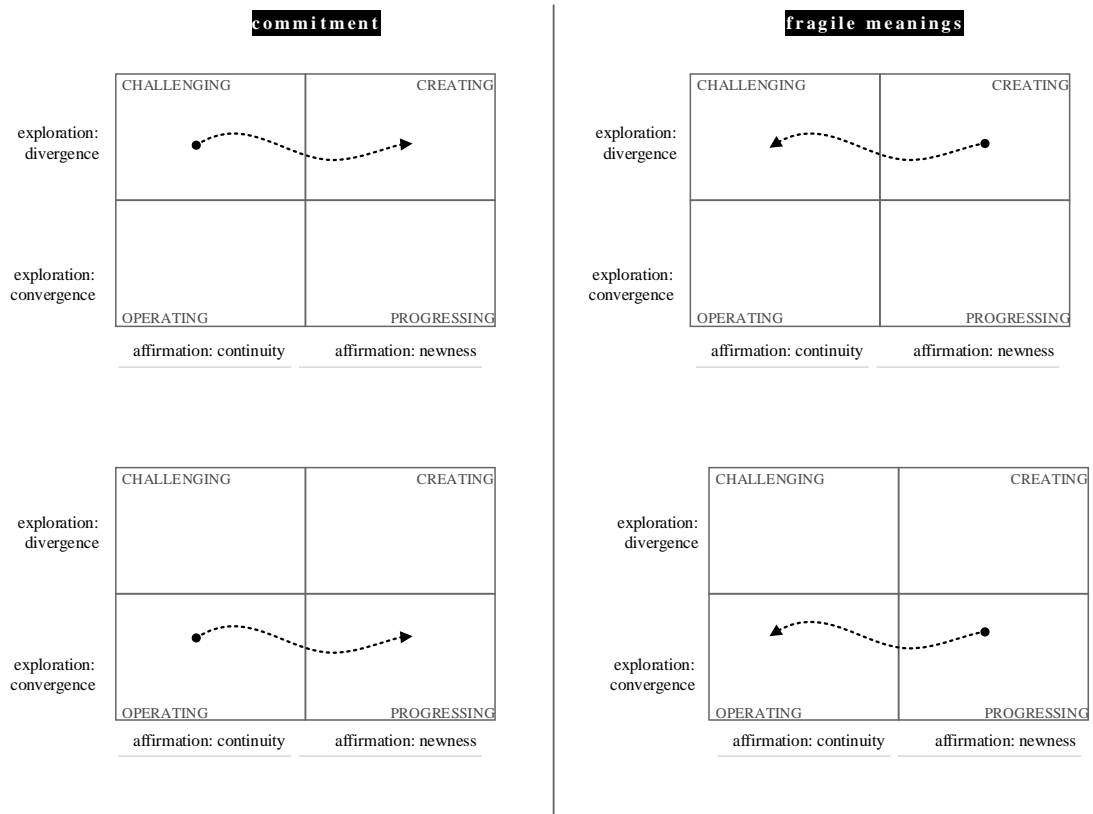
7.3.1 Patterns of passage across leadership expressions: horizontally in the grid

This sub-section addresses patterns of passage across leadership expressions patterns horizontally in the grid, and draws from Table 7-1 and Figure 7-5 to focus attention on the insights emerging from the empirical material. Figure 7-1 shows that leadership movement horizontally in the grid comprised two patterns of passage, unfolding from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation, and another two patterns of passage, unfolding from newness to continuity in the flow to affirmation. The patterns {challenging→ creating}, and {operating→ progressing} exemplified commitment, while the patterns {creating→ challenging}, and {progressing→ operating} exemplified fragile meanings.

Table 7-1: Patterns of passage horizontally in the leadership grid

Patterns of passage: horizontally	Occurrences: 26	Empirically Grounded Description
{challenging→ creating}	4: {MM-TP4→MM-TP5}, {RR-TP12→RR-TP13}, {SSD-TP10→SSD-TP11}, {JMM-TP3→JMM-TP4}	commitment
{operating→ progressing}	4: {RR-TP30→RR-TP31}, {SSD-TP6→SSD-TP7}, {SSD-TP15→SSD-TP16}, {SSD-TP20→SSD-TP21}	
{creating→ challenging}	1: {RR-TP13→RR-TP14}	uphold fragile meanings
{progressing→ operating}	14: {MM-TP12→MM-TP13}, {RR-TP1→RR-TP2}, {RR-TP15→RR-TP16}, {RR-TP22→RR-TP23}, {RR-TP26→27}, {RR-TP29→RR-TP30}, {RR-TP31→RR-TP32}, {RR-TP34→RR-TP35}, {RR-TP46→RR-TP47}, {SSD-TP5→SSD-TP6}, {SSD-TP12→SSD-TP13}, {SSD-TP16→SSD-TP17}, {SSD-TP19→SSD-TP20}, {JMM-TP5→JMM-TP6}	

Figure 7-5: Patterns of passage horizontally in the leadership grid



Firstly, leadership unfolded across divergence in the flow to exploration, moving from continuity to newness in affirmation ($\{\text{challenging} \rightarrow \text{creating}\}$). The specific pattern of passage indicated the emergence of a clear leadership direction, pointing to a new connection in participants' relational ties. On one hand, the unfolding across divergence in the flow to exploration indicated relational coordination and resolution to the re-arrangement of relational ties. On the other hand, the unfolding from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation pointed to the clear leadership direction, towards the selected route resulting from the re-arrangement of relations.

Drawing on Figure 7-1 and the empirical material from the Middle Managers' Reconfiguration leadership trajectory ($\{\text{MM-TP4} \rightarrow \text{MM-TP5}\}$), there was a development from reflecting on the reconfiguration proposition, to agreeing that it was

a viable option to pursue. Similar observations were made from the Recruitment Review leadership trajectory ({RR-TP12 → RR-TP13}). Participants moved from reviewing the results of the MAP exercise, to formulating a recruitment plan. Likewise, the other examples of {SSD-TP10→SSD-TP11} and {JMM-TP3→JMM-TP4} illustrated relational coordination to a newly developed context. As the context was in the making, so were participants' relational arrays. Therefore, the horizontal pattern of passage {challenging→ creating} appeared in newly developed contexts, where divergence in the flow to exploration, and unfolding from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation exemplified participants' commitment.

The next horizontal pattern of passage indicated unfolding across convergence in the flow to exploration, moving from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation ({operating→ progressing}). It indicated the emergence of a clear leadership direction within participants' existing relational arrays. Convergence in the flow to exploration indicated sustained co-action, while the unfolding towards newness in the flow to exploration pointed to the coordination of co-action towards a planned change. The particular horizontal pattern of passage occurred during the Recruitment Review and the Stand-In Service Development leadership trajectories, both of which dealt with planned changes. For example, during the Recruitment Review leadership trajectory, participants coordinated co-action towards the undertaken review by deciding on the outcomes of the interviews ({RR-TP30→RR-TP31}). In a similar manner, during the Stand-In Service Development leadership trajectory, participants marked new leadership direction in the progress of the working practice, by performing relevant updates ({SSD-TP6 → SSD-TP7} and {SSD-TP15 → SSD-TP16}) and following training requirements ({SSD-TP20 → SSD-TP21}). As

such, the horizontal pattern of passage {progressing→ operating} appeared in redeveloped contexts (planned change), where convergence in the flow to exploration, and unfolding from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation exemplified participants' commitment.

Shifting from newness to continuity in the flow to affirmation, the horizontal pattern of passage {creating→ challenging} indicated unfolding across divergence in the flow to exploration, illustrating ambiguity about leadership direction. Drawing on the example of {RR-TP13→RR-TP14}, participants questioned their relational ties by recognising the need for a task group to take forward the recruitment process. They deviated from the pre-established leadership direction, so as to uphold fragile meanings. In addition, the horizontal pattern of passage {progressing→ operating} illustrated tentative direction across convergence in the flow to exploration, unfolding from newness to continuity in the flow to affirmation. The particular horizontal pattern of passage highlighted the ways participants sustained direction in their existing connections. For example, participants clarified the requirements for the recruitment review by undertaking a MAP exercise ({RR-TP1→RR-TP2}), establishing requirement for progress ({RR-TP15→RR-TP16}), preparing and dealing with second stage interviews ({RR-TP22→RR-TP23}, {RR-TP26→27}, {RR-TP29→RR-TP30}, {RR-TP31→RR-TP32}, {RR-TP34→RR-TP35}) and preparing for future progress ({RR-TP46→RR-TP47}). In this respect, the horizontal pattern of {progressing→ operating} illustrated the ways participants upheld fragile meanings, by redefining direction in existing connections.

In summary, horizontal leadership movement comprised two types of patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid. The first type indicated a shift

from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation, and included the pattern of passage {challenging→ creating} that illustrated participants' commitment during new contexts, unfolding across divergence in the flow to exploration, and the pattern of passage {operating→ progressing} that illustrated participants' commitment during redeveloped contexts, unfolding across convergence in the flow to exploration. The second type indicated a shift from newness to continuity in the flow to affirmation, and included the pattern of passage {creating→ challenging} that exemplified upholding of fragile meanings in re-arranged connections, unfolding across divergence in the flow to exploration, and the pattern of passage {progressing→ operating} that exemplified upholding fragile meanings in existing relations, unfolding across convergence in the flow to exploration.

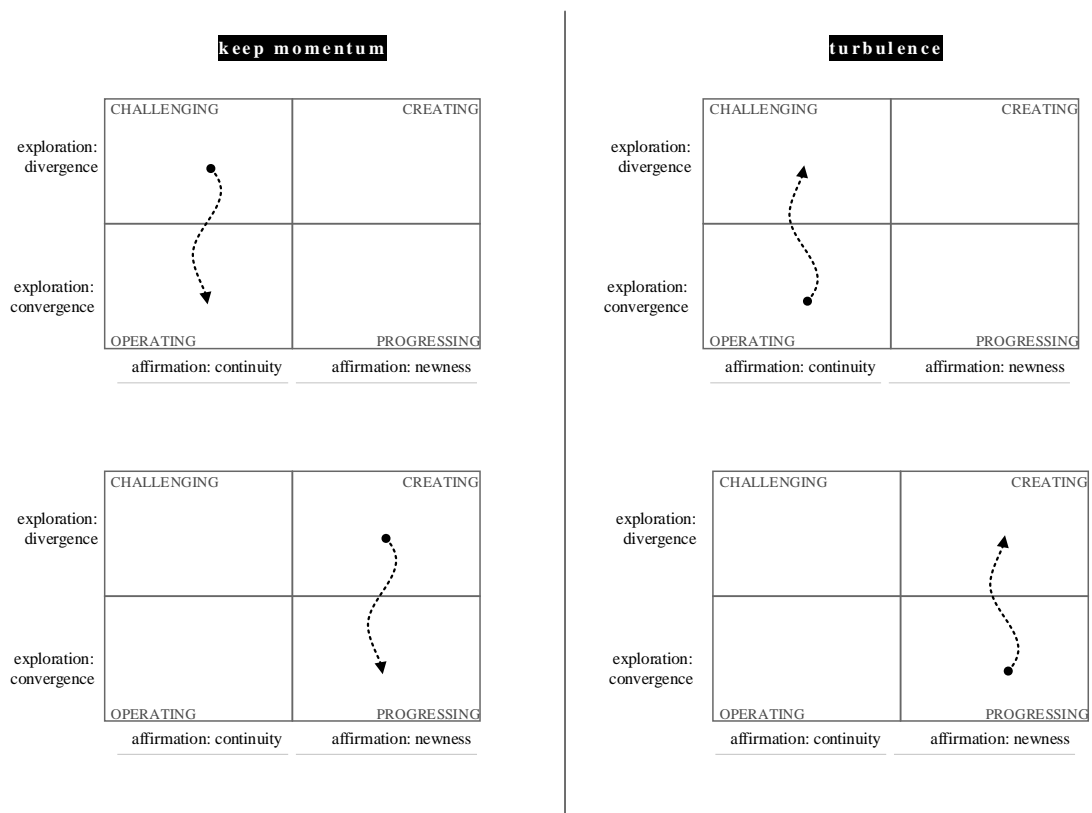
7.3.2 Patterns of passage across leadership expressions: vertically in the grid

The discussion in this sub-section outlines vertical patterns of passage across expressions in the grid. To focus attention on the insights emerging from the empirical material, Table 7-2 and Figure 7-6 are offered. Figure 7-6 draws attention to two types of patterns of passage vertically in the grid, in the movement across the flow to exploration. The first type of vertical patterns of passage described leadership momentum in the shift from divergence to convergence in the flow to exploration, with {challenging→ operating} characterised by continuity in the flow to affirmation, and with {creating→ progressing} characterised by newness in the flow to affirmation. The second type of vertical patterns of passage described turbulence, in the shift from convergence to divergence in the flow to exploration, with {operating→ challenging} characterised by continuity in the flow to affirmation, and with {progressing→ creating} characterised by newness in the flow to affirmation.

