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SUPPORTING AND CONTESTING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

A DISCURSIVE STUDY ON CONTRADICTORY VISIONS
OF A CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

Over the last three decades, organizations have increasingly attempted to augment the levels of organizational flexibility by improving the opportunity for remote work. Currently, in addition to increasing spatial and temporal flexibility, organizations are transforming their traditional office settings to hot-desking office due to pressure to reduce costs and modernize their working practices and external images. Although organizational change has been acknowledged as an interactional accomplishment involving discursive activities, prior studies on spatial change have failed to address the discursive processes of such changes.

The objective of this study is to examine the dynamics of spoken interaction when supporting and contesting organizational change. More specifically, the study focuses on analyzing how people within an organization evaluate an ongoing change and how they rhetorically produce their support or resistance to the change. Drawing on empirical data from a study of a change program which was strategically central to a public service organization in Finland, the study applies the theoretical and methodological approach of discursive psychology in the analysis. The empirical material consists of audio recordings from a series of workshops running over a three-week period, from nine program group meetings and from 36 individual interviews. The dissertation involves three empirical sub-studies published in peer-reviewed journals and an integrative chapter.

The analyses focus on the discursive and rhetorical construction of organizational change, and the results are discussed in relation to previous research on spatial change and discursive organizational change. First, I identify attitudes of support and resistance as rhetorical stances taken by the members of the organization while speaking about spatial change. I show that supporting stances relate to the current societal trends and the ability of an organization to react to its environment, whereas resistant stances emphasize the abandonment of grass-roots work practices and the communality of an organization. Second, I present dilemmas and controversies for discussion about spatial change by identifying commonplaces as the shared sources of arguments. Uncommitted employees, encounters, innovation and creative work proved to act as shared sources from which supportive and resistant stances were drawn. Third, I show how groups of employees construct opposite visions and consequences of change, and support and contest their own visions of change such that they do not speak about the same change. Similarly, the visions of real work in a renewed organization are produced differently in the words of employees and responsible managers. Fourth, I demonstrate that personal relations to the issue of supporting or resisting change tend to be hidden from others through various rhetorical strategies. Finally, I show how the different groups of employees produce a polarizing

organization by contrasting current employees and future employees, change-oriented and stability-oriented employees and new and old versions of the organization.

Based on this study, I conclude that the current discussion of flexibility of working life is wrapped in the abstract talk of enhancement of innovativeness, encounters, reforms, and benefits deriving from a hot-desking office setting. Suggestions that are more concrete should be brought out concerning how actual work practices should be changed to capitalize the enhancement of innovativeness and encounters. Moreover, further discussion on how innovativeness and encounters actually relate to the ways of working in an organization is needed.

As the main contribution to understanding organizational change, I highlight attitudes as rhetorical stances when exploring organizational change, following the idea of rhetorical social psychology. Instead of treating resistance as a negative inner attitude and studying ways to overcome such attitudes, this study suggests that resistant talk is a focal part of any discussion about change. Accordingly, it should be integrated in research settings as well as in the development work of an organization.

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In my private life, until the very last year, I believe this has been a low-profile dissertation work. When I finally told my friends, parents, and extended family that I will finish my dissertation work during the next year, nobody was surprised. Thank you for trusting me more than I myself ever did.

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The publications are referred to in the text by their roman numerals.

ABBREVIATIONS

e.g. exempli gratia
etc et cetera
i.e. id est

CDA critical discourse analysis
ICT information and communication technology
OD organizational development

1 INTRODUCTION

« Organization change is as old as organizations themselves. The pharaohs of ancient Egypt probably struggled with a need to change the organizations that build their pyramids. » (Burke, 2002, p. 19)

Studying changes in organizations and working life has a long tradition within the discipline of social psychology. The Hawthorne studies in 1924 - 1933 already explored the effect of alterable working conditions on employees' productivity and morale (Roethlisberger, Dickson, & Wright, 1939). Subsequently, Kurt Lewin introduced his field theory (1951), which is still applied in the field of change management today. Along with and following the processual and chaos theories, more recent research on organizational change has emerged from the paradigm of social constructionism¹, which is also the paradigm from which this particular thesis draws. More precisely, the study is located in the field of discursive psychology and explores how people within an organization talk about, support and contest ongoing organizational change. The theoretical and methodological approach of discursive psychology is broadly employed within the field of applied social psychology, where this dissertation is also placed.

Although organizational change is a widely studied field in temporal and topical terms, the continuous need to study and understand alterable organizations has not diminished, but rather the opposite. Organizations operate in a societal environment from which current and future trends emanate to organizations (Burke, 2002). Organizations aim at anticipating, responding to and reacting to societal changes through so-called organization change, i.e., a strategic change program that aims at contributing to the achievement of new systems and processes within an organization (see, e.g., Vereecke, Pandelaere, Deschoolmeester, & Stevens, 2003). Concomitantly, although organizational theories should be seen more as a continuum than continuous shifts in paradigms (Harisalo, 2008), the understanding of organizations varies contextually. While organizations during the time of the Hawthorne studies operated in the industrial environment in the USA during the time of standardized mass production and consumption (the so-called Fordism era), the discussion about work concerned productivity and workers' morale. Work during that industrial period was highly controlled, standardized, and differentiated into clear tasks (Beck, 2000). Originally, the Hawthorne studies focused on finding a correlation between physical working

¹ Along the way, various approaches to study organizational change have also emerged within the discipline of social psychology, meaning that this illustration of prior research is highly selective focusing on the best-known and pioneering approaches.

conditions and productivity, but turned to explore psychological effects, such as employees' attitudes on productivity (Roethlisberger et al., 1939).

Lewin's theory (Lewin, 1951), on the other hand, was influenced by modern physics, which was held at the time as the leader of the sciences. Thus, his key concepts like 'force field analysis' drew from the assumption that group behavior is held in a 'state of quasi-stationary equilibrium' by a constellation of equal and opposite dynamic forces that could be measured according to their strength and direction (Lewin & Gold, 1999, p. 33). Furthermore, a change agent in Lewin's work is a rational actor who directs an organization through relatively stable phases to a predetermined change (Caldwell, 2005a).

Since the late 20th century, the phenomenon of post-Fordism (also called post-modernism) emerged. Post-Fordism is associated with cultural and societal changes, for example, with greater fragmentation and pluralism, the emergency of new identities related to greater work flexibility, and the maximization of individual choices through consumption (Hall, 1988). During that period, a transformation to the new ICT industries with more flexible and decentralized forms of work processes and organizational structures emerged. In addition, the old manufacturing-based industries decreased and new information-based industries rose with an increasing emphasis on choice and product differentiation (Hall, 1988). During the era of post-Fordism, processual approaches raised discussions about pluralism and the interaction between an organization and its environment, while research focused on the constant changes observed in organizations and their environments. In the 1990's, organizational change theories began to characterize changes in organizations as emergent, non-linear and chaotic. At the same time, other post-modern organizational theories brought to the fore discourses as a way of understanding organizational life.

As theoretical shifts have occurred in various societal eras, working life itself has changed simultaneously. In Finland, one important transformation took place when the shift from an agrarian to an industrial society slowly began in the post-war period (Oinas, 2005). Accordingly, paid employment increased. Especially during the period of 1960-1975, urbanization and paid employment rapidly increased in Finland, which meant that lifestyles changed dramatically as well. Employees' time divided into two parts: work time and leisure time, following the rhythm determined by employers. An employee should travel to and from work at exactly scheduled times (Valkonen, 1985). In the beginning of the 1990s, Finland entered into an economic depression. A decrease in production and domestic trade took place, and its impact on unemployment was felt abruptly. In the mid-1990s, the government of Finland decided to develop the country into an "information society", and the Finnish National Fund for Research and Development introduced a national strategy for the information society (Blom & Melin, 2003). Another key point is that the depression forced organizations to find new ways to operate in order to survive (Pyöriä, 2001). Until that time, Finland had emerged as one of the world's leaders in almost all uses of new information and communication

technologies (Blom & Melin, 2003; Castells & Himanen, 2002)². Compared to the rest of the Western world, industrialization in Finland took place later than in other countries but the time of industrialization was a relatively short period. It has even been argued that Finland transitioned directly to a post-industrial service society. Finland also rapidly adopted changes that emanated from the national policy for the information society, and the numbers of knowledge workers increased following the implementation of the strategy (Pyöriä, 2001). The 21st century in Finland can be characterized as the information era, where service and knowledge work play a crucial role in the nation's economy and society more broadly (Pyöriä, 2001).

While industrialization brought stable working hours and stable locations to conduct work, it has been generally suggested that these factors are losing their relevance in the post-industrial information society (see, e.g., Ojala & Pyöriä, 2015). Instead, during the era of information society³, work is considered to be dispersed spatially and temporally. In general, the spatial and temporal dispersion of work has been driven by rapid technological development, increased global competition, nonstandard employment contracts, and intra-/international collaboration. Together, these elements create circumstances for nonstop activity in terms of work, consumption, profit creation, and communication (Ojala & Pyöriä, 2015; Presser, 2005).

Contemporary working life in Finland can be characterized by flexibility, mobility, and digitalization. Although none of these is a novel trend in Finland, their reincarnation into new forms has taken place regularly. Julkunen (2008) has noticed that there is a continuous language of transforming from 'old work' to 'new work'. However, 'new work' is conceptualized in different ways approximately every ten years (Julkunen, 2008). Flexible work has been under discussion in Finland since the mid-1980, although there has been debate on who is in the fraction of the workforce that is expected to be able to cope with variable circumstance (Mamia & Melin, 2006). While the labor market in Finland has been flexible during this period, employers have also provided various types of flexibility, such as flexibility in working hours, working place and the organization of work (Melin & Mamia, 2006). In the early years of flexible organizational structures, flexibility in work location seemed to refer merely to remote work (i.e. working from home) (See, e.g., Mamia & Melin, 2006), but now, flexibility in location has referred to working in multiple locations, such as at customer's site, on public transport and in public places.

Discussion around flexibility is linked to mobility and digitalization. ICT-based mobility refers to employees' possibility to work from any place and any time supported by modern technologies (Andriessen & Vartiainen, 2006).

² Given that Finland succeeded in the areas of ICT, the depression has left its mark on Finland's labor market, e.g., in the form of long-term unemployment

³ Scholars have called this period or related time by different names, depending on the emphasis they seek. For example, the period has been variously called the post-industrial society, post-modern society, network society, and the information age.

Although corporate digitalization took place during the information age and may not be considered a novel trend any longer, it develops new forms regularly. For example, in 2016, the government of Finland launched a strategy called “a digital leap” to create a revolution in the field of education.

Overall, during the last three decades, organizations have attempted to increase the levels of organizational flexibility by improving remote working. Mobile devices and computer-supported communication have allowed temporal and spatial flexibility of work arrangements and blurred the boundaries between work time and leisure time, which makes the role of self-management more crucial (Gephart, 2002). One aspect of this move toward flexibility has been attempts to cut down costs by reducing corporate office space, which has led to the emergence of the phenomenon of ‘hot-desking’. In the hot-desking office settings, employees do not have individual, dedicated desks to work from but employees work from any desks that happen to be vacant. Furthermore, employees are expected to work from various locations such as homes or public places (Bosch-Sijtsema, Ruohomäki, & Vartiainen, 2010; B. Brown & O’Hara, 2003; Gephart, 2002; Hislop & Axtell, 2007). In addition to increasing flexibility and reducing costs, companies aim at altering and modernizing their work practices and external image through a hot-desking office setting (Hirst & Humphreys, 2013). In Finland, this trend has already been adopted by high-technology firms and business organizations, but it is also being increasingly used in the more traditional industries, universities, and government agencies.

Prior research on the topic has been limited to worker satisfaction (e.g., Hoendervanger, De Been, Van Yperen, Mobach, & Albers, 2016; Kim & de Dear, 2013), productivity (Bosch-Sijtsema et al., 2010), employee behavior (Hirst, 2011; McElroy & Morrow, 2010) and the interaction between technology and spatial organization (B. Brown & O’Hara, 2003) in hot-desking office settings⁴. Rather less attention has been paid to discursive ways to support and contest the transformation from a traditional office setting to a hot-desking office setting. This is crucial, however, as organizational change involves discursive activities and change can be seen as a social accomplishment (e.g., Grant & Marshak, 2011; Preget, 2013). So far, most prior studies on spatial change in organizations lack discursive processes of such changes. This present study explores the transformation from a traditional office to a hot-desking office setting as an interactional accomplishment through the lens of discursive and rhetorical constructions. Following the suggestion to study an organization as it happens (Boden, 1994), this thesis draws on the empirical data of a study of an ongoing spatial change that took place in a large, public sector organization in Finland. This study provides detailed and systematic analysis on the process of organizational

⁴ Office settings where employees do not have a fixed desk of office but employees work in multiple locations are also called drop-in desks or touchdown spaces in research and practice.

change by focusing on what is contested, and how support for change is negotiated in interaction during an ongoing organizational change.

This dissertation consists of three empirical sub-studies and the present integrative chapter that involves seven sections. In the introductory section, I briefly introduce the research setup and research question. In the second section, I outline prior research approaches to studying organizational change and give an overview of previous research on organizational change from the social constructionism and spatial change points of views. The third section presents the theoretical and methodological framework of this study. In the fourth section, I summarize the research case, the data and the methodology applied in this thesis. The fifth section presents the summaries of three articles, while the sixth section further discusses the findings of the articles. The conclusion section discusses the main findings and discusses their relevance to previous research, theory, and practice.

1.1 SPATIAL CHANGE AS THE EMPIRICAL SETTING OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on exploring a strategically central change program in a public service organization in Finland. A five-year change program targeted to reduce office space by 40% and significantly alter the company to meet the requirements that the company is expected to face in the future. In the very beginning of the change, the responsible managers aimed at conducting the change from the angle of spatial change. However, already in the initial phase of the change, it became evident that spatial change is related to social and virtual aspects, thus they expanded the scope of the change program. As a result, the change program included three main areas: spatial, social, and virtual change. The most visible form of spatial change was that employees were expected to give up their private rooms and start working in a non-territorial, hot-desking office setting, where employees should choose a workstation that happened to be vacant on a daily basis and remove their personal belongings at the end of the day. The social change involved the ideas of increasing innovativeness of the company and altering work practices toward flexibility. This took place, for example, by expanding the contracts of remote work and reducing the numbers of meetings. Virtual change focused on supporting mobility and remote work by providing devices and services that allowed working in multiple places both within and beyond the physical confines of the organization's offices.

While the most visible aspect of the change for the employees was the so-called spatial change, virtual change and social change raised discussion within the company as well. Although this study focuses primarily on spatial change, all three change areas are intertwined. For example, the managers of the change program emphasized that working in a hot-desking office setting

demands new virtual tools and changes in work practices. Thus, spatial alterations require changes in other change areas as well.

The data was drawn from three sources: audio recordings from a series of workshops, from program group meetings and from individual interviews. The data sets allow access to discursive processes and the outlooks informing them. In addition, the data sets comprise spoken interaction from the different levels of an organization. Spoken interaction, especially taking place in the backstage of an organization, may involve the ambiguity and divergence that have been found to emerge during organizational change, for example, by Buchanan & Dawson (2007), Grant & Marshak (2011) and Engeström & Sannino (2011) in their studies on change processes.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Organizational change is usually defined as alterations in the current organizational arrangements, such as strategy, process, leadership, or culture. However, organizational change is not solely about some alteration in the aforementioned aspects of the organization, but also involves discursive accounts of those alterations in recursive relationships (Grant & Marshak, 2011). The changing of organizational arrangements typically occurs through strategy work, meaning that an organizational strategy gives an abstract framework that is translated into actual organizational arrangements through daily interaction in organizational life. Therefore, organizational change can be conceptualized as a multi-story process (Buchanan & Dawson, 2007; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) wherein various organizational actors draw on different discourses to construct meanings for strategic decision. Rather than a fixed set of strategic decisions, strategy as a series of ideas, practices and concepts is something that must be strived for, justified, and defended on a continuous basis through daily interactions. This derives from the assumption that organizational change can be depicted from an interpretative view (Heracleous & Barrett, 2001), itself based on constructionist assumptions stating that discourses not only mirror change but the actors of an organization can employ discourses as shared resources in their efforts to influence organizational change. This means that language is not merely a tool for change, but rather, change occurs in and through language use.

Organizational change can be characterized roughly either as planned or unplanned change, and as revolutionary or evolutionary change (Burke, 2014). Planned organizational change refers to the process in which decisions to change the organization have been made whereas unplanned change means that change is taking place without intention to change the organization. Change resulting in new or modified changes in strategy, leadership, or culture is called revolutionary change, whereas evolutionary (or continuous) change occurs when the organization attempts to improve its qualities to gain higher performance. Theories of organizational change are based on assumptions of

how the change is understood. Instead of characterizing change as linear and structural, this study understands change as unpredictable, ambiguous and highly contextual, following the understanding of discursive organizational change literature (e.g., Buchanan & Dawson, 2007; Grant & Marshak, 2011).

Studies in the field of organizational discourse are divergent and derive from different traditions. Grant and Iedema (2005) categorize organizational discourses into two traditions: organizational discourse analysis and organizational discourse studies. The former tradition consists of scholars operating in the field of discourse analysis, who study organizations as an essential element of social life, whereas the latter tradition refers to work conducted in the field of organization and management. According to McKinley and McVittie (2009) the main difference between these two traditions is how the role of discourse is understood. In the field of organizational discourse analysis, discourses are explored in their own rights, whereas the other tradition treats discourses as a means to understand organizational life, such as practices.

Another way to divide the field of organizational discourse is to characterize it either as monological or dialogical entities (Grant, Keenoy, & Oswick, 1998). Monological approaches reflect a modernist epistemology and tend to construct a coherent story of the organization, typically from one actor's or the group of actors' points of view (Gephart, Boje, & Thatchenkery, 1995). A monological account aims to construct a singular coherent discourse or narrative by excluding discordant, alternative, and interacting discourses. Dialogical approaches, on the other hand, reflect a social constructionist epistemology and are able to explicitly acknowledge that any organization is comprised of a multiplicity of discourses that reflect the multi-voiced participants of organization. This potentially allows for a multitude of organizational realities, "which although relatively autonomous discourses, may overlap and permeate each other" (Grant et al., 1998 p. 7). Similarly, actors who are involved in particular discourses may experience and interpret the same discourses, such as discussion, in a different way— meaning that we cannot construct a singular account (Marshak, 1998). Still, we are able to identify dominant and secondary discourses.

The analysis of this dissertation is based on the principles of social constructionism. More precisely, the study draws from the approach of discursive psychology that provides a social psychological approach to study the ways in which the multifaceted participants speak about, support, and contest an ongoing organizational change. The study is especially interested in what is being supported and what is being contested by addressing the following research questions:

- 1) How do the members of an organization rhetorically evaluate an ongoing spatial transformation, and how do they use these evaluations to support and contest the transformation?

- 2) What are the sources of the evaluations, and how are they discussed when supporting and contesting the ongoing spatial transformation?
- 3) What kind of pragmatic consequences do the evaluations have on the organization and its members?

2 RESEARCH APPROACHES TO STUDYING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

In this section, I give a chronological overview of the study of organizational change by starting from the seminal work of Kurt Lewin. After Lewin, I present the processual approach that has emerged partially as a critique for Lewin’s work and give a brief summary of chaos and complexity theories. Finally, I arrive at the research emerging from the social constructionism tradition and go deeper into the literature concerning the role of language in effecting organizational change. These various approaches are also summarized in the Table 1. After this, I briefly summarize social psychological approaches to studying spatial working conditions and summarize the most recent research on hot-desking office settings.

