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MICRO-PRACTICES AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF STRATEGIZING

A practice-based study of the implementation
process of dual strategic changes

PhD dissertation

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Skov', is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maria Skov, August 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Existing research has contributed to understanding how strategy emerges during implementation and, more specifically, how it is realized through micro-practices and social dynamics. However, despite growing evidence that organizations pursue multiple strategies simultaneously, and the organizational consequences of failing to implement key strategies, relatively few of the insights into different micro-practices and social dynamics and their effects on strategy implementation concern contexts of ‘dual strategic changes’ – where more strategies are being implemented simultaneously. Such insights may advance knowledge of strategy-as-practice, as the implementation of dual strategies is expected to be more complex and involve particular forms of micro-practices and social dynamics. Therefore, this dissertation aims to answer the following question: How do micro-practices and social dynamics of strategizing play out in the context of dual strategic changes, and with what implications for their implementation? Theoretically positioned in the strategy-as-practice field, the dissertation addresses this overall research question by drawing on a three-and-a-half-year¹ case study of three Danish public schools undergoing simultaneous strategic changes. The dissertation comprises three papers, each motivated by an interest in furthering the understanding of micro-practices and social dynamics in a context of dual strategic changes.

Paper I addresses how employees’ emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes. It demonstrates how varying intensity of negative emotional reactions affects sensemaking processes and reveals three sensemaking dynamics that emerge through the implementation processes of dual strategic changes: refusing sensemaking, disrupting sensemaking, and constraining sensemaking. The paper’s processual framework contributes to the emotion and sensemaking literature by showing (i) how employee emotions not only facilitate but also inhibit sensemaking processes, and (ii) how emotions as continual constructs can coexist and evolve during dual strategic changes. Furthermore, it contributes to the relatively sparse literature on dual strategies by extending knowledge on the interaction between two strategies. Specifically, the paper reveals that undermined implementation processes did not only occur as failure to

¹ During the period of 3.5 years, there was one year without any data collection due to maternity leave.

implement one or the other strategy but also as a subtle interplay in which emotional reactions to one strategy have consequences for both strategies.

Paper II examines how actors' resistance to strategic change plays out in the context of dual strategies, and what the implications are for their implementation. It reveals four practices – linking, collapsing, undermining, and rejecting – that emerge through the implementation processes of dual changes. The practices evolve through three implementation phases – justifying, revising, and delegitimizing, thereby shaping the unfolding processes of implementing the two strategic changes. In terms of contributions, the paper first enriches the resistance literature by showing how actors camouflage their resistance, building their capabilities as a precursor to engaging in more active resistance. Second, it contributes to the literature on dual strategies by demonstrating how actors construct and manipulate the interactions between strategies. More specifically, the paper's processual framework extends knowledge of the interaction between two strategies by showing (i) the specific interactional dynamic through which actors relate dual strategies to each other, and (ii) how this enables them to resist strategic change and inhibit the implementation of both strategies, rather than simply using an old strategy to resist a new one. Finally, the findings also enrich the unintended consequences literature by improving the understanding of the link between resistance and unintended consequences, showing a more explicit form of resistance – using one strategy to resist another, and vice versa.

Paper III seeks to address how managers structure emergence during strategy implementation through practices within and between meetings. By studying strategizing episodes of interactions between managers and employees both within and between meetings, this paper reveals four sets of practices that managers put into action when attempting to manage emergence: conflict resolution, shaping interpretations, restricting discussions, and using facilitators. The paper contributes to the meetings literature, developing a processual framework that describes the dynamic and interactive process, in which the four practices of exerting influence are carried out. The paper demonstrates that managers during strategy implementation structure the settings within which strategy emergence arises through a combination of interrelated interactions with various actors embedded within and between meetings. Due to the range of interacting actors and whether employees support or undermine the strategic orientation, managers strategically differentiate practices across interactions and employees. The ongoing dynamic and interactive process that is

punctuated by, but not beholden to, meetings enables managers to *both* suppress variation that does not align with the strategic orientations *and* enable variation that align with the strategic orientation. As a result, the cumulative implications of the flow of interaction enable, and partially structure, strategy emergence.

Altogether, these three papers demonstrate the complex and emergent nature of strategic changes, showing how dual strategies emerge during implementation. They show how dual strategies are realized through micro-practices and social dynamics, emphasizing strategy *activities* and their relationship to strategic *outcomes*. The studies advance insight into employee emotion and resistance as obstacles to strategic changes, and into how micro-practices and social dynamics may enable managers to deal with emergent components and thereby overcome some complexities.

DANSK RESUMÉ

Strategiimplementering er en kompleks proces, som ikke nødvendigvis operationaliserer og gennemfører en strategi; den kan også resultere i subtile justeringer eller endda eksplicite reformuleringer af den tilsigtede strategi. Forskning viser, at sådanne utilsigtede konsekvenser delvis kan være forårsaget af mikro-praksisser og sociale dynamikker. Alligevel er vores viden om, hvordan mikro-praksisser og sociale dynamikker udfolder sig i praksis, på tværs af simultane strategiske forandringer, begrænset. Forskning har dog antydnet muligheden af en interaktionseffekt mellem strategier, hvorfor implementeringen af simultane strategiske forandringer må forventes at være mere kompleks og afsløre specifikke former for mikro-praksisser og sociale dynamikker. Denne afhandling er drevet af ønsket om at bidrage med viden om, hvordan sådanne mikro-praksisser og sociale dynamikker udspiller sig i en kontekst med simultane strategiske forandringer, samt hvilke konsekvenser de har for implementeringen. Dette adresseres med afsæt i en teoretisk forankring i forskningsfeltet strategy-as-practice og baseres på et etnografisk, longitudinelt casestudie af folkeskoler, som gennemgår simultane strategiske forandringer. Afhandlingen består af tre artikler, der hver er motiveret af en interesse i at få mere viden om mikro-praksisser og sociale dynamikker, der ses som centrale elementer i strategiarbejdet grundet deres konsekvenser for implementeringen af strategierne.

Den første artikel belyser, hvordan medarbejdernes følelsesmæssige reaktioner former deres sensemaking-processer af de simultane strategiske forandringer, og hvordan deres reaktion og interaktion påvirker implementeringsprocesserne. Artiklen demonstrerer, hvordan en varierende intensitet af negative følelser, på forskellig vis, påvirker sensemaking-processerne, og illustrerer tre sensemaking-dynamikker, der udspiller sig gennem implementeringen af de simultane strategiske forandringer, herunder at: afvise sensemaking, forstyrre sensemaking og begrænse sensemaking. Artiklen giver tre overordnede teoretiske bidrag. For det første bidrager artiklens konceptuelle procesmodel til den eksisterende litteratur om følelser og sensemaking ved at vise, (i) hvordan medarbejderes følelser ikke kun fremmer, men også hæmmer sensemaking, og (ii) hvordan følelser som kontinuerlige konstruktioner kan sameksistere og udvikle sig under simultane strategiske forandringer. For det andet bidrager artiklen til den relativt sparsomme litteratur om simultane strategier ved at øge vidensfeltet om samspillet mellem to strategier. Mere specifikt klarlægges det, hvordan underminerede implementeringsprocesser ikke blot opstår på

grund af manglende implementering af den ene eller anden strategi, men snarere i et subtilt samspil, hvor følelsesmæssige reaktioner på én strategi påvirker implementeringen af begge strategier.

Anden artikel undersøger, hvordan modstand mod strategisk forandring udspiller sig i forbindelse med simultane strategiske forandringer og hvilke konsekvenser, det har for deres implementering. Det illustreres ved fire praksisser, heriblandt at forbinde, kollapse, underminere og afvise – der viser sig i implementeringsprocesserne på tværs af de to strategiske forandringer. Praksisserne udvikles gennem tre implementeringsfaser: retfærdiggørelse, revidering og delegitimering, som således former implementeringsprocessen. For det første bidrager artiklen til den eksisterende litteratur om modstand ved at demonstrere, hvordan aktører kamuflerer deres modstand ved at manipulere og konstruere samspillet mellem strategierne, som siden hen tillader dem at engagere sig i mere aktiv modstand. For det andet udvider artiklens konceptuelle model viden om samspillet mellem to strategier ved at demonstrere (i) den specifikke interaktionsdynamik, hvorigennem aktører forbinder simultane strategier til hinanden, og (ii) hvordan dette gør dem i stand til at modstå strategiske forandringer og hæmme implementeringen af begge strategier snarere end blot at bruge en eksisterende strategi til at modstå en ny strategi. Endelig uddyber denne viden også litteraturen om utilsigtede konsekvenser ved at styrke forbindelsen mellem modstand og utilsigtede konsekvenser og ved at illustrere en mere eksplicit form for modstand, hvor aktørerne bruger én strategi til at modstå en anden.

Tredje artikel adresserer, hvordan ledere strukturerer strategisk emergens under strategiimplementering gennem praksisser *i* og *mellem* møder. Ved at studere interaktioner mellem ledere og medarbejdere både i og mellem møder, afdækker denne artikel fire praksisser, som anvendes af ledere, når de forsøger at forme strategisk emergens: konfliktløsning, formning af fortolkning, begrænsning af diskussioner og brug af facilitatorer. Artiklen bidrager til litteraturen om møder ved at afdække et dynamisk mønster, som bevæger sig mellem forskellige typer interaktion med forskellige aktører i og mellem møder. Her ses det, at ledere strukturerer strategisk emergens ved strategisk at differentiere mødepraksis og medarbejderes indflydelse på tværs af medarbejdere – særligt i forhold til sammensætningen af interaktive aktører. Endvidere viser artiklen, at interaktion og mødepraksis muliggøres af og er afhængig af anden mødepraksis, og at de samtidig påvirker og former hinanden. Endelig udvider artiklen vores viden om utilsigtede konsekvenser ved at vise,

hvordan den samlede praksis i og mellem møder påvirker strategi. Det løbende samspil mellem forskellige typer af interaktioner gør det muligt for ledere at undertrykke potentiel variation, der ikke er i overensstemmelse med strategiske orienteringer. Det kumulative flow af interaktioner muliggør således emergens og delvis strukturering heraf.

Samlet giver disse artikler indsigt i en kompleks og emergerende karakter af strategiske forandringer, der viser, hvordan simultane strategier emergerer under implementeringen. Artiklerne viser, hvordan simultane strategiske forandringer realiseres gennem mikro-praksisser og sociale dynamikker, idet de understreger strategiaktiviteter og deres forhold til strategi og strategiske effekter. Artiklerne fremmer indsigten i medarbejderes følelser og modstand som hindringer for strategiske forandringer og ligeledes i, hvordan mikro-praksisser og sociale dynamikker kan gøre det muligt for ledere at håndtere emergerende komponenter og derved overvinde noget af kompleksiteten.

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PART I

Introduction

Part I contains the theoretical and methodological foundations of the dissertation. Chapter 1 outlines the motivation and research aim. Chapter 2 sets out the strategy-as-practice research field in which the dissertation is theoretically positioned. It elucidates strategy implementation as a non-linear process, emphasizing the micro-practices and social dynamics of (i) obstructing strategic changes and (ii) shaping strategy emergence. I uncover the theoretical foundations of these micro-practices and dynamics, clarifying how I theoretically position them, and identify the knowledge gap that the dissertation aims to address. Chapter 3 details the dissertation's research design. It introduces the cases and explains the dual strategic changes that make it a critical context for strategy research. Furthermore, it specifies the collection of data from ethnographic observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCING THE DISSERTATION

Motivation and research aim

Strategy implementation is ‘one of the most important undertakings of an organization’ (Sonenshein, 2010: 477), yet often fraught with unintended consequences or even failure (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2003; Hofer and Schendel, 1978). In particular, research shows that ‘implementation does not simply operationalize and execute strategy’ (Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015: 439) but also results in subtle adjustments to, or even explicit reformulations of, the intended strategy (Sminia and de Rond, 2012; Vaara and Whittington, 2012). Therefore, practice research goes beyond studying the relationship between strategy formulation and implementation to addressing them as mutually constitutive (Jarzabkowski, 2005). Although strategy formulation and implementation weave together in a complex way, making it difficult to separate, strategy-as-practice scholars still operate with concepts such as strategy implementation (e.g. Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015; Huy et al., 2014; Hengst et al., 2020).

In unveiling the emergent nature of strategic change, existing research has contributed to understanding how strategy emerges during implementation and, more specifically, how it is realized through micro-practices and social dynamics (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2005; e.g. Mantere et al., 2012; Huy et al., 2014; Sonenshein, 2010). However, despite growing evidence that organizations simultaneously pursue multiple strategies (e.g. Jarzabkowski et al., 2013; Smith, 2014), and the serious organizational consequences of failing to implement key strategies (e.g. Mantere et al., 2012), few have examined contexts of ‘dual strategic changes’ – where more than one strategy is implemented simultaneously. Yet, we expect the implementation of dual strategies often to be particularly challenging because they generate ambiguity (Sillince et al., 2012), conflicts (Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015), and struggles to make meaning (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017). Many of the problems identified in these few studies of dual strategies arise because there is an existing strategy with legitimacy, against which any new strategy must be interpreted and actioned (e.g. Hengst et al., 2020). They reveal an interaction effect whereby the way one strategy is implemented seems to shape the other (e.g. Sillince et al., 2012). So even though research often focuses on a single change (e.g. Balogun et al., 2011; Ybema and Horvers, 2017), overlooking that organizations often have to make changes in response to multiple pressures occurring sequentially or simultaneously (Webb and Pettigrew, 1999), we know that the implementation of dual strategies

may be problematic. Implementation processes may be more complex than single strategic changes and involve particular forms of micro-practices and social dynamics. Therefore, we need to examine the processual dynamics through which two strategies are implemented simultaneously. In doing so, we will extend understanding of strategy implementation as a non-linear process beyond considerations of how implementation does not simply operationalize and execute strategy (Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015: 439), to a more nuanced understanding of an interactional dynamic through which actors relate dual strategies to each other, and how it shapes the implementation of both strategies. Therefore, this dissertation is driven by the desire to answer the following question:

How do micro-practices and social dynamics of strategizing play out in the context of dual strategic changes, and with what implications for their implementation?