Table 7-2: Patterns of passage vertically in the leadership grid

Patterns of passage: vertically	Occurrences: 28	Empirically Grounded Description
{challenging→ operating}	5: {MM-TP14→MM-TP15}, {RR-TP4→RR-TP5}, {RR-TP9→RR-TP10}, {RR-TP49→RR-TP50}, {JMM-TP7→JMM-TP8}	keep momentum
{creating→ progressing}	12: {MM-TP7→MM-TP8}, {MM-TP11→MM-TP12}, {RR-TP17→RR-TP18}, {RR-TP19→RR-TP20}, {RR-TP21→RR-TP22}, {RR-TP24→RR-TP25}, {RR-TP28→RR-TP29}, {RR-TP33→RR-TP34}, {RR-TP39→RR-TP40}, {SSD-TP11→SSD-TP12}, {SSD-TP18→SSD-TP19}, {JMM-TP4→JMM-TP5}	
{operating→ challenging}	7: {MM-TP13→MM-TP14}, {MM-TP15→16}, {RR-TP3→RR-TP4}, {RR-TP8→RR-TP9}, {RR-TP10→RR-TP11}, {RR-TP48→RR-TP49}, {JMM-TP6→JMM-TP7}	turbulence
{progressing→ creating}	4: {MM-TP8→MM-TP9}, {MM-TP18→MM-TP19}, {RR-TP18→RR-TP19}, {RR-TP20→21}	

Figure 7-6: Patterns of passage vertically in the leadership grid



To begin with, leadership movement across continuity in the flow to affirmation in the vertical pattern of passage {challenging→ operating} featured the ways participants maintained leadership direction to new steps in co-action, in pursuit of apprehending reconfigured connections. For example, during the Recruitment Review trajectory, participants maintained leadership momentum by working on the MAP exercise ({RR-TP4→RR-TP5}) and explaining its results ({RR-TP9→RR-TP10}). Likewise, during the Emergence of Joint Management Meetings trajectories, participants maintained leadership momentum by reviewing the progress of the revisited meeting format ({JMM-TP7→JMM-TP8}). Turning to movement across newness in the flow to affirmation, the vertical pattern of passage {creating→ progressing} highlighted participation in newness. For example, during the Middle Managers' Reconfiguration trajectory, participants kept leadership momentum around the proposition, by pursuing specific milestones for progress ({MM-TP7→MM-TP8} and {MM-TP11→MM-TP12}). In a similar manner, during the Recruitment Review trajectory, participants kept leadership momentum around the future potential of recruiting by initiating a recruitment vision ({RR-TP39→RR-TP40}). As such, vertical patterns of passage, shifting from divergence to convergence in the flow to exploration, preserved leadership momentum. The vertical pattern of passage {challenging→ operating}, characterised by continuity in the flow to affirmation, dealt with apprehending reconfigured connections, while the vertical pattern of passage {creating→ progressing}, characterised by newness in the flow to affirmation, focused on participation in newness.

With regard to moving from convergence to divergence in the flow to exploration, the second type of vertical patterns of passage described turbulence, with

{operating→ challenging} characterised by continuity in the flow to affirmation, and with {progressing →creating} characterised by newness in the flow to affirmation. The vertical pattern of passage {operating→ challenging} illustrated turbulence in participants' connections, as they transitioned into newly developed relational ties, which sought to extend the invitation for further exploration (continuity in the flow to affirmation). For example, during the Middle Managers' Reconfiguration trajectory, participants transitioned into fresh relational ties, as evidenced in their struggle to formulate a conclusive proposal ({MM-TP13→MM-TP14} and {MM-TP15→MM-TP16}). In a similar manner, during the Recruitment Review trajectory, participants struggled to put together the MAP exercise and analyse its results ({RR-TP3→RR-TP4}, {RR-TP8→RR-TP9} and {RR-TP10→RR-TP11}).

The vertical pattern of passage {progressing→ creating}, characterised by newness in the flow to affirmation, illustrated turbulence, as participants sought to establish new relational connections in the direction of newly developed change. For example, during the Middle Managers' Reconfiguration trajectory, participants established new relational connections in the direction of the re-allocation proposal, by initiating consultation about the criteria ({MM-TP8→MM-TP9}), and by prompting closure to the procedure ({MM-TP18→MM-TP19}). Similarly, participants established new relational connections in the direction of the recruitment drive by clarifying corresponding requirements ({RR-TP18→RR-TP19}), and by establishing the contribution of the task group ({RR-TP20→RR-TP21}). Thus, the vertical patterns of passage, shifting from convergence to divergence in the flow to exploration, illustrated turbulence. The vertical pattern of passage {operating →challenging}, characterised by continuity in the flow to affirmation, dealt with

transitioning into newly developed relational ties, while the vertical pattern of passage {progressing →creating}, characterised by newness in the flow to affirmation, focused on new relational connections in the direction of newly developed change.

To recap, vertical patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid consisted of two types of movement. The first type indicated maintenance of leadership momentum, shifting from divergence to convergence in the flow to exploration. The vertical pattern of passage {challenging→ operating}, characterised by continuity in the flow to affirmation, dealt with apprehending reconfigured connections, while the vertical pattern of passage {creating→ progressing}, characterised by continuity in the flow to affirmation, focused on participation in newness. The second type of movement indicated turbulence, shifting from convergence to divergence in the flow to exploration. The vertical pattern of passage {operating →challenging}, characterised by continuity in the flow to affirmation, dealt with transitioning into newly developed relational ties, while the vertical pattern of passage {progressing →creating}, characterised by newness in the flow to affirmation, focused on new relational connections in the direction of newly developed change.

7.3.3 Patterns of passage across leadership expressions: diagonally in the grid

This sub-section addresses diagonal patterns of passage across leadership expressions. The discussion is complemented with Table 7-3 and Figure 7-7, which focus attention on the insights emerging from the empirical material. To begin with, diagonal patterns of passage illustrated sharp leadership movement: two-dimensional unfolding across the grid. The pattern of passage {challenging→ progressing} unfolded from divergence to convergence in the flow to exploration, and from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation, the pattern of passage {creating→

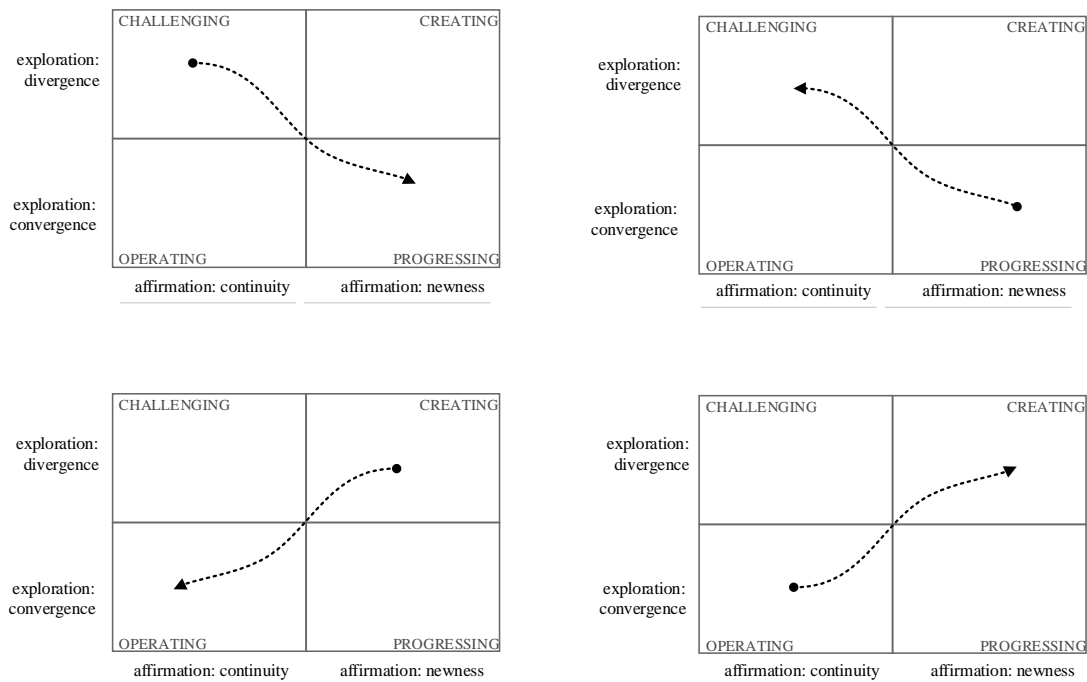
operating} unfolded from divergence to convergence in the flow to exploration, and from newness to continuity in the flow to affirmation, the pattern of passage {progressing→ challenging} unfolded from convergence to divergence in the flow to exploration, and from newness to continuity in the flow to affirmation, and the pattern of passage {operating→ creating} unfolded from convergence to divergence in the flow to exploration, and from continuity to newness in the flow to affirmation. These sharp movements illustrated that leadership was neither a one-off, nor a steady accomplishment. Rather, leadership was an ongoing process, flowing in relational dynamics.

Table 7-3: Patterns of passage diagonally in the leadership grid

Patterns of passage: diagonally	Occurrences: 25	Empirically Grounded Description
{challenging→ progressing}	6: {MM-TP17→MM-TP18}, {RR-TP14→RR-TP15}, {RR-TP41→RR-TP42}, {RR-TP44→RR-TP45}, {SSD-TP1→SSD-TP2}, {SSD-TP4→SSD-TP5}	sharp movement, crossing multiple boundaries
{creating→ operating}	5: {MM-TP5→MM-TP6}, {MM-TP9→MM-TP10}, {MM-TP19→MM-TP20}, {RR-TP6→RR-TP7}, {SSD-TP14→SSD-TP15}	
{progressing→ challenging}	4: {RR-TP40→RR-TP41}, {RR-TP42→RR-TP43}, {SSD-TP2→SSD-TP3}, {SSD-TP7→SSD-TP8}	
{operating→ creating}	10: {MM-TP6→MM-TP7}, {MM-TP10→MM-TP11}, {RR-TP5→RR-TP6}, {RR-TP16→RR-TP17}, {RR-TP23→RR-TP24}, {RR-TP27→RR-TP28}, {RR-TP32→RR-TP33}, {RR-TP38→RR-TP39}, {SSD-TP13→SSD-TP14}, {SSD-TP17→SSD-TP18}	

Figure 7-7: Patterns of passage diagonally in the leadership grid

sharp movement, crossing multiple boundaries



Starting from the diagonal pattern of passage {challenging→ progressing}, the unfolding from divergence to convergence, in the flow to exploration, indicated the (re)construction of relational ties, while the unfolding from continuity to newness, in the flow to affirmation, pointed to a leadership direction towards the (re)constructed relational ties. Significance lies in the ways the newly developed context drew from previous connections. Construction on top of existing connections made it possible to co-act and shape direction, by linking co-action to the newly developed context of work. For example, during the Stand-In Service Development leadership trajectory, participants drew from their existing relational ties to identify leadership direction for the formulation of the working protocol ({SSD-TP1→ SSD-TP2}). During the same leadership movement, participants reviewed their working practices on the basis of

their existing relational connections ($\{SSD-TP4 \rightarrow SSD-TP5\}$). Similar observations were made during the Recruitment Review leadership trajectory when the task group took over procedural work ($\{RR-TP14 \rightarrow RR-TP15\}$), when participants updated the recruitment process ($\{RR-TP41 \rightarrow RR-TP42\}$), and when they came up with a vision statement $\{RR-TP44 \rightarrow RR-TP45\}$. In a similar manner, participants dealt with the inconclusive proposal during the Middle Managers' Reconfiguration trajectory ($\{MM-TP17 \rightarrow MM-TP18\}$). Bringing these observations together, the diagonal pattern of passage $\{\text{challenging} \rightarrow \text{progressing}\}$ occurred during the development of new contexts, where drawing from each other cleared the way forward.

Next, the diagonal pattern of passage $\{\text{creating} \rightarrow \text{operating}\}$ indicated (re)construction of connections in the unfolding from divergence to convergence, and sustainment of leadership direction towards apprehending co-action, moving from newness to continuity. It showed the ways participants apprehended change, and the ways they coordinated co-action accordingly. For example, during the Middle Managers' Reconfiguration leadership trajectory, participants apprehended the reconfiguration proposition by suggesting the related re-allocation criteria ($\{MM-TP9 \rightarrow MM-TP10\}$). During the same trajectory, participants apprehended closure to the procedure by offering and evaluating a finalised proposal ($\{MM-TP19 \rightarrow MM-TP20\}$). Likewise, during the Recruitment Review leadership trajectory, participants apprehended the results of the MAP exercise by suggesting an action plan and by comparing the results with organisational values ($\{RR-TP6 \rightarrow RR-TP7\}$). Synthesising the above, the diagonal pattern of passage $\{\text{creating} \rightarrow \text{operating}\}$ appeared in the process of apprehending newly developed change, where leadership direction was sustained and oriented towards the related next steps of co-action.

The diagonal pattern of passage {progressing→ challenging} illustrated inquiry for clarification in co-action, in the unfolding from convergence to divergence, and from newness to continuity. For example, during the Recruitment Review trajectory participants questioned the prospects of recruiting, by seeking clarification about the values behind the recruitment drive ({RR-TP40→RR-TP41} and {RR-TP42→RR-TP43}). Likewise, during the Stand-In Service Development trajectory, participants questioned working practices, by seeking clarification about the emergency protocol ({SSD-TP2→SSD-TP3}), and about the evaluation of the service ({SSD-TP7→SSD-TP8}). In this respect, this diagonal pattern of passage indicated clarification in co-action, which occurred when participants had been familiar with the context of change.