Table 1 Chronological overview of studying organizational change

Research approaches for studying organizational change			
Approach	Main representative	Established in	Main emphasis
Field theory	Lewin	1940-	Change agents as expert facilitators conduct change through the three steps model of change.
Organizational development	Lewin (a founding father) Argyris, Schein, Schön	Mid 1950-	Change is a manageable process in which different stages follow each other.
Contextual approach	Pettigrew	1980-	Process, content, and context of change. The link between theory and practice. An organization is interaction with its environment.
Chaos and complexity theories	Brown, Eisenhardt, Tsoukas, Chia	1990-	An organization is in a constant process of emergence. Change is non-linear, irregular, and fuzzy.
Constructionist discourse approaches	Numerous scholars drawing from the work of Foucault or from micro-oriented discursive approaches	1990-	Discursive processes of an organization, contextual nature of knowledge, subjective meanings.

2.1 STUDYING CHANGE FROM LEWIN TO TODAY

Organizational change has been a popular topic for analysis among social psychologists since Kurt Lewin. Lewin's pioneering work in the 1950's can be considered the first proper theory on change management in general⁵. His change management model has become a well-known planned model for implementing change and is still applied today (Hussain et al., 2017). Lewin's three-step model of unfreezing, changing and refreezing behavior is based on the idea that it is easier to change an individual's behavior when the individual is a part of some social group than to change a person's behavior individually (Lewin, 1947). In his model, change starts by 'unfreezing' the existing state, by creating the motivation to change. Then, the meaning of current norms and existing attitudes toward working practices should be diminished. The second phase, 'changing' toward desirable state, takes place through developing and introducing new norms and attitudes toward work practices. Finally, 'refreezing' this new state means that the new norms and behaviors are reinforced and established. When the change has become incorporated into the culture, it is 'frozen' (Burnes, 2004a; Hussain et al., 2017; Lewin, 1951). Within these phases, group processes are emphasized and utilized. Lewin, for example, observed that participating in decision making in a group more likely results in change than in a situation invoking someone as an individual (Lewin, 1947). However, change does not occur automatically. Rather, Lewin emphasized change agents as expert facilitators of group processes to conduct planned organizational change (Caldwell, 2005a; Schein, 1998).

Lewin is connected to the tradition of organizational development (OD), and later prominent representatives of OD, such as Argyris (1998), Schein (1998) and Schön (1983) also considered the role of the change agent as focal (Caldwell, 2005a). Generally speaking, the tradition of OD introduced social psychological and behavioral approaches to change management. Although OD has developed further, the change agent as a concept and mode of practice has lost its overarching position (Caldwell, 2005a). In general, within OD, change is illustrated as a manageable process in which different stages follow each other, typically in a linear fashion (Burke, 2014; Lewin, 1951). In addition, Lewin's tradition has been called action research that is by now a well-established tradition. Lewin's approach to change is considered to represent the rationalistic discourse that means, for example, in his tradition, that human agents are seen to make conscious rational choices to change their behavior (Caldwell, 2005a, 2005b).

Naturally, approaches to study change and make changes in organizations have been connected to societal contexts and societal change. By the early 1980's, there was an increasing need to change organizations in a quick

⁵ The theoretical foundation of change management has, however, its older roots in several classic organization theories, such as Taylor's seminal work on scientific management within the disciplines of economics and engineering, and later the work of the Hawthorne school within social sciences.

manner in the Western world due to the oil crisis of the 1970's, a severe economic downturn in the West and the rise of Japan in international markets (Burnes, 2004a). Especially, the rise of Japan encouraged organization scholars to have a closer look at the cultural aspects of organization, as organization culture was seen to be a dominant driver for the success of Japanese companies (Morgan, 2006). By the same token, Lewin's work on change faced criticism and it was argued to be relevant only to small-scale change in stable conditions (Burnes, 2004b). One source of criticism was the processual approach that viewed change as being constant (Pettigrew, Ferlie, & McKee, 1992). This perspective emerged primarily from the work of Andrew Pettigrew in the 1980's. Pettigrew's (1997, 2012) work on contextual change represents a counter-approach to the planned change introduced by Lewin. His contextualist approach to study organizational change and strategy choice focused on the process, content, and context of change. Contextualism as an approach criticizes OD literature as disconnected to existing work or novel theoretical developments within organizational theory (Pettigrew, 2012) whereas contextualism is argued to link theory and practice (Caldwell, 2005a). Furthermore, the approach stated that the majority of OD-oriented research is ahistorical, acontextual and aprocessual in character, whereas the contextual approach provides a justification for pluralism and understands that an organization is in interaction with its environment (Caldwell, 2005a; A. M. Pettigrew, 2012). However, Thomas & Hardy (2011) challenge Pettigrew's work, among others, for criticizing OD-oriented research for failing to understand the messiness of change but still having a one-sided view of resistance. Meaning that resistance is primarily seen as something that has to be overcome.

In the 1990's, new theoretical developments took place. The role and impact of chaos and complexity theories started to increase. The main impact of these theories on organizational change theories is that they argue that conventional complex system models of organizations are outdated because of their conceptualization of change either as linear or cyclical (Luhmann, 1995). Organizations are not just stable or unstable structures but constant processes of emergence, as well as simultaneously ordered and disordered self-organization. Furthermore, the theories shifted focus from stability within systems to processes of change and development in understanding organizational change (Caldwell, 2005a). The focal idea of these theories is that disorder, irregularity and non-linear change are seen as natural to organizations (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997). Chaos theories have aimed at understanding the continually evolving and emergent nature of organizational change at a system level. However, they do not seem to offer adequate concepts for understanding agency and change within organizations (Caldwell, 2005a). Instead of being merely a naturalistic property of non-linear dynamic systems or network interaction, change within organizations is also the outcome of various forms of human agency and group processes (Lane, 2004). In chaos

theories, systems and solitary actors do not have intentionality (Caldwell, 2005a).

Michel Foucault's influence on postmodern organizational theory and constructionist discourse approach has been remarkable (Caldwell, 2005a). Especially since the beginning of the 1990's, scholars exploring organizational change have been applying a Foucauldian approach in their research (Välikangas & Seeck, 2011). Foucault's role has been focal in the realm of Critical Management studies (Fournier & Grey, 2000), and especially, research on organizational change. This research has been conducted through the lens of the critical discourse analysis tradition, emphasizing the power, ideology or historical aspects of discourses. Foucault began theorizing the subjective and humanistic notion of intentionality and centered agency in a completely novel way by decentering the subject in discourse (Caldwell, 2005a). According to Gergen (1999), Foucault seemed to remove human agency from a center place. However, Caldwell (2005a) argues that Foucault aimed at theorizing decentered agency through the four key concepts of his theory: discourse, power/knowledge, embodiment, and self-reflexivity. Decentered agency, thus, allows new ways to explore resistance and the dispersal agency and change in organization by focusing on those four key concepts in research.

Discourse has multiple and overlapping meanings in Foucault's work. However, discourses construct, categorize and regulate with rules stating who can say what, where and why. They are embedded in discursive practices, which refer to ways the natural world is understood and how human institutions and social relationships are organized. As Foucault puts it, discourses are 'practices, which form the objects of which they speak' (1972, p. 49). Discourse is also a form of power as it appears to organize and regulate what is possible to say and what is false and true in particular circumstances (Foucault, 2000).

Currently, research focusing on organizational change is fragmented and many approaches draw from the above mentioned traditions. Caldwell (2005a, 2005b) characterizes the tradition of Lewin through the discourse of rationalism, which involves the idea of a change agent or an action researcher as an expert who can objectively explicate the relation between knowledge and action. In current organizational life, knowledge becomes more specialized, differentiated, and distributed within organizations. Organizations are currently more networked than hierarchic and centralized and the issue of how to manage, develop and exercise of expertise becomes more problematic. Thus, scholars in the field of organizational development face new challenges. In general, scholars drawing from rationalistic tradition are involved in such research agendas as intervention, professional expertise and consultancy practices and aim at producing generalized knowledge about these issues (Caldwell, 2005a). However, Sonenshein (2010) as well as Dent & Goldberg (1999) criticize contemporary management texts for uncritically adopting Lewin's three-phase model of planned change and for applying it to construct

research set-ups in which managers' aim at breaking down employee's meaning construction (unfreezing), establishing new meanings (changing), and solidifying those new meanings (refreezing). These types of set-ups result in research narratives in which managers aim at overcoming employees' resistance – commonly seen as a negative meaning of change – while managers construct the positive meanings of change.

Contextualism focuses on the processes of emergent change in organizations (Caldwell, 2005b). It aims at increasing historical awareness of the empirical particularity of change processes through small numbers of intensively analyzed case studies (Pettigrew, 1997). This research tradition, among many others, has been further developed in many directions. Although some research has adopted the richness of Pettigrew's earlier work, research within the tradition has provided a wide-ranging case research on the context, content and process of change (Caldwell, 2005a). Some scholars have combined the process of change to a comparative analysis of organizational outcomes, which may provide a promising avenue to larger scale statistical mapping techniques and the issue of micro-macro debates (Caldwell, 2005a; Pettigrew, 1997). This indicates that some contextual scholars come close to positivistic methodologies, and there is also an increasing interest to approach constructionist discourses in the process-based observations of organizing/strategizing. However, the scholars by themselves state clearly their skepticism about the claims of postmodernism (Caldwell, 2005a).

Complexity theories, as a variety of fragmented theories, have produced various and dispersed approaches to study change. Many of these share their emphasis on decentered agency, complex systems of self-organization and the importance of practices (Caldwell, 2005a). For example, the perspective of learning organization approaches change from a team perspective and conceptualizes organizations as macro-systems with micro-processes of learning (Caldwell, 2005a). The lessons from the learning organization have been especially useful for practitioners, for example, through the famous work of Senge (1993). His "The Fifth Discipline" is one of the well-known books on learning organizations and broadly applied in consulting. Another perspective among complexity theories, namely sensemaking, approaches change through an ongoing processes of meaning called 'enactment' (e.g., narrative, symbol talks), through which people create intersubjective interpretations of the world (Weick, 1995). Although Weick comes close to a social constructionist discourse, he draws from pragmatism, symbolic interactionism and cognitive psychology, which means that he is not willing to treat sensemaking as a discourse of knowledge (Caldwell, 2005a). However, Sandberg & Tsoukas (2015) describe two roots of Weick's sensemaking: cognitivist and discursive. Although the cognitivist approach of sensemaking dominates, the discursive approach is apparent and is expected to increase (Sandberg & Tsoukas, 2015).

The constructionist discourse approach raised interest in studying organizational discourse alongside change processes in organizations (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000a; Grant & Marshak, 2011). Roughly speaking,

studies exploring the role of language in effecting organizational change can be divided into two categories: the Foucauldian approach and the more micro-oriented social constructionist approach. These studies differ especially in research material and in how they understand the concept of discourse. These two approaches are explored in more detail in the following sub-chapters.

2.2 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISTIC RESEARCH ON ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Approaches to study organizational discourses found in the literature have been categorized in numbers of ways (Phillips & Oswick, 2012). One way to classify the organizational change literature is thematic, whereupon the focus is on the topic of analysis, such as identity, culture, emotion, ethics or resistance (see, e.g., Jansson, 2014). Others have divided the literature according to the level of analysis, when the focus has ranged from localized micro-level analysis to larger macro level discourses (see, e.g., Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000b). The main division in such categorization is the division between the literature drawing from critical discourse analysis (CDA) and the literature of the language-in-interaction tradition, focusing on spoken interaction. In the following sub-chapters, I divide the literature on organizational change into macro social constructionist approaches and micro social constructionist approaches following the generally acknowledged division among social constructionism (See, e.g., Burr, 2015)⁶. A somewhat similar division has also been recognized as that between organizational discourse studies and organizational discourse analysis, respectively (McKinlay & McVittie, 2009). However, the division between micro and macro social constructionist research is rather broad-brushed, as both approaches are fuzzy at their edges.

Rhetorically oriented approaches have been applied clearly in both literature streams and in other traditions as well, such as new rhetoric (e.g., Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), speech act theory (Ben Lahouel & Montarget, 2016), Aristotelian (e.g., A. D. Brown, Ainsworth, & Grant, 2012), and various mixtures of these traditions (Kuronen, Tienari, & Vaara, 2005). Furthermore, previous discourse studies on organizational change have applied various concepts such as narrative (devices) (Buchanan & Dawson, 2007; Landau, Drori, & Terjesen, 2014; Robichaud, Giroux, & Taylor, 2004), discursive devices (Mueller & Whittle, 2011), rhetorical devices (Grant & Hardy, 2004), rhetorical strategies (Vaara, Tienari, & Laurila, 2006) and strategic resources (Hardy, Palmer, & Phillips, 2000) when exploring the use of discourse in supporting or contesting change.

⁶ This discussion is presented in more detail in the section 3.

2.2.1 MACRO SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONIST APPROACH TO STUDYING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Research drawing from the principles of macro social constructionism usually explores the role of macro linguistic and social structures in organizational life. Foremost, researchers in the field of organization and management have treated discourses as a means to understand organizational life (McKinlay & McVittie, 2009). Predominantly, mergers and acquisitions are explored as empirical contexts by scholars drawing from critical approaches (Demers, Giroux, & Chreim, 2003; Hellgren et al., 2002; Kuronen et al., 2005; Leonardi & Jackson, 2004; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Vaara & Monin, 2008; Vaara & Tienari, 2011; Vaara et al., 2006). However, some exceptions exist, such as strategic change in a non-government organization (Hardy et al., 2000) and a change program taking place in a private college (McClellan, 2011).

Instead of focusing on interaction among organizational actors, macro-oriented social constructionist research has been interested in public talk. For example, Leonardi and Jackson (2004) have explored the public stories of change leaders in written media articles. They found that managers employed the story of technological determinism and eliminated alternative stories. By doing so, they claimed that particular organizational changes are inevitable. This research aimed at understandings how change leaders justify managerial decisions to the public. Tienari, Vaara and Björkman (2003) have also used written media articles as their data when exploring corporate managers' discourses in legitimating change. Instead of creating a coherent story of change, their research has provided a more multi-voiced understanding of organizational change by identifying that the same actors can draw on even contradictory discourses at different times. Furthermore, they found that different actors with opposing goals may apply the same rationalistic or nationalistic discourse.

Written texts are a popular source of data when applying the approach of CDA. In addition to managerial stories, scholars within CDA have explored other forms of public talk regarding organizational change. By doing so, discourse studies have been interested in exploring the public legitimacy of organizational change. For example, Kuronen et al. (2005), Vaara & Monin, (2008), Vaara, Tienari, Laurila, (2006) have explored discursive strategies employed by journalist and analyzed written media texts as their data whereas Demers, Giroux and Chreim (2003) employed senior managers' written official announcements as their data when exploring how managers legitimate change officially. Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) identified the role of rhetoric in legitimating institutional organizational change from the transcripts of testimonies by witnesses of two commissions. They analyzed how the proponents and opponents of a new organizational form discursively struggled with each other by employing ontological, historical, teleological, and cosmological rhetoric. They concluded that rhetorical strategies involve both institutional vocabularies and the theorization of change. Rhetorical

strategies can be used to manipulate institutional logics, which acts to legitimate institutional change.

Research on strategy discourses has emerged from the macro social constructionist tradition. Typically, the research focuses on power-agency relationships by exploring the scope and limits of the strategic actions. In addition to written texts, research data involves interview material as well. For example, Hardy et al. (2000) used interviews as their data, when studying how individuals are able to employ a discourse as a strategic resource in their efforts to enact strategy. Using discourses in efforts to enact a change is not a straightforward method, but rather discursive actions should be embedded in their meaningful context. They state that actors use discourses in their efforts to introduce change, but their actions are not totally determined by wider discursive structures. Vaara, Kleymann and Seristö, (2004) focused on the discursive construction of strategies. More precisely, they explored the similarities in the processes of strategizing in different airlines and demonstrated the apparent flux of ideas across the airlines. Although they claim to operate within micro-level discursive practices, the discourses they identify follow Foucauldian ideas of discourses as a specific ways of speaking and constructing social reality. Discourses are seen to construct 'concepts, objects, subjects and identities by/with which specific social actors have to live' (Vaara et al., 2004, p. 4). This refers to the idea that discourses are a form of power that regulates who can say what, where they can say it, and why (See, Foucault, 2000).

Some scholars have utilized the premises of New rhetoric while exploring strategizing. Erkama and Vaara (2010) have found that strategies that argue for restructuring from the global and future orientation, from a self-fulfilling orientation and from cosmological orientation that emphasizes the necessity of change. They also identified strategies that are employed against the restructuring and concluded that such strategies draw from emotional and moralistic arguments.

The majority of change research emerging from macro-social constructionism has identified macro-level discourses to legitimate or resist some form of organizational change in public talk or in interviews. However, a separate stream of research has focused on talk within an organization. Such research has explored the production and management of change through the lens of how conversations within organizations are the medium and product of reality construction (e.g., Ford, 1999). Furthermore, the discussion has focused on employees' resistance and on how managers can overcome it. The emphasis has been on explaining how managers can change their communication in order to create and complete a successful change (Ford & Ford, 1995). Yet, in more recent literature, for example, McClellan (2011) has also focused on resistant discourses and argued that changes sometimes fail because resistant discourses are suppressed.

In sum, macro social constructionism has been interested in exploring the public face of organizations, such as public stories in written media. The main

interest has lain in understanding the role of macro linguistic and social structures that frame organizational change. Although research within macro social constructionism has produced interesting findings in terms of public talk of organizational change and organizational talk in terms of change and resistance, it neglects the dynamic process of interaction and the negotiation of meanings (Boden, 1994; Taylor & Van Every, 1999). Furthermore, rather than the detailed analysis of particular texts or episodes of interaction provided by micro-level approaches (Phillips & Oswick, 2012), the macro constructionism approach tends to produce the more abstract and semantic aspects of discourses.

2.2.2 MICRO SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISTIC APPROACH TO STUDYING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Micro social constructionist research has been focused on microstructures of language use and everyday discourses between people in interaction (Phillips & Oswick, 2012). The research approaches have involved discursive psychology, rhetorical approaches, and conversation analysis. The main emphasis has been on real-time interaction, such as consultative processes (e.g., Kykyri, Puutio, & Wahlström, 2010; Whittle, Suhomlinova, & Mueller, 2010), or a popular variant of “situated interaction” suggested by Cooren (2007) and Samra-Fredericks (2003) when exploring micro-strategizing in the meetings of senior managers. Empirical cases within the micro-oriented tradition are typified by a quality improvement initiative in a public–private partnership (Mueller & Whittle, 2011; Whittle & Mueller, 2011; Whittle et al., 2010), a workplace culture change (Holmes, Schnurr, & Marra, 2007; Thomas, Sargent, & Hardy, 2011), an organization development intervention (Marshak & Heracleous, 2005), the introduction of the agenda of New Public Management (Mueller, Sillince, Harvey, & Howorth, 2004), the establishment of a new organizational form (Kykyri et al., 2010), a strategic change program (Anderson, 2005) and the introduction of a new computer system (Shepherd, 2006; Symon, 2000, 2000, 2008).

Typically these studies focus on the talk of top or middle managers (e.g., Holmes et al., 2007; Marshak & Heracleous, 2005; Mueller et al., 2004; Thomas et al., 2011) or on the talk during the consultation process (Kykyri et al., 2010; Mueller & Whittle, 2011; Whittle & Mueller, 2011). For example, Mueller et al. (2004) studied board-level interaction and studied how the protagonist of change argued for change through rhetorical strategies. In contrast to the literature that analyses professional resistance to managerial initiatives, they highlight professionals’ strategies, or tactics, to justify a broader picture. Instead of merely describing a situation of conflict, they analyzed how language was employed to engage with others, while at the same time pursuing one’s own agenda. Finally, they identified justifying rhetorical strategies that all concerned widening the arguments used.