To address this overall research question, the dissertation adopts a strategy-as-practice approach (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Whittington, 2006; Golsorkhi et al., 2015), emphasizing the everyday activities of strategy practitioners. In accordance with such a practice perspective, implementation not just refer to the execution of strategies but also the formulation of strategies.

The dissertation is organized into three papers that examine and theorize different micro-practices and social dynamics in strategy implementation. Each paper is motivated by the view that micro-practices and social dynamics are central to strategizing due to their link to consequential strategic outcomes (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). The first two papers aim to extend knowledge of the micro-practices and social dynamics of obstructing strategic changes, while the third paper elucidates the micro-practices and social dynamics of shaping strategy emergence. In the following, I outline the motivation and research aim for each of the three papers.

Paper I focuses on emotion as an obstacle to strategic change, and is titled: ‘Emotional reactions as inhibitors of sensemaking: How emotions are nourished by and shape dual strategic changes’. Emotion is identified as an important behavioural process in strategizing (Suddaby et al., 2013) and is increasingly acknowledged as an important explanation for variation in key cognitive and social processes that influence how strategy is implemented (e.g. Liu and Maitlis, 2014; Brundin and Nordqvist, 2008; Sloan and Oliver, 2013; Huy, 2011). Existing studies show that employees’ interpretations of a new strategy often arise from, or are aligned with, their emotions towards it, which shapes the way they implement that strategy (Bartunek et al., 2006;

Walsh and Bartunek, 2011; Maitlis et al., 2013). Given this widespread evidence that emotion is integral to interpretive processes (e.g. Maitlis et al., 2013), a sensemaking lens on emotions in strategizing can potentially provide more knowledge about how and why strategists act the way they do, and thereby explain the impact of emotional reactions on change implementation. Although existing studies highlight that emotions may be a critical dimension of sensemaking and strategic change, it remains unclear how unfolding emotions across simultaneous dual changes coexist, evolve, and shape strategic outcomes (Klarner et al., 2011; Brundin and Liu, 2015). As emotions are transversal to any strategic practices and situations, there is a need to develop better understanding of their role in strategic change (Golsorkhi et al., 2015). Advancing such insight could enhance understanding of the social processes in strategizing (Golsorkhi et al., 2015). Therefore, Paper I applies a sensemaking lens to illustrate how employees' emotional reactions play out in the context of dual strategic changes. More specifically, it aims to answer the following research question:

RQ 1: How do employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how do these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes?

Paper II focuses on resistance as another obstacle to strategic change and is titled: 'Resisting by not resisting: The implementation processes of dual strategic changes'. From existing studies, we know that strategy is reinterpreted and reshaped, and that these unintended outcomes and reinterpretations often arise from resistance underlying strategy implementation and not just lack of understanding (e.g. Mantere et al., 2012; Balogun and Johnson, 2005; Huy et al., 2014; Sonenshein, 2010; Vaara and Tienari, 2011). Much of what we know about unintended consequences may arise from actors not simply reinterpreting the new strategy but actively resisting it. In other words, implementation of strategic change can be derailed or altered by employees' resistance (Courpasson et al., 2012). Accordingly, the resistance to change literature highlights the role of resistance in how strategic change is implemented (Courpasson et al., 2012). Existing studies thus provide insights into how people resist strategic change, what practices they use, and the effects on implementation (e.g. Laine and Vaara, 2007; Thomas and Davies, 2005; Balogun et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2011). Yet, they largely focus on the context of a single change, leaving unanswered how such social dynamics play out in the implementation of dual

strategies. Hence, we need more explicit focus on resistance as a key aspect of the implementation of dual strategies from which unintended consequences may arise. Therefore, Paper II aims to answer the following research question:

RQ 2: How does actors' resistance to strategic change play out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation?

Paper III focuses on micro-practices and social dynamics within and between meetings and is titled: 'Structuring emergence during implementation of strategic changes: Practices within and between meetings'. Existing studies have addressed the role of meetings in strategy implementation and related the practices to consequential strategic outcomes (e.g. Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008). As existing studies demonstrate that meetings are consequential for strategic outcomes, Whittington et al. (2006) also recognize emergence; based on the concept of planned emergence, they argue that managers and formal strategy work still have roles in organizing and structuring strategic change. Hodgkinson et al. (2006) conclude that strategy workshops are important vehicles for the planned emergence of strategy. Workshops are the 'very forums in which such emergent strategy is thought through, translating, perhaps even legitimizing and formalizing, that which has its origins lower down the organization' (Hodgkinson et al., 2006: 488). This does not necessarily contradict the concept of emergent strategy but rather indicates that workshops could be an effective bridge between formal design and informal emergence. Nevertheless, though the literature positions managers as 'active participants in the strategy process' (Jarzabkowski, 2008: 621) and highlights the role of meetings in strategy implementation (Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008; Hodgkinson et al., 2006), the practices within and between meetings are an integral but relatively poorly understood aspect of how managers structure strategy emergence. Paper III aims to address this knowledge gap by answering the following research question:

RQ 3: How do managers structure emergence during strategy implementation through practices within and between meetings?

Altogether, the three papers seek to provide insights into the complex and emergent nature of strategic changes, examining how dual strategies emerge during implementation. They aim to extend knowledge of how dual strategies are realized through micro-practices and social dynamics,

illuminating strategy *activities* and their relationship to strategic *outcomes*. The studies advance insight into employee emotion and resistance as obstacles to strategic changes and elucidate how micro-practices and social dynamics may enable managers to deal with emergent components and thereby overcome some complexities.

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Chapter 2

THEORETICAL POSITIONING

The strategy-as-practice approach

This dissertation is theoretically positioned in the strategy-as-practice research field. As an alternative to mainstream strategy research, a strategy-as-practice approach has implications for the way we view and study strategy (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Johnson et al., 2003). Considering strategy as practice shifts attention from typological accounts of strategies and their effects on performance to a more comprehensive, in-depth analysis of what actually takes place in strategy formulation, planning, and implementation and in other activities of thinking and doing in strategy (Golsorkhi et al., 2015).

The emergence of strategy-as-practice can be linked to the broader ‘practice-turn’ in social sciences, including organizational research (e.g. Schatzki et al., 2001; Nicolini, 2012; Feldman and Orlikowski, 2011). In line with this turn towards practice in organization studies, strategy-as-practice research utilizes the ‘practice-turn’ to develop understanding of organizational strategy (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Jarzabkowski, 2005; Johnson et al., 2003; Whittington, 2003; Whittington, 1996). Theory of practice emphasizes the wider social context that shapes and is shaped by observable activity (Schatzki et al., 2001) and considers how organizational life ‘emerges through people’s recurrent actions’ (Feldman and Orlikowski, 2011: 1240). Johnson et al. (2003: 3) in this sense describe ‘strategizing’ as the ‘doing of strategy’ and call for strategy research to emphasize ‘the detailed processes and practices which constitute the day-to-day activities of organizational life and which relate to strategic outcomes’. In this view, strategy is not something that an organization *has* but something its actors *do* (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007), emphasizing a particular interest in the everyday activities of strategy practitioners.

A further important aspect of the strategy-as-practice approach is the contextualization of micro-activities, emphasizing the micro-practices of strategizing. As ‘actors do not act in isolation but draw upon regular, socially defined modes of acting that make their actions and interactions meaningful to others’ (Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008: 1391), micro-activities need to be understood within their social context (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). To grasp this contextualization of micro-activities, Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008: 1391) argue that we have to elucidate ‘those social structures through which micro-actions are constructed and which, in turn, construct the possibilities for action’. For that reason, strategy as practice has been conceptualized ‘as a situated, socially accomplished activity, while strategizing comprises those actions, interactions and

negotiations of multiple actors and the situated practices that they draw upon in accomplishing that activity' (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007: 7-8).

A practice perspective 'goes beyond truncated views of strategy as a deliberate, top-down process', encouraging a broader definition of strategists (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007: 12). Strategy-as-practice studies have demonstrated that middle managers and lower-level employees are also important actors in shaping strategy (e.g. Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Balogun, 2003; Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Mantere, 2005; Rouleau, 2005). While their actions and influence on strategy may be unintended from top management's perspective, they are significant for the organization's survival. Hence, it is important to identify these actors as potential strategists, opening a research agenda that studies personnel below top-management level as strategic actors (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). However, this does not mean that research attention should shift completely from top managers: existing empirical work suggests that 'there is still much to be learnt from studying these actors as participants in strategy-making rather than as its formulators' (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007: 12). Such suggestions increase the relevance of studies investigating the interplay between managers and lower-level employees.

Strategy implementation

Research typically distinguishes strategy *formulation* from *implementation*, assuming that the latter follows the former (Huff and Reger, 1987; Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, and Lampel, 2005). In contrast, existing research has shown that strategy implementation should be viewed as a non-linear process (Hutzschenreuter and Kleindienst, 2006; Vaara and Whittington, 2012; Tsoukas, 2010) in which intended strategies often lead to unintended consequences (Balogun and Johnson, 2005). Scholars have shown that strategies are interpreted, adjusted, and adapted during implementation (Sminia and de Rond, 2012; Vaara and Whittington, 2012). In line with such reconfigurations of strategies, Mintzberg (1978) illustrates how an intended strategy does not necessarily come to realization, thus resulting in unrealized strategy. Realized strategy includes actions that does not derive from the intentions of top management, termed emergent strategy and can, therefore, be analysed as having both deliberate and emergent components (Boyett and Currie, 2004; Lowe and Jones, 2004). Literature on strategizing further develops this research agenda, recognizing the role of managers and formal strategy work in structuring strategy emergence

(Denis et al., 2007; Floyd and Lane, 2000; Jarzabkowski, 2005; Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Whittington et al., 2006; Miller and Sardais, 2011).

Jarzabkowski (2005) argues that the polarized categories such as formulation/implementation and intended/emergence are ‘academic conveniences, based in theoretical traditions that have little relevance in practice’, why practice research goes beyond studying the relationship between such concepts to addressing them as mutually constitutive. Accordingly, Whittington (2003) also argues that strategizing and organizing are simultaneous, constant activities - and in many respects almost the same. In accordance with a practice perspective, this dissertation addresses the dichotomies such as formulation/implementation and intended/emergent as mutually constitutive. Therefore, even though this dissertation is framed in the literature on strategy implementation and use the concept to uncover the realization of mandated changes (see e.g. Hengst et al., 2020; Huy et al., 2014), it still go beyond these inadequacies in the academic construction of strategy by examining strategy as a practice. It means that implementation not just refers to the execution of strategies but also the formulation of strategy content.

The dissertation aims to extend these insights into the emergent nature of strategic change contributing to understanding how strategy emerges during implementation and, more specifically, how it is realized through the micro-practices and social dynamics of obstructing strategic changes and shaping strategy emergence. In the following, I emphasize the foundations for these inquiries, clarifying how I theoretically position them and identifying the knowledge gap that they address.

Micro-practices and social dynamics of obstructing strategic changes

In revealing the emergent nature of strategy, management scholars emphasize that the social dynamics involved in strategy implementation often lead to unintended consequences (Balogun and Johnson, 2005; Mantere et al., 2012; Huy et al., 2014; Sonenshein, 2010). Examining strategy as practice gives critical importance to everyday social dynamics due to their link to consequential strategic outcomes (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). For instance, Mantere et al. (2012) demonstrate how communicated strategies become part of ‘sensemaking history’ and influence the implementation of strategic change through negative interpretations and rejections that ultimately lead to change reversal. Balogun and Johnson (2005) suggest that unintended consequences may

arise from a cyclical sensemaking process, where earlier schemata and sensemaking triggers inform subsequent sensemaking through the mediation of informal social interactions. Their study demonstrates how sensemaking triggers perceived by recipients to hinder rather than help the change process may lead to discussions, disagreements, and negotiations, indicating an implicit form of resistance to strategic change. Huy et al. (2014) also show how strategic change implementation is affected by sensemaking, which is reflected in shifting legitimacy judgements and emotional reactions that fuel growing resistance to the change, eventually leading to unintended consequences.

From these existing studies on unintended outcomes, we know that sensemaking leads to reinterpretation of strategic change so that it is implemented in different ways to those initially intended (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2005; Mantere et al., 2012). Often these unintended outcomes do not simply arise from employees' reinterpretations of a new strategy (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2005; Mantere et al., 2012) but are also aligned with their emotional reactions and resistance to it, which shapes the way they (re)interpret and implement that strategy. Hence, prior studies' illustrations of derailed implementation of strategic change often highlight an implicit form of negative emotion and/or resistance, displayed in negative interpretations (e.g. Sonenshein, 2010; Huy et al., 2014), rather than linking the unintended consequences directly to emotions or resistance.