Finally, in the diagonal pattern of passage {operating→ creating}, the unfolding from convergence to divergence, and the unfolding from continuity to newness, indicated the ways participants put change into work. For example, during the Middle Managers' Reconfiguration trajectory, participants put the proposal into work by attending to the details of the re-allocation criteria ({MM-TP6→MM-TP7} and {MM-TP10→MM-TP11}). In a similar manner, during the Recruitment Review trajectory, participants put recruiting into work by attending to the MAP results ({RR-TP5→RR-TP6}), by attending to the interview procedure ({RR-TP16→RR-TP17}, {RR-TP23→RR-TP24}, {RR-TP27→RR-TP28}, {RR-TP32→RR-TP33}), and by creating learning from the procedure ({RR-TP38→RR-TP39}). Thus, the specific diagonal pattern of passage showed movement towards a selected route that built on existing relational connections.

To conclude, diagonal patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid illustrated the ongoing process of leadership in the flow of relational dynamics. The diagonal pattern of passage {challenging→ progressing} exemplified unfolding from divergence to convergence, and from continuity to newness, illustrating that drawing from each other cleared the way forward in the development of new contexts. Secondly, the diagonal pattern of passage {creating→ operating} exemplified unfolding from divergence to convergence, and from continuity to newness, illustrating that leadership direction was sustained and oriented towards the related next steps of co-action, during the development of new contexts. Thirdly, the diagonal pattern of passage {progressing→ challenging} exemplified unfolding from convergence to divergence, and from newness to continuity, illustrating clarification in co-action, when participants had been familiar with the context of change. Lastly, the diagonal pattern of passage {operating→ creating} exemplified unfolding from convergence to divergence, and from continuity to newness, illustrating leadership towards a selected route that built on existing relational connections.

7.3.4 Patterns of leadership movement within expression in the grid

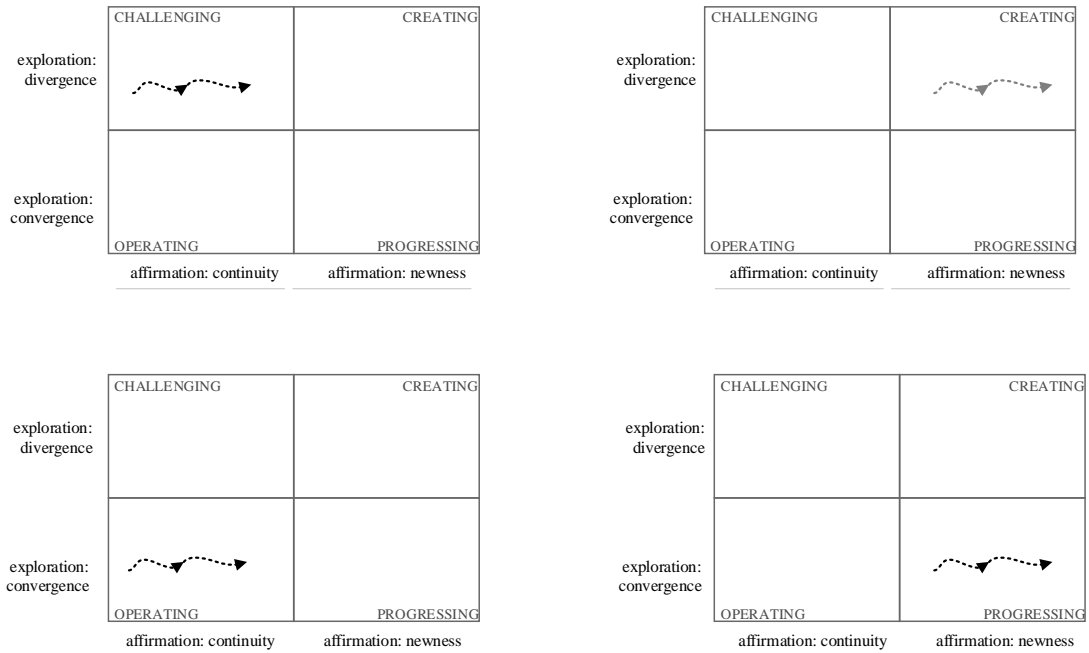
This sub-section discusses patterns of leadership movement within expression in the leadership grid. Table 7-4 and Figure 7-8 are offered to focus attention on the insights emerging from the empirical material. Drawing on Table 7-4, the pattern of {creating→ creating} was not observed in the empirical material from SocialORG. The author explained its ‘absence’ owing to the pattern’s intense relational dynamics (divergence, newness) that were difficult to occur successively.

Table 7-4: Patterns of leadership movement within expression in the leadership grid

Patterns of leadership movement within expression	Occurrences: 20	Empirically Grounded Description
{challenging→challenging}	11: {MM-TP1→MM-TP2}, {MM-TP2→MM-TP3}, {MM-TP3→MM-TP4}, {MM-TP16→MM-TP17}, {RR-TP11→RR-TP12}, {RR-TP43→RR-TP44}, {SSD-TP3→SSD-TP4}, {SSD-TP8→SSD-TP9}, {SSD-TP9→SSD-TP10}, {JMM-TP1→JMM-TP2}, {JMM-TP2→JMM-TP3}	synchronising
{operating→operating}	7: {RR-TP2→RR-TP3}, {RR-TP7→RR-TP8}, {RR-TP35→RR-TP36}, {RR-TP36→RR-TP37}, {RR-TP37→RR-TP38}, {RR-TP47→RR-TP48}, {JMM-TP8→JMM-TP9}	
{creating→creating}	<i>not observed empirically</i>	
{progressing→progressing}	2: {RR-TP25→RR-TP26}, {RR-TP45→RR-TP46}	

Figure 7-8: Patterns of leadership movement within expression in the leadership grid

synchronising



To begin with, the persistence in leadership unfolding within expression in the grid illustrated a process of participants' synchronising. Firstly, the pattern of {challenging→ challenging} within divergence and continuity highlighted uncertainty about leadership direction. It indicated that it was important for participants to question their practice to the extent that questioning became the direction. Participants did not seek to determine how to deal with practice, until they apprehended what it was that they were dealing with. In this respect, the pattern of {challenging→ challenging} exemplified seeking responses to the unknown. When there were no previous relational arrays, participants needed to distinguish them in order to co-create their desired future ({MM-TP1→MM-TP2}, {MM-TP2→MM-TP3}, {MM-TP3→MM-TP4}, {MM-TP16→MM-TP17}, {JMM-TP1→JMM-TP2}, {JMM-TP2→JMM-TP3}). The same was the case during the Stand-In Service Development trajectory. Participants reflected on the practical doing of the Service throughout the organisation, which drove to the focus on training ({SSD-TP3→SSD-TP4}, {SSD-TP8→SSD-TP9}, {SSD-TP9→SSD-TP10}). Again, they had not encountered such reflections before, and thus, leadership was oriented around distinguishing relational arrays. Bringing these observations together, the particular pattern of leadership movement appeared in contexts that were encountered for the first time, ranging from dealing with novelty (Middle Managers' Reconfiguration trajectory), radical change in working practice (Emergence of Joint Management Meetings trajectory), or re-apprehension of existing working practice (Stand-In Service Development trajectory). Thus, the pattern of {challenging→ challenging} indicated leadership orientation towards establishing relational connections.

Secondly, the pattern of {operating→ operating} within convergence and continuity highlighted participants' immersion in their practice. Participants were familiar with the requirements of change and, thus, they renewed invitation so as to sustain its direction. In this respect, the movement within the operating expression of leadership exemplified relational engagement with everyday work. For example, during the Recruitment Review trajectory, participants exemplified immersion in their practice as they sustained leadership direction towards procedural specifics of the recruitment drive ({RR-TP2→RR-TP3}, {RR-TP7→RR-TP8}, {RR-TP35→RR-TP36}, {RR-TP36→RR-TP37}, {RR-TP37→RR-TP38}), and then, towards arrangement for future progress ({RR-TP47→RR-TP48}). Similarly, during the Emergence of Joint Management Meetings trajectory, participants sustained leadership direction towards the future progress of the revived meeting format ({JMM-TP8→JMM-TP9}). From this perspective, the pattern of {operating→ operating} indicated leadership orientation towards established relational arrays, when participants were familiar with change.

Thirdly, the pattern of {progressing→ progressing} within convergence and newness highlighted participants' habituation of new context. The pattern illustrated the ways participants rooted their connections in the newly developed context, marking direction towards habituation. For example, during the Recruitment Review trajectory, participants grew familiar with the requirements of the recruiting by considering corresponding parameters ({RR-TP25→RR-TP26}) and by assimilating related learning ({RR-TP45→RR-TP46}).

Finally, the pattern of {creating→ creating}, within divergence and newness did not appear in the empirical material approached in SocialORG. In discussion with

research participants and the empirical material, the author attributed its ‘absence’ to the pattern’s intense relational dynamics. The idiosyncratic relational ties among participants in SocialORG could silence the persistence of intense dynamics.

In summary, leadership unfolding within expression in the grid, illustrated a process of participants’ synchronising. Firstly, the pattern within the challenging expression of leadership, unfolding within divergence and continuity, highlighted responses to contexts that were encountered for the first time towards establishing relational arrays. Secondly, the pattern within the operating expression of leadership, unfolding within convergence and continuity, exemplified relational engagement with everyday work, with participants being immersed in their practice and renewing the invitation so as to sustain the direction of change. Thirdly, the pattern within the progressing expression of leadership, unfolding within convergence and newness, highlighted the ways participants rooted their connections towards habituation of new context. Finally, the empirical ‘absence’ of the pattern within the creating expression of leadership, unfolding within divergence and newness was explained by the author as regards participants’ idiosyncratic connections that could silence intense relational dynamics.

7.3.5 Section Synthesis & Recap

This section has analysed patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid, as they reappear in the four leadership trajectories in SocialORG: horizontally, vertically, diagonally and within expression. Starting with horizontal patterns of passage, they comprised two types of movement. The first type illustrated leadership moving from continuity to newness, with the pattern of passage {challenging→ creating} exemplifying participants’ commitment during new

contexts, and the pattern of passage {operating→ progressing} exemplifying participants' commitment during redeveloped contexts. The second type of movement showed leadership moving from continuity to newness, with the pattern of passage {creating→ challenging} that exemplified upholding of fragile meanings in re-arranged relational arrays, and the pattern of passage {progressing→ operating} that exemplified upholding fragile meanings in existing relational arrays.

Then, vertical patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid consisted of two types of movement. The first type illustrated maintenance of leadership momentum, unfolding across divergence. The pattern of passage {challenging→ operating} indicated the apprehension of reconfigured relational connections, while the pattern of passage {creating→ progressing} exemplified a focus on participation in newness. The second type of movement illustrated turbulence, unfolding from convergence to divergence. The pattern of passage {operating →challenging} illustrated the transitioning into newly developed relational ties, while the pattern of passage {progressing →creating} highlighted new relational ties in direction of newly developed change.

Next, diagonal patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid addressed perpetuity in the abrupt movement crossing multiple boundaries (participants' connections and orientation to the future). The pattern of passage {challenging→ progressing} illustrated that drawing from each other cleared the way forward in the development of new contexts. Secondly, the pattern of passage {creating→ operating} exemplified that leadership direction was sustained and oriented towards the related next steps of co-action, during the development of new contexts. Thirdly, the pattern of passage {progressing→ challenging} exemplified

clarification in co-action, when participants had been familiar with the context of change. Lastly, the pattern of passage {operating→ creating} highlighted leadership towards a selected route that built on existing relational connections.

Finally, leadership movement within expression in the grid pointed to a process of participants' synchronising. Firstly, the movement within the challenging expression of leadership highlighted responses to contexts that were encountered for the first time towards establishing relational connections. Secondly, the movement within the operating expression of leadership exemplified relational engagement with everyday work, with participants being immersed in their practice and renewing the invitation so as to sustain the direction of change. Thirdly, the movement within the progressing expression of leadership highlighted the ways participants rooted their relational ties towards habituation of new context. Finally, the empirically 'absent' movement within the creating expression of leadership hinted intense relational dynamics, which could be silenced in participants' idiosyncratic relational connections.

The core insights offered by the discussion is that leadership is an ongoing and fluid process, embedded in local context and developed alongside relational connections. This is illustrated by unfolding movement in the leadership grid. Leadership movement, as illustrated by patterns of passage across leadership expressions, is not a discrete 'move', but ongoing 'moving'. Therefore, there is no separation between entities that move, and their movements; rather, the discussion is centred on moving. In such a way, relational dynamics characterise co-action in the emergence of leadership. Therefore, the analysis here has empirically shown that the

relational process of leadership is a “subtle and complex dance of co-action, a dance in which meaning is continuously in motion” (Gergen, 2009c, p. 282).