Rather less attention has been paid to non-managerial voices in organizations, although a few exceptions exist (Anderson, 2005; Whittle et al., 2010). For example, Anderson (2005) studied how a project team negotiated past and future meanings during the process of organizational change. He examines how language practices allow organizational members to work out new discourses within the context of preferred and historically rooted discourses in the organization, and thereby achieve organizational change. A stream of literature focuses on the ways managers or change agents should communicate change to get employees or stakeholders to accept and commit to the change. They end up emphasizing the importance of creating a shared interest in order to justify change. Mueller and Whittle (2011) focused on a translation process, referring to a process during which an idea is constructed and later becomes taken for granted. They use the term discursive device when referring to micro-linguistic tools that people employ in interaction to construct a version of the world and their relationship to it. They draw from the field of discursive psychology in their analysis of what people do with discourses.

Whittle et al. (2010) studied a training session in which change agents aimed at translating the goals of the change to convince the recipients that they should align with the change. They analyzed various rhetorical tactics employed by the change agents to manage resistance and to funnel interests. They argue that the same change can be received in various ways, depending on the change agents' ways of funneling the interests of the recipients.

Others have paid attention to how the members of an organization construct counter-arguments toward technological change (e.g., Shepherd, 2006; Symon, 2000, 2005). These studies understand discourses as rhetorically organized, performing particular functions and aiming at introducing a rhetorical approach to study the introduction of technology. Symon (2000, 2005) explores interview talk in order to uncover resistant argumentation toward renewals. She treats these as counter-arguments to the "official rationale" for the renewal she interpreted from documents and interviews with key stakeholders. In her work (Symon, 2000), she examined via interviews how organizational members constructed a particular view of reality to justify their opposition to a new computer system introduced in a public sector organization. The focal aim of her work was to augment approaches applied in work and organizational psychology by introducing rhetorical analysis. She concluded that the everyday rhetoric of organizational talk demonstrates how work is accomplished in an organization through language.

Symon (2005) later studied resistance as the production of counter-arguments in the context of the introduction of a technological change and located it as a disputation of a particular version of reality, whether generated by managers or employees. She focused on studying how resistance and identity are mutually constructed through talk and identified a number of rhetorical strategies employed to pursue arguments and counter-arguments.

These included, for example, producing “resistant users”, producing and negotiating various boundaries (such as we/others), and drawing on local and broader cultural discourse.

Taken together, prior studies have demonstrated how management gurus, managers, or consultants construct a particular vision of change and employ it to convince others. However, little attention is paid to dialogical aspects when talking about change, although some exceptions exist (e.g., Symon, 2005; Whittle et al., 2010). Similar to Symon (2000, 2000), the research case in this study concerns the construction of arguments and counter arguments to achieve certain goals. In addition to interview material, I focus on real-time talk in meetings and workshops to capture real-time negotiation of change in the context of spatial change.

In conclusion, micro constructionist research has been interested in language used in an organizational context. The focus has been on everyday language between people in interaction and on how everyday language is constructed and used as a shared resource between the members of an organization in individuals’ efforts to effect organizational change. Usually, this has taken place by exploring how managers or change agents construct change and disseminate it to other members of an organization. Micro constructionist research is able to demonstrate how work is conducted through language in organizations and how the members of organizations discuss, support and contest change.

I have here divided the literature following micro and macro social constructionism, yet the division in practice is rather broad-brush. Although both approaches have their own emphasis, these emphases may intermingle in research papers (Nikander, 1997). For example, Vaara et al., (2006) focus on subtle meaning-making processes at the micro-level and still draw their theorization from critical discourse analysis.

Next, I briefly summarize social psychological approaches to studying spatial working conditions, beginning with the early Hawthorne studies, and summarize the most recent research on hot-desking office settings.

2.3 RESEARCH APPROACHES TO STUDYING SPATIAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Within organizational change research, a stream of research can be recognized to relate specifically to the reorganization of spatial working conditions. During the Hawthorne studies, spatial arrangements were changed to explore the effects of spatial changes on employee productivity and morale, whereas the most recent study examines the development trend of organizations, presenting that the hot-desking office setting better supports new working practices in organizations. More specifically, a stream of research on the hot-desking office continues the primary goal of the Hawthorne studies by exploring the effects of the physical working space on employee behavior (e.g.,

McElroy & Morrow, 2010). The prime goal of this research stream has dominantly been to confirm or contradict the development trend of organizations that presents the hot-desking office setting better supporting new working practices. Some studies draw from Lewin's three-step model and suggest that the transformation to the hot-desking office can be used as unfreezing existing cultural practices in organizations or as freezing new cultural patterns of behavior (Bull & Brown, 2012; McElroy & Morrow, 2010). Discursively informed research on spatial change has approached spatial change through the lens of sense-making and produced an understanding of how the employees of an organization interpret spatial change.

2.3.1 HAWTHORNE STUDIES

Studying spatial change within the field of social psychology can be dated back to the 1920's, namely to the Hawthorne studies conducted in 1924 - 1933. The Hawthorne studies refer to the set of experiments through which employees' reactions to working conditions which influence on productivity and morale, were examined (Roethlisberger et al., 1939). The Western Electric Company sponsored a series of experiments for exploring employee productivity and morale at its large factory complex, called Hawthorne Works, in Chicago. The researchers' aim was to study the link between illumination and productivity, more specifically, the effects of lighting change on productivity. In addition to a test group, there was also a control group. The researchers tried different versions of increasing and decreasing the lighting. What surprised them was that productivity continued to increase without a correlation to the level of lighting. Throughout the experiments, production either increased or did not change significantly both in the test group and control group. The researchers concluded that if the illumination was a factor with respect to employee output, it was lost among many others. They hypothesized that employees' attitude was a significant factor and moved forward to the next series of studies (Roethlisberger et al., 1939).

The next experiment was conducted with a small group of six women. The variables explored were shorter working periods, incentive pay, personal health, and supervision. Women working in a special, separate area were observed by a researcher. They were consulted by the researcher before the introduction on any change factor. The informants knew that the researcher was not a formal part of management. The results showed that productivity steadily increased. The researchers concluded that there is no cause and effect relationship between working conditions and productivity (Roethlisberger et al., 1939).

The informants of experiments themselves explained that the following factors improved their productivity: more freedom on the job, no boss, setting their own work pace, smaller group than usually, and the way they were treated. The researchers concluded that factors other than physical working conditions contributed to positive worker attitudes, which were shown to be

the important factor during the series of experiments. Following this, a third set of studies were conducted. This set of studies consisted of 21,000 employee interviews. The interviews can be characterized as counseling sessions in which the researchers learned about employees' attitudes and how to teach supervisors about handling employee complaints as a sign of some underlying problem that existed on the job, at home or in the person's past (Roethlisberger et al., 1939).

The last set of experiments was conducted to understand social relations on the job more extensively. This set was conducted with a group of 14 men, whose duty was to wire and solder banks of equipment for central connecting services. Similar to the prior set of group experiments, the group was separated for the study and observers collected the data. Based on the findings, the researchers emphasized the importance of group norms and standards and the informal organization (Roethlisberger et al., 1939). For example, the level of individual performance was significantly influenced by a group norm in terms of rate of productivity (Burke, 2002). One of the researchers concluded that all these studies demonstrated clearly that employees responded to what was happening to them based on the significance these events had for them. Furthermore, the meaning of a change is likely to be at least as important as the change itself (Roethlisberger, 1980).

Later, the phenomenon in which a subject changes one's behavior during the course of the experiment because he or she is aware of his or her participation in the experiment is called the Hawthorne effect. Nonetheless, many scholars have re-estimated the data and results of Hawthorne studies. While some scholars, for example Jones (1992), have argued that there is no evidence of the Hawthorne effect, some scholars have redefined 'Hawthorne effect', and for example, Brannigan and Zwerman (2001) crystallize it as potential change in industrial relationships which takes place by understanding the nature of industrial conflicts.

Although the preliminary aim of the Hawthorne studies was to explore physical working conditions, after the first set of experiments the scope of the research turned more to the psychological effects. Nowadays, the results of the study are considered controversial, even to an extent that the experiments are viewed as simply an experiment of the power of a good story (Levitt & List, 2011). However, Cairns (2003) argues that the Hawthorne studies led organizational scholars to accept the dominance of social factors over physical for decades. Furthermore, although the researchers concluded clearly that physical settings do not play any role in employees' productivity, the results cannot be applied as such to today's organizations when designing work places.

2.3.2 PRIOR RESEARCH ON THE OPEN-PLAN OFFICE SETTING

The Hawthorne studies, although controversial, questioned the impact of physical working conditions and emphasized social aspects of work and the

importance of the informal organization. Later, plenty of social psychological research has focused on exploring social interaction in spatial settings. Although the present study is focused on exploring the change process, during which the transformation from a traditional office to hot-desking environment has taken place, I only briefly summarize the social psychological interest in studying spatial work settings.

Classic social psychological interest lies in social interaction. Hence, social psychological understanding has contributed to describing different aspects of the influences of the constructed, physical environment on human behavior (Westlander, 2003). The physical environment can, for example, bring people together or separate them, create distance between employees, serve conditions for personal contact and enable, or disable the personal control over his or her working conditions. However, it has been clearly stated that physical conditions do not necessarily produce targeted outcomes and they should not be treated as a sufficient condition for desirable social relationships (Westlander, 2003).

In the 1960's, open-plan offices were established to promote equality and to question privilege by setting all personnel to sit together within the same landscape. Furthermore, the so-called "combi" office combining the cellular with the open plan office was designed to further the advantages of each style and hinder their disadvantages. In such circumstances, social psychological knowledge has contributed to describing a well-functioning work situation from a social interaction point of view (Westlander, 2003). For example, Söderberg (1993) has illustrated the construction of a new environment through the metaphor of a village where both community and seclusion is spatially supported.

Organizational (social) psychology⁷ has approached the question of spatial work environments through surveys and questionnaires and explored, for example, privacy and job satisfaction among employees when moving from a conventional office to an open-plan office (Sundstrom, Herbert, & Brown, 1982). Furthermore, social psychological interest toward spatial changes has been conveyed through the multidisciplinary field of environmental psychology that has focused on exploring how people are affected by environments of work. As the focus of this present study is on how spatial change is talked about, supported, and contested during the transformation process, these studies remain beyond the scope of the dissertation. However, a brief summary of those studies concludes that the research has produced controversial findings. While researchers have identified noise and lack of privacy as the focal sources of dissatisfaction in open-plan office layouts (see, e.g., Kim & de Dear, 2013), others have demonstrated employees' satisfaction

⁷Also research on knowledge workers, virtual workers and mobile workers has explored mobility settings and focused on such aspects as productivity and effectiveness in the field of organizational psychology (see, e.g., Andriessen & Vartiainen, 2006; Bosch-Sijtsema, Ruohomäki, & Vartiainen, 2010).

with specific workplace features, such as lighting and acoustic environment (e.g., see review, Ajala, 2012).

The current form of open plan office is the so-called multi-space office, or the hot-desking office setting that is designed to support various tasks. Usually, multi-space offices involve private, social and semi-social zones to work, meaning that it provides spaces for private and group work and also for open, ad hoc interaction. Although research on hot-desking and multi-space offices has proliferated in recent years in multidisciplinary fields, it is still scarce⁸. However, the multi-space office has also produced research on the relationship between work satisfaction and the frequency of switching between different non-assigned work stations (e.g., Hoendervanger et al., 2016) and on quantifying the pros and cons of the open-plan layout (e.g., Kim & de Dear, 2013). Furthermore, research has focused on employee behavior in such settings (e.g., McElroy & Morrow, 2010; Qu, Zhang, Izato, Munemoto, & Matsushita, 2010). Qu et al. (2010) have found that employees tend to select the same work station every day, whereas McElroy & Morrow (2010) concluded that office redesign is an effective strategy for implementing organizational change, as those employees that moved to new office spaces reported to have favorable perceptions of culture and work-related attitudes. These studies result in conclusions of whether the industry-accepted development trend, such as ‘open-plan office supports better communication or working practices’, is right or wrong. Thus, this research tradition produces a monological story of alterable organizations rather than allows for a multitude of organizational realities, which is the focus of the present study.

While the above-mentioned studies have predominantly produced normative knowledge of shortcomings and advantages of a hot-desking office, others have approached alterations in spatial settings as a major organizational transformation from working in a traditional office mode to nomadic work. Bean & Eisenberg (2006) studied employee sense-making during the process where an organization aimed at increasing the mobility of employees out of and within the company facility; a paperless operation; and enabling knowledge work through a flexible, project-based organization. They observed and interviewed employees’ experiences during the implementation of the change. The researchers concluded that change challenged the employees’ meanings of work and sensemaking took place through discussions of identity, culture, and structure. In terms of identity, sensemaking took place by identity disconfirmation. All the employees, excluding one, held the previous identity labels. For example, managers faced distress when such spatial aspects that traditionally symbolized the status of leader were absent from the new office premises. Furthermore, employees held the same meaning of creative work (creativity needs space to think which was not available in the

⁸ Specifically, research on hot-desking is scarce, although there is plenty of research regarding mobile workers and multi-locational work, which are excluded from this dissertation.

new premises) and of being a professional (a professional needs a bigger table than available) during and after the transformation.

Bean & Hamilton (2006) studied the same organization for the responses of nomadic employees to downsizing, when corporate leaders framed the flexible work mode, nomadic work, as desirable for the firm and its employees during a transition. The labels the leaders gave to new work related to innovation, flexibility, freedom, nomadic work, teams, self-reliance, and learning. They found that some employees accepted the given frames whereas others interpreted the frames as detrimental to their job security and reverted to a traditional discourse that highlighted the need for geosocial anchors in the work environment. In addition, those same employees followed the given new work practices in terms of project-based working, whereas others did not, respectively. However, some of the latter group of employees partially affirmed the prevailing discourse but revised their meanings of what that frame meant in their day-to-day work activities.

Similarly, Airo et al., (2012) approached a transition to open plan offices through the lens of sensemaking. They explored how team leaders and employees make sense of the spatial change during the transition. They listed sentences on how their 21 interviewees opposed and supported the spatial change. The supportive arguments seemed to rely on the physical appearance of new offices or on the work of professionals who have planned new spaces. Opposing arguments involved shared opinions of the change and the use of sarcasm. They concluded that employees tend to be ambiguous with their messages when interviewed during a workplace change process.

Instead of describing a metaphor of nomadic work when exploring the experiences of mobility at work, Hirst (2011) uses a metaphor of vagrancy to emphasize the loss of ownership of space. She criticizes the pervasive use of the metaphor of nomadic work, as it romanticizes mobility and working in non-territorial workspaces and produces mobility as the outcome of freedom and choice. Her research described the removal of taken-for-granted patterns of everyday ownership and use of the workspace when transferring to “nomadic work”.

Similar to Bean & Eisenberg (2006), Bean & Hamilton (2006) and Hirst (2011), Kinnunen, Lempiäinen & Peteri (2017) acknowledge the process of spatial change as a major transformation in terms of working philosophy. Kinnunen et al. (2017) explored how a traditional office and a hot-desking office shape employees and their work. They concluded that although a hot-desking office is presented as being unhierarchical and a place where employees are able to choose where they want to work, a hot-desking office as being one large coffee room, in fact, lacks informal workplace areas, where employees are used to presenting their resistance or giving alternative interpretations. Furthermore, a new office area are fitted up as “chill out” areas, including bean bag chairs and playstation games which are typically seen to belong to the free time of young men. Thus, the elements belonging to

the free time of young men seem to present innovativeness in current working places.

To summarize, prior research on a hot-desking, per se, tends to produce normative stances for or against such office settings by highlighting the negative outcomes they produce (e.g., Kim & de Dear, 2013) or identifying its benefits compared to a traditional office environment (e.g., McElroy & Morrow, 2010). There is a need for research that, instead of taking stances for or against a hot-desking office setting, elaborates those stances taken by the members of an organization who are experiencing an ongoing spatial change. Furthermore, instead of ending up concluding that employees tend to be ambiguous with their messages in terms of new spatial orders (Airo et al., 2012), the aim of this study is to elaborate on the ambiguous accounts in their rhetorical context. As Billig (1996) emphasizes, the meaning of a particular argument can be understood only if we know what is being argued against. In the following section, I present the theoretical foundations of this study, and elaborate in detail on the rhetorical aspects of taking stances, which is employed in the analysis of the research data in this dissertation.

3 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

In this section, I discuss social constructionism and especially micro social constructionism as an epistemological paradigm and a starting point for empirical research to this study. More specifically, this study is placed within the tradition of discursive psychology involving the approaches of rhetorical social psychology and discourse analysis that provide theoretical and methodological framework for this study. The study is also inspired by the tradition of institutional interaction that is an approach within micro social constructionism. Institutional interaction is informed by ethnography, discursive psychology, and conversation analysis. Figure 1 aims at capturing the relationship between these theoretical foundations.



Figure 1 Theoretical sources of the dissertation

3.1 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

The classic work of Berger and Luckmann (1967) was one the most powerful works that gave rise to discussions on social construction of everyday life (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). Later, social constructionism has become such a popular approach that even some critics have argued that there is not anything what we cannot call social constructionism (Hacking, 1999). It is generally acknowledged that social constructionism is not a unitary paradigm (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008), but involves different constructionist forms such as macro and micro social constructionism. Still, it can be characterized as an approach to theory and research which is originated as a counterforce for mainstream psychology and social psychology (Burr, 2015). Accordingly, social constructionism opposes many principles which are central to mainstream psychology and social psychology. It argues against objective fact, and instead states that all knowledge is constructed by people. In addition to challenging realism as a form of knowledge, it opposes the essentialist mode of the person referring to the idea that there is some 'pre-given' content to the person. Social constructionism especially opposes the ideas of cognitive and social

psychology that presents thoughts, memories, beliefs and attitudes as psychological structures which become visible in our actions and which partially show who we are. In this regard, social constructionism states that there is no 'essence' inside people that makes them what they are. Furthermore, it emphasizes that our understanding of the world comes from other people and it places the everyday interaction between people in the production of knowledge at center stage (Burr, 2015).

Given that social constructionism is not a consistent and precise paradigm, it can be treated as an umbrella for many approaches that share one or more of the following assumptions: First, the tradition of social constructionism suggests that researchers should take a critical stance toward taken-for-granted knowledge instead of treating our knowledge as based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world. Second, among the tradition of social constructionism, it is understood that all ways of understanding are bounded to their historical and cultural context. Instead of treating knowledge as derived from the nature of the world as it really is, knowledge is understood to be sustained by social processes. Furthermore, knowledge of the social world retains some patterns of social action and excludes others (Burr, 2015).

According to Burr (2015), there are two major forms of social constructionism theory and research – micro and macro social constructionism – and there are important differences between them. The former refers to the understanding of the micro-structures of language used in interaction, whereas the latter aims at understanding the role of more macro linguistic and social structures in framing social and psychological life. This divide also reflects the difference between discursive psychology and Foucauldian discourse analysis, respectively (Burr, 2015). However, some scholars have aimed at bringing these approaches together in synthesis. For example, Samra-Freredics (2003) aims for a linkage of everyday lived experiences to more stable strategy work in her research.