While such research has focused on the social dynamics of implementing a single strategic change, we know that implementing dual strategies may engender challenges because they generate ambiguity (Sillince et al., 2012), conflicts (Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015), legitimacy struggles (Hengst et al., 2020), and problems over meaning making (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017). These studies demonstrate that there is an interaction effect, whereby how one strategy is implemented seems to shape the other. In situations of dual strategic changes, implementation processes may be more complex and involve particular forms of emotion and resistance. Accordingly, this dissertation goes more deeply into the resistance and emotion literature to better understand how such social dynamics may play out in a context of dual strategic changes.

To improve understanding of the social processes in strategizing, calls have been made to take the issues of resistance and emotion seriously (Golsorkhi et al., 2015:18). Analysis of resistance involves reconceptualizing how organizational actors interpret, make sense of, consume,

or react to the strategies imposed on them. The reactions range from various modes of coping to outright resistance. Further, it seems that emotion has been emerging as an insightful and stimulating dimension that is transversal to any strategic practices and situations (Golsorkhi et al., 2015). Brundin and Liu (2015) argue that there is a need to develop better understanding of their role in strategic change. Accordingly, this dissertation elucidates emotion and resistance as two obstacles to strategic changes.

Micro-practices of structuring strategy emergence

To analyse strategy as a situated, socially accomplished activity, strategy-as-practice studies emphasize ‘the activities that draw upon and are structured by particular strategic practices’ (Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008: 1392). Strategy is associated with particular types of practices that structure the flow of everyday strategy work (Mantere, 2005). Existing research has demonstrated how studies of practices, such as recurrent annual cycles (Jarzabkowski, 2003; Jarzabkowski, 2005), strategy workshops (Hodgkinson et al., 2006), and recurrent meetings (Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008) can improve understanding of the actions and interactions of strategists and the strategic outcomes they produce.

These existing studies conceptualize the micro-practices through which strategic activity is constructed. As those practices shape strategic activity, such as strategic change, strategy-as-practice scholars propose that they may be used as units of analysis for investigating how strategic changes emerge (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). We know from existing research that meetings as strategic practices are consequential for strategic outcomes (e.g. Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008). However, though meetings have been studied to understand how strategic activity is constructed, practices within and between meetings are an integral but still relatively poorly understood aspect of how managers shape strategy emergence. Accordingly, this dissertation goes more deeply into the meetings literature to better understand how such practices enable managers to deal with emergent strategy components during strategy implementation.

Conceptual orientation of the papers

Each of the three papers explains some different aspects of activity that are considered consequential at the chosen analysis level, operationalizing different key concepts in the strategy-as-practice agenda. The papers vary in terms of the dominant practitioner focus, main practices examined, and consequential outcomes. As emphasized by Jarzabkowski et al. (2007), these concepts are important theoretically in establishing the conceptual orientation of research, practically for informing different aspects of strategy practice, and analytically for defining the level and unit of analysis for empirical research (Schatzki et al., 2001; Whittington, 2003). Table 2.1 summarizes how the papers operationalize the key concepts.

Table 2.1. Conceptual orientation of the papers

Paper	Research question	Dominant practitioner focus	Main practices examined	Consequential outcome (what does it explain?)
Paper I: Emotional reactions as inhibitors of sensemaking; How emotions are nourished by and shape dual strategic changes	How do employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how do these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes?	Employees	Emotion and sensemaking	Implementation of strategic changes
Paper II: Resisting by not resisting: The implementation processes of dual strategic changes	How does actors' resistance to strategic change play out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation?	Employees	Resistance	Implementation of strategic changes
Paper III: Structuring emergence during implementation of strategic changes: Practices within and between meetings	How do managers structure emergence during strategy implementation through practices within and between meetings?	Managers*	Meetings and informal interactions	Structuring strategy emergence during implementation

* Managers refer to headmasters, who have a kind of middle-manager role.

Paper I is titled, 'Emotional reactions as inhibitors of sensemaking: How emotions are nourished by and shape dual strategic change'. This paper uncovers how employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes. In line with the broader definition of strategist, the dominant practitioner focus in this paper is employees. The paper examines employees' emotional reactions and their sensemaking as the main practices. Besides their consequences for other micro-mechanisms, these practices are considered consequential for the implementation of strategic changes.

Paper II is titled 'Resisting by not resisting: The implementation processes of dual strategic changes'. This paper examines how actors' resistance to strategic change plays out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation. As in Paper I, the strategic 'actors' are employees. However, Paper II differs by focusing on resistance as the main practice, which also is considered consequential for the implementation process. Specifically, the paper elucidates the role of resistance in implementation of dual strategic changes.

Paper III is titled 'Structuring emergence during implementation of strategic changes: Practices within and between meetings'. In this paper, managers are the dominant practitioner focus. As pointed out earlier, while strategy as practice encourages a broader definition of strategists, including middle and operational-level employees, existing empirical work indicates that there is still much to learn from studying top managers as participants in, rather than formulators of, strategy-making (e.g. Jarzabkowski, 2003, 2005). The paper examines the practices within and between meetings. As a realized strategy may include actions that do not derive from the intentions of management, these practices are examined to account for how they enable managers to deal with emergent components. Hence, this paper focuses on clarifying how managers shape strategy emergence during implementation.

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Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

Epistemological and ontological reflections on studying practices and processes of strategizing

The practice turn in strategy research (Golsorkhi et al., 2015; Johnson et al., 2003) implies ‘an explicit reconsideration of paradigmatic premises’ (Grand et al., 2015: 78). Strategy-as-practice research is shaped by constructivist paradigms (Kuhn, 1996), and more specifically, the pivotal argument of this dissertation is that strategy is a socially constructed phenomenon (Grand et al., 2015). This constructivist epistemology indicates that research is creation and construction (Joas, 1992; Knorr-Cetina, 1989). Accordingly, the ‘research methodologies are understood as enabling, ensuring and fostering creativity in research practice’ (Grand et al., 2015: 90). Because, if ‘research is interpreted as creation and construction, it needs to be enabled by particular methodologies, technologies and practices of creation and construction’ (Grand et al., 2015: 91). From the perspective of the social constructivist paradigm, knowledge of strategizing are effects of ‘continuous scientific and practical (re)construction processes, through the creative activities of the organization actors and strategy researchers involved, and through interactions between organizational actors and strategy researchers’ (Grand et al., 2015: 91).

The strategy-as-practice reconceptualization of strategy represents an ontological shift in strategy research and the way strategy is looked upon. Following the constructivist paradigms, ‘refocusing of scientific research from “describing reality” to an exploration of “reality construction” through scientific research and social practice’ (Grand et al., 2015: 84), this dissertation sheds light on how strategy is produced, stabilized, and changed in organizations through practices, practitioners, and praxis (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). I consider and analyse strategy as a continuously unfolding stream of activity that is constructed through the interactions and negotiations between various actors. This ontological stance is linked to a processual understanding of organization acknowledging social phenomena as accomplished through ongoing activities (Weick, 1979).

In order to capture the continuous construction of strategy (Langley et al., 2013; Langley, 2007), this dissertation takes a strong process approach to analyse qualitative process data (Langley, 1999; Chia and Tsoukas, 2003; Jarzabkowski et al., 2017). In accordance with this strong process approach (Langley, 2007; Langley et al., 2013; Rescher, 1996), the dissertation focuses on

how strategy is produced and reproduced in an ongoing flux of processes (Chia and MacKay, 2007; Hernes, 2007). As an alternative to seeing the world in terms of stable entities changing from time to time (Langley et al., 2013), this dissertation sees the world as composed of ever-changing processes (Langley et al., 2013; Chia and Tsoukas, 2003). Scholars such as Feldman (2000) and Tsoukas and Chia (2002) conceptualize organizational phenomena as being in a continuous state of becoming. Such a conceptualization implies that ‘practices reconstruct the organization on a recurrent basis but also provide the grounds for its modification’ (Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008).

Based on these epistemological and ontological reflections on studying practices and processes of strategizing, I adopted an ethnographic, longitudinal case study approach (Langley, 1999; Pettigrew, 1990). The study relies on in-depth qualitative data, drawing on multiple data sources to capture the micro-practices and social dynamics that might be relevant to understand the process of strategy implementation. In the following, I contextualize the study, describing the case setting, followed by an account of the data collection.

Case setting

To advance understanding of micro-practices and social dynamics of strategizing, I initially looked for a setting comprising multiple strategic changes. Such a setting can be found in public organizations, which often have to make strategic changes in response to multiple pressures occurring sequentially or simultaneously, particularly new government policies. As the Danish school context has undergone multiple, externally mandated changes (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019), this setting is suitable for examining the overall research question.

Hence, the dissertation sets out to study the implementation processes of dual strategic changes in a school context experiencing top-down, centrally regulated demands and standards. The external pressure to enact multiple strategies typically puts professional autonomy and interests under pressure (Jarzabkowski and Fenton, 2006), even as it is difficult to promote agreement to changes due to such self-interest and professional autonomy (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017; Brown, 1998). The study was conducted over a period in which two changes were imposed: new working hour rules and a new public school reform. The changes were externally mandated by the Danish central government and Local Government Denmark (an association of Danish

municipalities). The implementation of the two changes came simultaneously, but they were not intended to be linked (Kjer and Rosdahl, 2016). Figure 3.1 illustrates a timeline that incorporates and superimposes both strategic changes to understand their temporal linking.

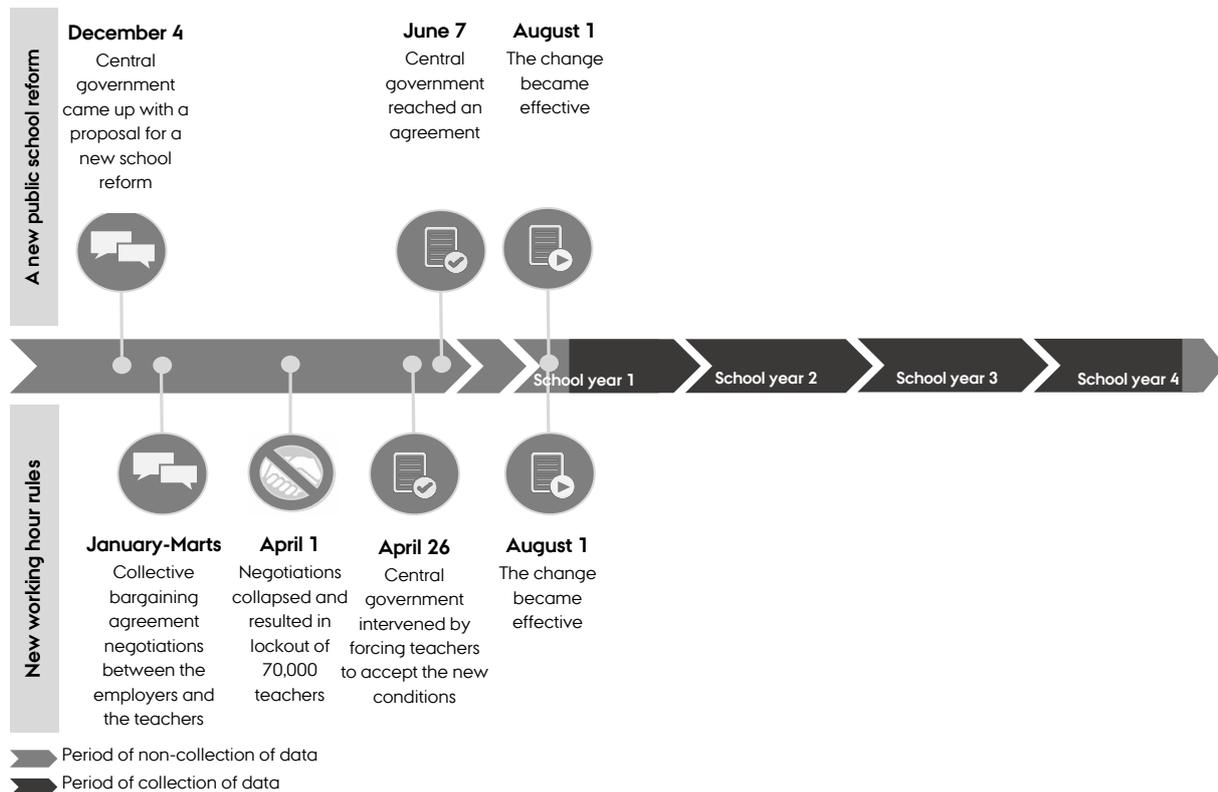


Figure 3.1. The temporal linking of the strategic changes

The new working hour rules were adopted after the collective bargaining agreement negotiations between the public employers (represented by Local Government Denmark) and the teachers (represented by the Danish Union of Teachers, ‘DLF’) collapsed and the resulting lockout of 70,000 teachers had lasted almost four weeks (DLF, 2014). Core to the dispute was the DLF’s refusal to sign a collective bargaining agreement that gave headmasters more power to determine teachers’ work schedules. Central government intervened by forcing teachers to accept the new conditions (Refner, 2014). The new rules gives the management team greater autonomy to lead and distribute work at school, determining the ratio of teaching and preparation hours, and total working hours. The change was strategic in altering the deployment of key school staffing resources, overturning the maximum of 25 weekly contact hours that had been standard. Teaching

hours thus rose (to 30 hours for some) and full-time presence in school became a duty of teachers. Table 3.1 summarizes the initiatives in the new working hour rules, outlining the framework for the new management strategy (MANST).