7.4 Chapter Synopsis

This chapter has the analysis of the empirical material relating to the second research questions about how expressions of leadership unfold progressively. The chapter has drawn on the empirical material from SocialORG, where turning points were joined together. It is developed in two parts. The first part in section 7.2 revisits the four leadership trajectories, and analyses leadership unfolding from one turning point to the next in the leadership grid. The discussion is complemented with graphical abstractions in Figures 7-1 to 7-4, showing an ongoing relational process through moving across expressions in the leadership grid. Each trajectory has a different story to tell about the ways relational dynamics play out in the unfolding of leadership. The Middle Managers’ Reconfiguration trajectory describes the ways leadership unfolds from diverse interpretations to collective commitment, dealing with a novel proposition. The Recruitment Review trajectory describes the ways leadership moves to directions that support co-action, thus illustrating compound relational dynamics and connection to local context. The Stand-In Service Development trajectory describes the ways leadership extends to the whole of the organisation, highlighting reciprocity. Lastly, the Emergence of Joint Management Meetings trajectory describes the ways leadership unfolds in the recreation of social bonds.

The above descriptions have uncovered recurring patterns of passage across leadership expressions in the grid: horizontally, vertically, diagonally and within expression. They are discussed in the second part of the chapter, in section 7.3. Horizontal leadership movements comprise two types of patterns. The first one

illustrates participants' commitment during new contexts, with the pattern of passage {challenging→ creating}, and participants' commitment during redeveloped contexts, with the pattern of passage {operating→ progressing}. The second type of horizontal movement illustrates upholding of fragile meanings in re-arranged relational ties, with the pattern of passage {creating→ challenging}, and upholding of fragile meanings in existing relations, with the pattern of passage {progressing→ operating}.

Vertical leadership movements also consist of two types of patterns. The first one exemplifies maintenance of leadership momentum, where the pattern of passage {challenging→ operating} highlights the apprehension of reconfigured relational connections, and the pattern of passage {creating→ progressing} highlights a focus on participation in newness. The second type of vertical movement exemplifies turbulence, where the pattern of passage {operating →challenging} illustrates the transitioning into newly developed relational connections, and the pattern of passage {progressing →creating} illustrates new relational connections in the direction of newly developed change.

Next, diagonal movement in the leadership grid illustrates the ongoing process of leadership unfolding across multiple boundaries (participants' connections and orientation to the future)..The pattern of passage {challenging→ progressing} shows that drawing from each other clears the way forward in the development of new contexts, the pattern of passage {creating→ operating} highlights that leadership direction is sustained and oriented towards the related next steps of co-action, during the development of new contexts, the pattern of passage {progressing→ challenging} exemplifies clarification in co-action, when participants are familiar with the context

of change, and finally, the pattern of passage {operating→ creating} exemplifies leadership towards a selected route that builds on existing connections.

Lastly, leadership moves within expression in the grid, exemplifying a process of participants' synchronising. Movement within the challenging expression of leadership highlights responses to contexts encountered for the first time, towards establishing relational arrays, movement within the operating expression of leadership exemplifies engagement with everyday work, and movement within the progressing expression of leadership highlights the ways participants root their connections towards habituation of new context. Movement within the creating expression of leadership does not appear in the analysis of the empirical material from SocialORG, which is attributed to intense relational dynamics that may be silenced in participants' idiosyncratic connections.

Altogether, the discussion in this chapter about progressive unfolding in the grid presents leadership as an ongoing and fluid process, embedded in local context and developed alongside relational connections. Movement in the grid, analysed in patterns of passage across leadership expressions, is not regarded as a discrete 'move', but rather as 'moving'. Such an analysis empirically illustrates the relational process of leadership, where there can be no separation between entities that move and their movements. Instead, relational dynamics characterise co-action in the emergence of leadership. These empirical insights conclude the empirical side of the thesis. Therefore, it is possible to proceed to the next chapter, and discuss how the thesis has responded to and achieved its objectives.

CHAPTER 8 | DISCUSSION

8.1 Chapter introduction

The aim of this chapter is to link together the thesis' chapters, and discuss how the thesis has responded to and achieved its objectives. In doing so, the chapter illustrates the thesis' contribution to the field of leadership studies. Section 8.2 introduces the discussion from the perspective of the first research objective about the empirical expression of the relational process of leadership in responsive interplays. Next, section 8.3 continues the discussion about the first research objective and focuses on patterns of leadership expressions. Then, section 8.4 brings the discussion to the second research objective about the progressive unfolding of leadership. Section 8.4 also synthesises the empirical insights and offers the proposed notion of *syn-kinesis*, which goes beyond causality and proposes a new, dynamic way to talk about leadership grounded on relational constructionism. The chapter ends with a synopsis in section 8.5.

8.2 Responsive interplay

This section discusses the first research objective, which deals with the empirical expression of leadership in the dialogical process of the responsive interplay. Restating its conceptual foundations, the thesis centres dialogical processes as means to approach relational dynamics (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2011a; Shotter, 1993, 2008), thus empirically exploring how leadership unfolds. In doing so, the empirical inquiry has explored leadership as flux, where multi-beings (re)construct their connections. The point of reference for approaching relational dynamics has been Gergen's (2009c) notion of the responsive interplay, conceptualised in terms of

invitation – exploration – affirmation. The responsive interplay conveyed the co-active moment in which the relational process of leadership was at a turning point. Analysis of the empirical material showed multiple and co-existing possibilities of the responsive interplay, in the seamless combination of [invitation → exploration → affirmation], as illustrated in Figure 6-1.

In the analysis of the empirical material as regards the responsive interplay, the thesis shows that the relational process of leadership finds expression in responsiveness to emergent possibilities in pursuit of direction, with multiple voices heard and related to each other, which is key in the discussion from a relational constructionist perspective (Gergen, 2009c; McNamee & Gergen, 1999; McNamee & Hosking, 2012). The thesis adds to the discussion in the following ways. Firstly, empirical insights have demonstrated that the responsive interplay does not originate from a single, individual source. Rather, it is co-acted among multi-beings: invitation is endorsed as such and proceeds to exploration, which is in turn affirmed as worth pursuing. Therefore, the ways the responsive interplay has been approached empirically indicate different pursuits compared to entitative approaches to leadership, where all there is about leadership starts and finishes with the individual leader (individualistic literature stream: Wood, 2005), or where leadership is communicated in-between individuals (inter-individualistic literature stream: Uhl-Bien, 2006). Here, the empirical inquiry and by-passes the individual dominance of rationality, in favour of otherness Sampson (1993). In this respect, leadership is not expressed in individuals, nor in groups; but in the turning points that punctuate the flow of relational dynamics.

Secondly, the thesis adds to theory by empirically demonstrating that the responsive interplay is not simply a communicative discourse (Tourish, 2014). The dialogical framing of the responsive interplay includes much more than acts of speech or text (Fairhurst, 2008); primarily, it embraces the relational dynamics, out of which leadership emerges. This means that the relational process of leadership shapes and is shaped by the course of co-action (Gergen, 2009c), coined by Shotter (2010, p. 245) as “relationally responsive understandings”. The empirical inquiry illustrates dynamic co-action, where participants spontaneously respond to one another. Spontaneity highlights that the relational process of leadership cannot be modelled as a preconceived formula, embodied in individuals, independently of one another (Hunter, et al., 2007). According to the analysis of the empirical material, the relational process of leadership and the responsive interplay are mutually constituting. This renders the labels of ‘leader’ and ‘follower’, addressed in entitative approaches to leadership, irrelevant. The discussion about the empirical material avoided using any labels that precede the flow of the responsive interplay. This becomes the preconception of labels comes before relational dynamics: by looking for the ‘leader’ or the ‘follower’, leadership is already there (Wood, 2005). From another perspective, the ideas of ‘listeners’ and ‘speakers’ might be appropriate in the dialogical framing of relational leadership, to the extent that the listener becomes the speaker in the responsive interplay, and vice-versa (Bakhtin, 1981). Although such characterisations might hold a promising potential, the author has left them in the side so as to place emphasis on relationality, avoiding any connotations to the individual in the expression of leadership.

This brings the discussion to the third addition to theory, which enhances the appreciation of participation in the expression of leadership. As discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, complete combinations in the responsive interplay direct attention to appropriate possibilities, without prompting a preferred one. In various examples from the empirical material, relational dynamics, in the process of responsive interplays, narrowed down available possibilities, not with the aim to achieving an ideal route; but with the aim to achieving the route that was appropriate to participants' relational connections. This is critical as regards practical considerations around the relational process of leadership (Carroll, et al., 2008) because it seems to nurture flexibility and pro-activeness. Relational dynamics punctuate the flow of leadership towards the immediate requirements of co-action, drawing on practicality rather than optimisation. Therefore, participation in the relational process of leadership brings about engaged connections among participants, through which co-acted direction emerges. The degree of engagement depends critically on the ways participants respond relationally to each other, as illustrated by the multiple combinations in the responsive interplay (Figure 6-1). Thus, in the moment-by-moment expression of leadership, participants' contributions can be characterised as relational (Hosking, 2008), which is not the same as the equal contribution assumed by distributed leadership theories (Gronn, 2002) within the literature stream of inter-individualistic theories. This is because inter-individualistic theories place emphasis on the structure of network developed between individuals, whose roles contribute to leadership (Carson, et al., 2007). The thesis' offering about the relational process of leadership does not start from structuring participation. In its conception, it draws on emergence and talks about the process of co-acting leadership, without necessarily assuming success.

Participants' relational contributions offer the fourth addition to theory, with the notion of relational coordination, which highlights the ways diverse views are forged into leadership expressions. The relational process of leadership is nourished among participants to the extent that "rather than content, the chief emphasis is on the process of relational coordination" (Gergen, 2009c, p. 224). In the process of relational coordination, relational dynamics navigate across diverse views with the aim to reach mutual understanding, which is distinctively different from shared frames of meaning (Eberly, Johnson, Hernandez, & Avolio, 2013). The former refers to relational context, whereas the latter refers to the context of meaning. By focusing on the relational context, leadership is expressed out of relational coordination, not agreement on meanings. More importantly, the relational process of leadership continues even when participants do not share the same appreciation of meaning, thus illustrating direction out of differences ('differentiating' and 'adapting' exploration). As such, the relational process of leadership is not based on relationships of competition or collaboration (contextual focus), nor is it dependent on sharing common meanings (Bresnen, 1995). Rather, it emerges out of mutually defining relational dynamics, where relational coordination is more important than shared frames of meanings.

Extending the potential of relational coordination, it is worth addressing its practical application in organisational meetings. The reason for establishing this link comes from the author's engagement with meetings during the research process. Besides recognising the significance of meetings in organisational settings (Boden, 1994; Schwartzman, 1989), the author observed that the importance of dialogue, and specifically the importance of responsive interplays is perhaps downplayed in the

workplace. The empirical insight that responsive interplays encourages relational, not equal contribution, appears relevant to eschewing asymmetrical imbalances, arising from organisational conventions, such as managers-subordinates (Hosking, et al., 1995). Furthermore, relational coordination in the process of leadership can give way to genuinely engaging with alternative views, opening up to the potential of relational dynamics. Gergen (2009c, p. 165) noted that “to understand each other is to coordinate our actions within the common scenarios of our culture. A failure to understand is not a failure to grasp the essence of the other’s feelings, but an inability to participate in the kind of scenario the other is inviting”. Thus, relational coordination points to the importance of engaging in the dialogical process of the responsive interplay so as to achieve mutual understandings, rather than concur the same position. Additionally, the empirical insights about relational coordination seem appropriate for facilitating participants’ engagement with the emergent nature of leadership. The co-active moment of leadership at a turning point signals a new expression of relational dynamics. To paraphrase Heraclitus, participants can never walk into the same turning point twice (Nayak, 2008, 2014). Shotter (2006) emphasised that the difficulties in achieving mutual understandings are problems of orientation, with participants not in contact with each other and their surroundings. In the analysis of the empirical material, relational coordination conveyed the ways participants achieved resolution to tensions, as they oriented around their relational connections (for example, JMM-TP1 to JMM-TP4). In line with the empirical insights, Shotter (2006) suggested relational sensitivity for staying connected with each other, and achieving leadership direction.

To recap, this section has discussed the empirical expression of the relational process of leadership in terms of the responsive interplay, as addressed in the first research objective. Attention is focused on the co-active moment in which leadership is at a turning point, described by Gergen's (2009c) interrelated flows of invitation – exploration – affirmation. Analysis of the empirical material shows multiple and co-existing possibilities of the responsive interplay, which are presented in Figure 6-1. There are four ways that the thesis adds to theory about the multiplicity of leadership. Firstly, leadership is not contained in individuals, or groups of individuals, but is co-acted in relational dynamics. Secondly, the dialogical framing of the responsive interplay includes not only communicative elements, but also the relational dynamics, out of which leadership emerges. That means that leadership is not preconceived, nor does it emerge independently of multi-beings. Rather, the relational process of leadership and the responsive interplay are mutually constituting. Thirdly, participants' engagement in the expression of leadership indicates boundaries to relational dynamics, but not a selection of an optimal route. As such, leadership speaks to issues of practice, directing attention to the immediate requirements of co-action. For these reasons, the multiple combinations in the responsive interplay (Figure 6-1) speak about relational, but not equal contributions. Finally, relational coordination conveys the ways diverse views are forged into leadership expression with the aim to reaching mutual understanding, which is distinctively different from shared frames of meaning. Therefore, leadership emerges out of mutually defining relational dynamics. In terms of its practical application in organisational meetings, relational coordination proposes the dissolution of asymmetrical imbalances, arising from organisational conventions, with the focus on relational, not equal contributions. Likewise, relational

coordination suggests engagement with alternative views with the aim to achieving mutual understandings, not the reinforcement of the same view. Lastly, relational coordination is relevant to the emergent nature of leadership, in terms of facilitating participants to engage with a new turning point and to achieve leadership direction. Synthesising the above, the discussion in this section describes leadership expressed in relational dynamics, co-acted by multi-beings. Relational dynamics are not just communicative, but also mutually constitutive of leadership; they do not illustrate the pursuit of an optimal route, but highlight participants' relational contributions, which points to issues of practical relevance. Table 8-1 summarises the discussion in this section and links it to related literature.