This study draws from the micro social constructionist tradition, which I briefly introduce next and present the most important differences between micro and macro social constructionism. Micro social constructionism focuses on everyday discourses between people in interaction. It takes a relativist stance, which criticizes a critical realism stance that states that an external world exists independently of our representations of it. As for the relativist stance, it argues that even if an external world exists, we cannot access it. This differs from macro social constructionism, which draws from a critical realist stance that manifests itself as a structural reality to the world, usually as a form of power relations. Although scholars operating within the micro social constructionism tradition have commonly been criticized for ignoring the existence of the material world (e.g., Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011), taking a relativist stance does not mean that material world is denied. Instead, it opposes the possibility that we can report objectively on the material world and questions the notion that we only reflect the material world in our talk and other symbolic systems.

While macro social constructionism defines the concept of ‘discourse’ in a way that channels what we think, say and can do (or what can be done to us), micro social constructionism, especially discursive psychology, examines discourses through the lens of how they act as shared resources for speakers or writers in their efforts to achieve their ends (Burr, 2015). This distinction is usually visible in the data employed by researchers who study communication practices. While macro-social constructionists study the text of public discourses, micro-social constructionists tend to choose real-time interaction for their data (Burr, 2003).

Grounding in the micro social constructionism tradition, this study is interested in language used in interaction and uses spoken interaction as a research material. When exploring language use, language is not treated as representation of inner psychological states of people, but rather an interactional accomplishment. Furthermore, although multiple versions of the social world are available for speakers through interactional and constructive work, this study does not make claims as to which versions of the social worlds are more real or true than others. Still, this study may claim which discourses have become dominant when discussing change. The following sub-chapters illustrate the approaches of this study more specifically.

3.2 DISCURSIVE PSYCHOLOGY

This study draws from the tradition of discursive psychology, especially from its two approaches: rhetorical social psychology, and the discourse analysis introduced by Potter and Wetherell in their book “Discourse and Social Psychology” (1987). This tradition has also been characterized in many writings as The Loughborough school (e.g., Nikander, 1995; Parker, 2012). Discursive psychology, as a part of the critical psychology movement, has proposed an alternative approach to theorize and study the phenomena of mainstream social psychology. It has emerged from the critique towards mainstream social psychology by emphasizing the use of language as a methodological and theoretical approach to study human life, and by shifting attention from the quantitative methodologies to qualitative methodologies (Billig, 2009). However, discursive psychology is not a unitary movement – rather, it involves various approaches to study language (Burr, 2015) or it involves various ‘flavors’ as characterized by Billig (2009).

Drawing from the underpinnings of social constructionism, it shares the anti-essentialist view of the person. It especially opposes the idea of language as a representation of internal states, or cognitions, which is a common understanding among mainstream cognitive and social psychologists. Instead, it is interested in the performative functions of language by exploring the ways in which people use language in building specific accounts of events in everyday and more institutional situations (Burr, 2015; Wiggins & Potter, 2007). Although some discursive psychologists have applied the concept of

discourse in a Foucauldian sense (referring to a system of discursive practices within a specific socio-historical context), usually discursive psychologists tend to use the concept of discourse as an instance of situated use of language (Billig, 2009; Burr, 2015).

Discursive psychology originates from such previous traditions as speech act theory, ethnomethodology and semiology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Especially Austin's seminal work (1962) on speech act theory has had a central role in the development of discursive psychology. Speech act theory emphasized the meanings of sentences as practical activities: instead of describing things, sentences have functional meaning because they can do something – for example declare, justify, or name things. This comes close to the interests of the tradition of ethnomethodology, which refers to the study of the methods that ordinary people use to produce and make sense of their everyday life. In the tradition of ethnomethodology, the interest lies in studying what people do with their language and what kind of consequences it has in interaction (Burr, 2015). Semiologists have moved away from the simple model of language in which isolated words and objects result in meaning. They have shown that the words which are absent in descriptions are as important as those used for descriptions. However, semiotics emphasizes the structure over specific uses of languages, which tend to result in static idealistic analyses (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

The basic principles of discursive psychology can also be argued to have their roots in Wittgenstein's later writing on language (Billig, 2009). Especially, two ideas of Wittgenstein are important here: language as a social phenomenon and the pragmatic aspect of language. According to Billig (2009), discursive psychology draws from Wittgenstein's idea that language is not private but it is inherently social and does not communicate internal psychological states. Furthermore, to understand the meaning of language, we should explore what people are actually doing with language when they speak to each other. However, the emphasis of empirical analysis differentiates discursive psychology from the work of Wittgenstein, as Wittgenstein did not conduct empirical analysis of talk (although he stressed the use of language as a research object), and this is a central part of discursive psychology. Similarly, Austin (1962), recognized as a central background figure for discursive psychology, shared the importance of the use of language as a research object but lacked the empirical analysis of talk in his work.

To summarize, the background theories for discursive psychology emphasize the social nature of language and the pragmatic aspect of language use. As this study aims to offer a detailed understanding of change talk, discursive psychology was chosen for the methodological and theoretical framework of this study. As mentioned, discursive psychology is not a stationary entity of some principles and assumptions, but rather it can be characterized as a common ground for studies bringing social interaction and language into focus (Burr, 2015). Being a broad and alterable field, it involves various approaches to studying languages. Such approaches include, for

example: rhetorical social psychology, which emphasizes the argumentative nature of language (e.g., Billig, 1989, 1996); and discourse analysis, which is interested in those subtle ways which people employ language to construct and create social interaction and social worlds (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). In this study, I analyze how an organizational change is supported and contested during an ongoing change. Both these approaches enable this kind of analysis because they consider language as social and pragmatic. Furthermore, they treat cognitions like attitudes and beliefs as something people do instead of as something people have. In this study, rhetorical social psychology provides key concepts, such as attitude and commonplace, to examine the process of support and resistance. Meanwhile, discourse analysis offers concepts such as discursive strategies to explore how support and resistance toward change are constructed. Although these two approaches emerged from an overlap of discursive psychology, they each have their unique profiles that are explored below.

3.2.1 RHETORICAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Rhetorical social psychology is an approach to study argumentative dimensions of how people use language in a particular discursive context. The key figure in this field has been Michael Billig, who draws from discursive psychology and the ancient tradition of rhetoric and pays attention to the argumentative dimensions of social life. Rhetorical social psychology highlights rhetoric as argumentation instead of merely reducing it to a social influence and persuasion technique. Also in this study, rhetoric is seen as argumentation in which arguments and counter-arguments play a focal role. This follows Billig's (1996) idea of considering arguments and counter-arguments as the key part of the social nature of human thinking. Rhetoric is not only found in circumstances of explicit argument, but also everyday talk produces particular versions of social reality. According to Billig (1996), rhetoric is dialogical, meaning that arguments are developed toward potential counter-arguments. A particular argument is understood only if we know what is being argued against.

As this study is interested in how the members of an organization speak about, support and contest change, the study adopts analytical concepts from rhetorical social psychology and discourse analysis. The analysis of rhetorical stances forms the basis of the analysis of this study, although the focus of all sub-studies has not been specifically on attitudes as rhetorical stances. Instead, they have applied other concepts from the field of discursive psychology, such as evaluation and rhetorical strategies when exploring the support and resistance of change. Attitudes as rhetorical stances have been in the focus of analysis in the article III, whereas the article I, I have employed the concept of rhetorical evaluation when referring to a speaker's stance toward a topic. In the article II, I have adopted analytical concepts from the

discourse analysis. However, as integrative concepts for all the sub-studies, the concepts of attitudes and commonplaces are introduced next.

3.2.1.1 Attitudes as rhetorical stances in a matter of controversy

Similar to discursive psychology, which opposes the idea of language as a representation of internal states or cognitions, Billig (1996) explores argumentative dimensions in such mainstream social psychology phenomena as attitudes, roles, and categorization, and states that argumentative dimensions have been ignored by mainstream social psychologists. Concerning this thesis, the concept of attitude is of interest as it enables an integrative examination of how change is contested and supported.

Regarding research on organizational change, scholars have largely applied the concept of attitude while exploring resistance to change. Lewin introduced resistance as a system concept (see Dent & Goldberg, 1999). In his work, resistance was defined as a force that affected managers and employees equally and could be anywhere in the system. Later, scholars (e.g., Lines, 2005; Piderit, 2000) have recognized that resistance may take place along multidimensional levels of attitudes. Piderit (2000), proposed that employee responses occur at the emotional, cognitive and intentional level, whereas Lines (2005) named them cognitive, emotional and behavioral reactions. Piderit (2000) defines resistance to change as a representation by the set of negative responses along the three dimensions and support to change means that an individual has positive reactions along all three dimensions. Lines (2005) follows a social psychological definition provided by Petty and Wegner (1998) and defines attitude as a person's overall evaluation of change. Although the majority of change research has applied the concept of attitude as a representation of inner psychological attitude, Symon's (2005) analysis differs by adopting Billig's rhetorical approach to study the arguments employed by organizational members for and against various aspects of a new technological system. This is also key to the analysis conducted in my study, as attitudes as rhetorical stances allows for observing how arguments for and against change are constructed and employed to achieve particular versions of change when supporting and contesting it. Furthermore, exploring attitudes as rhetorical stances offers a rich understanding of detailed and delicate discussion about change.

Billig (1996) argues that attitudes should not be seen as the supposed inner psychology of the attitude-holder. Instead, attitudes have argumentative dimensions and they refer to rhetorical stances in a matter of controversy. Although this is contrary to the understanding of mainstream social psychology, social psychologists seem to agree that attitudes refer to evaluations being for or against something or somebody, although they disagree on the psychological processes behind our attitudes (Billig, 1996). Instead of arguing that our attitudes mirror our emotions or that our attitudes are habits of thinking, rhetorical social psychology suggests that our attitudes

are situated within a wider argumentative context. Billig's ideas are crucial as I look into how the members of an organization produce attitudes about controversial issues in a specific social context. Moreover, Billig (1996) argues that attitudes represent an evaluation of a controversial issue. Thus, the social context of attitudes represents the context of controversy. This controversial aspect of attitudes suggests that not all beliefs are attitudes. Attitudes are more than responses for or against a stimulus. Instead, they present stances on matters of public debate.

Billig (1996) suggests that the meaning of discourse employed in an argumentative context can be explored in relation to the contests of criticism and justification that form an integral part of the attitude in a specific argumentative context. Without this context, there would not be such things as attitudes (Billig, 1996). To understand the meaning of discourse, one has therefore to explore counter-positions – the positions which are being criticized or justified. Thus, it is not enough to explore merely the words within the discourse, as the words do not have a fixed meaning and they may have different meanings in different contexts. For the purpose of this study, these among Billig's ideas enable an exploration of how criticism against and support for change are discussed during change. They also allow observing variability in stances, as discussed next, instead of providing monological and singular accounts of change.

Given that key rhetorical activities are justification and criticism, the meaning of stance arises from what is being supported and from what is being contested. However, an individual may speak about the same topic in various ways, express various stances with regard to a topic in different rhetorical contexts and pay attention to the other participants in the conversation. The same person may be doing different things with their talk when one speaks on different occasions and in different interactional contexts (Billig, 1996). It is possible to argue both sides of a case. Thus, the approach highlights both variability and ambiguity in the language used, but also the matter that an individual takes a stance either in order to support or contest a particular view. These ideas have been applied and developed further, for example, Vesala and Rantanen (2007) unite Billig's (1991, 1996) ideas and qualitative methodology for exploring evaluative stance-taking in text and talk to understand attitudes from a rhetorical, communicative perspective. Similarly, Pyysiäinen (2010) and Peltola & Vesala (2013) have explored the communicative process of expressing a positive or negative stance toward a topic by group members. Peltola & Vesala (2013) demonstrate the flexibility of attitudes by analyzing how a person can produce more than one view to the same object of evaluation, and how a person is able to adjust one's stand to be accordant with how the situation evolves. Pyysiäinen (2010) shows the co-construction of attitudes in a group and how this is related to interactional dynamics. Interactional dynamics allows the gradual construction of a strong, collective attitude but also flexibility in stances.

3.2.1.2 Commonplaces as sources of arguments

In addition to attitudes as rhetorical stances, commonplaces as sources of arguments act as an integrative concept for this study. The concept of commonplace is explicitly applied in the analysis of article III. Still, the other two articles discuss relevant matters under discussion in an organization when introducing and conducting change. They also demonstrate what the sources are from within arguments, drawn without using the concept of commonplace. To discuss and interpret the results of this study, I apply the concept of commonplace explicitly when contemplating the results from the three sub-studies in compilation. The concept facilitates interpretation of where various stances are drawn from and how various stances are produced rhetorically.

The contents or topics of arguments were often defined as the 'commonplaces' (*loci communes*) of rhetoric in the classic textbooks of rhetoric (Billig, 1996). The concept of commonplaces stands for the commonsense values and notions which are, ideally, shared by speaker and audience alike. The rhetorical aspects of commonsense suggest that commonsense may have a contradictory nature. Commonsense is not a unitary store of folk wisdom, rather it can provide us dilemmas and controversies for discussion and argumentation. The places of argument were common as speakers regularly fetched useful platitudes from these indexed places. The commonplaces were thus 'the stock phrases of oratorical productions' (Billig, 1996, p. 229). However, the precise nature of such places remained unclear. Billig makes a distinction between two senses of the commonsense. An anthropological sense limits particular versions of commonsense to particular communities of audiences. Another sense argues that commonsense is shared and approved by all audience. Billig's approach follows anthropological sense, as according to him, each community has its own commonsense, manifested in commonplaces. Furthermore, the concept of commonsense is not equal to good sense, or being sensible.

Commonsense would seem to have two divergent aspects in its relation with argumentation. First, it may cut off arguments as some matters might be commonly sensible within a community, and therefore widely accepted. There is no need to argue for those matters taken for granted. However, commonsense may be rich in arguments, as commonplaces that form crucial components of commonsense possess sources for arguments. The argumentative aspect of commonsense invites argumentation and controversy. Berger (1970) argues that commonsense illustrates the picture of the world that is shared by the members of a particular society. He continues by saying that commonsense mitigates dilemmas of interpretation and make social life meaningful. There is no need for accounting within a particular society. Although the basic assumptions of commonsense are fixed, the values of commonsense, which usually constitute the means of arguments, can become the topics of controversy and its stock of commonplaces is alterable. These ideas are crucial to this study, as when studying change, it is focal to understand which arguments employees or different groups of employees

treat as self-evident, and how shared beliefs may be taken for granted among a group of employees or treated in a different way among another group of employees.

Commonplaces in practice mean that speakers are able to employ, for example, shared assumptions, beliefs, values, experiences, cultural and moral principles, to express their stances. In the analysis of this study, I have explored and interpreted how these kinds of shared resources act as 'commonplaces' from which individuals draw their justifications or criticisms. As Billig (1996) argues, the rhetorical nature of argumentation rests upon the principle that the same beliefs or assumptions may be employed even for opposing purposes, resulting in opposing stances toward a topic by different people.

In addition to rhetorical social psychology, this study adopts concepts and ideas from discourse analysis, which are introduced next.

3.2.2 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Discursive psychology involves an approach that provides a social psychological form of discourse analysis. This form was presented in Potter and Wetherell's (1987) pioneering book "Discourse and Social Psychology", which proposed an alternative methodological and theoretical approach to study the phenomena of social psychology through qualitative methodologies. Their work is influenced by Billig's rhetorical social psychology, especially relating to the concept of attitude (Wiggins & Potter, 2007). They emphasized attitudinal accounts that can be constituted in various ways. A speaker's evaluation is directed at specific formulations rather than some abstract object. For example, a speaker can provide a negative description of a minority group but express a highly positive description of a representative of that group (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

One of the central themes developed among discourse analysts is the relationship between the versions of reality and mind. In this relationship, people construct things in the world (actions, events, history) and things in the head (attitudes, feelings and expectation) in their interaction with others and employ these constructs to serve their actions (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Wiggins & Potter, 2007). The focus of discourse analysis is to investigate the way that accounts are built in interactions to suit particular purposes. Discourse analysis thus emphasizes the situated use of language referring to how people actively construct accounts in their interaction. Furthermore, it places emphasis on the performative and action-oriented nature of language. Both of these are also core principles within discursive psychology (Burr, 2015). These are relevant ideas to this study, as I look into how various stances to support and contest change are constructed through rhetorical and discursive strategies. Within discourse analysis, different strategies are identified and their pragmatic orientations are discussed. In my study, I especially focus on how different visions of change are constructed and further

employed. Concerning this, the strategies related to justify one's accounts are of interest.

Potter (1996) focuses on fact construction, or how a speaker justifies his or her accounts as facts. He proposes that a factual account can be examined for its offensive and its defensive rhetoric. In offensive rhetoric, a speaker aims at undermining alternative accounts whereas in defensive rhetoric, a speaker aims at protecting one's own account. Billig (1996) emphasizes that the meaning of argument can be examined regarding the contest of criticism and justification, similarly, Potter (1996) suggests that accounts can be explored regarding their offensive and defensive strategies.

Potter and Wetherell (1987) introduced the concept of interpretative repertoires from Gilbert and Mulkay's (2015) earlier work. The concept refers to the linguistic resources that people draw upon in constructing their accounts of events. These culturally shared interpretative repertoires enable people to construct particular versions of events to justify their own behavior and allow them to maintain a credible stance in an interaction. A repertoire is a collection of linguistic devices and metaphors which could be used to bring about a particular desired representation of an event. It can be illustrated as a kind of a shared toolkit containing the resources which people can employ in their own efforts (Burr, 2015). The same repertoire can be employed by different people to enact different purposes, and different and even contradictory repertoires may be used by an individual in his or her talk. Repertoires are not located inside individuals' minds, and thus they are culturally shared and do not belong to single individuals as would characteristics or traits (Burr, 2015; Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

Within discourse analysis, the identification of interpretative repertoires has been an analytical approach for research. This means that researchers have aimed at identifying the culturally available linguistic resources used by speakers in their aims at building their accounts. However, recent developments within the so-called Loughborough school have increasingly drawn on conversation analytic principles, following, for example, that the use of interpretative repertoire as a concept has decreased in research papers. However, the concept is still applied, especially by researchers who do not position themselves as discursive psychologist but still are keen on employing discursive psychological ideas in their research (Burr, 2015). Some researchers, however, have developed their own concepts to replace the concept of interpretative repertoire. For example, Mueller and Whittle (2011) employ the concept of discursive devices, referring to the micro-linguistic tools employed by people in interaction to produce a particular version of the world and their relationship to it.

Taken together, these two forms of discursive psychology form the theoretical and methodological framework for this study. They provide a paradigm to approach organizational change as a social construction in which various organizational actors employ discourses to evaluate, support, and contest change. Furthermore, they offer the theoretical lens to examine

discussion around organizational change and tools to analyze supporting and contesting talk. More precisely, such key ideas as attitudes as rhetorical stances, and commonplaces as sources of arguments, are utilized as integrative concepts in this study when looking into how the members of an organization produce supportive and resistant stances and how they build these arguments from shared, even taken-for-granted beliefs and values. Confronting the cognitive social psychological understanding of attitudes as a private, inner state of a person, the framework enables ways to explore what someone says about change as a social topic. Moreover, discourse analysis provides the ways to look into and identify such linguistic resources that are used by employees in their efforts to build their supportive and resistant accounts toward change. Furthermore, the approach allows for an examination of variability but also coherence in change talk that is previously (e.g., Buchanan & Dawson, 2007; Grant & Marshak, 2011) acknowledged to entail divergence and ambiguity in discourse.

3.3 INSTITUTIONAL INTERACTION IN WORKPLACE RESEARCH

This study also relates to the research field called institutional interaction, which refers to research exploring interaction in institutional contexts, especially in work places. Namely, ethnography, conversation analysis, and discourse analysis have been applied in studying institutional interaction and thus, institutional interaction can be located within micro social constructionism. This tradition focuses on the micro-dynamics of the use of language as the linguistic level of analysis (Drew & Heritage, 1992), which is also the level of analysis of this study.