Table 3.1. The framework for the MANST

Initiatives*	Content
No maximum contact hours	The school management is free to determine the teaching to preparation-hour ratio, and total working hours.
Full-time presence	Teachers have the right and duty to be present full-time in the workplace during full working hours.
Scheduling of working time	The work is organized on weekdays, Monday to Friday, during daytime hours. The daily working hours must, to the extent possible, be continuous, rather than split shifts, or entailing preparation outside these working hours.
Number of working days	The school management/municipality determines the number of days that teachers must work.
Determination of teachers' tasks	The management prepares a task overview, which must indicate the tasks that the teacher is expected to complete.
No (very limited) flexitime	Teachers have no or very limited flexitime.

MANST: management strategy

*All initiatives were mandatory from the first year of the change.

Simultaneously with the new working hour rules, a new public school reform was implemented, as central government reached a broad political agreement to improve standards in Danish public schools. This strategic change was a US-inspired, accountability-focused school reform with three main objectives: 1) the public school system must challenge all students to reach their full potential; 2) public schools must curb the impact of social background on academic results; and 3) trust in schools and pupil well-being must be enhanced via respect for professional knowledge and practices (The Danish Ministry of Education, 2013). These objectives were to be achieved through several strategic initiatives (see Table 3.2), including longer and more varied school days and increased teaching quality in various subjects, with enhanced exercise and movement, objective-oriented teaching, and open schools (The Danish Ministry of Education, 2013). This very comprehensive reform fundamentally altered the current teaching strategy. Table 3.2 outlines the framework for the new teaching strategy (TEAST).

Table 3.2. The framework for the TEAST

Initiatives	Content	Timeframe
Longer school day	30 hours for the youngest, 33 for the middle, and 35 hours for the oldest students.	Mandatory from the first year of the change.
Homework assistance and academic immersion	Time must be allocated (2-3 hours each week) for students to have academic lessons clarified, receive help with homework, and be immersed in subjects that are particularly difficult or interesting.	Participation was voluntary in the first year, but mandatory from the second year of the change.
Exercise and movement	Exercise and movement must be integrated into all students' school days for an average of 45 minutes each day.	Mandatory from the first year of the change.
Open school	The school must cooperate with the surrounding community in sporting, cultural, and business life.	Mandatory from the first year of the change.
Varied and realistic teaching	Traditional blackboard-based teaching must be combined with practical and assisted learning activities that challenge and motivate students.	Mandatory from the first year of the change.
Objective-oriented teaching	Learning objectives, student plans, and quality reports are introduced as new requirements.	Only in the second year the new simplified learning objectives were introduced to promote objective-oriented teaching.

TEAST: teaching strategy

Although each of the changes consists of several strategic initiatives, there was only limited central specification on how they should be implemented. This left schools certain discretion on implementation, possibly in collaboration with the municipality. However, to varying degrees, the changes set the framework for management and teaching, and schools responded to the mandated changes by implementing a new TEAST and a new MANST.

I proceeded to select three Danish public schools in a midsize municipality. The smallest school is located in a small community and has approximately 400 students, 30 teachers and a management team comprising a headmaster, a deputy headmaster, and a pedagogical leader. The mid-sized school is located in a suburb and has approximately 600 students, 50 teachers, and a management team comprising a headmaster, a deputy headmaster, a section manager, and a pedagogical leader. The biggest school is also located in the city and has approximately 1,000 students, 75 teachers, and a management team comprising a headmaster, a deputy headmaster, a section manager, and a pedagogical leader. Each of the schools are split into three sections respectively including the young, middle, and older students. Specific details of the three cases are

disguised to preserve anonymity. The three schools are labelled School A, School B, and School C, and all research participants are given pseudonyms.

Data collection

Longitudinal qualitative data were collected over a period of three and a half years² as the schools implemented the two changes. The data were triangulated through multiple methods of data collection, incorporating ethnographic observations, in-depth interviews, and documentary analysis.

Over the three and a half years, 85 days were spent at the schools, observing meetings, seminars, and daily work. The main data collection focused on interaction between actors. It has been argued that although meetings are not necessarily directly focused on strategy, they may include strategic issues (Seidl and Guérard, 2015). Therefore, I studied everyday interaction such as large-group and small-group meetings. The small-group meetings involved various committees (e.g. cooperation committees, pedagogical committees, and implementation teams). These may be mandatory groups, such as the cooperation committee which is a committee of workgroup representatives, chaired by the headmaster, and which includes multiple employee-elected members. The pedagogical committee focuses on professional aspects of teaching; its members hold key positions as regards pedagogical issues, and, often, members are appointed by the management team. Finally, the implementation teams are *ad hoc* in nature, focus on specific issues, and are mostly appointed by the management team. In total, I attended 52 meetings over this period, each lasting two to five hours, resulting in 155 hours of observation. I also attended four seminars, each lasting about six to nine hours. In addition, I engaged in other forms of on-site fieldwork, collecting incidental observational data: I regularly sat in the office or staffroom where I joined informal discussions and talked with teachers and managers. I observed and participated in informal pre and post-meeting discussions, and observed and shadowed managers and teachers in their everyday work. Alongside daily observations, informal, open-ended, and unstructured interviews took place. Detailed field notes, including as many verbatim quotes as possible, were taken and typed up within 24 hours, as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994).

² During the period of 3.5 years, I had one year without any data collection due to maternity leave.

To complement ethnographic observations, I conducted 44 semi-structured interviews. I wanted to understand not just how the managers' plans were created and action taken, but also how these plans are consumed and influenced by employees and translated into the day-to-day practices that create strategy. Therefore, the interviews include both interviews with members of the management team (22) and interviews with teachers (22). Interviews lasted 45-60 minutes; all interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Finally, the study included access to internal documents. Specifically, I collected minutes and agenda items of all meetings attended, strategic plans, calendars, budgets, and executive profiles, allowing additional data triangulation. These documents were used as a secondary data source and provided a new perspective on the implementation processes; this was useful for engaging interviewees in discussion. Furthermore, they document, among other things, not only the discussions that took place in the meetings but also the understandings that were achieved through the discussions.

Table 3.3 provides an overview of primary data included in each of the three papers. As indicated by Table 2.1. (see Chapter 2), employees are the dominant practitioner focus in both Paper I and II. As I had access to interview employees in School A, the use of data in Paper I and II are derived from this case. It was applicable to shed light on how the micro-practices and social dynamics of employees play out. In contrast, the dominant practitioner focus in Paper III is managers. As I had access to interview managers in all three schools, three empirical cases form the empirical basis of this paper. It was relevant for studying how managers' micro-practices and social dynamics shape the implementation processes. However, even though it can be an advantage that the discussion and the conceptual framework rely on multiple sources of evidence, I prioritized an in-depth case study allowing me to develop a detailed understanding of the micro practices and dynamics related to both managers and employees. It leads to a relatively dominance of School A. Hence, as illustrated in Table 3.3, Papers I and II draw on a single case study, while Paper III adopted a multiple case study.

The data collection was spread out over a period of 3.5 years, where data were collected for 30 months. At the beginning of the first school year, I met with the municipality's school superintendent, who apprised me of the schools and advised me regarding my case selection. I

selected three public schools and contacted their headmasters. During the second quarter of the first school year, I had initial informal interviews with each of the headmasters of the three schools.

Table 3.3. Case schools and data summary

Data summary	School A small	School B mid-sized	School C large	Total
Students	400	600	1000	
Teachers	30	50	75	
Management team	3	4	4	
Interviews				
- No. of interviews with teachers (45-60 minutes each)	22	-	-	22
- No. of interviews with managers (45-60 minutes each)	9	6	7	22
Observations				
- No. of meetings observed (2-5 hours each)	38	7	7	52
- No. of seminars observed (6-9 hours each)	3	-	1	4
- No. of days of on-site fieldwork	72	7	6	85
Documents				
- Minutes of all meetings attended	✓	✓	✓	
- Strategic plans and budgets	✓	✓	✓	
- Calendars	✓	✓	✓	

----- Data included in Papers I and II

..... Data included in Paper III

After these interviews, I started the data collection. An overview of the progress of data collection is illustrated in Table 3.4. As shown in Table 3.4, while I extended the period of study in order to capture the longitudinal processes, I reduced the intensity of data collection due to resource constraints. Furthermore, I reduced the number of data collection sites in order to achieve a more in-depth study of one of the schools. I considered these choices as necessary for doing meaningful process-based research.

The analysis followed an iterative analytic process, in which I together with co-authors went back and forth between the data, emerging themes, and the literature (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). The three specific analytical processes are elaborated on in the papers included in Part II.

Table 3.4. Progress of data collection

		1 st SCHOOL YEAR				2 nd SCHOOL YEAR				4 th SCHOOL YEAR			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
SCHOOL A	Meetings		□□□□□□□□□□			□□□□□□□□□□				□□	□□	□	
	Seminars				x		x		x				
	Fieldwork		-----			-----				-----			
	Interviews: employees												
	Interviews: managers			•••			•••				•••		
SCHOOL B	Meetings		□	□□	□□	□	□						
	Seminars												
	Fieldwork		-	-	--	---							
	Interviews: employees												
	Interviews: managers			••••			•••						
SCHOOL C	Meetings		□	□	□□	□□	□						
	Seminars							x					
	Fieldwork			--	-	---							
	Interviews: employees												
	Interviews: managers			•••			•••						

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PART II

Research papers

Part II is the empirical research of the dissertation. It is based on a study of strategy as practice in Danish public schools over a period of three and a half years. Chapters 4 to 6 address the dissertation's three research questions. Chapter 4 explains how employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes. Chapter 5 provides insight into how actors' resistance to strategic change plays out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation. Chapter 6 elucidates how managers structure emergence during strategy implementation through practices within and between meetings.

Chapter 4

PAPER I

Emotional reactions as inhibitors of sensemaking:
How emotions are nourished by and
shape dual strategic changes

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS AS INHIBITORS OF SENSEMAKING: HOW EMOTIONS ARE NOURISHED BY AND SHAPE DUAL STRATEGIC CHANGES

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses how employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking, and how these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes in situations of dual strategic changes. Drawing on a longitudinal case study, the paper presents two primary findings. First, the study links employees' negative emotional reactions to one strategic change with their co-arising responses to another strategic change, and demonstrates how these responses in turn shape the strategic change outcomes of both strategies. Second, the paper identifies three sensemaking dynamics: refusing sensemaking, disrupting sensemaking, and constraining sensemaking. These dynamics illustrate how emotional reactions can lead to redirected and constrained sensemaking across simultaneous changes. That means the level of sensemaking decreases for one change; however, sensemaking is still a continuous process as it simply has redirected from one to another change. The findings make four main contributions. First, they contribute to existing research on the role of emotions in sensemaking processes, improving understanding of how emotions not only facilitate but also inhibit sensemaking processes and thereby change progress. Second, they contribute to existing research on emotions in strategizing by explicitly focusing on emotions as continual constructs that can coexist and evolve during dual strategic changes. Third, they improve understanding of the relationship between emotions and strategic change outcomes by demonstrating how undermined implementation processes did not only occur as failure to implement one or the other strategy but also as a subtle interplay in which emotional reactions to one strategy have consequences for both strategies. Fourth, they elaborate and complexify this relationship by demonstrating an interaction effect between two strategic changes.

Keywords: Emotion, sensemaking, strategizing, strategic change, strategy-as-practice, practice theory

Status: Working paper. A prior version of the paper has been accepted for presentation at the AOM Academy of Management (SAP Division) in Vancouver in 2020.

Introduction

Emotions have become a recognized aspect of organizational life (Elfenbein, 2007; Fineman, 2000; Bartunek et al., 2011), yet remain neglected in the field of strategy-as-practice (Brundin and Liu, 2015). Calls have been made for an emotion angle in strategic management literature, particularly regarding strategizing (e.g. Hodgkinson and Healey, 2011; Huy, 2012). For instance, Jarzabkowski and Paul Spee (2009) invited researchers to consider more intangible practices in strategizing such as emotion, and Suddaby et al. (2013) identify emotion as an important behavioural process in strategizing. Furthermore, emotion has increasingly been acknowledged as an important explanation for variation in key cognitive and social processes that influence how strategy is implemented (Huy, 2011). Even so, emotion is a relatively new aspect in strategizing, despite being acknowledged in organizational studies (Brundin and Liu, 2015). The few strategy-as-practice studies of emotion highlight that the emotions sensed and displayed by strategists significantly influence their social interactions and are thus important in strategy-making and strategic change, either supporting or jeopardizing strategic intents (e.g. Liu and Maitlis, 2014; Brundin and Nordqvist, 2008; Sloan and Oliver, 2013).

However, while several empirical change studies have addressed emotions' role, there have been calls to research unfolding emotions across multiple, sometimes simultaneous, changes (Klarner et al., 2011; Brundin and Liu, 2015). The implementation of dual strategies is expected often to be particularly challenging because of ambiguity (Sillince et al., 2012), conflicts (Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015), and struggles to make meaning (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017). Many of these problems identified reveal an interaction effect whereby the way one strategy is implemented seems to shape the other (e.g. Sillince et al., 2012). Hence, addressing this gap of unfolding emotions across multiple, simultaneous changes is expected to extend our understanding of strategizing. Such research can potentially reveal more complex implementation processes than single strategic changes and expose particular forms of micro-practices and dynamics.