Table 8-1: Synopsis of empirical insights about the responsive interplay

Theme addressed	Indicative literature	Empirical insights
leadership construction	Sampson (1993) Uhl-Bien (2006) Wood (2005)	co-acted by multi-beings
dialogical framing of responsive interplay	Gergen (2009c) Shotter (2010) Tourish (2014)	relational dynamics; leader/follower labels: irrelevant
engagement	Carroll, et al. (2008) Hosking (2008)	relational, not equal contribution
relational coordination	Bresnen (1995) Hosking, et al. (1995) Gergen (2009c) Shotter (2006)	mutual understandings, not shared meanings practical application

8.3 Leadership expressions

This section continues the discussion on the first research objective about the empirical expression of the relational process of leadership, by focusing on the various combinations composing leadership patterns. The empirical inquiry approached the co-active moment of leadership (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 1997, 2011a; Hosking, et al., 1995) in the combination of [invitation →exploration →affirmation], where the

flow from one phase to the next signified pursuit of direction in the following ways. Invitation set leadership in motion, and the flow to the other two phases illustrated leadership in motion. The flow to exploration signified fluctuation in participants' relational connections, while the flow to affirmation signified orientation to the future. Analysis of the empirical material focused on the two flows setting leadership in motion, and showed that the flow to exploration alternated between divergence and convergence, while the flow to affirmation alternated between continuity and newness. The analysis uncovered 16 leadership patterns with similar characterisations as regards the flows in the responsive interplay, composing the following four leadership expressions: challenging, creating, operating and progressing. Figure 6-2 provides an overview of the four leadership expressions, together with their corresponding patterns.

To begin with, the four leadership expressions, identified in the empirical material, illustrate the multiplicity of possibilities across the continuity of relational dynamics, which is discussed in the literature by Gergen (2009c) and Hosking (1988, 2007). The graphical abstraction of the 'leadership grid' in Figure 6-2 aims to convey the multiplicity in the relational process of leadership, as explained by the different possibilities expressions and their corresponding patterns, which co-exist and harmonise each other. The leadership grid is depicted by the convention of two-dimensional axis for reasons of representation, but its containing expressions cannot

be measured or put against each other. Leadership expressions co-exist, but they are not separated into dualistic opposites. The graphical abstraction simply aims at communicating the empirical appreciation of the multiplicity in the relational process of leadership.

The four leadership expressions are empirical manifestations of the co-active moment, where leadership is at a turning point such that a particular ephemeral direction becomes the focus of co-action. This moment is described theoretically in the literature as “reciprocal motion” (Steiner, 2011, p. 89). With regard to this, the empirical inquiry offers an illustration of descriptions appearing in the literature about leadership expression. For example, the description of “being in the now” is offered by Hosking (2011a, p. 463). Likewise, Mead’s continuous frames of gestures and responses is offered by Simpson (2014). Therefore, the four leadership expressions in the grid make a valuable contribution towards an empirical appreciation of leadership in flux. The leadership grid directly points to multiple possibilities that are continuously (re)constructed. The challenging expression of leadership illustrates provocation of relational dynamics in pursuit of mutual understandings. Then, the creating expression of leadership signals expansion in relational dynamics, while participants coordinate relationally to achieve immediate direction. Also, the operating expression of leadership shows the sustainment of relational dynamics in basic frames of reference. Moreover, the progressing expression of leadership highlights the

endurance of relational dynamics, as participants pursue familiarity in the context of change. Reviewed against the literature, the leadership grid contributes to the understanding of the temporal and local nature of relational leadership.

Firstly, the discussion focuses on how leadership expressions across the grid add to the literature about the temporality of the relational process of leadership. Temporality in leadership studies is a point of consideration that has been tentatively present (Carroll & Simpson, 2012; Hosking, 2007, 2008, 2011a; McNamee & Hosking, 2012), and holds promising insights when addressed empirically (Dinh, et al., 2014). Time in leadership studies is predominately viewed as chronological, thus assuming that leadership is broken down to specific steps along measurable intervals (Mumford, 2011). On a very basic level, leadership is the aftermath solution to organisational problems or the given solution for organisational success (Bolden, et al., 2011). With its relational constructionist foundations, the empirical inquiry followed a processual view of time (Gergen, 2010; Helin, et al., 2014; Hernes, 2007; Hernes, et al., 2013), and analysed relational dynamics with regard to otherness. In the analysis of the empirical material, turning points were not approached in terms of sequential pasts. The flow of relational dynamics was continuous, in the sense that analysis did not separate leadership into before and after states. Rather, analysis uncovered multiple expressions in the ongoing flow of leadership. Each co-active moment of leadership included relational implications, carrying past as well as anticipated relational ties. In this respect, leadership was not expressed chronologically: from the past into the present and going to the future. Rather, leadership expressed the future in the present, which was shaped by the past. Such an analysis of future-present-past resonated empirically with the descriptions about

temporality from the greater field of process studies, offered by Chia and Holt (2009), Hernes, et al. (2013), Langley, et al. (2013), and Nayak and Chia (2011). Moreover, the temporal continuity of relational dynamics indicated the practical doing of leadership (Simpson, 2009).

With regard to these, a temporal illustration of leadership yields promising insights for leadership studies. Leadership cannot be systematised or repeated; it is continuously (re)constructed. Nonetheless, this continuous reconstruction emerges from engagement in relational processes, reaching out to both the past and the future simultaneously. The relational process of leadership belongs to the past, in the sense that it was affirmed in previous responsive interplay, and it also belongs to the future, in the sense that it is available for affirmation in a following responsive interplay. Such an analysis cannot predict the future based on the past, and therefore, leadership cannot guarantee success based on previous successes. Rather, both practitioners and academics may focus on the present of relational dynamics, which put to work ‘how’ leadership goes on, and set aside ‘what’ comes after leadership (i.e. success/failure). Likewise, the temporal changefulness of leadership shows that there is no origin and no ending in its unfolding; theory develops around the ‘now’ of leadership, which can have multiple expressions as illustrated in Figure 6-2. Bringing these insights together, leadership is expressed in what is passing, which is connected with what is past and with what is to come.

To summarise the discussion about the temporal appreciation of leadership in the empirical inquiry, the analysis has followed a relational constructionist philosophy, taking a processual view of time. In the analysis of the empirical material, the relational process of leadership emerges with regard to otherness in a continuous flow among

multiple expressions. Leadership future direction is co-acted in the present, which is shaped by the past to the extent that each co-active moment of leadership carries relational implications that bring past, as well as future relational ties to the present. As such, the four leadership expressions across the grid resonate empirically with the descriptions about temporality from the greater field of process and practice studies. Turning to the field of leadership studies, there is a number of additions to theory. The continuous (re)construction of leadership cannot be accounted for through a system of repetitive steps. Rather, this continuous reconstruction emerges from engagement in relational processes, calling both the past and the future concurrently, through previous and next responsive interplays. Such a temporal analysis of leadership cannot predict the future based on the past, and thus, the discussion here cannot refer to success on the basis of previous success. Rather, the discussion focuses on the present of leadership, where multiple expressions talk about ‘how’ leadership goes on in the ‘now’.

Building on the ‘now’ of leadership, the discussion turns to its local nature and the related empirical insights. To begin with, attention to the local, cultural and historical contexts of leadership is urged by Hosking (2007, 2008), with the proposition that such an appreciation offers a pragmatic framework for reflecting on how leadership is constructed, maintained, and changed. Drawing on Figure 6-2, multiple patterns of the responsive interplay illustrate the ongoing relational process of leadership. In principle, there are numerous possibilities, and leadership can go on in various directions, depending on the combinations in the responsive interplay; however, some combinations appear more appropriate to the local conventions of context. The relational process of leadership is ongoing precisely owing to these

conventions, embedded in relational connections, which bound the possibilities that can be co-acted at a turning point. Participants' responsiveness to one another carries memories of where leadership has come from, as well as projections about where leadership might go. These are made sensible in the co-active moment of leadership, where they are (re)created into leadership direction. As such, local, cultural and historical contexts constitute a strong paradox for leadership; but one that is not impossible in practice. On one hand, the responsive interplay signifies the emergence of leadership at a new turning point. On the other, local conventions bound the possibilities of the new turning point, depending on appropriateness to co-action. In the centre of this paradox lies the emergence of leadership as a "real presence" (Steiner, 1989), which expresses a new way of relational dynamics, as characterised by movement across the leadership grid. The discussion in Chapter 3 refers to words gaining their meanings as they are used within 'the game' (Wittgenstein, 1968). Linking this argument with the discussion here, the local context for leadership expressions resembles the way grammar defines the meaning a word may have in a particular use (Wittgenstein, 1968).

Synthesising the above, it becomes evident that the unfolding of leadership is not universal, but rather appropriate to local conventions. The relational process of leadership cannot provide a generic answer to organisational dilemmas, nor is it the panacea for any problem faced in the organisation (Hunter, et al., 2007). At the same time, the multiplicity of leadership expressions across the grid illustrates that there is not one way to look for or talk about leadership. Drawing on the example offered by Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b), it may be premature to talk about the disappearance of leadership, if the descriptions do not fit certain expectations. Put

differently, dominant discourses around leadership (Bolden, et al., 2011) typically focus on intense relational dynamics, as expressed in the creating expression (divergence in the flow to exploration, newness in the flow to affirmation). However, there are other possibilities available, such as the operating expression of leadership, which is characterised by milder relational dynamics (convergence in the flow to exploration, continuity in the flow to affirmation). Along these lines, attention to other possibilities for leadership expressions, which are less extraordinary, are encouraged by Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003c), who focus on the everyday doing of leadership. Drawing again on Wittgenstein (1968), the multiplicity across the grid speaks about seeing leadership ‘as’ flowing in the four expressions, rather than seeing leadership ‘that’ is one fixed expression.

To recap, local-cultural-historical propositions about leadership are illustrated in the multiple patterns of the responsive interplay. From a processual orientation, it is not possible at any time to predict how the responsive interplay may be coordinated and how the relational process of leadership may develop. In principle, any coordination may be affirmed as leadership direction. Still, local conventions restrict the number of possibilities to the ones that fit local relational connection, and in doing so, some combinations in the responsive interplay appear more sensible to the specific context. This may be one plausible explanation for why some patterns in the responsive interplay were not featured in the analysis of the empirical material, as illustrated in Figure 6-2. In this respect, the responsive interplay signifies the emergence of leadership at a new turning point, which is deemed appropriate within the local conventions of co-action. Therefore, the analysis of the empirical material has

demonstrated that leadership is not universal, but has multiple expressions across the grid depending on local-cultural-historical conventions.

In conclusion, this section has continued the discussion on the first research objective about the empirical expression of the relational process of leadership, by focusing on multiple leadership expressions, composed by the combinations in the responsive interplay. The following four expressions of leadership are noted in the analysis of the empirical material and illustrated in Figure 6-2: challenging, creating, operating and progressing. The four leadership expressions co-exist and harmonise each other, providing an empirical manifestation of the co-active moment, where leadership is at a turning point. More importantly, the leadership grid empirically illustrates the ways multiple possibilities of leadership are continuously reconstructed. As such, the thesis contributes to the understanding of the temporal and local nature of the relational process of leadership. Following relational constructionist foundations, analysis of the empirical material develops a processual appreciation of time. Leadership emerges continuously with regard to otherness in multiple expressions. It does not follow a step-wise fashion of chronological appearance from the past, to the present and into the future. Rather, leadership future directions are co-acted in the present, which is shaped by the past to the extent that each co-active moment of leadership carries relational implications. Therefore, the discussion cannot make any predictions about the future; it focuses on continuous reconstruction in relational processes, where multiple expressions described 'how' leadership goes on in the 'now'. What is more, local-cultural-historical conventions restrict leadership's possible directions to the ones that fit participants' connections. Thus, the relational process of leadership does not have a universal character, but rather is explored in

multiple expressions across the grid. Synthesising the discussion in the section, the relevance of the thesis' empirical insights does not stem from their potential to predict success, but from their potential to speak about the expressions of leadership that build up orientation and engagement in relational dynamics. Table 8-2 summarises the discussion in this section and links it to related literature.

Table 8-2: Synopsis of the empirical insights about leadership expressions in the grid

Theme addressed	Indicative literature	Empirical insights
multiplicity in leadership	Gergen (2009c) Hosking (1988, 2007)	leadership expressions in the grid: challenging, creating, operating, progressing
temporality	Carroll and Simpson (2012) Chia and Holt (2009) Helin, et al. (2014) Hosking (2007, 2008, 2011a) Simpson (2009)	turning points analysed in terms of relational implications leadership grid: ongoing (re)construction in the present
local-cultural-historical conventions	Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003b, 2003c) Hosking (2007, 2008)	boundaries to co-action leadership is not universal

8.4 Leadership movement: *Syn-kinesis*

This section moves the discussion forward to the second research objective, which deals with how leadership unfolds progressively. Building on the discussion from the previous two sections 8.2 and 8.3, the focus here is on the movement from one turning point to the next, illustrated though the passage across expressions in the leadership grid. Drawing attention to the notion of movement, as developed in the analysis of the empirical material, Figures 7-1 to 7-4 show the relational process of leadership unfolding in progressive movements across the grid. Four types of movements have been identified: horizontally, vertically, diagonally and within expression in the leadership grid.