As I use workplace interaction as data for this study, I briefly summarize the tradition of such studies. Research on workplace interaction has a long tradition within discourse-based sociolinguistic and sociological research (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). These studies have focused on micro-level interaction and ideological processes of work. Health care dominates as a context of research. Scholars have focused on interaction between health care professionals and their patients, for example in therapy sessions (e.g., Labov & Fanshel, 1977; Weiste, Voutilainen, & Peräkylä, 2016), in child health clinics (e.g., Tiitinen & Ruusuvuori, 2014) and in medical consultation (e.g., Ruusuvuori, 2001). These studies have produced understanding, for example, about the subtle ways of turn-taking in interaction and of participation in discussion. The other dominant contexts of micro-level interaction research are educational settings (e.g., Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) and legal settings (e.g., J. M. Atkinson & Drew, 1990).

Sarangi & Roberts (1999) divided the studies of workplace interaction into frontstage and backstage research. Frontstage research focuses on examining the public face of the workplace, such as interaction between medical

professionals and their patients and interaction between social workers and their customers. Such analysis of institutional interaction is common among scholars using a conversational analytic approach. Backstage research is interested in the ways in which professional knowledge is constituted in inter-professional meetings and less formal encounters. Usually, this means that researchers must gain access to naturally occurring data in institutions and observe the everyday practices of employees. This is considered a difficult task, however, because it may concern those who are being studied (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). The interest related to backstage research has informed my research, and thus my data sets involve naturally occurring talk from a series of workshops and meetings.

Meeting interaction has been previously explored, for example, from the decision-making point of view. Deidre Boden (1994) demonstrated how local speeches are linked to larger organizational goals. According to her, meetings contribute to creating the particular organization in a way in which gathering, producing and absorbing knowledge in meetings are transformed to the goals, plans, and decision of the whole organization (Boden, 1994). Allen D. Grimshaw (1987) showed how ambiguity in interpreting conversation may influence decision-making. He explored a group of university teachers, including himself, who were making a decision on the grade of a dissertation. Grimshaw concluded that he changed his opinion because of ambiguity in ongoing interaction and reactions of others (1987). Kangasharju (1998) explored the alignment of two or more participants into teams in the course of a disagreement. She showed how negotiations take place through various methods, such as acting in alliance and generating collective disagreement (Kangasharju, 1998). However, institutional interaction is not an island itself, rather empirical analysis of institutional talk often merges with discursive social psychological interest, such as studying emotions in meeting talk (Nikander, 2007). Similarly, this study draws parts of its data from meeting interaction in institutional contexts and merges the analysis with discursive psychological interests. Prior research on meeting interaction provides ways to understand how local talk and larger organizational goals can be interpreted in the analysis of this study.

Discourse-based research on organizational change has predominantly taken place in the field of management and organizational research and in the field of discursive analysis, but their link to institutional interaction is not explicated. However, the division between frontstage and backstage research of organizations, made by Sarangi & Roberts (1999), can be utilized by illuminating how macro-oriented change research has focused on public talk whereas micro-oriented change research has focused on talk within an organization.

4 RESEARCH CASE, DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, I present the empirical research case, the data, and the qualitative methods used in the three sub-studies. First, I give an overview of the organizational change program as a case of this study and introduce my three different data sets. Second, I give an overview of the process of analysis applied in the three articles.

4.1 ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AS THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This study is part of a research project that focused on a strategically central change program in a public service organization, Media Inc. (a pseudonym). The company employs 3100 people permanently, has approximately the same number of freelancers, and around 400 people with fixed-term contracts. The average age of the employees is 46 years and their average tenure is 17.2 years. In 2011, Media Inc. started a five-year change program to reduce office space by 40% and change the ownership structure of the space from owning to renting. At the same time, the change program aimed at significantly altering the company to meet future demands, both from within the organization and from external stakeholders. More specifically, the change program included three main areas: spatial, social, and virtual change. The spatial change involved an effort to reduce costs by making the use of the facilities more efficient, to facilitate interaction and synergy between units, and to enhance innovativeness through increased interaction between people with different working profiles. In a practical sense, the change program aimed at altering the traditional office settings into non-territorial workspaces, where employees do not have dedicated desks but they have to reserve any workstation that happens to be vacant on a daily basis and remove their personal belongings at the end of the day. Furthermore, employees were expected to work from various locations such as homes or public places.

The social change focused on increasing the innovativeness of the company and changing current work practices to be in line with the workplace trend of “brave new workplace” (Gephart, 2002). This trend highlights the ideals of flexibility and mobile work. Furthermore, one purpose was to create a more open organizational culture that would increase interaction among the employees of different units, in addition to collaboration with external partners who are able to rent part of the office space. In practice, the managers of the change program continuously stated that the purpose of the change program was to facilitate the development of new rules on working in the open-plan office and to encourage remote work. They also emphasized the

need to create new guidelines for collaboration with external partners and the need to facilitate the adoption of a new way of thinking that supports innovativeness. The purpose of the virtual change was to support mobility and remote work by providing such devices and services that allow working anywhere and anytime. The organization conducted the change program in different sites of the company. The sites were geographically dispersed.

The research project that aimed to explore an organizational transformation from a traditional office to a multi-space office, from its planning phase to implementation and use, was conducted during 2011 - 2014. The research project was primarily conducted at the main site of the company (referred to in the text as 'site A'), but interviews were also conducted in another site where the first party to participate in the change program was located (referred to in the text as 'site B'). The data for this dissertation was collected during the research project. The full data set of the research project involves audio-recorded workshop discussions and meeting discussions, the workshop and meeting-related observation material, and interviews and written documents concerning the change program (such as strategy documents and program plans). The data used in this dissertation are presented in detail in the data section.

4.2 DATA

In this dissertation, I used two types of data sets: workshop and meeting interaction audio recordings and individual interviews. In addition, I had access to the company's strategy documents and to the descriptions, intermediate and final reports of the change program, which together provided an overview and details of the change program. The data was collected during a research project either by a research colleague or by myself. I gathered the workshop material through the method of participatory observation, meaning that I was one of the participants of the workshops. The meeting data was collected through the method of non-participant observation, meaning that the researchers did not participate in the meeting discussions but were present in the meetings and audio-recorded the discussions of the meetings. I participated in five out of nine meetings, whereas the research colleague participated in the remaining four meetings.

Interviews were collected during the years 2011-2014. I conducted 16 individual interviews, the research colleague conducted 19 individual interviews, and one individual interview was conducted jointly. In the following sub-sections, I present each set of the material separately. The overall view of the data used in the articles is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Data used in the articles

Article	Data source	Data type	Participants
I	Workshop talk	37 hours of participatory observation with 33 hours of audio-recorded discussion (460 pages of transcriptions)	Facilitators 3 Managers 4 Employees 2 External experts 3
	Employee interviews	Qualitative interviews n= 13	Middle managers 2 Line managers 1 Employees 10
II	Program group meeting talk	9 meetings resulting in 15 hours of audio-recorded meeting discussion with non-participant observation (174 pages of transcriptions)	Persons in charge 2 Employees 8 Middle managers 1
III	Interviews	Qualitative interviews n=36	7 responsible directors and managers 29 employees

4.2.1 A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS

The first data set was collected in the autumn of 2011. This data set formed the core of the Article I. The company's change program was launched in the spring of 2011, and during the same time the key persons in charge of the program asked the company's internal innovation coaches to help them engage and widely include personnel in the change program. The innovation coaches and the key managers decided to conduct a series of workshops in order to generate practical targets for the program and to include employees in the ideation process of new solutions in the autumn of 2011. The innovation coaches and project manager selected and invited the participants, who either were experts on the work environment, in some way related to the change process or represented different user groups. Twelve participants of the workshops consisted of a multidisciplinary team: three facilitators, four managers, three employees, and three external experts including the author of this dissertation.

The series of workshops ran over a three-week period. The purpose of the workshop series was to uncover the latent needs, behaviors, and desires of the employees and generate innovative solutions around the future work environment. The form of the workshop follows IDEO's Human-Centered Design process and proceeded in five phases:

⁹ IDEO is a well-known global design and consulting company.

- 1) Identify a design challenge. The design challenge formulated in the beginning of the workshop series was: ‘What is a functional, inspiring, and flexible future work environment like in Media and how is it implemented?’
- 2) Observe and inquire: Each participant in the workshop series interviewed or observed either current employees or external experts from different companies in order to study future personnel needs.
- 3) Analyze and synthesize: The results of these interviews and observations were communicated in the workshops while the other participants made notes. These notes were later grouped and analyzed further by searching for patterns, insights, and common themes in the material.
- 4) Brainstorm new solutions, develop prototypes and gather feedback.
- 5) Plan pilots and implementation for new solutions found during the course of the workshop. The workshop series resulted in nine concepts that were prototyped.

Talk in the workshop represents one central site where organizational change is constructed in interaction. The workshop series is a particularly illustrative case of strategy interaction in which strategy work is done in collaboration between divergent organizational actors. The role of the workshop series was to give support to and insights into the managerial decisions.

As a member of the workshop series, I used the method of participatory observation when collecting audio recordings of the series of workshops. This method, when a researcher is a part of a group studied, is called participant observation (e.g., Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). This strategy means that a researcher assumes the role of the member of an organization as defined by Czarniawska (2012). Then, a researcher aims at acting like a member of an organization. Accordingly, I assumed the role of the workshop participants. Instead of assuming the role of the organizational members, I was given the label “external expert” by the organizers of the workshop. Hak (1999) encourages to use this type of ethnographically oriented method, as it makes it possible to have a direct engagement of the researcher with the setting that was studied through the observation and informal discussions with other participants.

As the series of workshops involved two other external members, I blended in with the group. Not all of the employees in the workshops knew each other before to the workshop series, which also made my role more neutral. In the first workshop session, the facilitator told about my dual role in the group and I asked a permission to use the data for research purposes. My behavior in the workshops was sedated, meaning that I did the work needed (discussed, interviewed, presented interview material) without bringing any powerful or strongly deviant opinions. In the end of the workshops, I also discussed with some persons from the workshops how they experienced my role. Those persons mentioned that they did not pay attention to my research-oriented

activities but saw me only as a group member of the workshops. As an ethical research notion, I noticed that my empathy varied depending on the person I spoke with, meaning that my empathy followed the speaker. When I felt that I empathized with a speaker, I echoed the speaker by nodding and making agreement sounds, but I did not interrupt or continue the discussion. I turned this empathy as a tool to learn about how people speak in different ways. This naturally brought additional pressure in the phases of analysis, encouraged me to be as dutiful to data as possible, and focus only on features that the speakers themselves oriented towards.

All workshop discussions were audio-recorded excluding a period of four hours, when the participants worked in small groups. The material consists of 33 hours of audio-recorded discussion (460 pages of transcribed interaction) and 37 hours of participatory observation, which overlap by 33 hours. By analyzing audio-recorded organizational talk, it is possible to obtain access to institutional processes and the outlooks informing them. The focus on recorded content cuts across a basic problem associated with the gap between what people say and what they do (Drew & Heritage, 1992). I chose these workshops for analysis for three main reasons:

- 1) Workshops, like organizational meetings, are places where talk links everyday micro practices with larger organizational goals (Boden, 1994), and they are goal-oriented activities in a specific institutional context (Drew & Heritage, 1992).
- 2) The workshops gather together discourses from several actors, employees, middle managers and persons in charge of the initiative, and thus provide rich material for analyzing the question of how change is talked about.
- 3) The longer perspective shows that these workshops played a central role in targeting change in the company.

4.2.2 A PROGRAM GROUP'S MEETINGS

The data set of the article II was collected during the period between the autumn of 2012 and the autumn of 2013. The data set involves 9 meetings where researchers were present as observers but did not participate in the discussions taking place in the meetings. Gold (1958) has described different observational stances researchers can take while observing. He calls the method in which the researcher is present merely as an observer as the method of non-participant observation.

The steering group of the change program had made the decision that particular office areas would be changed to multi-space offices in order to reduce cost and support flexible and mobile work. In the autumn of 2012, a program group for operational purposes was established. The purpose was that the group brings diverse angles to the discussion, represents different functions of the organization, and ensures that all aspects of administrative responsibilities are taken into consideration when making plans regarding

changing the physical, virtual and social spaces. The main interaction site for conducting the work of the program group consisted of meetings in which the project group members discussed how the overall change should be planned, coordinated, and finally carried out within different parts and levels of the organization. Altogether, the project group involved 11 permanent members, of which approximately 7-9 were present at each meeting. In addition, one or two invited experts from the organization participated in the meetings depending on the issues discussed. Two persons were key figures in the group, and half of their official working time was allocated to conducting the change process, whereas the rest of the group members participated in the change mainly via meetings.

The meetings took place every other week during the autumn and every four weeks during 2013. Usual topics of the meetings were: looking through the memo from the previous meeting, what has been discussed at the latest steering group meeting, updates on what has happened at different sites regarding the progression of the change, discussions on what to do next, how to communicate the change initiative within the organization and on-going rumors and overall attitudes toward the change initiative in different parts of the organization.

The researchers attended the meeting in turn to observe and audio-record nine meeting discussions. Each meeting lasted from 1.5 to 2 hours. Approximately 15 hours of recorded interactions resulted in 174 pages of transcriptions. In practice, we conducted the non-participant observation as follows: My research colleague or I were introduced in the first meeting and later every time a new participant arrived (at the same time when other participants were introduced) and told about our research project. Usually, we sat on a couch behind the meeting table. My impression was that the members of the meetings only paid attention to us in the beginning, and sometimes when the members of the meetings made a lot of jokes or made pungent remarks. In such situations, one person looked at us and occasionally said something, as if to make sure that we understood the joking context or as if to check how we reacted. However, this took place approximately less than once per meeting on average, and seemed to diminish with the passage of the time. Sometimes, when they talked about our research organization, they asked us something about the topic, but usually even if they talked about our university or research group they did not pay any attention to us. Usually, we did not speak during the meetings, excluding greetings and before and after the meetings. As the program group consisted of employees from different functions, and we as researchers were involved in the program group from its first meeting when the program group was practically established, our presence seemed to be natural for the participants. This might have been different if the program group consisted of a group of regularly meeting employees, when our presence would be additional to the program group.

4.2.3 THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The third data set consists of management and employee interviews during the change. The label of management involves such directors and managers that are in responsible positions regarding the change program or strategic guidelines in the company, whereas the label of employees refers to other members of the organization, such as line managers, administrative staff, development managers, and representatives of content production. Altogether 36 interviews were collected between 2011 - 2015. During that time, spatial changes were introduced in the organization and the interviews were conducted in the different phases of the transformation in two sites of the company. In 2013, a group of employees trialed open space solutions in a temporary place in site A. The employees in site A moved into their new premises in March 2014, whereas the employees in site B moved in new premises in August 2013. The employees were interviewed in six cycles: 1) The interviews of four key managers or directors were conducted in the first year of the change program, 2011; 2) The interview with a top manager was conducted in 2013; 3) The interviews with employees who had recently moved in the new premises in site B were conducted in 2013 4) Employees and a responsible manager who were supposed to move in the new premises in site A were interviewed in 2014. Both those employees who trialed new solutions in a temporary place as well as those employees who moved directly from their traditional single-room offices to open, multi-space offices were interviewed; 5) Additional employees who had moved into new premises in site B were interviewed; 6) Employees and a responsible manager working in new spaces in site A were interviewed. These interviewees were the same employees interviewed in phase 4. The details of the interviewees are presented in the table below. In order to facilitate variation, the interviews were gathered from employees at various levels and occupations within the organization.

In-depth semi-structured interviews (approximately 60-130 minutes each) were conducted in order to gain an understanding of how organizational members speak about the change. The interviews were defined as semi-structured as the researchers brought broad topics for discussion and allowed the interviewees to develop ideas and speak freely about the topics. However, the researchers made moves in the conversation, if needed, to ensure the conversation covered change-related topics. The interviews are also characterized 'in-depth' as the researchers encouraged the interviewees to provide a nuanced and detailed understanding of their experiences of change and of their daily working practices.

Interview material has been considered as "non-naturally" occurring and as co-produced by the researcher and an interviewee. However, an interview is an economic way to elicit talk about selected topics and it also allows interviewees to speak about the topics from their own perspectives (Nikander, 2012). To reflect on the co-production of interview material, in the article III, entire episodes (questions and answers) are presented and paid attention to. Furthermore, as Widdicombe (2017) remarks, interviewees are typically

recruited because they are supposed to be members of a particular social category, although their membership may be taken for granted. We took several steps to overcome this obstacle: While we recruited interviewees that were assumed to represent people experiences the change, we did not provide them any detailed category, rather we asked how each interviewee saw his or her relationship to the change. Furthermore, we did not assume them to represent any stances toward change, but asked rather neutral questions in terms of how change was introduced, and in return were given reasons for and what they thought about the reasons presented for the change. In addition, we did emphasize confidentiality and stressed the process of data anonymizing when handling research material. We framed ourselves as doctoral students and researchers and emphasized that there are not right or wrong answers but we are interested in all kinds of experiences and opinions in terms of change.

All interviews involved the same topics and special questions related to the phase of the change. The interviews started with the current work descriptions and work practices, followed by questions related to the phase of the change (expectations in terms of the outcome of the change or experiences of working in a temporary phase or new premises). Furthermore, questions as to why the change was introduced were asked. In addition, the questions related to strategic decisions were asked from different viewpoints (e.g., how they are argued and justified, what an interviewee thinks about these justifications and arguments). All interviews were audio recorded with the permissions of the participants for later transcription.

Table 3 The details of the interviewees

Phase of the research	Interviewee's position in the organization	Selection criterion for interview
PHASE 1: December 2011, N=4 Interviews of key managers in the beginning of the change program	Director	The owner of the change program
	HR director	Responsible manager (social change)
	Development manager	Responsible manager (Spatial change)
	Development manager A	Responsible manager
PHASE 2: March 2013, N=1 Interviews with key director when the program group was operational	Strategy director	The program group established reported to her
PHASE 3: September 2013, N=3 Interviews with employees experiencing the spatial change in site B.	Three production coordinators	Worked in new premises
PHASE 4: October 2013 – November 2013, N=11 Open space solutions were trialed in a temporary space (i.e. a space into which the employees moved while their office spaces were being remodeled). These interviewees will move into new spaces in 2014 in site A.	Two development managers	Trialed working in a temporary space
	Development manager (virtual space)	Trialed working in a temporary space, responsible manager
	Administrative staff	Trialed working in a temporary space
	Head of development	Trialed working in a temporary space, responsible manager
	Six development managers (one, responsible manager (A) interviewed 1 st time in phase 1)	Trialed working in a temporary space
PHASE 4: January - February 2014, N=4 Employees who did not participate in the trial but will move into new spaces in 2014 in site A.	Two line managers	Will move in to new spaces
	Two journalists	Will move in to new spaces
PHASE 5: January – February 2014, N= 6 Interviews with employees experiencing the spatial change in site B.	Four graphic designers	Worked in new premises
	Line manager	Worked in new premises
	Set designer	Worked in new premises
PHASE 6: October 2014, N=7 Employees working in new spaces in site A Second round of interview (first round conducted in PHASE 4).	Administrative staff	Worked in new premises
	Head of development	Worked in new premises, responsible manager
	Five Development managers (one responsible, 3 rd interview)	Worked in new premises

4.3 PROCEDURES OF THE ANALYSIS

The analyses of the three sub-studies in this dissertation are based on the principles of micro social constructionism. All the sub-studies focus on the analysis of spoken language and share the background assumptions that people actively use language in their everyday meaning-making, and language not only mirrors objects but also constructs them (Burr, 2015). More precisely, all three sub-studies apply an institutional interaction perspective, referring to the approach that focuses on the analysis of spoken interaction in the institutional context. Within the perspective, the variation of discursive accounts is treated as importantly as consistency in the analysis – meaning that the focus of analysis was to search for patterns of consistency as much as for variation and exceptions (see, e.g., Potter, 2007). However, consistency and variation of language use are identified as rhetorical and discursive phenomena, not as some internal psychological state. Furthermore, the constructive and flexible ways in which language is used has been a central subject of study. Sub-studies I and III draw specifically from a rhetorical orientation that encourages us to study not only how argumentative cases are organized through language, but also to examine the ways they are designed to undermine alternative cases (Billig, 1996). Rhetoric contributes to understanding how “text and talk is organized in specific ways which make a particular reality appear solid, factual and stable” (Wetherell & Potter, 1992:95). In contrast, Sub-study II follows the principles of discourse analysis, and focuses especially on identifying recurrent patterns of language use. Next, I present these two procedures of analysis separately.