Investigating emotions' cumulative effect on organizational strategic outcomes, and thereby connecting micro-level activities to macro-level outcomes, is a major challenge in strategy-as-practice research, particularly when it comes to studying emotion and strategizing (Brundin and Liu, 2015). Given widespread evidence that emotion is integral to interpretive processes (e.g. Maitlis et al., 2013), a sensemaking lens on emotions in strategizing could enhance

knowledge about how and why strategists act as they do, and thereby explain emotional reactions' impact on change implementation processes. Therefore, this paper applies a sensemaking lens to illustrate how emotional reactions play out in the context of 'dual strategic changes' – two strategies being implemented simultaneously. The paper addresses the overarching question: *How do employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how do these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes?*

I address these issues by drawing on a 3.5-year³ longitudinal case study conducted in a Danish public school during the imposition of two changes: public school reform and new working hour rules. The two simultaneous changes were externally mandated (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019) by the Danish central government and Local Government Denmark. Each change included several strategic initiatives but with limited prescription on how to implement them. Therefore, schools had certain discretion to determine, possibly in collaboration with the municipalities, the concrete terms of implementation. However, the changes set the framework for management and teaching, and the focal school responded to the mandated changes by implementing a new teaching strategy (TEAST) and a new management strategy (MANST). While the new MANST is associated with many strong, dominant, negative emotions, the new TEAST has no dominant associated emotions. In accordance with a practice perspective, this paper addresses the dichotomies such as formulation and implementation as mutually constitutive. Therefore, even though this paper is framed in the strategy implementation literature and uses the concept to uncover the realization of mandated changes (see e.g. Hengst et al., 2020; Huy et al., 2014), it still goes beyond these inadequacies in the academic construction of strategy by examining strategy as a practice. It means that implementation refers not just to the execution of strategies but also the formulation of strategy content.

Investigating the implementation of the new TEAST and MANST, this paper presents two primary findings. First, the study links employees' negative emotional reactions with their co-arising responses to the managers' sensegiving and demonstrates how these in turn shape the strategic change outcomes. It shows how emotional reactions, sensemaking dynamics, and strategic change outcomes interrelate and co-evolve across strategies and emotional reaction

³ During the period of 3.5 years, the author had one year without any data collection.

patterns. Second, the study demonstrates that sensemaking dynamics may turn out differently in situations of dual strategic changes. The paper identifies three sensemaking dynamics evoked by different intensities of employees' emotional reactions: refusing sensemaking, disrupting sensemaking, and constraining sensemaking. These dynamics illustrate how emotional reactions can lead to redirected and constrained sensemaking across simultaneous changes. That means the level of sensemaking decreases for one change; however, sensemaking is still a continuous process as it simply has redirected from one to another change.

Overall, the findings enrich knowledge in four ways. First, they contribute to research on emotions' role in sensemaking processes, improving understanding of how emotions may not only facilitate but also inhibit sensemaking processes in situations of dual strategic changes. More specifically, the study theorizes emotions as sensemaking inhibitors that constrain ongoing sensemaking processes. Second, they contribute to research on emotions in strategizing by explicitly focusing on emotions as continual constructs that can coexist and evolve during dual strategic changes. Third, they improve understanding of the relationship between emotions and strategic change outcomes by demonstrating how undermined implementation processes did not only occur as failure to implement one or the other strategy. They also occur as a subtle interplay in which emotional reactions to one strategy have consequences for both strategies. Fourth, they elaborate and complexify this relationship by demonstrating an interaction effect between two strategic changes.

The paper first outlines the study's conceptual background, and then explains the methodology. The findings section shows how employees' emotions emerge and shape their co-arising responses to managers' sensegiving, and how these shape the implementation processes of dual strategic changes. Finally, the paper discusses the findings and research contributions.

Theoretical framing

Emotions as continual constructs

Existing studies highlight that emotions play an important role in strategic change. Among other factors, employees' reactions to change result from their related emotions (e.g. Liu and Perrewe, 2005; Scherer, 2005; Huy et al., 2014; Liu and Maitlis, 2014), and the types of emotions and

individual coping strategies of employees ultimately affect change outcomes (Paterson and Hartel, 2002). Prior studies of employees' emotions during change (George and Jones, 2001; Huy, 2002; Liu and Perrewe, 2005) often characterize emotions as either positive, such as joy and excitement, or negative, such as fear and grief. Several studies have examined the behavioural outcomes of employees who show positive or negative emotions.

Many studies simply describe positive emotions as beneficial to change and negative emotions as detrimental (Huy, 2002; Kiefer, 2005; Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010), offering a deterministic view that does not fully capture the role of emotions. By dividing emotions into positive and negative, these studies do not examine the coexistence of multiple emotions during a change process. Positive and negative emotions should rather be seen as continual and mutually informative (Fineman, 2006), implying that several emotions with different intensity can coexist (Elfenbein, 2007; Piderit, 2000). While it has been acknowledged that several emotions are evoked during change (George and Jones, 2001; Vince, 2006), prior studies have not investigated such a mix of emotions (Klarner et al., 2011). We lack sufficient knowledge of how change triggers different emotions within an individual and how such emotions then lead to different employee coping strategies (Klarner et al., 2011). This partly reflects prior studies neglecting that emotions evolve during a change process (Ven and Poole, 1995): they examine how employees cope with emotions resulting from change as a snapshot event (e.g. Liu and Perrewe, 2005). This is surprising given the evidence that change evolves as a process (Piderit, 2000; Weick and Quinn, 1999). As planned change can take time (Kotter, 1995), several events throughout the change process can trigger different emotions and coping behaviour among employees. Hence, more research is needed on how employees' various emotions can evolve during change (Klarner et al., 2011; Smith and Lazarus, 1993).

Furthermore, research often focuses on a single change, neglecting that organizations increasingly have to change in a repeating fashion (Vermeulen et al., 2010). Prior studies overlook the procedural and repetitive nature of change and fail to examine emotions as continual constructs. However, employees may experience several emotions throughout changes, and the emotions experienced in one change may impact the appraisal processes triggered by a subsequent change (e.g. Kiefer, 2002). The broader context of repeated change thus requires greater attention. Though highlighting emotions' important role in strategic change, prior studies leave an unanswered puzzle

that this paper will address. It remains unclear how unfolding emotions at different stages and across multiple, simultaneous changes coexist, evolve, and shape organizational strategic outcomes. This gap is important because emotional reactions may unfold across multiple simultaneous strategic changes implying an interaction effect; such that evoked emotions from one change may affect another change.

To understand the implementation processes, strategic changes should not be seen in isolation. Different characteristics and dynamics may play out if changes are placed in context with each other. To better understand strategists' actions and thereby explain the link between emotions as continual constructs and strategic change outcomes, I turn to the sensemaking literature, encouraged by widespread evidence that emotion is an integral part of interpretive processes (e.g. Maitlis et al., 2013).

The role of emotion in sensemaking processes

Strategic change involves a shift in organizational purpose, priorities, and goals (Gioia and Longenecker, 1994) and requires changing current modes of cognition to support appropriate action (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991). This cognitive re-orientation has led researchers to focus on meaning construction during strategic change (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991; Gioia and Longenecker, 1994). Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) suggest that a strategic change process might best be understood in terms of the emergent and interrelated concepts of 'sensemaking' and 'sensegiving'. While sensemaking concerns 'meaning construction and reconstruction by the involved parties as they attempt[t] to develop a meaningful framework for understanding the nature of the intended strategic change', sensegiving involves 'the process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organizational reality' (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991: 442). Research emphasizes sensemaking and sensegiving capabilities as critical to practitioners' issue selling when championing change (Dutton and Ashford, 1993; Dutton et al., 2001; Ling et al., 2005; Piderit and Ashford, 2003), as well as their communication and influencing of change intent when implementing strategic change (Balogun, 2003; Guette and Vandenbempt, 2017; Huy, 2002; Ericson, 2001).

To better understand how emotions are nourished by and shape dual strategic changes, I build upon and expand the literature about emotions and sensemaking, more deeply examining the connection between them. There are several reasons why emotion may be a critical dimension of sensemaking processes. Emotion plays a crucial role in detecting and attending to anomalies (Adler and Obstfeld, 2007). It directs attention towards certain cues (Öhman et al., 2001) and alerts individuals to unexpected and possibly dangerous events (Weick, 1990). Therefore, emotion may help us understand why certain events trigger sensemaking. Furthermore, emotion has increasingly been acknowledged as an important explanation of variation in key cognitive and social processes. Scholars claim that emotions reflect interpretation of events in a work setting and may influence sensemaking in uncertain times (Tiedens and Linton, 2001), such as during change. Emotions can influence the thinking process, i.e. how employees handle a given task (Forgas and Fiedler, 1996), and thinking content, i.e. what kind of information employees recall, select, interpret, and learn as a function of their affective state in an ambiguous social situation (Forgas and George, 2001). Emotion thus seems important in shaping the sensemaking process that follows a triggering event.

Several empirical sensemaking studies imply the importance of emotion (Bartunek et al., 2006; Dougherty and Drumheller, 2006; Sonenshein, 2007; Walsh and Bartunek, 2011). For instance, emotion is a critical element in the socialization of organizational newcomers as they experience new, unfamiliar practices (Pratt, 2000). The emotionality of issues also plays a significant role in shaping leaders' and stakeholders' individual sensemaking in orchestras (Maitlis, 2005; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007). A small but growing literature focuses explicitly on the connection between emotion and sensemaking. For instance, Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) show that sensemaking in reaction to change in an important organizational artefact – the colour of a public transportation company's bus fleet – can elicit various emotions, including joy, calmness, disgust, and shame. Bartunek et al. (2006) examined the intersection of emotion and sensemaking in the context of planned change, showing that individual employees' felt emotions significantly influence whether and how they engage in sensemaking. Furthermore, in a study of organizational foundings, Walsh and Bartunek (2011) showed how members' emotions both emerge out of and fuel sensemaking following an organization's demise. Based on a three-phase model of sensemaking processes, Maitlis et al. (2013) identify the different roles that emotion plays in sensemaking and clarify the underlying mechanisms. Nevertheless, while several empirical change studies address emotions' role, calls have been made to research emotions as

continual constructs (Maitlis et al., 2013; Klarner et al., 2011). As Maitlis et al. (2013) point out, we need research into emotions' influence on how sensemaking processes play out, particularly the impact of the valence and intensity of felt emotions.

Although a wide range of events and situations have been shown to trigger sensemaking, novel or unexpected events often do not lead to sensemaking processes. This is a key issue for sensemaking research because failing to engage in sensemaking has been associated with costly, sometimes tragic, consequences (Gephart Jr, 1993; Weick, 1990). A range of factors could be examined to understand why some novel events trigger sensemaking while others do not, but scholars propose that the underexplored role of emotion may be critical in this process. Other scholars argue that negatively valenced emotions indicate a need for and energize the search for meaning and an understanding of the situation (Stein, 2004; Maitlis et al., 2013); they are thus conceptualized as triggers and enablers of sensemaking. However, the triggering process and emotions' role could be more nuanced than previously theorized.

Guiette and Vandenbempt (2017) illustrate how ongoing sensemaking micro-processes can be bracketed off or constrained, in terms of quality not quantity, through what they term 'sensemaking inhibitors'. As sensemaking is a continuous process (Sandberg and Tsoukas, 2015), the inhibition of sensemaking quality entails increasing pre-interpretation and the narrowing of sensemakers' thought-action repertoire. However, in situations of dual strategic changes emotions may be sensemaking inhibitors that constrain ongoing sensemaking micro-processes in terms of *both* quantity and quality. Emotions may potentially forestall sensemaking processes due to employees' resulting tendency to direct attention from one strategic change to another. That means the level of sensemaking (quantity) decreases for one change, as the other change has the attention; however, sensemaking will still be a continuous process, as it simply will be redirected from one to another change.

Based on this concept of sensemaking inhibitors, this paper aims to nuance the triggering process and emotions' role by investigating how emotions bracket off or constrain sensemaking processes. As emotional reactions can inhibit sensemaking processes, they could influence strategic change outcomes. However, research has underexplored how a mix of emotional reactions evolve during the implementation of multiple strategies, how this evolving character

interacts with employees' responses to managers' sensegiving, and how this interaction influences strategic change outcomes. This empirical study seeks to address these gaps.

Research context and methods

Consistent with other practice-based interpretive research, this study took a real-time case-study approach. Its longitudinal design not only enables more contextualized analysis of emotions and strategizing activities but also elucidates the connection between emotions and more macro-level strategic phenomena, such as strategic change (Brundin and Liu, 2015).

Case setting

The empirical study was conducted in a local community public school located in a mid-sized Danish municipality. The school has approximately 400 students, 30 teachers, and a management team comprising a headmaster, a deputy headmaster, and a pedagogical leader. The school is divided into three sections, A, B, and C house, which include respectively older, middle, and young students. Specific details of the school are disguised, and all research participants are given pseudonyms to preserve anonymity.

The 3.5-year study period covered the imposition of two changes were: working hour rules and public school reform. Both changes were externally mandated by the Danish central government and Local Government Denmark (an association of Danish municipalities), and their implementation was simultaneous: the first strategic change was not anchored before implementation of the second began. Figure 4.1 illustrates a timeline that incorporates and superimposes both strategic changes to understand their temporal linking.