Leadership movement in the grid empirically describes the ongoing and fluid relational process of leadership, which is embedded in local context and developed

alongside relational connections. Such an analysis provides an empirical illustration of leadership as a “choreography of co-action” (Gergen, 2009c, p. 137). Movements in the choreography are not discrete ‘moves’, but ongoing ‘moving’. Because movements are embedded in relational dynamics, the flow in the relational process of leadership cannot be separated into discrete ‘moves’. Linking to the discussion about temporality, the movement from one turning point to the next brings to the present moment of leadership past, as well as future anticipation of relational dynamics: “like waves of the ocean it is not clear where one movement ends and another begins” (Gergen, 2009c, p. 30). What is more, movements in the choreography of co-action speak about appropriateness, as described in section 8.3 with local-cultural-historical conventions. Drawing on the metaphor of dancing, as offered by Gergen (2009c), the invitation to dance suggests participation in the dance, whether it is a rumba or a foxtrot (participation in relational arrays). Likewise, the dance itself signals the range of possible choreographies (possibilities of co-action). Therefore, in the unfolding of leadership there cannot be an appreciation of individual acts; rather, the relational process of leadership is expressed in the ongoing confluence of relational dynamics: “we co-create our scenario, unsure of its ultimate direction, and in doing so the wings of multi-being may be spread” (Gergen, 2009c, p. 37).

The thesis’ main contribution to leadership theory lies in the synthesis of the empirical insights about leadership movement in the grid. The conceptualisation of leadership movement, and its related graphical abstraction with the example in Figures 7-1 to 7-4, offer a new, dynamic possibility to talk about leadership from a relational constructionist perspective. Such a conceptualisation addresses an ongoing and fluid process, embedded in local context and emerging from relational dynamics. This

implicates that assumptions of causality in explaining leadership are precluded. Since the discussion is centred on moving, there are no conceptual means of separating between entities that move. Linking to the discussion in Chapter 2, it is worth recalling how literature streams explain leadership by means of cause-effect formulations.

The literature stream of individualism draws on causality to describe leadership as developed in transition from one stage to other (before and after leadership). The significant agency of the leader is the cause that results in producing the effect of leadership (Bolden & Gosling, 2006). From this conceptualisation, 'leadership' is produced in the discrete 'moves' of the individual leader, and related explanations offer a formula for the leader. Furthermore, leadership assumes comparability between the different entities (leader/followers), as if all other contextual conditions are equal. Therefore, the individualistic stream of theories does not offer the possibility for addressing leadership movement, with the focus on 'moving'. Turning to the second stream of theories that addresses inter-individualism, leadership movement is not a relevant conception either. Inter-individualism conceptualises leadership as developed in a network of individuals that exert influence on each other (Edwards, 2011). In the theoretical variations under the inter-individualistic stream, there exists a common, functional assumption that supports the conception of leadership as a network. Leaders and followers adhere to a network because being part of it produces 'better leadership'. Thus, leadership is explained with the formulation of a network, which implies convergence around shared meanings for delivering successful performance (cause/effect explanation). The distribution of leadership in the network of individuals separates discrete entities, where leaders empower others and leadership roles are

assigned before they are executed, exemplifying causality in the explanation of leadership.

Both streams of individualism and inter-individualism treat leadership as an external change. The third literature stream of relationality does not talk about leadership from the perspective of external fixed points of reference, connected with cause-effect formulations. Leadership does not ‘exist’ because of the leader’s qualities (first stream), nor does it ‘exist’ because of the network’s qualities (second stream). Rather, leadership emerges in relational dynamics and it is futile to address causality, as there are no conceptual means to do so (Gergen, 2009c; Hosking, 2011a, 2011b; Hosking & Shamir, 2012). As transpires from the empirical insights, relational dynamics do not presuppose convergence to shared meanings, but relational coordination around mutual understandings. Likewise, relational dynamics do not prescribe the delivery of leadership. The focus is on ‘how’ leadership unfolds, without this being necessarily connected to success. For example, the analysis of the empirical material showed instances of conflict (MM-TP16) or uncertainty (JMM-TP1). In this respect, the conception of the movement conveys effectively the emergent phenomenon of leadership, expressed through relational dynamics.

Taking together the empirical insights, the author proposes the characterisation of leadership movement as *syn-kinesis*, drawing on the compound Greek word meaning ‘moving together with’ (συγκίνηση, συν + κίνηση). *Syn-kinesis* conceptualises the ephemerality of leadership, perpetually (re)constructed in relational process among multi-beings. It aims to illustrate and communicate that leadership is not a fixed point of reference, but a process that becomes in relational dynamics. Its contribution to leadership theory is described in the following seven features. *Syn-*

kinesis highlights that leadership is not a one-off spark that stands alone; it is an ongoing process, embedded in local context and developed in relational dynamics (1). Additionally, *syn-kinesis* illustrates that leadership is not universal, nor is there only one way to talk about it. The *syn-kinetic* process of leadership is polymorphic: it may be challenging, creating, operating or progressing, without any measurement or separation among the multiple expressions (2). The polymorphic expression of *syn-kinesis* is also characterised by constant metamorphosis in pursuit of direction, as showed in its successive unfolding through multiple expression in the leadership grid (3). The *syn-kinetic* process of leadership unfolds in time, as its movements mingle with other movements under way, within relational arrays. It is perpetually and temporally changeful, with no origin or end. This means that *syn-kinesis* cannot be divided into separable stages, nor can it be predetermined and planned. For its expression, there are multiple leadership patterns that are meaningful in particular contexts and particular co-active moments. Therefore, the *syn-kinetic* process of leadership cannot be pinned down to a specific location; it unfolds across various turning points and spreads throughout the organisation (4).

Likewise, *syn-kinesis* cannot be attributed to specific individuals (first literature stream), nor given externally from the properties of a network of individuals (second literature stream). *Syn-kinesis* illustrates the polyphonic expression of leadership, emerging from multi-beings who are mutually constitutive of *syn-kinesis* (5). In this respect, accountability for leadership is relationally present at each turning point. Just as the *syn-kinetic* process of leadership cannot be traced back to a certain location, neither can accountability be traced back to a particular individual or a constellation of individuals. Lines of accountability are embedded in relational

dynamics to which multi-beings have a unique involvement. In other words, accountability in *syn-kinesis* is part of the ongoing relational process (6). Therefore, *syn-kinesis* calls for a new way of talking about the relational process of leadership as movement that becomes in relational dynamics, and is not already in existence. *Syn-kinesis* serves as a way of approaching 'how' leadership goes on. Such a conceptualisation does not offer a specific formula about how leadership 'is' or about what 'leadership' represents. Rather, its meaning has to do with providing a practical theory that is exemplary of relational dynamics and processual unfolding (7). The conception of *syn-kinesis* suggests a movement to 'getting things done'; it is not an idealised, optimal way nor a way that guarantees success. *Syn-kinesis* illustrates the seeking of leadership direction. As such, the thesis' contribution is in the constant flows in relational dynamics, rather than the arrival to or a departure from a state of leadership.

In conclusion, this section has discussed the ways the thesis addressed the second research objective about how different expressions of leadership unfold progressively. The focus is on the movement across turning points, as illustrated in Figures 7-1 to 7-4 through the passage of expressions in the leadership grid. In the analysis of the empirical material, four types of movements in the leadership grid were uncovered: horizontal, vertical, diagonal, and within expression. Leadership movement in the grid constitutes the main contribution that the thesis has achieved, offering a new, dynamic possibility to talk about leadership from a relational constructionist perspective. The conception of leadership movement, together with its graphical abstraction, addresses an ongoing and fluid process, embedded in local context and developed alongside relational dynamics. The author has conceptualised

leadership movement as *syn-kinesis*, grounded in the analysis of the thesis' empirical material. *Syn-kinesis* aims to communicate that leadership is an ongoing (1), polymorphic (2) process in constant metamorphosis (3), in pursuit of direction. There is no origin or end to the *syn-kinetic* process of leadership, but rather a perpetually and temporally changeful flow (4). *Syn-kinesis* cannot be pinned down to certain individuals or networks of individuals; it emerges in relational dynamics (5). Likewise, accountability cannot be attributed to specific individuals; it is relationally present at each turning point (6). From this outlook, *syn-kinesis* contributes to leadership theory by suggesting a practical way to talk about the 'how' of leadership, illustrating relational dynamics and processual unfolding (7). Table 8-3 summarises the discussion in this section and outlines the contribution to leadership theory. The numbers noted in Table 8-3 serve purposes of clarity, so that the reader can navigate comfortably across the research offerings and their meanings in the discussion.

Table 8-3: The *syn-kinetic* process of leadership

Theme addressed	Contribution to theory
<i>syn-kinetic</i> leadership	(1) ongoing process of relational dynamics (2) polymorphic (3) constant metamorphosis (4) spatially unattainable (5) polyphonic (6) accountability at each turning point (7) practical theory exemplary of relational dynamics & processual unfolding

8.5 Chapter synopsis

This chapter discusses how the thesis has responded to and achieved its objectives, illustrating its contribution to leadership studies. Section 8.2 addresses the first research objective about the empirical expression of the relational process of leadership in responsive interplays. Analysis of the empirical material approached the co-active moment of leadership, in which leadership is at a turning point, with Gergen's (2009c) interrelated flows of invitation – exploration – affirmation. The analysis uncovered multiple possibilities as presented in Figure 6-1. The thesis adds to theory about the multiplicity of leadership in following ways. Leadership is expressed in relational dynamics in the dialogical framing of the responsive interplay, which signifies that leadership and its relational dynamics are mutually constituting. Engagement in the expression of leadership indicates boundaries to relational dynamics, thus demonstrating participants' relational contributions. Relational coordination conveys the attainment of mutual understandings, which is poles apart from shared frames of meanings. Relational coordination also has practical implications: the dissolution of asymmetrical imbalances, arising from organisational conventions, the engagement with alternative views with the aim to achieving mutual understanding, and the accomplishment of leadership direction.

Next, analysis of the empirical material identifies the following four leadership expressions, as presented in Figure 6-2: challenging, creating, operating and progressing. They empirically illustrate the ways multiple possibilities of leadership are continuously (re)constructed. In doing so, the thesis adds to the understanding of the temporal and local nature of the relational process of leadership. A processual conceptualisation of time discounts the chronological manifestation of leadership,

suggesting that the relational process of leadership goes on in the present, shaped by the past and extended to the future. Local-cultural-historical conventions bound the appropriate possibilities to the ones fitting relational connections, thus rendering certain patterns in the responsive interplay a better match to specific contexts.

Section 8.4 discusses the second research objective about the progressive unfolding of leadership, focusing on the movement from one turning point to the next, illustrated though the passage across expressions in the leadership grid. Drawing on the analysis of the empirical material, four types of movements in the leadership grid are uncovered: horizontal, vertical, diagonal, and within expression. They constitute the thesis' main contribution in the conception of *syn-kinesis*, which goes beyond causality and proposes a new, dynamic way to talk about leadership grounded on relational constructionism. The *syn-kinetic* process of leadership is an ongoing, polymorphic process in constant metamorphosis, in pursuit of direction. It cannot be traced back to a certain location nor can it be pinned down to individuals; it emerges in relational dynamics. Accordingly, accountability cannot be attributed to specific individuals; it is relationally present at each turning point. On these grounds, *syn-kinesis* contributes to leadership theory by suggesting a practical way to talk about the 'how' of leadership, illustrating relational dynamics and processual unfolding.

CHAPTER 9 | CONCLUSION

9.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter brings the thesis to closure by overviewing the research journey. Firstly, section 9.2 restates the concerns motivating the research, and explains how they have been addressed. Next, section 9.3 discusses how the proposed conceptualisation of *syn-kinetic* leadership contributes to theory, practice and research. Lastly, the chapter comes to an end by reviewing limitations and avenues for future research.

9.2 Thesis' summary

The thesis begins with problematising the individual-centric persistence in leadership studies, constituting three interrelated concerns around which the motivation of the thesis developed. Firstly, the individual-centric portrayal of leadership renders relational dynamics irrelevant. Secondly, individualism makes leadership some kind of an ideal formula, sitting outside relations. Thirdly, by looking to prescribe 'who' is producing leadership or 'what' leadership is about, the critical questions of 'how' leadership unfolds remains silenced. On these grounds, the thesis' aim is to understand leadership as a relational process unfolding in practice, attending to its relational dynamics. This is put into perspective with the research objectives of exploring the empirical expression of leadership and its progressive unfolding. Reviewing the literature, the author does not wish either to overemphasise or over-criticise leadership theory. Rather, she re-evaluates theorising in the light of individualism by means of a meta-theoretical review, which identifies the literature streams of individualism, inter-individualism and relationality.