4.3.1 STUDIES I AND III

These studies draw on Billig’s (1989, 1996, 2009) rhetorical social psychology, which highlights rhetoric as argumentation in which not only arguments but also counter-arguments are the key part of the social nature of human thinking. In these two sub-studies, the focus of interest was to study how the actors of an organization employ rhetorical devices in their efforts to support or contest change. Rhetorical descriptions are demonstrated to be powerful discursive forces to support or negate claims in number of ways (Forbat, 2005).

The audio-recorded workshop discussion and the interviews were transcribed verbatim. The analysis proceeded in the following manner: I read all the material at least twice to get an overview of how the speakers used various rhetorical resources in their talk. In the first round of analysis, all sequences of talk were selected in which the speakers spoke about change and the principles of the change, or in which they argued for or against the change. The analysis followed a bottom-up approach, meaning that it focused on such features that the speakers themselves clearly oriented to (Nikander, 2008). This follows that in the second round of analysis, in the article I, I chose all of

the stretches of talk in which the participants talked about the future, future needs, and future employees as the speakers constructed the change through the future. In the article III, my co-author and I selected sequences in which the actors of the organization spoke about the change, how they contested and supported it and how they responded to the strategic visions of management. From the selected sequences, we identified rhetorical devices employed by the actors. Finally, the analysis focused on how rhetorical strategies were used, for which purposes and by whom.

4.3.2 STUDY II

Study II focused on spoken interaction in the institutional context, and uses the micro-dynamic of the use of language as the linguistic level of analysis (see., Drew & Heritage, 1992). The study follows the principles of discourse analysis (Edwards & Potter, 1992) and focused on analyzing discursive patterns, i.e., the patterns of how people speak about a particular topic repeatedly and regularly. The data consisted of nine meetings, resulting in approximately 15 hours of recorded data. The meetings were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. To sort out the data, the contents of the meeting discussions were scanned and picked up the sequences where group members were concerned with the context in which they operated. These sequences were further coded into two groups: temporal orientations and formal roles. After that, the analysis focused on identifying discursive patterns, resulting in three dominant patterns, which were again presented and analyzed in detail.

5 SUMMARY OF THE ORIGINAL ARTICLES

This section summarizes the research objectives and the findings from the three original publications. The methodological choices of each sub-study were presented in the previous section. Section 5.1. summarizes the findings of the article I, section 5.2 of the article II and section 5.3 of the article III.

5.1 STUDY I : TWO VISIONS OF FUTURE EMPLOYEES AS A MEANS TO SUPPORT OR CONTEST CHANGE

The first article examines how the participants of the workshops spoke about the future of the organization, future employees, and their future needs. More specifically, the article focuses on how organizational actors use the repertoire of the nomad to support and legitimize spatial change. The findings of the study showed that the participants used the same metaphor of the nomad as a rhetorical strategy to support or contest the spatial change; thus, the use of the particular repertoire does not necessarily contribute to the desired outcomes.

In study I, the research participants employed the metaphor of the nomad as a rhetorical strategy for opposing purposes. The participants constructed two different versions of the future employees as nomads of which both are *uncommitted employees*, but for different reasons. Future generations as future employees are portrayed as people who have 'several irons in the fire', and that is the reason why they cannot commit to one employer full-time, whereas current employees as nomads are illustrated as those whose work is dispersed and they have to move about a great deal. The first vision is employed to support the change whereas the latter vision is employed to resist the change as the feeling of membership of the work community will disappear and nomads do not have deep roots. These different visions were seen as the outcomes of the change.

The metaphor of the nomad was a bottom-up concept in terms of research, meaning that the members of the organization employed the metaphor, and the data showed that the members of the organization oriented themselves toward the use of metaphor on their own. However, in the organizational change literature, the metaphor of the nomad has been used to describe employees working in a hot-desking office alongside the increased mobility and flexibility of working life (Bean & Eisenberg, 2006; Bean & Hamilton, 2006; Hirst, 2011). This acknowledged discourse was accordant with how the metaphor was used in the workshop by those who supported the change. The data especially demonstrated that 'nomadic work' was seen to be the outcome of freedom and choice by those who used it to support the change. This is reminiscent of the critique presented by Hirst (2011) when arguing that the metaphor of a nomadic work romanticizes mobility and working in non-

territorial workspaces by illustrating it as the outcome of employee's willingness and choice.

The participants also applied contradictory stances to the change through these visions. The participants presented a positive version of the nomad and used it to support altering organizational arrangements in accordance with a nomadic way of working, while a manager spoke through the voice of a nomadic employee and evaluated the change toward a nomadic type of working in a negative way. The change was evaluated in a positive way when younger generations were depicted as nomads. When the metaphor of the nomad is employed to support change, the change toward nomadism is evaluated either as an obligatory part of the future or positively. When the change was evaluated in a negative way, the current employees were depicted as nomads. Contest against the change was constructed through footing, meaning that participants spoke through another member of the organization when stating negative consequences of employees acting like nomads.

As I acted as a participant observer in the workshops, I observed my contribution to the discussion continuously. I noticed my contribution in the episode 4 presented in the article I. In the episode, the participants discussed interview findings from interviews concerning nomadic work. I was the only participant who brought up the previously recognized interview finding stating that nomads do not need to have a deep commitment to their workplace¹⁰. I was not the person who brought this aspect of nomadism up the first time, but my action affected the research in that the participants subsequently discussed this “side-effect” of nomadism as presented in the episode 4. This does not affect the results that uncommitted employees were produced as supporting and contesting stances, but it led to the participants discussing it again. The episode shows that this “side-effect” was labeled as a design challenge, and the positive vision of nomadic employees continued as a dominant argument.

In article I, I also summarized the findings of follow-up interviews conducted a year after the workshop series. The interviews showed that not everybody accepted the metaphor of the nomad as a vision of change, and the positive and negative evaluation of the change co-existed. However, in the interview, the metaphor of the nomad was narrowed to only relate to the spatial aspects of the work and the proximity of the work community.

¹⁰ In the workshops, the participants presented findings from the end-users interviews and others made notes from the presentations. These notes were written on post-its and grouped later. Each participant then selected five notes that she or he considered important out of all groups of post-it notes. These notes selected were then further discussed. I observed that I was the only person who picked up a note as important stating, “nomads do not need to have a deep commitment to their workplace”, although all participants had made a note of it. Thus, my contribution to the discussion about nomads was that episode 4 in the paper probably did not exist without my contribution to the discussion.

5.2 STUDY II: OPPONENTS, SUPPORTERS AND BUCK-PASSERS OF CHANGE

The second article focuses on the meeting talk of the members from a temporary program management group, which had a key role in realizing the change in the organization studied. More specifically, the study addresses the question of “how the members of a temporary program management group negotiate the scope of its activities through constructing a shared understanding of its operational context”.

The study II explored discursive patterns of how members of organizations were portrayed to live in different times. These patterns were employed to construct a dualistic organization in which nominated change makers were modern and had an orientation towards the future whereas other members of the organization were described as being old-fashioned, who were not willing to change but wanted to keep their old routines.

The group’s orientation was predominantly in the future and they did not shift between different temporalities. They also labeled the other organizational actors as stuck in the past. This was surprising, as Emirbayer and Mische (1998) emphasized the actor’s ability to shift along different temporal orientations. When the program group talked about the group’s temporal orientations, they predominantly stayed in the future but also shifted slightly between present and future orientations. However, the present orientation referred to situations in which the group understands that “the current organizational situation is unbearable” and had to be changed. When the group talked about the employees and the top management, they shifted between the past and the future (the present was treated as either the past or the future). When the group spoke about the top management’s present orientation, they characterized top management as being stuck in the past or in the present depicted as the past (“the top management does not currently support the change but wants to call a timeout and to stop developing from now until next year”). However, the group characterized top management’s temporal orientation as being from the future in situations when the group said that management should provide the vision of change and tell the employees how they will work in the future. Furthermore, when they needed some guidelines for future planning from top management, they labeled the management as having a future orientation. However, in only one instance was top management depicted solely as future-oriented, while in other sequences of talk, top management was portrayed as supporting the employees’ past thinking or not understanding how serious the organizational situation will be if change does not happen now and, thus they were seen as those who resisted the execution of the change plans.

The program group portrayed the employees as being stuck in the past (not understanding that a traditional office space is outdated and valuing the old office setting) and therefore resisting change. In the few instances they portrayed the employees as having future or present orientations, the

employees were introduced as exceptional cases. Nonetheless, after introducing them as exceptional cases, the group members continued by describing the other employees as those who are not willing to change but want to keep their old routines, or referred to a general reactionary attitude prevailing in the company. To conclude, study II identified *a discursive pattern of a dualistic temporal order*. The group employed this discursive pattern to characterize the group members as those who supported the change, whereas other members of the organization outside of the group were mainly depicted as those who resisted the change.

The program group also discussed the change through drawing different positions to the members of the organization. By doing so, they withdrew from the responsibility to implement change and, at the same time, legitimized buck-passing to the line managers and top management. Interestingly, the line managers and top management were predominantly characterized as buck-passers. The group's discursive patterns were to indicate a gap in leadership and then blame management for being reactionary. The program group positioned its role as a "process owner". By doing this, the program group formulated *a triadic hierarchical orientation* in which it navigated within the permanent hierarchy between employees and the management. Top management was considered as a proxy to communicate the vision and legitimize the change to the employees. Here, the group felt that top management had not understood the change program and thus needed the program group's guidance in order to send the right message to the employees. The other triadic hierarchy concerned the setting, where line managers were seen as shirking the responsibility to implement change. As the program group perceived significant resistance on the part of the employees, they highlighted the role of a group as the facilitators of the change but not the owners of the underlying vision. The above-described discursive patterns allowed the group to construct itself as temporally superior but hierarchically limited

5.3 STUDY III: CONTRADICTORY ARGUMENTATIONS OF THE OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE

The third article continues the discussion of how the members of the organization evaluate the change. The article addresses the question of how various organizational actors (i.e., responsible directors and managers, employees including line managers, administrative staff, development managers, and representatives from content production) talk about, support, and contest change, and how they use rhetorical strategies to construct spatial change as justified or unjustified. This is also discussed in relation to the organizational position of the speakers.

The findings showed that the responsible managers and the employees constructed change in a different manner and employed contradictory lines of argumentation. Furthermore, the responsible managers supported the change

and evaluated it positively, whereas the employees contested the change and predominantly evaluated it negatively, even in those cases where positive aspects of the change were brought up. However, their lines of argumentation drew from the same commonplaces. The responsible managers constructed the objectives of the change as being coupled with current and future work practices and needs, whereas the employees constructed the objectives of change as being detached from current real work practices. Furthermore, the responsible managers and the employees produced opposite arguments from the commonplace of *encounters*. The responsible managers constructed encounters as defining the desired mode of future work and a prerequisite for innovativeness, while the employees constructed it as a hindrance to “real” work. In employee talk, encounters and innovativeness were not constructed as belonging to the sphere of work, but as something external to it, and were even viewed as a threat to productivity. The commonplace of encounters was thus used by the employees as a means to resist the managerial idea of an open and innovative work space, whereas the responsible managers employed it as a means to support the change. Accordingly, the responsible managers and employees spoke in a different way about what “real” work is like and what the change will result in.

The commonplace of *creativity* was employed to resist the change by the employees, whereas the responsible managers used it to support the transformation. The responsible managers equated creativity with an open shared space and encounters, as well as constructing creativity as being best supported by increasing collaboration and open office settings. In managerial talk, creativity and innovativeness were used interchangeably, but the employees made a distinction between them. As for the employees, they saw creativity from the perspective of an individual who performs creative work that requires solitude and a peaceful environment. Innovativeness was described as a social, collaborative action in open office space that hinders ‘real work’.

The nature of managerial work was constructed as being incongruent with the multi-space office by the employees, whereas the responsible managers did not make a distinction between various job descriptions. However, their argumentations seemed to involve the assumption that all employees will benefit from the change. Although the line managers portrayed themselves as being able to cope with the open space solution, they employed the strategy of footing (Goffman, 1981) and spoke on behalf of their subordinates by describing the lack of confidentiality as a constraining factor to the managerial work practices. By doing so, the line managers also mitigated their own positive stance toward the change.

In addition to contradictory argumentations among the responsible managers and the employees, the responsible managers employed two separate and contradictory argumentations when speaking about and supporting the change. The responsible managers supported the change by employing such rhetorical resources as desired change and coercive change.

Their talk focused on the desired outcomes that the change will result in and on the coercive external factors that force the organization to change. Desired change was employed by problematizing the current situation and emphasizing the benefits of the change for the organization and the employees. When employing the rhetorical recourse of desired change, the responsible managers constructed the change as being driven by endogenous needs and future benefits. Furthermore, the coercive change talk involved the aspects of organizational financials and the overall developments in society, particularly in working life. These were presented as facts and developments that were constructed as something the organizational members cannot influence, as they were givens of the future. The talk of financial necessity highlighted the rationality of the change by emphasizing that the current use of the space was not efficient, and owning excess premises was not rational from a financial perspective. Interestingly, both of these rhetorical recourses drew from the commonplace of finance, but were used with opposite logics. In the coercive change talk, cost savings were presented as the central driver for the change, while in the desired change discourse the board-level commitment to change and its strategic importance was illustrated by referring to the magnitude of the financial investments that had been allocated to the change. Therefore, the responsible managers supported the change by drawing opposing purposes for the change from the same commonplace of finance.

5.4 THE MAIN FINDINGS IN A NUTSHELL

The main results of the article I is that the participants of the workshop series constructed two different visions of future employees. Although both visions concerned future employees as uncommitted employees, those who evaluated change positively referred uncommitted employees as the outcome of freedom and choice whereas those who evaluated change negatively referred to uncommitted employees as the outcome of coercion. They either used these opposite visions to evaluate change negatively or positively and contested or supported change, respectively.

In the article II, the members of the program group produced a dualistic temporal order by producing themselves as future-oriented people, whereas the other members of the organization were dominantly produced as past-oriented people. The future-oriented people were illustrated as modern, who were willing to change and bring the organization into “today’s” world. The past-oriented employees were described as being resistant and old-fashioned, who were not willing to change but wanted to keep their current routines.

In the results of the article III, the responsible managers supported the change and evaluated it positively, whereas the employees contested the change and predominantly evaluated it negatively, even in those cases where positive aspects of the change were brought up. The positive evaluation involved the benefits that the change will result in and the external reasons

that forced the organization to change. The negative evaluation consisted of grass-roots work practices and their unsuitability to the new office premises. However, both the responsible managers and employees used encounters, creative work and innovativeness as sources of their arguments when supporting and contesting the change.

6 RESULTS

In addition to the separate findings of the three original articles, this section contemplates the findings found in the articles in a compilation, by discussing all the three articles together under five different themes. These five areas integrate the results of the original articles and cover the research questions presented in the Introduction. The research questions are also repeated in the following sections. Key concepts from rhetorical social psychology, such as attitudes as rhetorical stances and commonplaces as the sources of arguments, act as integrative concepts for identifying and interpreting how employees support and contest change. This examination deepens the understanding of the variability of speaking about change when supporting and contesting it. Sub-sections 6.3, 6.4. and 6.5. expand the understanding of the pragmatic aspects of discourses by interpreting how discursive means, such as rhetorical strategies, are used to produce social realities.

6.1 ATTITUDES AS RHETORICAL STANCES IN TALKING ABOUT CHANGE

The question “How do the members of an organization rhetorically evaluate an ongoing spatial transformation, and how do they use these evaluations to support and contest the transformation?” is addressed from the perspective of the attitudes the members of the organization take when speaking about the change. Contrary to mainstream social psychology, in this thesis, the concept of attitude is not treated as a representation of internal states but rather as rhetorical stances in a matter of controversy. Following Billig (1996), I take attitudes more as rhetorical evaluations being for or against something or somebody, and they are situated within a wider argumentative context.

The three articles of this dissertation partially discussed the question of attitudes, but the articles have predominantly applied other concepts while exploring the support and resistance of change. In this sub-section, I reanalyze the findings of three articles through the lens of attitudes, and thus widen the analysis of the articles. The names of the attitudes presented below do not appear in the original articles, but the contents of these attitudes are explored in the original articles as well. In the original articles, different attitudes are illustrated either as negative or positive stances toward change. The table 4 summarizes stances taken to support change whereas the table 5 summarized stances taken to contest change. In the following text, I use ‘stance’ and ‘attitude’ as interchangeable.

6.1.1 ATTITUDES SUPPORTING CHANGE

Rhetorical stances taken to support change serve various tasks. First, they relate to acting in anticipation of future needs of future employees (proactive attitude). Second, they serve to support modernizing the organization (reformist and innovative attitudes). Third, they search for the faction who should lead the change (passive attitude). Fourth, they produce change as coercive (rational attitude). These stances can be seen as counter attitudes to attitudes that are assumed to prevail in the organization (conservative, reactionary, and avoiding attitudes).

A *proactive* attitude was taken by some workshop participants while supporting the change in the article I. Invoking a proactive attitude discursively produces the anticipation of future needs, especially regarding younger generations as company members. These needs are presented as being congruent with flexibility in spatial solutions and work relations. A proactive stance highlights that the organization has to be more flexible and make changes needed to achieve the level of flexibility that is congruent with the needs of future employees. The stance counters the conservative attitude that was seen to prevail among the current employees who are satisfied with their current situation. By contrast, the proactive stance highlights the need to make the organization modern.

Table 4 Summary of stances supporting change

Attitude	Speaker	produced as a counter-attitude to
proactive attitude	workshop participants	conservative attitude
reformist attitude	program group members	reactionary attitude
passive attitude	program group members	avoiding attitude
innovation attitude	responsible managers	deterioration attitude
rational attitude	responsible manages, facilitator in the workshop	deterioration attitude/ conservative attitude

In the article II, the members of the program group took a *reformist* stance and a *passive* stance to support change. The central aspect of the reformist

attitude was that the program group constructed itself as modern people who were willing to change their organization to be in line with the trends of current and future working life. This was constructed as a counter attitude to a reactionary attitude that was expected to prevail among the members of the organization. The reformist stance was powerfully produced by constructing a distinction between the modern program group members and other members of organization who have the reactionary attitude. The reactionary attitude was similar to the conservative attitude, but stability and change resistance prevailed among the employees and the management was produced to be deeper and more all-encompassing when invoking the reactionary attitude. The reformist stance argues powerfully against the wish to keep stability within the organization.

The passive stance represents an evaluation of controversial change. The members of program group stated that the transformation was not taking place in the organization as the management shirked their responsibility. However, the program group positioned itself as a process owner who has no agenda but rather the management should lead the transformation. This was constructed as a counter attitude to the managers' supposed avoiding attitude.