The new working hour rules were adopted after collective bargaining agreement negotiations, between the public employers (represented by Local Government Denmark), and the teachers (represented by the Danish Union of Teachers, 'DLF') collapsed, and the resulting lockout of 70,000 teachers had lasted almost four weeks (DLF, 2014). Core to the dispute was the DLF's refusal to sign a collective bargaining agreement that gave headmasters more power to decide teachers' work schedules. Central government intervened by forcing teachers to accept the new

conditions (Refner, 2014). The new rules give the management team greater autonomy to lead and distribute work at school, determining the ratio of teaching and preparation hours, and total working hours. The change was strategic in altering the deployment of key school staffing resources, overturning the maximum 25 weekly contact hours that had been standard. Teaching hours thus rose (up to 30 hours for some) and teachers have the right and duty to be present full-time at the workplace during the full working hours. Figure 4.1 illustrates a timeline that incorporates and superimposes both strategic changes to understand their temporal linking.

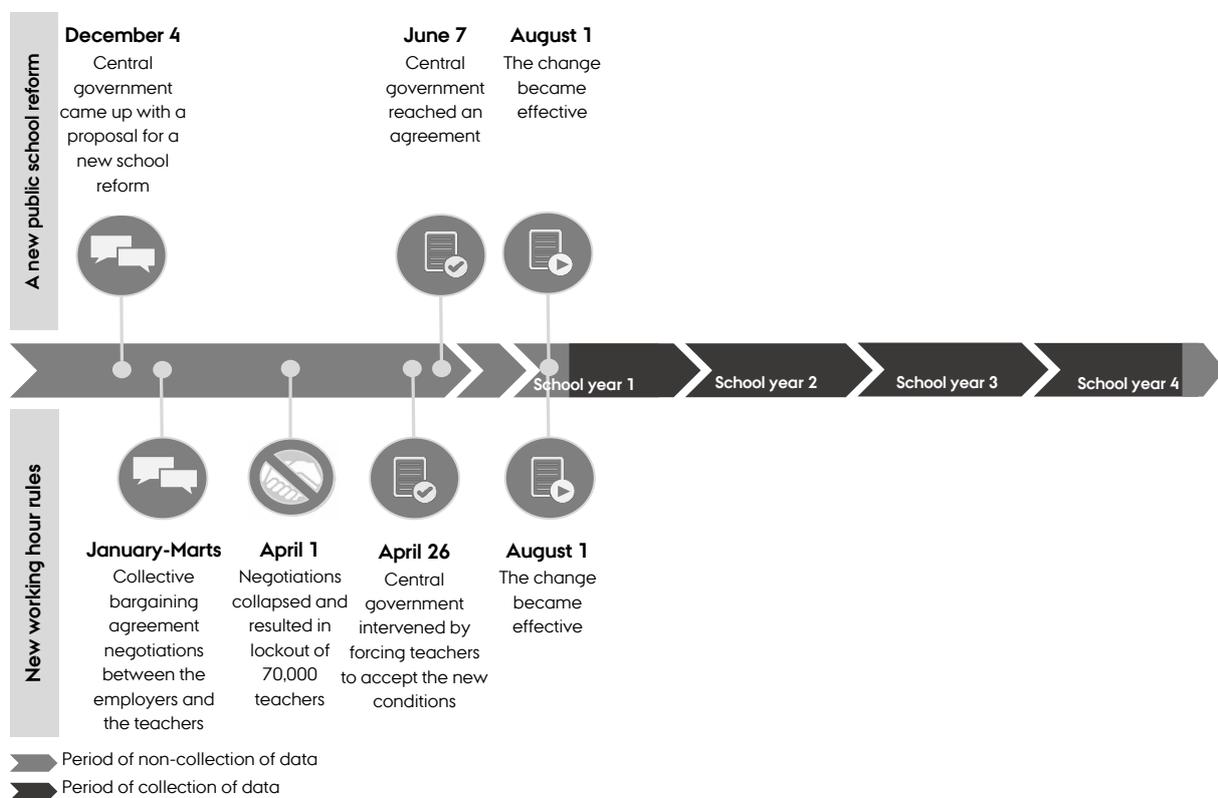


Figure 4.1. The temporal linking of the strategic changes

Simultaneously, central government reached a broad political agreement on reform to improve standards in Danish public schools. US-inspired and accountability-focused, the school reform had three main objectives: 1) the public school system must challenge all students to reach their full potential; 2) public schools must curb the impact of social background on academic results; and 3) trust in schools and pupil well-being must be enhanced via respect for professional knowledge and practices (The Danish Ministry of Education, 2013). These objectives were

to be achieved through many different strategic initiatives, including longer and more varied school days and increased teaching quality in various subjects, with enhanced open schools, homework assistance, academic immersion, and exercise and movement (The Danish Ministry of Education, 2013). This very comprehensive reform fundamentally altered the focal school's teaching strategy.

With only limited central specification on how to implement the strategic initiatives, schools had certain discretion on implementation, possibly in collaboration with the municipalities. To varying degrees, the changes set the framework for management and teaching, and the focal school responded by implementing a new TEAST and a new MANST.

Data collection

Longitudinal qualitative data were collected over 3.5 years as the school implemented the new strategies. The data were triangulated drawing on multiple collection methods, incorporating ethnographic observations, in-depth interviewing, and documentary analysis. These qualitative techniques allow fine-grained study of both experienced and displayed emotions that can be hidden, masked, or faked (Brundin and Liu, 2015). Over 70 days were spent at the school observing meetings, seminars, and daily work. In total, I attended 38 meetings of 2–5 hours each, providing 110 hours of observation. I also attended three seminars, including a strategy seminar, each lasting about 6–9 hours. In addition, I engaged in other forms of on-site fieldwork collecting incidental observational data: I regularly sat in the office or staffroom where I joined informal discussions and talked with teachers and managers. I observed and participated in informal pre- and post-meeting discussions and observed and shadowed managers and teachers in their everyday work. Informal, open-ended, and unstructured interviews took place. Detailed field notes, including as many verbatim quotes as possible, were taken and typed up within 24 hours, as recommended (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2013).

To complement observations, I conducted 31 semi-structured interviews, including nine with the management team members and interviews with 22 of the 30 teachers. Interviews lasted 45–60 minutes; all were recorded and transcribed. Finally, the study included access to internal documents. Specifically, I collected minutes and agenda items of all meetings attended, strategic

plans, calendars, budgets, and executive profiles, allowing additional data triangulation. These documents were used as a secondary data source and provided a new perspective on the implementation processes; this was useful for engaging interviewees in discussion.

Analysis

All data were imported into the qualitative software package NVivo 10 to support the analytic process of indexing and comparing units of coded data. I followed an iterative analytic process comprising five stages (Corbin and Strauss, 1990).

Stage 1: Case stories. In the first stage I wrote chronological case stories for each strategic change over time (Langley, 1999). As the aim was to richly detail the implementation of strategic changes, I used a thick description mode of analysis (Geertz, 1973). The case story of the MANST indicated a range of emotional reactions to this strategy, while the case story of the TEAST indicated a lack of attention and an undermined implementation process. Therefore, in the following stages, I coded the sensemaking dynamics, emotional reactions and strategic change outcomes, and finally, I analysed the interaction effects.

Stage 2: Coding for sensemaking dynamics. In the second stage I went through the data (transcribed interviews and field notes from meetings and other forms of on-site fieldwork) to identify sensemaking processes. Sensemaking has to do with meaning construction and reconstruction by the involved parties as they attempted to develop a meaningful framework for understanding the nature of the intended strategic change (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991: 442). Sensegiving is concerned with the process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organizational reality (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991: 442). Therefore, in order to capture employees' (re)interpretations of the TEAST, sensemaking dynamics were coded by what employees said (expressing thoughts) in response to managers' sensegiving. I coded the episodes where the TEAST were raised for discussion or to be shared as information with others. Regarding these social processes of meaning construction and reconstruction (their responses to managers' sensegiving), I interpretatively clustered the identified empirical codes into broader thematic categories according to their content.

This stage of analysis derives three sensemaking dynamics: refusing sensemaking, disrupting sensemaking, and constraining sensemaking.

Stage 3: Coding for emotional reactions. In the third stage I began open coding of emotional reactions to the MANST (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). Emotional reaction refers to a feeling state with an identified cause or target that can be expressed verbally through statements or non-verbally through behaviour (Elfenbein, 2007). Emotions can be hidden, masked, or faked, or may even be unknowable to the self. Emotional cues, such as vocal intonations, facial displays, and other nonverbal gestures, indicate how an individual construes their role in changing events and social structures (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987). Therefore, I use non-verbal cues both as primary indicators of displayed emotion and as confirmatory indicators (e.g. shaking the head, lowering and drawing the brows together, and the tightening and raising of one lip corner for contempt) alongside employees' verbal statements (e.g. hard, glaring eyes and raised voice alongside the statement 'Remember what we have been deprived of. We were robbed and sacrificed, and it feels like this is forgotten. ... I just don't think it's okay.').⁴

I used the circumplex model (Larsen and Diener, 1992) to explore the wide range of emotions that employees might display. The model captures a range of emotions, categorizing emotions in the dimensions of valence (how positive/pleasant or negative/unpleasant the emotion is) and activation (how intense the emotion is). Together, they capture almost the full range of emotional reactions (Bartel and Saavedra, 2000): pleasant, high-intensity including enthusiasm and excitement; pleasant, low-intensity including calm and comfort; unpleasant, high-intensity including anger, anxiety, and fear; unpleasant, low-intensity including disappointment, shame, and dejection. It allows me to consider emotions relative to one another in terms of their positivity/negativity and intensity. As other empirical papers (e.g. Liu and Maitlis, 2014), I used primary facial expressions (Ekman and Friesen, 1984) and verbal expressions (Retzinger, 1991) as indicators of emotional valence, while vocal expressions (Scherer, 2005) and body movements (Harrigan, 2005) were the primary indicator for emotional intensity. However, even though I coded for both positive and negative emotions, the first-order codes almost entirely comprise negative emotional reactions to the MANST. There were only isolated cases of neutral emotions, where

⁴ For the sake of space and readability, I do not describe employee physical indicators in the findings section, but refer instead to the emotions that they indicate.

employees had ‘an impassive expression, or ‘resting’ face (i.e. with no evident emotional expression) and was speaking in a matter-of-fact, even, and flat tone of voice’ (Liu and Maitlis, 2014: 210).

Therefore, this paper focuses on a mix of unpleasant emotional reactions of differing intensity. Ultimately, I aggregated these negative emotional reactions into three higher-order constructs: low-intensity (e.g. disappointed and dejected), medium-intensity (e.g. sad and dissatisfied), and high-intensity (angry and excited) – these are sufficient to explain the emotional reactions as one key aspect of my model.

Stage 4: Coding strategic change outcomes. Regarding the strategic change outcomes, I examined how the strategies progressed and emerged. I coded for whether there were progress in the strategic initiatives linked to the MANST and TEAST. When there was no alignment between the initially change initiatives, and what the employees did (both manifested in what actors said (expressing thoughts and actions), and what they did (or did not do), I coded it as no or limited progress of change – i.e. actors undermine appropriate actions. If there was alignment, or if the actors had agreed to revise the initiatives, I coded it as progress of change – i.e. actors support appropriate actions.

Stage 5: Analyzing the interplay. In the fifth stage, I began analyzing the interplay between intensity of emotional reactions, sensemaking dynamics and strategic change outcomes. I revisited the initial narratives and began mapping the emergent themes into the dynamics uncovered in descriptions of the changes (Langley, 1999). Analyzing this interaction effect between the two changes reveal that employees’ emotional reactions to the MANST shape their co-arising responses to managers’ sensegiving of the TEAST. Through this mapping, I compared the dynamics of emotional reactions, sensemaking dynamics, and strategic change outcomes across different stages of initiated changes. I recognized that employees are experiencing and displaying different evolution of emotions. More specifically, I recognized that the intensity of the emotional reaction decreases.

Finally, these findings allowed me to propose a theoretical model for how emotions play out in the context of dual strategic changes, identifying negative emotional reactions, sensemaking

dynamics, and strategic change outcomes as key aspects. The following sections aim to provide coherent understanding of how they interrelate and co-evolve.

Findings

During the analysis, it becomes increasingly evident that employees' emotional reactions to the MANST shape their co-arising responses to managers' sensegiving of the TEAST, and that this then shapes the implementation of both strategies – even though the mandated changes were not intended to be connected. Table 4.1 summarizes how the three key aspects of the emergent data story – emotional reactions, sensemaking dynamics, and strategic change outcome – interrelate.

Table 4.1. Interrelations between the two strategies.

MANST		TEAST	
Employees' emotional reactions	Strategic change outcomes*	Employees' responses to managers' sensegiving	Strategic change outcomes*
High-intensity, negative emotions	-**	Refusing sensemaking	No or limited progress of change
Medium-intensity, negative emotions	Progress of change	Disrupting sensemaking	No or limited progress of change
Low-intensity, negative emotions	-**	Constraining sensemaking	Progress of change

MANST: management strategy; TEAST: teaching strategy

*These outcomes are shaped by the sensemaking dynamics related to employees' responses to managers' sensegiving on the TEAST.