Each one of them is reviewed against their underlying assumptions so as to determine which literature stream can provide an anchor for the thesis to fulfil its aim and objectives. The first literature stream of individualism regards leadership as the property and product of the individual leader, and therefore cannot account for the emergent and fluid relational process of leadership that the thesis aims to approach. The second literature stream of inter-individualism describes leadership in the actions of individuals that interact with each other, prescribing what leadership is but not addressing how it unfolds. The third literature stream of relationality approaches leadership as an emergent relational process, providing the ground for pursuing the thesis' objectives. It is important to clarify the nuances in the conceptualisation of leadership between the streams of inter-individualism and relationality. Inter-individualism addresses leadership as the outcome of interacting individuals, while relationality discusses leadership as a process that becomes together with its participants. As such, there are incommensurate differences between the two literature streams of inter-individualism and relationality (Gergen, 1994a; Hosking, 2011b).

Progressing with research, the thesis' conceptual foundations are grounded in relational constructionism (Gergen, 1994a, 2009c; Hosking, 1988, 2006, 2008, 2011a; Hosking, et al., 1995). They are described in the interconnected features of relational dynamics, co-action, emergence, responsive interplays and turning points. Relational dynamics constitute a resource for approaching leadership as multi-beings (re)construct their connections. Then, emergence indicates the expression of leadership as change in the flow of relational dynamics, while co-action signifies continuity in participants' connections. Relational dynamics are approached with the notions of responsive interplays and turning points. Responsive interplays are

dialogical processes approached in terms of Gergen's (2009c) description of invitation – exploration – affirmation, and their combination offers the co-active moment of leadership. Turning points punctuate the flow of relational dynamics, indicating change in leadership direction.

Conceptualised as such, the thesis' focus is on the relational implications of dialogue so as to explore how ongoing relational processes (re)construct leadership. The empirical inquiry is then described as immersed, episodic fieldwork to highlight direct and real-time involvement in research that takes place in meetings in organisational settings. The unit of analysis is turning points in the unfolding of leadership, identified as such by research participants themselves. Levels of analysis are not considered as they do fit with the processual nature of the research, given the underlying assumption of separation into distinct entities. Research started in SocialORG in May 2013, and continued in PublicORG in September 2013, with the methods of non-participant observation (pre, post and during meetings), shadowing (in PublicORG) and reflective research notes.

Engaging with the empirical material was developed in induction and abduction in the following way. Drawing on turning points, the author constructed, leadership trajectories. In SocialORG, leadership trajectories were joined together with turning points dealing with the same issue, spreading across meetings and across the organisation. In PublicORG, the leadership trajectory consisted of discrete turning points that were not joined together. Then, turning points were analysed from the lens of the responsive interplay, and patterns of leadership expressions were recognised. Next, analysis progressed only in SocialORG, where there was movement from one turning point to the next. Leadership trajectories were revisited and analysed in terms

of moving from one turning point to the next. Bringing together the insights from SocialORG and PublicORG, theory about relational leadership was developed after analysing 106 turning and concluding the research in October 2013.

Turning to its quality, the thesis is analytically and methodologically rigorous, as becomes evident from the discussion in Chapter 4 and from the presentation of the empirical insights. The author's position was characterised by (re)construction together with research participants, as well as by a reflective review of the scope and limitations of insights. On these grounds, the research has produced trustworthy empirical insights, as evidenced by the thesis' procedural systematicities: the decision to follow participants' interpretations of turning points, the reflections from a pilot study, the incorporation of feedback from members of the academic community, the observations from multiple vantage points (various and different meetings), the faithfulness to participants' voices, as well as to methodological underpinnings, and the relational practice of reflexivity. Furthermore, ethical research practice was followed, and complemented the ethical approval granted by the University of Strathclyde for pursuing the empirical inquiry as outlined above.

With regard to research specifics, the first research site, SocialORG, operated in the third sector, in the field of social care in the UK and had an established practice of meetings. Access in SocialORG was granted for all organisational functions and workgroups in SocialORG, facilitating the realisation of the research methodology and design. The second research site, PublicORG, operated in the public sector, within local authorities in the UK, and served as a contrasting site. The practice of meetings in PublicORG was strikingly different compared to SocialORG: here, meetings were regarded as administrative tasks to confirm direction. Research access was limited to

only four workgroups. In Social ORG, four leadership trajectories were developed, joined together with turning points dealing with the same issue, spreading across meetings and across the organisation (Middle Managers' Workload Reconfiguration, Recruitment Review, Stand-In Service Development, and the Emergence of Joint Management meetings). In PublicORG, one trajectory was developed, consisting of discrete turning points that are not joined together.

Drawing on the leadership trajectories, their turning points were analysed in terms of Gergen's (2009c) responsive interplay, with the interwoven flows of invitation-exploration-affirmation. Invitation was analysed as the trigger to co-action, with the empirically grounded constructs of 'developing' and 'preceding'. Exploration was analysed with reference to how meanings and relational connections were in the making towards mutual understanding, with the empirically grounded constructs of 'differentiating', 'stabilising', 'adapting' and 'integrating'. Affirmation was analysed with reference to temporary confirmation of moving forward, with the empirically grounded constructs of 'linking' and 'selecting'. The flows of invitation, exploration and affirmation were presented separately for analytical purposes, but were theoretically and empirically, interrelated and mutually constituent. Combinations in the responsive interplay composed 16 patterns, which had common characteristics in the flow from one flow to the next, setting leadership in motion. Specifically, the flow to exploration alternated between divergence and convergence, while the flow to affirmation alternated between continuity and newness. As such, the following four leadership expressions were identified: challenging, creating, operating and progressing. They indicated the scope of the relational process of leadership, and the multiple possibilities of relational dynamics. These possibilities co-existed and

harmonised each other, as appreciated in the graphical abstraction of the leadership grid (Figure 6.2). It is worth noting that the identified leadership expressions, and their corresponding patterns, respond to the first research objective of exploring the empirical expression of relational leadership.

Next, analysis drew on the trajectories developed from the empirical material approached in SocialORG, where turning points were joined together. Leadership trajectories were revisited and analysed in the unfolding from one turning point to the next in the grid. Such an analysis brought about recurring patterns of passage across leadership expressions: horizontally, vertically, diagonally and within expression through the leadership grid. These were not presented as discrete ‘moves’, but rather as ‘moving’, exemplifying relational dynamics. It is worth noting that the analysis of passage in the leadership grid responds to the second research objective about exploring the progressive unfolding of the relational process leadership. Altogether, the empirical insights provide a new, dynamic way to talk about leadership from a relational constructionism perspective. This is conceptualised as *syn-kinesis*, which is an ongoing, polymorphic process in constant metamorphosis, in pursuit of direction. The *syn-kinetic* process of leadership emerges in relational dynamics, and does not belong to specific individuals or locations, rendering accountability present at each turning point.

9.3 *Syn-kinesis*: Contribution to theory, practice and research

The *syn-kinetic* process of leadership centres relational dynamics and adds to theory in the following five ways: by furthering understanding beyond causal explanations, by empirically illustrating multiplicity, by empirically exemplifying temporal and local considerations, by rethinking the language used to describe leadership and by epitomising generative potential that opens up the possibility of relational constructionism. Firstly, the thesis contributes to leadership theory by offering another possibility for understanding leadership, which does not originate from entities connected with cause-effect formulations. *Syn-kinesis* has addressed the emergent process of leadership as expressed in relational dynamics (Gergen, 2009b, 2009c).

Secondly, *syn-kinesis* empirically illustrates the multiplicity of leadership (Hosking, 1988, 2007). In the very beginning, the construction of the responsive interplay at turning points signifies leadership emergence co-acted in relational dynamics. Then, the various combinations in the responsive interplay at turning points offer 16 patterns, which, according to the flow in relational dynamics, compose four leadership expressions: challenging, creating, operating and progressing (Figure 6.2). Leadership expressions provide a spectrum of possibilities for discussing leadership, ranging from executional accounts (operating) to radical changes (creating). Therefore, *syn-kinesis* does not theorise leadership as ‘something’ that can be captured once and for all, and identified rigidly. Thirdly, the movement from one turning point to the next, illustrated through the leadership grid in the horizontal/vertical/diagonal/within passage of expressions, characterises the unfolding of *syn-kinesis*, addressing temporal and local considerations (Figures 7-1 to 7-4).

Therefore, the *syn-kinetic* process of leadership is perpetually (re)constructed; it does not emerge in a chronologic fashion. Rather, it goes on in the present, shaped by the past and extended to the future (Carroll & Simpson, 2012; Chia & Holt, 2009; Helin, et al., 2014; Hosking, 2007, 2008, 2011a; Simpson, 2009). Additionally, the passage of leadership expressions in the movement across turning points signifies local-cultural-historical conventions. Direction is affirmed depending on relational connections, which bounds possibilities to the ones fitting specific contexts (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003b, 2003c; Hosking, 2007, 2008).

Fourthly, the conception of *syn-kinesis* contributes to a body of studies in the leadership domain, concerned with the use of language (Kelly, 2008). In particular, *syn-kinesis* is used to denote processual underpinnings. Throughout the thesis, the way language has been used carefully stays away from connotation to individuals and static entities. For example, the labels ‘leader’ or ‘followers’ have not been used to avoid an automatic representation that renders leadership a product of the labelled individuals. Therefore, the author wishes to highlight that the way language is used shapes the game, in the sense that words themselves are impotent in describing leadership out of context (Wittgenstein, 1968). This does not necessarily imply the use of alternative words or labels, but rather a thoughtful application that may be accompanied with explanation about the author’s selected use. While there is the danger of reducing the notion of leadership to yet another label, in the case of *syn-kinesis*, the author hopes that the thesis has demonstrated its pertinence and appropriateness to the research objectives as a dynamic way to talk about leadership grounded on relational constructionism.

Fifthly, synthesising the above, *syn-kinesis* is characterised by generative potential (Gergen, 1994a, 1994b) that opens up the possibility of relational constructionism. The thesis and its empirical inquiry give emphasis to context and relational embeddedness, theorising leadership in a unique way as *syn-kinesis*, under the lens of relational constructionism. This is achieved by meticulously considering a methodological approach that illustrates performativity of responsive interplays, sensitivity to context and emergence of temporal newness, as marked by turning points punctuating the flow in relational dynamics.

Turning to its contribution to practice, *syn-kinesis* establishes a practical way to talk about the ‘how’ of leadership, thus providing practitioners with insights about the dynamic nature of leadership and setting aside elusive personifications. These insights are the following four: relational coordination, appreciation of success in a temporal manner, accountability at turning points, and leadership development. Starting with relational coordination, it expresses engagement in the responsive interplay at turning points, illustrating participants’ relational contributions. As such, *syn-kinesis* indicates that the focus for practitioners should be the context of their relational connections, rather than the context of meaning. This is because *syn-kinesis* emerges in relational dynamics, not from agreeing on shared frames of meanings (Bresnen, 1995). In fact, it is irrelevant for the *syn-kinetic* process of leadership if there is divergence or convergence among participants (flow to exploration, Figure 6-1); the point of consideration is relational coordination. Furthermore, the author’s engagement in organisational meetings allows her to suggest that by focusing on relational coordination participants can overcome asymmetrical imbalances, arising

from organisational conventions (Hosking, et al., 1995), engage with alternative views with the aim to achieving mutual understanding, and achieve leadership direction.

The second offering to practitioners is the appreciation of success from a temporal perspective. Success is explained in individualistic and inter-individualistic theories as the aftermath of ‘good or effective’ leadership (Dinh, et al., 2014; Dionne, et al., 2014; Hannah, Sumanth, Lester, & Cavarretta, 2014). From another perspective, *syn-kinesis* does not address success as coming after leadership, but as going on in the present, co-active moment of leadership. That means that practitioners should not anticipate success to occur from repetitive steps, as leadership cannot be predicted on the basis of past achievements or future anticipations (Carroll & Simpson, 2012; Chia & Holt, 2009; Helin, et al., 2014; Hosking, 2007, 2008, 2011a; Simpson, 2009). Rather, practitioners may appreciate success from their engagement at turning points, where the past and the future are called concurrently in making the present (Shotter, 1980, 1993, 2005, 2008).

Temporality in appreciating success links to the third offering to practitioners, dealing with the issue of accountability. As explained by Gergen (2009c), accountability in organisations is typically attributed to specific practitioners, deriving from the assumptions of individualism or inter-individualism. Practitioners are held accountable for their actions under the premise that leadership is produced by them. From the perspective of *syn-kinesis*, leadership emerges in relational dynamics, and therefore, practitioners do not act alone; they are multi-beings in co-action. Instead of drawing attention to individual performers so as to attribute accountability, it is important to shift attention to the way practitioners relate to each other. This is because accountability is relationally present at each turning point.

Fourthly, *syn-kinetic* leadership is related to leadership development. Following individualistic or inter-individualistic tenets, leadership development is framed in human capital, signifying attention to qualities of the individual (Day, 2000; Uhl-Bien, 2011b). From a relational perspective, *syn-kinesis* suggests a focus on the social capital in leadership development, signifying attention to relationality. This implicates that the focus in leadership development is not to develop the positive qualities of the individual practitioner; but to develop the ways of relating to one another. Raelin (2011, pp. 204-205) viewed the subject of leadership development as leaderful development, highlighting practitioners' involvement in learning, as well as learning that occurs in their work environments. In addition, Thory (2013, p. 236) suggested a focus on sociocultural process in practitioners' development by means of diversity training which prioritises "support for inclusive teamwork practices, nurturing respect and tolerance for diversity, reviewing group values, improved access and support and evaluating selection, recruitment, and promotion practices".