In the article III, responsible managers shifted between two overarching attitudes, both of which were employed to support change: '*innovation* attitude' and '*rational* attitude'. The focal aspect of the innovation attitude was that change should be conducted in order to achieve the desired outcomes and future benefits. These outcomes and benefits related to encounters, creativity, and innovativeness, and they would result in a better organization. This attitude was constructed as a counter-attitude to a *deterioration* attitude that was claimed to prevail in the organization. The deterioration attitude was often mobilized through arguments concerning how the employees were worried about that everything will go worse. In the article III, limitations in paper length prevented showing the longer episodes of the interviews, which would be useful to demonstrate how the responsible managers spoke about employees' fears of the open-plan office. For example, a responsible manager explicitly stated that because the employees were worried that the change will result in an open-plan office which harm the work environment, he would highlight in discussions with them how great the change is and how renewed office space is better for working than the current one. The deterioration attitude was also taken into account in the talk of other responsible managers. The responsible managers problematized the maintenance of the current state of the organization, especially its spatial solutions. The managers stated that the transition to a multi-space office solution contributes to achieving a more innovate and communal working culture and organization.

Rational notions of change were often mobilized through arguments related to organizational financials, along with overall developments in society and working life. These issues were the givens of the future, and elements that the members of the organization could not influence. These issues forced the organization to change. It was also seen as natural that the organization would

react to them. This attitude can also be constructed as a counter attitude to both the deterioration attitude and the conservative attitude. The focal aspect of the rational attitude was that the current usage of the space was not efficient and owning excess premises was not financially rational. In the article I, the rational attitude was present when describing what the future would be like in the organization. This took place by describing that in the future, they would have many nomads in the company whether they like it or not

6.1.2 ATTITUDES CONTESTING CHANGE

Stances taken to contest change focused on cautioning the consequences of change (cautionary attitude), making a difference between actual work practices and expected work practices (real work attitude), and highlighting the discrepancy between actual work practices and new office settings (creativity attitude). These stances were produced as responses to aspects brought out via the innovation and proactive attitudes.

In the article I, as a counter attitude to the proactive attitude, the manager of the workshop took a *cautionary* attitude to the change. The main content of this attitude is that the opposing side effects of the change are brought up and employed to caution against the negative consequences of the change, especially the consequences of an increase in nomadic work.

In the article III, employees took two different stances, the *creativity attitude* and *real work* attitude, to contest change. The key aspect of the creativity attitude was that creative work requires its own place in a peaceful environment. Moreover, during the creative process, a variety of materials and equipment are used which makes a hot-desking office setting unsuitable for creative work. Speakers also mentioned their co-workers as exemplars of creative workers for whom the spatial change brings negative consequences.

The employees took a real work attitude by speaking about and defending 'real work practices'. It involves the matters that real work, being something different from the notions of continuous innovation and encounters, is affected negatively by a hot-desking office setting. In addition, being continuously available to interact with others would not promote a focus on 'real work'. Managerial work was also illustrated as involving private discussions with subordinates, which is hindered in a renewed office space. These were produced as a counter attitude to the ideas concerning innovativeness and encounters.

Table 5 Summary of stances contesting change

attitude	Speaker	produced as a counter-attitude to
cautionary attitude	manager in workshop	proactive attitude
creativity attitude	Employees	innovation attitude
real work attitude	Employees	innovation attitude

6.2 COMMONPLACES AS THE SOURCES OF ARGUMENTS

The question “What are the sources of the evaluations, and how are they discussed when supporting and contesting the ongoing spatial transformation?” is addressed through the concept of the commonplace. Commonplaces are shared places from which speakers draw their justifications or criticism when taking various stances. As Billig (1996) suggests, the same commonplace can be employed for opposing purposes. Instead of just describing how the same commonplace can be used to support or contest change, the findings aim at emphasizing relevant matters (relevant commonplaces) under discussion while making spatial change in organizations. Furthermore, by illustrating such matters and how they are discussed in different ways in supporting and contesting change, it is possible to acknowledge that the visions the members of organizations draw from the same commonplace are different. This is illustrated in Table 6. The practical matter of these different visions is discussed in more detail in the sub-section 7.4.

In the article I, *uncommitted employees* as a commonplace are employed to support and contest change. However, uncommitted employees are employed to support change when talking about future generations as uncommitted employees, but are also used to contest change when talking about current employees as uncommitted employees. In addition, younger generations are seen as naturally uncommitted and an organization should change in order to get younger generations accept the organization as an employer in the future. This employs a different logic than when speaking about current employees, wherein the argument suggests that spatial change will produce such working circumstances that current employees cannot commit to their work community and organization any more.

In the article III, such commonplaces as *encounters*, *innovation*, and *creative work* were used both to support and to contest change. Responsible managers constructed old premises as inconvenient for organizational

creativity and future requirements of working life, as they do not support encounters. Employees constructed the new office settings as being inconvenient for current creative and managerial working practices, as the new office setting involved continuous encounters and lacked privacy, which hindered real work. However, the arguments from both groups of the members of the organization involved the idea that new office settings allowed and produced unintentional encounters. Such encounters were used as a commonplace for arguments used to support change by the responsible managers and to contest change by the employees. These groups of employees used contradictory argumentations of what real work is like and what the consequences of encounters and innovation on real work are.

Innovation was considered as a social, collaborative action in an open office space by the responsible managers and employees. However, what the envisioned increase in innovation would result in was seen in an opposite manner. While the responsible managers drew from the commonplace of innovation to argue for future benefits, the employees drew from the same commonplace and stated that innovation activities, usually referred as social, collaborative actions in open office space, hindered their ‘real work’.

The responsible managers used the concepts of innovation and creativity as interchangeable, whereas the employees described creative work as the work conducted in solitude and requiring a peaceful environment, and innovation as a social, even noisy, activity. When the responsible managers supported the change, they drew from the commonplace of creativity and innovation when arguing for open shared space, whereas the employees contested the change by distinguishing creative work, and characterizing it as requiring peace and solitude.

Table 6 the summary of the commonplaces used for opposite purposes

Commonplace	Supporting change	Contesting change
Uncommitted employees	Future generations are naturally uncommitted and an organization should support this as a given	Current employees cannot commit to their work due to change
Encounters	Current space does not support encounters	Encounters hinder real work
Innovation	Innovativeness in open office space brings future benefits	Innovation activities hinder real work in open office space
Creative work	Requires shared open space	Requires peace and solitude

In addition to using the arguments drawing from the same commonplace for opposite purposes, the members of the organization also used the same commonplace in a contradictory manner to support change. This is summarized in Table 7. In the article II, the program group members drew

from the commonplace of *present time* when supporting change. They used the commonplace of present time by illustrating how the program group members have a present temporal orientation, characterized as modern. When they described management or employees by drawing from the commonplace of present time, the present time was illustrated usually as past. This commonplace is manifested in their talk when they described that the rest of organization was resistant to change yet they were themselves modern. They supported change by drawing from temporality by stating that they, as future-oriented organizational actors, understood that the whole organization should change in order to meet the current and future challenges posed by working life and society and that they have to take the organization to “today’s world”. They also supported the necessity of change by arguing that the rest members of the organization do not understand the necessity of change and want to keep their current conservative working methods in the new office settings as well.

Similarly, in the article III, the commonplace of *finance* was used in a contradictory manner to support change. Change was supported by highlighting the financial necessity of the change, as the current usage of space was not efficient, and owning premises was not a rational solution from a financial perspective. In a contradictory manner, change was supported by highlighting the magnitude of the financial resources that had been allocated to the change initiative. The financial weight was used to illustrate the significance of the change.

Table 7 The commonplaces used in a contradictory manner for the same purpose

Commonplaces used in a contradictory manner to support change		
Present time	An organization should operate in “today’s world”	Resistant organizational actors want to keep their current (old-fashioned) working methods
Finance	Cost-savings force the company to change	The company invests a large amount of money to build new premises

6.3 SUPPORTING AND CONTESTING THE DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF CHANGE

The question “What kind of pragmatic consequences do the evaluations have on the organization and its members?” is addressed from the perspective of the kinds of social realities the members of an organization produce when supporting and contesting change. In this sub-chapter, I discuss the different versions of change produced by supporting and contesting change. In sub-chapter 6.4, I explore how the members of the organization separate

themselves from the issue of supporting and contesting the change through various rhetorical strategies. Sub-chapter 6.5 also explores the research question by discussing how the members of the organization produce a polarized organization.

The findings show that the members of the organization produced different versions of change and supported or contested various visions of change. In practice, this means that those who supported change spoke of a different change than those who contested the change. Some members of the organization evaluated a vision of change in a negative way, while others evaluated another vision of change in a positive way. Those who evaluated a change negatively employed this vision to contest a change whereas those who evaluate a change in a positive way employed discourses to support change. To put it simply, the different groups of actors speak about different changes. Below, I will demonstrate various visions of change produced by the members of organization and demonstrate how contradictory visions were used to support or contest change. These visions are also summarized in table 8.

In the Article I, the participants of the workshops constructed two different visions of nomadic employees and used these visions either to support or contest change:

Nomads with interest-driven work: When the younger generations were evaluated as uncommitted employees, the speakers attached positive implications to that evaluation: future employees were described as people who have several irons in the fire, and that is the reason why they cannot commit to one employer full-time. This vision was used to support the change.

Nomads with dispersed work: A manager employed a repertoire of nomads with dispersed work to resist change by evaluating change negatively, as it results in uncommitted future employees as they have to move about a great deal: the feeling of membership in the work community would disappear as nomads do not have deep roots.

In the Article III, different employee groups constructed different visions of the objectives of change. They had different visions of what work and the organization would be like when the objectives were realized. The responsible managers constructed the objectives of the change as being coupled with current and future work practices and needs, whereas the employees constructed the objectives of change as being detached from current real work practices. Both groups of employees employed contradictory visions of current “real” work practices when supporting and contesting the change:

Work requires communality: The responsible managers stated that communality is a prerequisite for creative work - and creative work is the work done in the organization - and such work should be conducted in face-to-face interaction. Encounters and open shared spaces were seen to support such types of working.

Work requires individuality: The employees spoke about their own or others' creative work that it requires a peaceful environment. Otherwise, they

were not able to conduct their main duties. Creative work was also attached to a variety of materials and equipment that were used during the creative process. Encounters and innovation in open shared space, when others are doing 'real' work, were seen to hinder actual work practices. They drew from their own or others' actual work practices when they contested the change.

In the Article III, the responsible managers and the employees envisioned the future organization in a different way, and, accordingly, employed the visions of the future for opposite purposes:

Realization of change objectives results in ultimate superiority: the responsible managers evaluated the change as a great improvement compared with the current work environment. The rhetorical logic of the argumentation was that the spatial change would bring about mobility and/or shared open spaces, which would result in encounters that were considered as the signs of superiority.

Realization of change objectives results in bedlam: As an objective of the change was to support innovativeness of the company, the members of the organization commented on innovativeness. In contrast to creative work, innovation was not considered as activity requiring a peaceful environment, but rather described as a non-working and disturbing activity that hinders real work (especially creative work) by the employees. Therefore, they stated that if someone would come to 'innovate' in the shared open space, it would result in complete disorder and in the creation of an environment where one cannot conduct his or her work. Furthermore, one's availability for others all the time was also mentioned as being a hindrance to conduct one's own work. The employees contested this vision of a future organization.

Table 8 The summary of various visions of change

In a renewed organization	Different versions of change	
	<i>supporting change</i>	<i>contesting change</i>
Employees	are nomads with interest-driven work	are nomads with dispersed work
Work	requires communality	requires individuality
Organization	is ultimate in superiority	is in bedlam

6.4 SEPARATING ONESELF FROM THE ISSUE OF SUPPORT OR RESISTANCE

A dominant discursive pattern to support or contest change was for the speakers to separate themselves from the issue of support or resistance of the change. This took place through various rhetorical strategies. First, the research participants employed the rhetorical strategy of footing, introduced by Goffman (1981), when supporting and contesting the change. Footing refers

to a rhetorical device through which speakers present their relationship to what they say (Goffman, 1981).

In the Article I, the method of footing was used to justify the speakers' support the change. The participants invoked the younger generations' assumed needs and work practices when they argued for organizational arrangements that allow mobility and flexibility and make such working practices possible.

In the Article I, the method of footing was also used to justify the speakers' resistance to the change. When contesting the change, a manager spoke through the voice of others and explained the negative effects of the change on other people. Through footing, he was able to downplay his own role regarding resistance.

In the Article III, the speakers who supported and contested the change usually indicated that they pushed for someone else's agenda when evaluating the change positively or negatively, thus separating themselves from the issue of personal support or resistance. The responsible managers highlighted the benefits that the organization and its employees will receive through the change. In addition, the employees spoke through other employees or their own subordinates when they contested the change. Usually, they emphasized that they could themselves cope with the change, but were worried about other employees.

Second, the rhetorical device of factualization was employed in talking about change. This rhetorical device also separates the speaker from the content of the speech and describes things as 'out there', as defined by Potter (1996).

In the Article I, the change was constructed to be about an increase in the numbers of nomads. Following the factualization of the way things would be in the future regarding nomads and working life more generally, the change was constructed as non-negotiable, and something they might not want but had to do because such decisions have been already made in the organization. This made other potential alternatives seem futile, and the speaker was not a person who was responsible for the decision of the change.

In the Article III, the responsible manager employed the strategy of factualization by providing rationalistic or factual reasons for the change, and by mitigating the role of human actors in the change. Instead, they emphasized external forces as reasons for the change. The external forces presented as facts 'out there' were the financial situation and the changes that were taking place in working life and in the media field.

Moreover, a discursive pattern called withdrawing from the responsibility to conduct change was a dominant discursive pattern in the article II. The program group members positioned themselves as outsiders from the official vision and its goals for the change, and called themselves 'process owners' with no agenda concerning the change. They presented a hierarchical order wherein the program group was simply a facilitator of the change and the management was responsible for the implementation. In this hierarchy, the program group

portrayed itself acting as a 'process owner', and used the management as a proxy to lead the employees to the change. The program group members distanced themselves from the responsibility for conducting change in the daily life of the organization by referring to the functional roles of the organization. The other hierarchy they produced was that the top managers were portrayed as those who should show the novel vision and tell the employees how they will work in the future. In this hierarchical fabric, the program group refused to have any further involvement with the vision, rather the program group members had to make the top management understand what the future vision is and understand the importance of the change for their company.

Table 9 Discursive patterns to distance oneself from the issue of support or resistance

Rhetorical strategy	support change	contest change
footing	younger generation's needs and work practices	the negative effect of change on other people's work
	benefits for an organization and its employees	a speaker her/himself can cope with, but is worried about others
factualization	an increase in number of nomads is non-negotiable	
	external reasons force the organization to change	
withdrawing	deny to have an agenda, act as a process owner	

6.5 DRAWING A POLARIZING ORGANIZATION

The research participants created polarizations within the organization when discussing the change. These are summarized in figure 2. In the article I, the participants portrayed the distinction between future generations and the majority of current employees. As much as future generations were portrayed as being naturally flexible and moving about a great deal, the current employees were described as having been statically bolted to their desktop table for 30 years of their working career.

In the article II, the program group members constructed a sharp contrast between those people who are future-oriented and those people who are past-oriented. Accordingly, the employees were categorized into two groups: those people who understand the future and want to change and those people who want to keep their old-fashioned work practices and stay stable.

In the article III, the responsible managers and the employees drew opposite versions of the change. While the responsible managers described the change as improving the modus operandi and resulting in a better

organization, the employees envisioned that the change would hinder actual work in the organization.



Figure 2 The summary of arguments drawing a polarizing organization

7 DISCUSSION

In this section, I give a summary of the main findings and discuss their relevance to theory and practice. Moreover, I discuss the limitations of the study and suggest future research questions that emerged from the findings of this present research.

7.1 DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN RESULTS

In this study, I was interested in the dynamics of spoken interaction when talking about organizational change. This led me to analyze in detail what is being supported and what is being contested during ongoing organizational change. This is presented through the rhetorical stances members of an organization take while speaking about change. Furthermore, I have identified the sources of arguments and discussed how these were employed in speaking about change. Moreover, I have presented pragmatic consequences of speaking about change by analyzing how the members of the organization produce various versions of change and of its consequences. Arising out of these analyses, I present and summarize the five main findings of this study below.

First, attitudes demonstrate how stances about a controversial matter are taken from a rhetorical, communicative perspective. Unlike the notion of attitudes being an ‘essence’ inside people that make them what they are (see, Burr, 2015), the rhetorical approach argues that attitudes have rhetorical dimensions. A majority of previous research on organizational change has applied the concept of attitude as a representation of an inner psychological attitude when exploring resistance to change (e.g., Lines, 2005; Piderit, 2000). Similar to Symon (2005), this study challenges prior research by introducing a rhetorical perspective to study resistance, which takes into account both supportive and resistant stances when talking about change. Furthermore, this study specifically contributes to the research on a hot-desking office setting. Prior research on hot-desking offices has produced a monological story of organizational realities by exploring whether the industry-accepted development trend such as ‘an open-plan office supports better communication or working practices’ is true (e.g., Hoendervanger et al., 2016; Kim & de Dearm 2013; Qu et al., 2010). This study introduces a new angle to study and understand spatial changes in organizations by challenging the starting point of prior research, which draws from the Hawthornian assumption that the effects of the physical working space on an employee’s behavior are either positive or negative. The starting point of the present study is that the members of an organization initially take various stances. By exploring stances from a communicative perspective, it is possible to

understand how employees evaluate spatial change in various ways, and thus, this study allows for a multitude of organizational realities to come up. This study showed that in the context of spatial change, proactive, reformist, passive, and innovation stances were employed by the responsible managers and the program group members to support the change. Resistance to change is presented from cautionary, creativity, and real work stances. Supporting stances emphasized the importance of reacting to future needs and societal trends, the need to modernize the organization, as well as benefits for the organization that the change will result in. As for contesting stances, they arise as the alternative outcomes of strategic goals (dispersal work and uncommitted employees) along with local and current work practices of the employees and their conflict with the new office setting. Thus, the matters that are supported concern the current societal trends and the ability of an organization to react to its environment, whereas the matters that are contested concern the abandonment of grass root work practices and the communality of an organization. This means that supporting and contesting stances operate on different levels (external and internal, local and societal) and concern different aspects of change.

Second, this study has raised dilemmas and controversies for discussions about spatial organizational change by analyzing the commonplaces of arguments. Prior research on discursive organizational change (Tienari et al., 2003) has found that different actors with opposing goals may apply the same discourses, and the same actors can even draw on contradictory discourses at different times. This was the starting point for this study, as the study follows Billig's ideas (1996) of rhetorical social psychology and aims at identifying the sources of contradictory discourses and their pragmatic aspects. I have identified uncommitted employees, encounters, and innovation as shared sources of arguments that were used to support or contest ongoing change. Furthermore, I have identified the present time and finance as commonplaces used in a contradictory manner to support change. These identifications reveal dilemmas and controversies for discussion by showing the places where the members of an organization draw from while discussing spatial change. Contrary to organizational change management literature that follow Lewin's (1951) three-step model of changing organizations and illustrate change through the discourse of rationalism, which involves the idea of a change agent conducting planned organizational change through relatively stable phases to a predetermined change (see., Caldwell, 2005a, 2005b; Hussain et al., 2017), this study understands change as unpredictable, ambiguous, and highly contextual. This definition follows the discursive organizational change literature (e.g., Buchanan & Dawson, 2007; Grant & Marshak, 2011). Accordingly, this study focused on controversies when discussing change and had a closer look at where controversies come from instead of labelling the members of organizations as "change resistant" or "change-oriented" people. This study also extends the focus of micro social constructionistic change research that has demonstrated how management or consultants construct a

vision of change and employ it to convince employees (e.g., Mueller & Whittle, 2010; Mueller et al., 2004). This study showed where controversies come from when the responsible managers, program group members, and employees used discourses in their efforts to achieve their ends. Although the Hawthorne studies (Roethlisberger, 1980) already raised the notion of the informal organization during spatial transformations, the current study on a hot-desking office setting has predominantly neglected dilemmas and controversies by producing normative knowledge of advantages and shortcomings of a hot-desking office (e.g., Hoendervanger et al., 2016; Kim & de Dear, 2013; McElroy & Morrow, 2010; Qu et al., 2010). Thus, this study challenges the prior study to take controversies into account when exploring organizational change.