**The implementation process is not influenced.

In the first relationship, high-intensity, negative emotions towards the MANST lead employees to refuse sensemaking of the TEAST, resulting in no or limited progress of the TEAST due to lack of (re)interpretations. In the second relationship, employees' medium-intensity, negative emotions towards the MANST disrupt sensemaking of the TEAST, leading to limited progress of the TEAST due to lack of (re)interpretations and progress of the MANST due to (re)interpretations. In the third relationship, low-intensity, negative emotions towards the MANST lead to constrained sensemaking of the TEAST, resulting in progress of the TEAST due to (re)interpretations. For each emergent relationship, I explain the emotional reactions and co-arising responses to the

managers' sensegiving, providing an illustrative vignette and analyzing the strategic change outcomes.

High-intensity emotions

Emotional reactions. The change trigger leads to high-intensity, negative emotions such as anger, deprivation, victimization, and agitation. As one employee voiced: 'I think much can be ascribed to the fact that their feelings are hurt. They feel victimized.' Another employee thus expanded:

No, I don't think we'll do it [accept the new framework and conditions]. I think some will still have in mind what they have been deprived of. But, it's also a question of seniority, that is how much autonomy you feel they have been deprived of. I think that teachers generally believe that in connection with education, they have power over everything. I mean that they have freedom of method and autonomy and they can decide everything. But that is no longer the case. (Employee, Interview)

Sensemaking dynamics. Employees attempt to shape understanding and construct the meaning of their high-intensity, negative emotional reactions by contending that they have been robbed, victimized, and deprived. In the following vignette, Emma and Thomas, due to their high-intensity, negative emotions, are redirecting sensemaking from the TEAST to their emotional reactions to the MANST:

One central part of the public school reform is open school. The school must cooperate with the surrounding community. Because students must be compatible with the community, they will be part of local sporting, cultural, and business life must help to create academically competent and capable children and young people. As the school board wishes to have an action memo from each department on open school, section meetings are called. However, instead of making sense of the open school initiative, employees attempt to construct the meaning of their emotional reactions to the MANST. Interrupting thought processes on the TEAST, Thomas expresses angrily and unequivocally: 'No, I don't think we'll do it [cooperate with local sporting and business life]. I think we will still have in mind what we have been deprived of.' Emma also directs attention away from the open school initiative. She expresses a feeling of deprivation, victimization, and agitation,

and points out that the teachers have been robbed: 'Remember what we have been deprived of. We were robbed and sacrificed and it feels like this is forgotten. ... I just don't think it's okay.' In an informal interview after the meeting, Thomas explains: 'And sometimes you'll hear that [reduced co-determination] is what I'm reacting to. I don't want to hide how I feel.'

Julie, an employee, describes the meeting as follows: 'The atmosphere was in no way pleasant. Some left the meeting in tears. It's much about how things are formulated. But I think much can be ascribed to the fact that their feelings are hurt. They feel victimized.' Sara, another employee, explains that it was a very unconstructive meeting: 'When conditions are changing, then that's your target. That's why it went all haywire today. There was no structure. Everything was on the table. And it was not constructive.' Consequently, even though open school was intended to include elements of local sport, culture, and business, none are included in the action memo from the meeting.

The vignette illustrates that, as a consequence of high-intensity, negative emotional reactions, employees refuse to make sense of the TEAST. In the social processes of meaning construction and reconstruction, they direct sensemaking from the TEAST to their emotional reactions to the MANST. When managers attempt to influence the outcome by communicating their thoughts about the TEAST to employees and seeking to gain their support, the employees do not always attempt to develop a meaningful framework for understanding the nature of the intended change. Even though the managers seek to sell a strategic change or initiative to them, the employees do not always accept the invitation to make sense together. Instead, through their everyday activities, employees dwell on negative emotions and tend to initiate interpretive processes of emotional reactions in response to managers' sensemaking efforts on the content of the TEAST. Instead of discussing and making sense of the new TEAST, employees keep talking about being deprived and humiliated, thus redirecting sensemaking to their emotions towards the MANST and attempting to express and create understanding of them. Their emotions thus prevent sensemaking processes due to the tendency to refuse thought processes and direct attention from the TEAST to emotions.

Strategic change outcomes. The implication of the emotional reactions and the co-evolving sensemaking dynamics is no or limited progress of the TEAST due to lack of

(re)interpretations. As the vignette illustrates, emotional reactions led to an unconstructive meeting, delaying the implementation of open school. The strategies were not discussed, implying that the employees did not develop a meaningful framework for understanding the nature of the intended change: ‘They are tackling it [the changes] appallingly. Frightfully bad. I mean, I have colleagues who are still stuck ... they are stuck’ (Employee, Informal interview). Consequently, the implementation process is delayed: ‘But I think we need to talk about what this has done to us – to change the routines that we haven’t succeeded yet’ (Employee, Informal interview). The lack of sensemaking around the TEAST thus results in individual employees managing according to their own goals, which they individually translate so that the strategy makes sense in relation to their own practice and teaching. The consequence of the sensemaking process is individualized attitudes and acts:

I just think ... I’m just doing what I want. We decide for ourselves, and we do just that, and then we see what happens. You could also hear that somebody was doing something, as they usually do, they do a bit of it ... and a bit of it. One fits one’s own little everyday life. (Employee, Informal interview)

Medium-intensity emotions

Emotional reactions. The change trigger also leads to medium-intensity, negative emotions. Some employees have a sense of dissatisfaction and perplexity resulting from headmasters being given more power to determine teachers’ work schedules. Therefore, the employees feel sad and bitter: ‘It is a challenge that some are truly resentful about all this.’ (Employee, Informal interview). As one employee voiced in frustration: ‘And we must be able to be content about it. As I see it, this may be somewhat of a challenge here’ (Employee, Informal interview). Some employees feel exposed to distrust and lack of recognition from the community: ‘Perhaps there’s been some degree of distrust. Do they wish us well, or will they be gone in a month or a year?’ (Employee, Interview). The employees describe that they feel that distrust has been sown as to whether they solve their tasks and spend the time they should:

Well, if I do this every year, because I find that's what's best for the students, why should I change it then? Isn't it ok what I've done? Didn't my students get good scores in their finals? And then you start turning it against yourself. (Employee, Informal interview)

It was put into doubt whether your tasks were solved and the time was spent. This was a general thing. I'm certain that some didn't. But most have delivered what they were supposed to and even a bit more. (Employee, Interview).

Several employees feel that their professionalism is questioned, and they begin to take this personally. As one employee describes, they have an emotion of alienation:

Seen from my point of view, our co-determination was vastly reduced. And that alienates you from the issue. And sometimes it's difficult to recognize the thoughts and plan and strategies that are put into your workday. There is no interaction, necessarily. (Employee, Interview).

Employees cannot recognize strategies and lack ownership. As one describes, these medium-intensity emotional reactions are a consequence of the TEAST, and it can be felt in meetings:

We haven't overcome the distrust yet, but we're getting there. Some say: 'we have to move on'. But some are much affected by the teachers having been locked out. That really hurt. And will take a while to mend. And that's what was felt at the meeting today. (Employee, Informal interview)

Sensemaking dynamics. The medium-intensity, negative emotional reactions lead employees to redirect the discussion from the new TEAST to the new MANST instead. They attempt to create understanding of their lack of power, involvement, and co-determination. In response to managers' sensegiving, one employee replies:

Co-determination is scarce. And I've said it a lot of times, and I've been in this game for many years, that it's fairly hopeless and it's a long haul if you want to change anything in this culture if you're a teacher on the floor. (Employee, Observation).

This is a struggle for freedom and autonomy in which employees set the agenda for managers: to talk about the TEAST, we must first talk about freedom. It is a way of disrupting. Another employee responds as follows to managers' sensemaking:

Personally, I'm cheering for Riisager [Minister of Education] to give us back some freedom. Strictly speaking, if you listen to the teachers on the floor and show them some trust and responsibility, they will do what you want them to do in the first place. (Employee, Observation)

Employees actively seek to convince others, legitimize specific configurations of the MANST, and promote specific interpretations of what must take place to serve an agenda and increase control over the work situation. Within a meeting, one employee comments:

You know, I've been a teacher for many years, and we used to do it differently. That is, before this. It was bottom-up, and we used to discuss the principles for how to do things and what to do and then we would reach a decision about the structure and the strategy for solving problems. From where I stand that was a LOT more expedient and involved people a lot more. (Employee, Observation)

The senses of distrust and alienation lead employees to redirect sensemaking to the MANST. So even though managers initiate interpretive processes of the TEAST, sensemaking is characterized by clear marking of standpoints regarding the MANST:

The challenge of the public school reform is that it didn't grow in our garden – it was planted. And it is difficult to take a plant that somebody else has grown and make it your own. This is why this project will always see challenges. It would be so much easier if they gave you the seed and said, 'now, grow a tree'. (Employee, Interview).

Some employees call for autonomy and freedom of method, so teaching can be adapted to each class. They call for the purpose and goals to be managed, instead of the details and method. As managers approach the classroom, the trouble begins. Here, employees are the leaders and there is no one else to control or decide on the teaching. As one employee describes:

Take the point of departure in our reality instead of a make-believe one. The top-down ideas may not be in accord with what we see. ... Perhaps it doesn't go down awfully well

in a class with two children with ADHD or with Mia wanting desperately to tell you that she got new shoes. (Employee, Observation)

In the following vignette, Julia and Peter, due to their medium-intensity, negative emotional reactions, redirect sensemaking from the TEAST to the MANST. It illustrates how they manage to make some revisions to the MANST and achieve greater freedom of method:

According to the public school reform, the school has to implement homework assistance and academic immersion. At a meeting with the implementation team, the managers want to discuss the strategy for implementing this initiative. The meeting agenda is to discuss how 2–3 hours each week can be used to clarify things one more time, provide help with homework, and immerse students in things that are particularly difficult or interesting. When Jane, the headmaster introduces this agenda, Peter, an employee, calls for purpose and goals to be managed, rather than details and method. He suddenly interrupts: ‘Possibly their ideas are really good. But my framework in terms of my class may be totally different and make it hard for me to implement them in the everyday of the class.’ Though Jane attempts to keep focus on the TEAST-related initiative, Julia initiates interpretive processes related to the MANST and calls for autonomy and freedom of method: ‘The more structured and rigid a system, a pattern or teaching, the harder it is for some of these children’.

The strategic attempts to influence and negotiate revisions to the change processes continue after the meeting. Julia and Peter converse with Michael, the deputy headmaster, in the staffroom. Julia explains: ‘I mean, they talked a lot about the schools getting more freedom, but that didn’t happen as it’s the same hat they’ve pressed down over all our heads. We’re lacking the freedom to do what works best in this particular school.’ Peter continues: ‘It’s problematic when they interfere with our possibility to act according to what we believe is the best way of doing things’. In an informal interview after the meeting, Julia explains her feelings of distrust and lack of recognition: ‘It simply cannot be right that our professional identity is questioned the way it is. It is our ability to make the right decisions and organize our teaching the way we believe it ought to be that is questioned.’

In another informal interview, Peter similarly expresses his feelings of alienation, as he cannot recognize strategies and lacks ownership: ‘Seen from my point of view, our co-determination was vastly reduced. And that alienates you from the issue. And sometimes it’s difficult to recognize the thoughts, plans, and strategies that are put into your workday.’ So even though meetings are convened to discuss the strategy for implementing homework assistance and academic immersion, they are characterized by discussions and clear marking of standpoints on freedom of method. By pointing out their concerns, the employees interpret the MANST as problematic and manage to revise their freedom of method, gaining more opportunity to plan and prioritize their own time.

As the vignette illustrates, this sensemaking dynamic resulting from medium-intensity, negative emotional reactions involves employees disrupting sensemaking. In the social processes of meaning construction and reconstruction supposed to be focused on the TEAST, employees interrupt and derail managers’ sensegiving attempt by directing sensemaking from the TEAST towards their preferred redefinition of the MANST. Through their everyday activities, employees strategize by redirecting sensemaking to the MANST to shape the understanding of others. Employees tend to initiate interpretive processes of sensemaking on the MANST in response to managers’ sensemaking efforts on the TEAST. Due to their emotional reactions, employees strategically attempt to shape and negotiate revisions to the MANST; instead of a personal process of making sense of the TEAST, it becomes a process of influencing the sensemaking and meaning construction of others. Thus, their emotional reactions obstruct sensemaking processes because of the tendency to interrupt thought processes and direct attention from the TEAST to the MANST.

Strategic change outcomes. The medium-intensity, negative emotional reactions and resulting disruption of sensemaking lead to no or limited progress of the TEAST. Due to a lack of sensemaking, the TEAST is not discussed and (re)interpreted, and employees do not develop a framework for understanding the intended change. This results in individualized attitudes and acts. The medium-intensity emotional reactions also have consequences for the MANST, as employees direct attention to this strategy. By calling for purpose and goals to be managed, rather than details and method, they achieve greater freedom of method and increase their influence. Managers agree to some revisions of the MANST in an attempt to progress strategy implementation of the TEAST: ‘We try to make it, so that they have a bigger role in decision making’ (Deputy Headmaster,

Interview). A reinterpretation of the MANST is that ‘Teachers get the opportunity to work flexible hours and thereby get more freedom to plan and prioritize their own time’ (Documents). As the headmaster describes: ‘Teachers now have flexibility in the organization of working hours, for example in relation to timetabling days and weeks’ (Headmaster, Interview).