Turning to the contribution to research, the empirical inquiry exemplifies two offerings in the ways it is designed and approached methodologically. Firstly, the empirical inquiry is among the first studies to engage with a relational constructionist orientation and follow leadership as it unfolds in everyday settings (McNamee & Hosking, 2012, p. 21). Likewise, it is among the first studies to propose an approach to leadership as it unfolds in real-time (Denis, et al., 2012). Additionally, it is the first study in the leadership domain that pursues research across all organisational functions. Denis, et al. (2012, p. 230) noted that they have found no study exploring relationality "in teams mixing senior executives with middle managers". With regard to the thesis' methodology, the empirical inquiry has proposed a way for

conceptualising how leadership may find expression (Denis, et al., 2012) with the focus on turning points punctuating the flow in relational dynamics, as identified by participants themselves. With this focus, the empirical inquiry explores leadership in its practical doing, in the sense of what ‘unfolds’; not in the sense of what ‘is’ or what ‘a representation looks like’. Therefore, the thesis contributes to leadership studies by offering an empirical example for following leadership as it flows and attending to ‘how’ it is expressed, rather than ‘who’ produces it, or ‘what’ its impact is.

Altogether, *syn-kinesis* has called into question the mystery surrounding leadership, problematising individualistic and inter-individualistic assumptions that regard individuals as the owners of leadership. Unsettling these assumptions, the thesis offers another possibility, involving relational dynamics and pointing out that there are multiple expressions of leadership, perpetually (re)constructed. The proposed conceptualisation of *syn-kinesis* creates great hope in furthering the understanding about the relational process of leadership as it unfolds in practice.

9.4 Limitations and avenues for future research

This section raises six points of consideration regarding the thesis’ limitations and the ways to proceed with future research, recognising that the thesis has produced trustworthy empirical insights that can be further followed up. The following considerations are addressed: the way power is conceptualised, the thesis’ capacity to provide predictions about leadership, access issues in PublicORG, incomplete turning points, missing patterns, and movements’ overlap.

To begin with, *syn-kinesis* describes leadership in relational dynamics, meaning that none of the participants has power over the others. In the realms of individualism or inter-individualism, power refers to the intentional production of

leadership by individuals who exist separated from each other, and who act on each other. Linking to the thinking of Follett (1996), individualistic theories equate leadership to the leader's 'power to act', while inter-individualistic theories conceptualise leadership as 'power over' others, shifting around individuals depending on the circulation of leadership functions. From such conceptualisations, leadership becomes the outcome of power-relationships (broadly defined from charisma to authority, and one-way to multi-directional). In this respect, the thesis can be criticised for not addressing issues of power, or speaking about the leader (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009). The thesis does not propose a tension-free approach to leadership; it offers another possibility comprising relational dynamics with the conception of *syn-kinesis*, which cannot pre-suppose leadership labels. Instead of separation, *syn-kinesis* draws attention to synergies, which can be thought of as 'power with' (Follett, 1996). In addition to the limitation of addressing 'power on or over others', the notion of *syn-kinesis* does not have the capacity to predict in advance how leadership goes on in the future. Drawing on relational dynamics, *syn-kinesis* talks about how leadership goes on in the 'now', but cannot predict the future on the basis of the past, nor can it provide formulas about 'who' can be a 'leader' or a 'good leader'. *Syn-kinetic* leadership is appropriate to local-cultural-historical conventions, and therefore cannot be universally appreciated or presented as a solution for any problem faced in the organisation.

Turning to the empirical inquiry, access issues in PublicORG have been a major limitation, resulting in the development of one trajectory that included discrete turning points. PublicORG constituted an unconventional site to research the relational process of leadership, given that relational encounters were not meetings-based. Thus,

future researchers may benefit from modifying the present methodology and research design to address the particularities of analogous contexts more competently. In the thesis' methodology, meetings are considered an appropriate observational place, given their centrality to organisational life and their practical orientation. In light of the empirical insights from PublicORG, such a research focus can be modified to include sophisticated relational encounters that are not easily identifiable by the researcher. Therefore, instead of observing meetings, shadowing may be a more appropriate research method. This is because in unconventional settings, similar to PublicORG, shadowing can guide the researcher to the 'invisible' connections among participants.

Moreover, the thesis' conceptual basis of turning points provides an avenue for extending the research. It is worth recalling that the author made the decision to focus on complete turning points (going from invitation to exploration and to affirmation) for reasons of pertinence to the research objectives. In the future, research could focus on incomplete turning points. For example, lines of inquiry may research the ways relational connections energise or alienate co-action, the ways relational connections invite complete turning points, or the ways they confine progression in responsive interplays. Likewise, future research can explore the expression of missing leadership patterns in other research contexts. The research sites explored in this thesis concerned the third and public sector; thus, the private sector constitutes a future research possibility. The research context of PublicORG is also worth further exploration, with the methodological suggestions outlined before, so as to gain a nuanced understanding about the subtlety of relational dynamics in contexts dominated by bureaucracy and formal structures. Additionally, it is worth pursuing future research in contentious

contexts, where conflict, and even resistance, underpin relational arrays among participants. Finally, an interesting avenue for future research is exploring relational dynamics in the intersection and overlap of leadership movements. For example, the Stand-In Service Development movement overlapped at turning point SSD-TP18 with the Middle Managers' reconfiguration movement. Besides reciprocal and spatial dynamics that have been noted here, there is potential for further research into movements' overlap so as to identify variances in relational dynamics.

To conclude, the thesis' potential is coupled with the inescapability of limitations, which have been acknowledged and linked to avenues for future research. In the above examination, there appear to be limitations to what the thesis has addressed, as well as opportunities for future development. At the end, the author hopes that the thesis has shown that there is great potential in the conception of *synkinesis*, offering a dynamic way to talk about the relational process of leadership, eschewing individual-centric theorising.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Participant information & consent form template



Participant Information Form

Title of Project: Exploring leadership as collective and collaborative process of co-creating.

Researcher: Chrysa Sklaveniti – PhD Student, MBA, BSc Hons

Dear participant,

I am a PhD student in the Department of Strategy and Organisation at University of Strathclyde Business School and I would like to invite you to participate in research I am undertaking as part of my studies. My research project explores leadership as a process of co-creating collective and collaborative action. For this purpose I would need to direct my data collection towards observing team meetings. In such way, I aim to contribute empirically by moving away from researching outcomes, and towards focusing on the co-creating process of leadership work.

If you agree to participate, this will involve being observed in team meetings. Observation will be recorded (notes-taking & audio) and transcribed, with all data being anonymised and treated as confidential. Data will be securely stored and accessed only by me with my personal passwords. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time until 30th September 2013, after when I will be writing-up for my research and will not be able to remove quotations from my final dissertation.

I appreciate you giving time for my research. I am at your disposal for further information at chrysavgi.sklaveniti@strath.ac.uk.

Thank you,

Chrysa Sklaveniti.

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Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: Exploring leadership as collective and collaborative process of co-creating.

Researcher: Chrysa Sklaveniti – PhD Student, MBA, BSc Hons

If you would like to participate in my PhD project as described in the previous section, please tick the boxes you agree with and sign below:

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understand that I have the opportunity to ask questions of clarification.
- I understand that my participation in this research will involve recording my interactions during meetings.
- I understand that any information recorded will be anonymised and treated as confidential.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any stage.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

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Appendix 2: MM trajectory, responsive interplay

Turning point	[i n v i t a t i o n → e x p l o r a t i o n → a f f i r m a t i o n]			
MM-TP1	developing	→	differentiating	→ linking
MM-TP2	preceding	→	adapting	→ linking
MM-TP3	preceding	→	adapting	→ linking
MM-TP4	preceding	→	adapting	→ linking
MM-TP5	preceding	→	adapting	→ selecting
MM-TP6	preceding	→	stabilising	→ linking
MM-TP7	preceding	→	adapting	→ selecting
MM-TP8	developing	→	stabilising	→ selecting
MM-TP9	preceding	→	adapting	→ selecting
MM-TP10	preceding	→	integrating	→ linking
MM-TP11	preceding	→	adapting	→ selecting
MM-TP12	preceding	→	stabilising	→ selecting
MM-TP13	preceding	→	integrating	→ linking
MM-TP14	preceding	→	adapting	→ linking
MM-TP15	preceding	→	stabilising	→ linking
MM-TP16	preceding	→	adapting	→ linking
MM-TP17	preceding	→	adapting	→ linking
MM-TP18	preceding	→	stabilising	→ selecting
MM-TP19	preceding	→	adapting	→ selecting
MM-TP20	preceding	→	integrating	→ linking

Appendix 3: RR trajectory, responsive interplay

Turning point	[i n v i t a t i o n → e x p l o r a t i o n → a f f i r m a t i o n]				
RR-TP1	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
RR-TP2	preceding	→	integrating	→	linking
RR-TP3	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP4	preceding	→	adapting	→	linking
RR-TP5	preceding	→	integrating	→	linking
RR-TP6	preceding	→	adapting	→	selecting
RR-TP7	preceding	→	integrating	→	linking
RR-TP8	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP9	developing	→	adapting	→	linking
RR-TP10	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP11	developing	→	differentiating	→	linking
RR-TP12	preceding	→	adapting	→	linking
RR-TP13	preceding	→	adapting	→	selecting
RR-TP14	developing	→	differentiating	→	linking
RR-TP15	developing	→	integrating	→	selecting
RR-TP16	preceding	→	integrating	→	linking
RR-TP17	developing	→	adapting	→	selecting
RR-TP18	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP19	developing	→	differentiating	→	selecting
RR-TP20	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
RR-TP21	preceding	→	adapting	→	selecting
RR-TP22	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
RR-TP23	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP24	preceding	→	adapting	⇒	selecting
RR-TP25	preceding	→	stabilising	⇒	selecting
RR-TP26	developing	→	stabilising	⇒	selecting
RR-TP27	preceding	→	integrating	⇒	linking
RR-TP28	preceding	→	adapting	→	selecting
RR-TP29	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
RR-TP30	preceding	→	integrating	→	linking
RR-TP31	developing	→	integrating	→	selecting
RR-TP32	preceding	→	integrating	→	linking
RR-TP33	preceding	→	adapting	→	selecting
RR-TP34	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting

RR-TP35	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP36	preceding	→	integrating	→	linking
RR-TP37	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP38	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP39	preceding	→	adapting	→	selecting
RR-TP40	developing	→	integrating	→	selecting
RR-TP41	developing	→	differentiating	→	linking
RR-TP42	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
RR-TP43	developing	→	differentiating	→	linking
RR-TP44	preceding	→	adapting	→	linking
RR-TP45	developing	→	stabilising	→	selecting
RR-TP46	developing	→	integrating	→	selecting
RR-TP47	preceding	→	integrating	→	linking
RR-TP48	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking
RR-TP49	preceding	→	adapting	→	linking
RR-TP50	preceding	→	stabilising	→	linking

Appendix 4: SSD trajectory, responsive interplay

Turning point	[i n v i t a t i o n → e x p l o r a t i o n → a f f i r m a t i o n]		
SSD-TP1	developing	→	differentiating → linking
SSD-TP2	developing	→	integrating → selecting
SSD-TP3	preceding	→	adapting → linking
SSD-TP4	developing	→	differentiating → linking
SSD-TP5	developing	→	stabilising → selecting
SSD-TP6	preceding	→	integrating → linking
SSD-TP7	developing	→	stabilising → selecting
SSD-TP8	preceding	→	adapting → linking
SSD-TP9	developing	→	adapting → linking
SSD-TP10	developing	→	differentiating → linking
SSD-TP11	developing	→	adapting → selecting
SSD-TP12	developing	→	stabilising → selecting
SSD-TP13	preceding	→	integrating → linking
SSD-TP14	preceding	→	adapting → selecting
SSD-TP15	preceding	→	stabilising → linking
SSD-TP16	preceding	→	stabilising → selecting
SSD-TP17	preceding	→	integrating → linking
SSD-TP18	developing	→	differentiating → selecting
SSD-TP19	developing	→	stabilising → selecting
SSD-TP20	preceding	→	stabilising → linking
SSD-TP21	developing	→	integrating → selecting

Appendix 5: JMM trajectory, responsive interplay

Turning point	[i n v i t a t i o n → e x p l o r a t i o n → a f f i r m a t i o n]		
JMM-TP1	developing	→	differentiating → linking
JMM-TP2	developing	→	differentiating → linking
JMM-TP3	developing	→	adapting → linking
JMM-TP4	developing	→	adapting → selecting
JMM-TP5	developing	→	integrating → selecting
JMM-TP6	preceding	→	integrating → linking
JMM-TP7	preceding	→	adapting → linking
JMM-TP8	preceding	→	stabilising → linking
JMM-TP9	preceding	→	stabilising → linking

Appendix 6: PO trajectory, responsive interplay

Turning point	[i n v i t a t i o n → e x p l o r a t i o n → a f f i r m a t i o n]				
PO-TP1	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
PO-TP2	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
PO-TP3	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
PO-TP4	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
PO-TP5	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting
PO-TP6	preceding	→	stabilising	→	selecting