Third, based on the identification of commonplaces, the results suggest that the different members of an organization draw from the same commonplace and construct opposite visions of change. Thus, the different groups of employees support and contest their own visions of change, meaning that they do not speak about the same consequences of change. This contributes to the research that has criticized organizational change research for regarding discourses as constitutive by nature (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011; Mumby & Clair, 1997). This study demonstrates how the discourses can be explored through the lens of their role as resources for the members of an organization in their efforts to influence organizational change. Moreover, although Foucault-oriented change research has examined discourses as regulating what is possible to say and what is false and true in particular circumstances, this present dissertation has demonstrated that the members of an organization are able to utilize the same commonplaces as a source of their arguments to produce various visions of the same change. Furthermore, when prior discursive research has focused on the power of discourse in legitimizing or resisting change (e.g., Erkama & Vaara, 2010; Hardy et al., 2000; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Vaara et al., 2004), this study extends the understanding of the research by demonstrating that the same discourse can be used for opposite purposes. The visions of change in organizations can turn into positive and negative. For example, the metaphor of the nomad was meant to be a positive illustration of future employees, but it was also used for the opposite purpose. The controversial visions of change involve the vision of future workers either as nomads with dispersed work or as nomads with interest-driven work, the latter vision being desired, and the former – unwanted. Furthermore, the responsible managers and employees used contradictory visions of what ‘real work’ is like in the new office settings. While the responsible managers emphasized social interactions, the employees stressed individuality as a focal aspect of their real work. Furthermore, the employees contested the vision of change, in which the realization of change objectives results in bedlam, while the responsible managers supported the vision of change, in which the realization of change objectives results in the ultimate organizational superiority. This suggests that

talk around ostensibly similar topics (the same commonplaces) produced by the different groups of employees results in separate visions of what the change causes in the organization.

Fourth, the focal discursive pattern in the data was that a speaker separated him- or herself from the issue of support or resistance to change. This took place via various rhetorical strategies. By doing so, the speakers presented their relationship towards what they said, downplayed their own role regarding resistance, or positioned themselves as external to decisions in a rhetorical manner. Although prior research has covered a great number of justification strategies (e.g., Demers et al., 2003; Kuronen et al., 2005; Vaara & Monin, 2008) and identified strategies to support or contest organizational change (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), less attention has been paid to the delicate production of the positions by those who support or contest change. This study emphasizes the benefits of a detailed analysis of spoken interaction in the context of organizational change by making the kind of social practices that otherwise would pass unnoticed more visible. As a methodological notion, Widdicombe (2017) remarks that people may reject their supposed identity category in interviews. The questions in the interviews did not position the interviewees to be for or against the change, but rather we were sensitive about not bringing up such categories. We also framed the interview situations as a confidential discussion. Although this finding could be due to the methodological setting, an interview is an interaction situation and, thus, reflects and constructs how people produce their role in the interaction. This detailed study shows that the issue of support or resistance to change is a delicate matter, and personal relations to the issue of support or resistance tend to be hidden from others

Fifth, the study has revealed dichotomies that were created and made visible in everyday organizational life. The appreciation and high expectations regarding future generations are portrayed in contrast to the depiction of current employees. In addition, a sharp contrast is seen between those who are produced as future-oriented employees, being willing to change, and those who are produced as old-fashioned, desiring stability. It seems that speaking about change allows dichotomies to form. While prior research on spatial change is content with the conclusion that employees tend to be ambiguous with their messages in terms of a new spatial order (Airo et al., 2012), the present study elaborated upon ambiguous accounts in their rhetorical context and demonstrated the meaning of a particular argument in relation to what is being supported and what is being contested. These findings add to the research that has explored the transformation to a hot-desking office as a major transformation in work practices. Prior studies have found that a hot-desking office challenges the employees' idea of work (Bean & Eisenberg, 2006; Bean & Hamilton, 2006) and the furniture and equipment in a hot-desking office communicate that innovativeness relates to the free time of young men in the company (Kinnunen, et al., 2017). This study suggests that taking a rhetoric perspective to explore a transformation process makes it

possible to analyze in detail how different participants in a discussion challenge the idea of work, the idea of creative work, and idea of future employees and to construct a picture where different viewpoints and dichotomies are made visible.

Overall, this study discusses the continuous change of working life toward mobile, flexible, and fragmentary ways of working. Although none of these trends is novel, they have specific meanings in current working life. Currently, companies aim at reducing costs, increasing flexibility, and modernizing their working practices and external images by reducing corporate office space and altering traditional office settings to hot-desking office settings (Hirst & Humphreys, 2013). The matter of flexibility has especially been under discussion in Finland since the mid-1980. There has been discussion on which faction of an organization is expected to cope with variable circumstances, and that party has from time to time been an employer or an employee (Mamia & Melin, 2006). This thesis has demonstrated that the discussion of flexibility is wrapped in the abstract talk of enhancement of innovativeness, encounters, and reforms as well as of benefits deriving from a hot-desking office setting. That said, working in hot-desking office is romanticized, as criticized by Hirst (2011). Strategic talk lacks concrete suggestions on how the actual work practices should be changed in order to capitalize on the enhancement of innovativeness, encounters and reforms, and how they relate to current ways of working in an organization.

It is generally accepted that the rise of information technology blurred the division between work time and leisure time that was so clear in the industrial era. The expansion of ICT, together with spatial change, blurs the limits of work place and public and private place – especially when places such as public transportation, public cafes, homes, customers' sites and so on are considered relevant work places as much or more so than traditional offices.

An organization is a narrative fabric, and its identities are multiple and dynamic (Johansen, 2012). Current and future trends emanate to organizations, and the members of an organization can employ these trends as shared resources in their efforts to achieve their ends. While productivity and workers' morale were part of the narrative fabric of organizations in the industrial era, and cultural aspects rose to prevalence in the 1980's, today's organizations are composed of a narrative fabric of such matters as spatial change, innovativeness, and encounters. Even talk aimed at pursuing change involves various lines of argumentation, the attempt to integrate many stories into a coherent expression is a visible. For example, it has been argued that stable working hours and stable locations to conduct work have lost their relevance in the post-industrial information society (see, e.g., Ojala & Pyöriä, 2015). ICT technology allows spatial and temporal dispersion, which is one of the key ideas behind a hot-desking office. This runs counter to innovativeness as social action and encounters employed to legitimate change, but they are bonded together within change rhetoric. Instead of allowing variability of narrative constructions, investing to a single story as a dominant story to alter

an organization may lead to the assumption that one type of solution is suitable for every member of organization. This assumption has already been challenged in critiques presented against Lewin by the processual approach in the 1980's, not to mention the micro social constructionism tradition emphasizing variability in discourses.

Finally, the study sparked the discussion of what the real work is like in an organization. Spatial change seems to challenge the autonomy of an employee regarding a decision about how to conduct one's work (socially or individually). The study poses questions such as, who can define what real work is like and who can change the content of real work? Furthermore, an open question remains as to who is responsible for the outcomes of work if the autonomy is taken away from a single individual.

7.2 METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Prior research on a hot-desking office setting has tended to produce normative understandings of shortcomings and benefits of such changes. However, a qualitative, discursive approach would allow for digging deeper into the matters under discussion when transferring from a traditional office setting to a hot-desking office setting.

Macro social constructionist research on organizational change has produced interesting findings on different rhetorical strategies. However, the lack of naturally occurring discussion produces more abstract and semantic aspects of discourses, which shifts discussion on organizational change from grass-roots work practices to more abstract ideas and lived ideologies. Focusing on discursive accounts produced by employees experiencing organizational change results in a more nuanced understanding of the matters and issues affecting the organization undergoing the particular change. Furthermore, interactional data allows for digging deeper into interaction and rhetorical stances the members of an organization take while supporting and contesting change. Moreover, the rhetorical analysis of various attitudes provides an understanding of the reasons why the members of an organization support and contest an ongoing change.

The main limitation of this study is that the whole change program is a large process occurring simultaneously at many locations and extending over time, and is in many ways controversial. Therefore, the data sets employed in this dissertation are limited in scope and time. However, I believe that this data set is large enough to increase our understanding of the controversies and different stances taken while supporting and contesting change.

The combined 36 qualitative interviews, 15 hours of meetings and 37 hours of participatory observation of a series of workshops is cogent data as such. However, given the fact that the change program lasted five years and the company has over 3000 employees, the data provides a limited view of the

organization's members and the change program. Still, the dissertation is based on a qualitative research paradigm, meaning that the purpose is to describe, explain, and understand the discussion that is taking place during the change. Therefore, as Van Maanen (1979) emphasizes that the purpose of qualitative research is to gain deep insights into the phenomenon under study in its context, I believe this present study has provided a deep understanding of discussion occurring during change (although some voices might be lacking due to data limitations). Still, as Marshall (1996) presents, instead of drawing a representative sample of the population and producing generalizable results, qualitative research improves understanding of complex human issues. However, the results of qualitative research on social interaction can be generalized as *possible* practices (Peräkylä, 2011), meaning that I do not claim that the members of an organization always or usually take such stances as presented in this study, rather I claim that they are possible stances when discussing spatial change. Furthermore, I do not claim that organizational change always or usually leads to a polarized organization, but I claim that a polarized organization is possible while organizational change is conducted.

In qualitative research in general and observation and interview studies in particular, the researcher is a part of the social world being studied. This requires a continuous process of reflection on the research. Furthermore, in order to gain access to enter and conduct research within the company, building trust is paramount. This took place, for example, by being overt in terms of my research activities, but also by emphasizing the confidentiality in terms of handling the research material. While collecting data through the method of participatory observation, I especially reflected on my dual role in the research (discussed in article I as well as in the methodology section of this work). As a series of workshops involved participants external to an organization, and not even all the employees knew each other before to the workshop series, my presence as a researcher was not underscored. Furthermore, as the series of workshop involved many practical matters, such as interviewing and group work, being a participant observer softened my researcher role more than if I had been a non-participant observer in such setting. During the workshop series, I also reflected continuously on myself as researcher and participant, and I aimed to be aware of my contribution to discussion and wrote it down.

Similarly, when conducting non-participant observation, being reflective matters. In the sub-study II, my research colleague and I alternately participated in the meetings through the method of non-participant observation. We were present at the meetings, but we did not produce spoken research material. We reflected our presence by writing down situations when the participants paid attention to us and by taking this into account in the analysis. In a similar manner, when analyzing interview material in the sub-study III, the questions are taken into account when analyzing how the employees and responsible managers produced their stance to the change.

The analysis of data is limited to positive and negative evaluation of change, which produced the responsible managers as those who support change and the employees as those who contested change. Although that characterization is dominant in the dataset, the data also included positive evaluations of change by the employees. The positive evaluation concerned the physical appearance of the new office and the employees' positive attitude toward change in general. However, the positive evaluation was predominantly dissipated by highlighting in the same breath negative aspects of the change, either from the employees' own perspectives or those of others. In addition, although the employees took positive stances to support change in general, they predominantly took negative stances to contest the particular ongoing spatial change.

7.3 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

This dissertation has three theoretical contributions. First, this study follows the field of rhetorical social psychology and highlights attitudes as rhetorical stances in a matter of controversy instead of considering them as representations of internal psychological states. Not only is this contrary to understanding in mainstream social psychology, but this view also challenges prior research. Plenty of previous research concerning organizational change has tackled how to overcome resistant attitudes in organizations and how change leaders can disseminate new strategic directions to others by shifting meanings. Scholars have largely applied the concept of attitude while exploring resistance to change. These studies typically describe resistance as a negative attitude (See summary in Sonenshein, 2010) or as a response taking place on emotional, cognitive and intentional or behavioral levels (Lines, 2005; Piderit, 2000). Treating resistant talk as a negative inner attitude may result in the conclusion that there is a need to overcome resistant talk. This study suggests, similar to some others (McClellan, 2011; Piderit, 2000), that resistant talk is a focal part of talk about change and it should be integrated in research settings which explore change rhetoric in organizations. However, the definition of attitude in this dissertation differs from those defined by McClellan (2011) and Piderit (2000). Furthermore, this study provides a new lens to analyze resistance talk by taking the principle of rhetorical social psychology (Billig, 1996), which is oriented to always take resistance talk into account when looking into argumentative talk, as a starting point. Prior research that treats resistance talk as a negative inner attitude seems to be based on the idea that a change or development activity is reasonable, and everybody finally understands or should understand the reasonability of that activity. However, this study challenges that starting point and has taken the variability of accounts for a change and development activity as its foundation

and demonstrated that any aspect of that activity can turn into a tool to resist the development activity.

Second, this study suggests that a multidisciplinary approach is needed to understand the constantly changing working life. Along the way, various approaches to studying organizational change have borrowed concepts and methods from different disciplines to be able to operate in an environment that comprises elements and phenomena from various disciplines. Organizations operate in the societal environment, which plays a crucial role in how organizations develop their own *modus operandi*. Organizational change is a controversial and multidisciplinary phenomenon that deserves to be studied as such. Regardless of disciplines, organizational change usually involves discursive accounts of the alterations of organizational arrangements (Grant & Marshak, 2011). The tradition of institutional interaction provides a view to study interaction in work places, but discourse-based research in the field of management and organizational research has not largely utilized the tradition. However, research on organizational discourses is an inherently multidisciplinary field. Foucault's influence on organizational discourse approaches has been especially remarkable (Caldwell, 2005a; Välikangas & Seeck, 2011). Research on organizational discourses has operated in the fields of organization and management as well as in the field of discourse analysis. These studies have understood the role of discourse in different ways, which follows that they have usually operated at different levels (macro or micro) and explored either the role of macro linguistic and social structures as a means to understand organizational life (see, McKinley & McVittie, 2009) or the microstructures of language use and everyday discourses between people in interaction as their own right (see, Phillips & Oswick, 2012). However, the rhetorical approach in organization studies could be more developed (Symon, 2000). In discursive organizational change literature, change is understood as being unpredictable, ambiguous, and highly contextual (e.g., Buchanan & Dawson, 2007; Grant & Marshak, 2011). This study, focusing on the spatial organizational change, shares the understanding of the nature of change with discursive organizational change literature. The Hawthorne studies (Roethlisberger et al., 1939) have already brought up the notion of unpredictability and context sensitivity in terms of spatial change. An approach that understands context sensitivity and ambiguousness as its foundation is Billig's rhetorical social psychology. It discards a Foucauldian lens to discourse, as for Foucault, discourse usually behaves in an unarguable manner (Billig, 1996). It opens up a view to study change as an arguable phenomenon, for example, in the field of social psychology and management and organizational studies.

Finally, according to Billig (1996), rhetoric is dialogical, meaning that arguments are developed toward potential counter-arguments. In this study, arguments were predominantly developed toward supposed counter-arguments, meaning that they were not purely in a dialogical form. More specifically, those who promote change seems to construct their arguments

toward counter-attitudes assumed to prevail in an organization, whereas those who contest change seem to ground their arguments in arguments acknowledged to prevail among those who support change. Those who support change have a dialogical relation to attitudes *supposed* to prevail in an organization, whereas those who contest change have a dialogical relation to rhetorical stances found in an organization. However, this conclusion may also be explained by the methodological choices of this dissertation. Interview material is not interactional among organizational members, and data sets from meetings do not involve “grass-roots” talk, but rather the data set represents those who support change. However, the data collected in the workshop series involves both supporting and contesting stances and shows this dialogical discrepancy. In addition, interview and meetings materials involved plenty of supposed counter-arguments of which only a few appeared in the data overall. The other explanation is that supporting stances are employed in strategic talk, in the frontstage side of change talk, which means that arguments related to furthering change are available in organizations, and thus they have possibility to be applied as counter-arguments. It is likely that contesting stances belong to the backstage area of an organization and are therefore hidden from strategy talk. They are hidden from the formal arenas of an organization and are usually presented in informal interaction. However, this can be concluded that the concept of ‘*supposed counter-argument*’ needs further exploration. Future research questions should focus on exploring dialogical aspects of change rhetoric in more detail with various interactional data sets.

Moreover, further work is required to establish attitudes as rhetorical stances in the field of organizational change, as the majority of research has focused on attitudes as inner psychological states. Similar to Symon (2000, 2005), the research case in this dissertation concerned the construction of arguments and counter arguments to achieve certain goals. In addition to interview material as employed by Symon (2000, 2005), this present dissertation focused on real-time talk in meetings and workshops to capture real-time negotiation of change in the context of spatial change. To deepen understanding in this respect, it is possible to dissolve dichotomies emerging from change.

Finally, this study has focused on supporting and contesting stances in talking about change. By drawing the limits of supporting and contesting talk, those employees who do not care about or pay any special attention to change remained out of the scope of this dissertation. The future research should focus more deeply on this group of employees. The fact that not stating deviant opinions of change does not mean that this group of employees has nothing to say about change should be recognized.

7.4 PRAGMATIC CONTRIBUTIONS

As the results outlined above show, different groups in an organization produce different visions of an ongoing change, and therefore end up discussing different changes. As a practical contribution, this does not mean that managers should focus on reducing different visions and continuously providing “correct” visions of a change. Instead, this study encourages taking different visions seriously and considering how a change program can be redirected so that unwanted scenarios will not materialize, or considering alternative solutions if unwanted scenarios do indeed materialize. To put it briefly, instead of aiming to cut down resistant talk, this study encourages to take resistant talk into account as a relevant part of change talk. The results encourage those who lead changes in organizations to shift from the normative evaluation of positive and negative attitudes of change to understand variability in stances when discussing change.

Furthermore, the supporting stances and contesting stances produced positive and negative visions of an organization, respectively. Those people who aim at supporting change in an organization may benefit from taking into account the content of contesting stances. Instead of highlighting the goal of ultimate organizational superiority when supporting change, change managers could talk about inconveniences the change might result in. Thus, they could shift the focus from emphasizing the ultimate in superiority to responding to the negative evaluation of change at the same abstraction level and finding the ways to deal with negative consequences.

Some of the issues emerging from the findings of this study relate specifically to the implementation of spatial change. As spatial change seems to challenge the idea of work and the idea of a future employee, the study encourages having a grass-roots level discussions about what spatial changes mean to an individual employee and his or her working practices. It also suggests that change managers will get used to everyday work practices of the members of an organization in order to have a realistic vision regarding the need of enhancement of innovativeness and encounters. Moreover, there is a need to have a vision of which phases of work or work descriptions benefit from spatial change and which roles do not benefit from spatial change. This results in the acceptance of pluralism, such that there is no such a thing as one same working solution that suits all members of an organization.

Finally, in the trend to reduce corporate office spaces and altering traditional office settings to hot-desking office settings, organizations are narrated through innovativeness and encounters, along with internal and external necessity. The future employees are narrated as mobile employees. Instead of analytically thinking about what these trends really mean in an organization and how they are rhetorically packaged, there is a threat that narratives as such become end in themselves. Belief in trends means that trends themselves are believed to bring benefits to an organization. The study encourages thinking about whose values new narratives represent.

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