Low-intensity emotions

Emotional reactions. The third and final relationship between emotional reactions, sensemaking dynamics, and strategic change outcomes involves low-intensity, negative emotional reactions. The change trigger leads to feelings of disappointment, ambivalence, dissension, and uncertainty: ‘I feel split. On the one hand, I feel stepped on, but on the other hand, we must also accept things as they are’ (Employee, Informal interview). Employees ‘constantly feel distracted and disturbed’ (Employee, Interview) and ‘have a sense of uncertainty and doubt’ (Employee, Informal interview). Furthermore, they are frustrated and disappointed: ‘I still believe that people are frustrated about new routines and tasks’ (Employee, Interview); ‘The frustration today is clear ... and they are not trying to hide it’ (Employee, Informal interview). Moreover, employees display negative emotions of dejection and incapacity: ‘Right now, I’m worn out. I’m exhausted. I try to fight this battle for the kids, but at some point, you give up’ (Employee, Interview). Feeling burnt out and exhausted, they therefore focus on getting the best out of it.

Sensemaking dynamics. Due to their low-intensity, negative emotional reactions, employees’ sensemaking of the TEAST is restricted. Hence, while the first two sensemaking dynamics involve employees redirecting sensemaking away from the TEAST, this practice involves sensemaking of the TEAST. When managers initiate interpretive processes of sensemaking, employees do actually attempt to develop a meaningful framework for understanding the TEAST. However, even though sensemaking is focused on the TEAST, interpretive processes are constrained and informed by employees’ low-intensity, negative emotional reactions, leading to rejection of managers’ interpretations and sensegiving. In their sensemaking of the TEAST, employees are pessimistic, negative, confrontational, and dismissive: ‘I’m still seeing some teachers fighting back. They haven’t accepted the overall framework’ (Employee, Informal interview). Employees describe themselves as on their guard, rigid, and unbending:

I perceive teachers as a somewhat rigid group that doesn't want to budge. Who believe they can solve this task without management. So I think that management will bring forward a lot of suggestions: 'Could we do it like this or like that?' And they will be met by a group saying: 'We'll manage this ourselves'. (Employee, Interview)

Objectively I see some antagonists in all of this who simply don't want to cooperate. ... Some still believe it's a stupid idea. They are most rigid as regards their time with the students. We're a large fragmented group that is hard to manage – we're not easy to push around. (Employee, Informal interview)

In their sensemaking of the TEAST, employees are sceptical and critical: 'Yes, we are sceptical, and if it works, why change it?' (Employee, Informal interview). They are also worried and doubtful. In the following vignette, Anders, Mark, and Rebecca contribute to constrained interpretive processes and reject managers' sensegiving as a consequence of their low-intensity, negative emotional reactions. It demonstrates how such sensemaking dynamic leads to the emergence of the intended exercise and movement initiative of the TEAST.

According to the reform, exercise and movement have to be integrated in all students' school days for an average of 45 minutes each day. Therefore, the management team decides to convene a teachers' meeting to discuss the content of the strategic initiative and how it could be implemented. At the meeting, a group of employees is very pessimistic, confrontational, and dismissive towards the exercise and movement initiative. Negative and frustrated, Anders argues: 'It is completely silly that the oldest students should spend time on this [exercise and movement]. ... I'm one of the naysayers.' He argues that the confrontational actions are a consequence of teachers feeling 'both frustrated and disappointed, and we are not trying to hide it'. At the meeting, the interpretive processes are also constrained by employees' feelings of powerlessness. Some argue that they are burnt out and exhausted: 'We're fed up. So, we just have to make ends meet.' Although these employees are not that confrontational towards the exercise and movement initiative, they are worried, sceptical, and critical about it. Rebecca questions the initiative's relevance and whether aspects should be revised: 'How about removing exercise and movement for the oldest students?' After the meeting, Mark continues: 'Yes, we are sceptical, and if it works, why change it? ... And that's why I feel that there'll always be

this rumbling where they'll keep questioning some things'. Accordingly, Jane, the headmaster, also explains: 'Generally, teachers are sceptical towards a lot of the stuff that comes with changes. Until they realize that it may actually make a difference. But I do believe that it will take a couple of years before they adapt to this one, and before they separate the wheat from the chaff.'

As the vignette shows, this sensemaking dynamic is characterized by employees constraining sensemaking. However, the processes of sensemaking are not only informed and constrained by employees' own emotional reactions but also by others' emotional reactions. Employees feel and experience the medium- and high-intensity, negative emotional reactions of others. They see that other employees' feelings are very intense and negative, especially regarding questioning of their professionalism. As employees consider this in their interpretive processes, the intensity of emotional reactions from other employees constrains employees' sensemaking of content. This results in cautious sensemaking of the TEAST:

I really would like to discuss this with them. But to some, the affront there's been feels so much as abuse. Which makes it very difficult for them. So, it's like they feel that I'm only adding insult to injury. This is why I try to be very careful when entering into a discussion with them. (Headmaster, Interview).

Hence, in their sensemaking, employees are not only curious and inquisitive regarding the TEAST but also attentive, restrained, and careful to avoid unfortunate consequences:

Well, I've put a soft pedal on this, thinking that there is no need to take up this discussion. Because there are some teachers who feel – at least that's my impression – squashed by the way the reform was imposed. That is, the way it happened. So, it's deeply rooted in them and their perception of their job. (Employee, Informal interview)

... you just shut up, you don't want to get involved. Because you sense that there are some personal interests at stake. Or they are unable to set aside their personal interests and take part in a general discussion. (Employee, Informal interview)

Strategic change outcomes. As an outcome of this process of low-intensity, negative emotional reactions, the TEAST emerges. As the headmaster describes: 'it's baby steps and small

adjustments all the time. But we are making progress' (Headmaster, Informal interview). Revisions and reinterpretations of the intended TEAST include the following:

Due to the reform, learning objectives, student plans, and quality reports are new requirements. However, the student plans are being simplified. (Documents)

Due to the reform, traditional blackboard-based teaching has to be combined with practical and assisted learning activities that challenge and motivate students. However, the assisted learning activities are reduced. (Documents)

Due to the reform, there has to be time (2–3 hours each week) to have things clarified one more time, to get help with homework, and to immerse students in the things that are particularly difficult or particularly interesting. However, the requirements for organization and hours of homework assistance and academic immersion are replaced. (Documents)

Summary of dynamics

The findings offer understanding of how different intensities of negative emotional reactions affect sensemaking processes, revealing three sensemaking dynamics that emerge through the implementation processes of dual strategic changes. The emotional reactions and sensemaking dynamics co-evolve and thereby shape the unfolding processes of implementing changes. The findings are summarized in Figure 4.2. The figure links employees' emotional reactions with their co-arising responses to managers' sensegiving, and illustrates how these responses in turn shape the strategic change outcomes. As the intensity of emotional reactions lowers, less inhibited sensemaking processes begin to emerge, yet promoting an undermined implementation process. These emergent relationships are demonstrated through three links.

Link 1 demonstrates that the intensity of employees' emotional reactions to one strategic change affects the sensemaking processes for the other strategic change: different intensities of emotional reaction lead to different sensemaking processes. The intensity influences whether and how a change is discussed, and how decisions are made or postponed. Thus, as emotional reactions evolve during changes, so do sensemaking dynamics.

Link 2 demonstrates that the sensemaking dynamics influence whether the strategic changes emerge and progress. When employees refuse sensemaking, it leads to no or limited progress of change 2. When employees disrupt sensemaking, it leads to no or limited progress of change 2 and progress of change 1. Finally, when employees constrain sensemaking, it leads to progress of change 2.

Link 3 demonstrates that the sensemaking dynamics shape how emotions evolve, by shifting to a lower intensity, during implementation processes. Due to the sensemaking around emotions, employees' emotions increasingly shift to medium intensity (link 3A). As the employees secure some revisions to strategy 1, their emotions increasingly shift to lower intensity (link 3B). These links illustrate the evolving character of emotional reactions during strategic changes.

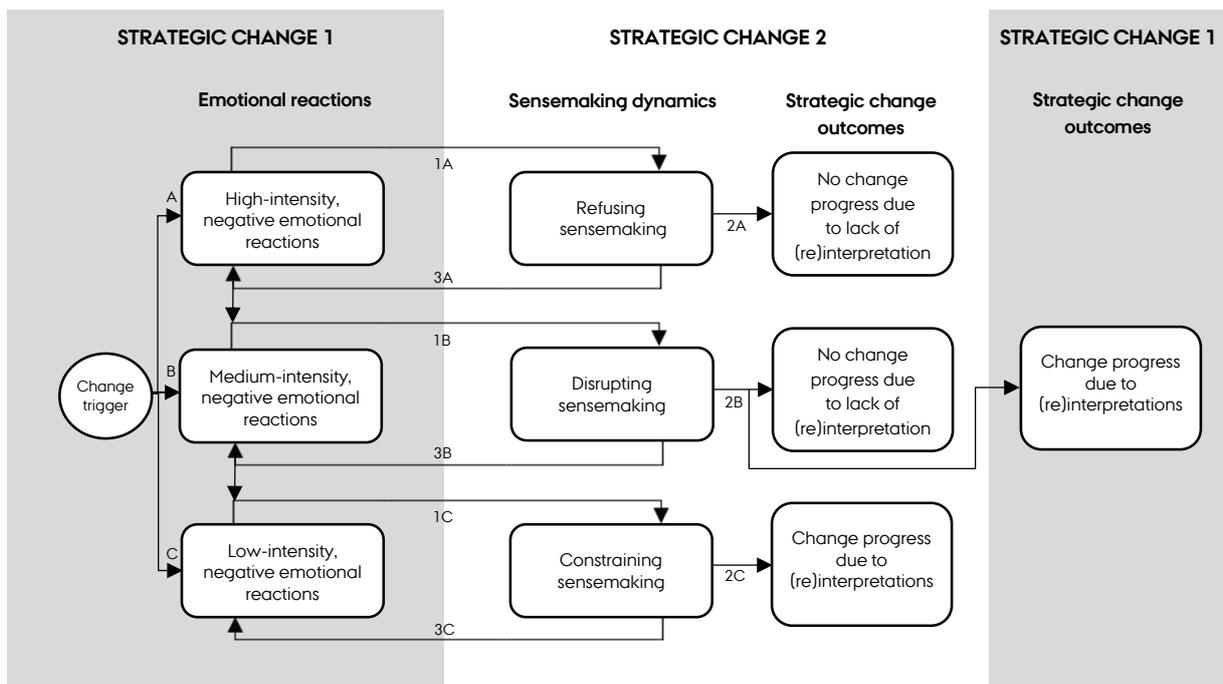


Figure 4.2. The links between emotional reactions, sensemaking dynamics, and strategic change outcomes.

The figure distinguishes between three different emotion patterns (A–C) and illustrates the links between them. The organizational change trigger leads to different actions and reactions as employees' emotions evolve differently. Overall, three different emotion patterns are recognized: three-stage (A), two-stage (B), and one-stage (C). The complex three-stage emotion pattern

involves high-, medium-, and low-intensity reactions; the two-stage emotion pattern involves medium- and low-intensity reactions; and the simpler one-stage emotion pattern only involves low-intensity reactions. As indicated by the arrows, the emotional reactions, sensemaking dynamics, and strategic change outcomes of one pattern are enabled by and dependent on other patterns. All three patterns interact, and the mechanisms influence one another across the patterns. For instance, even though the emotional reactions of the first emotion pattern do not evolve significantly, the degree of cautiousness in constrained sensemaking of the strategic change may decrease, as other employees' negative emotional reactions evolve from high to low intensity.

Discussion and contributions

A conceptual model

Existing research has highlighted that negative emotions are likely to energize in search for meaning and an understanding of the situation (e.g. Stein, 2004; Maitlis et al., 2013). This study differs from prior works by providing a nuanced understanding of sensemaking that theorizes emotions as sensemaking inhibitors. As sensemaking is a continuous process (Sandberg and Tsoukas, 2015), prior works defines such inhibitors as 'factors that constrain ongoing sensemaking micro-processes in terms of quality rather than quantity' (Guiette and Vandenbempt, 2017: 66). Therefore, inhibiting factors have referred to 'a change in sensemaking quality when the level of pre-interpretation increases and the sensemakers' thought-action repertoire narrows' (Guiette and Vandenbempt, 2017: 66).

However, in situation of dual strategic changes, this study demonstrates that emotions can be theorized as sensemaking inhibitors that constrain ongoing sensemaking processes in terms of *both* quantity (see Figure 4.3, I) and quality (Figure 4.3, II). Figure 4.3 illustrates that emotions may forestall sensemaking processes due to employees' resulting tendency to refuse and/or disrupt thought processes and direct attention from one strategic change to another (Figure 4.3, ii) or to the emotion itself (Figure 4.3, i). That means the level of sensemaking (quantity) decreases for one change, as the other change has the attention; however, sensemaking is still a continuous process as it simply has redirected from one to another change.

Strategic change involves a shift in organizational purpose, priorities, and goals (Gioia and Longenecker, 1994) and requires changing current modes of cognition to support appropriate action (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991). When sensemaking is inhibited in quantitative terms (Figure 4.3, I), it causes a lack of (re)interpretations, undermining appropriate actions and the progress of change. When sensemaking is inhibited in qualitative terms (Figure 4.3, II), it leads to (re)interpretation, however constrained, supporting appropriate actions and the progress of change. Hence, as illustrated in Figure 4.3, C, emotions as sensemaking inhibitors may undermine and shape the unfolding processes of strategic change implementation.

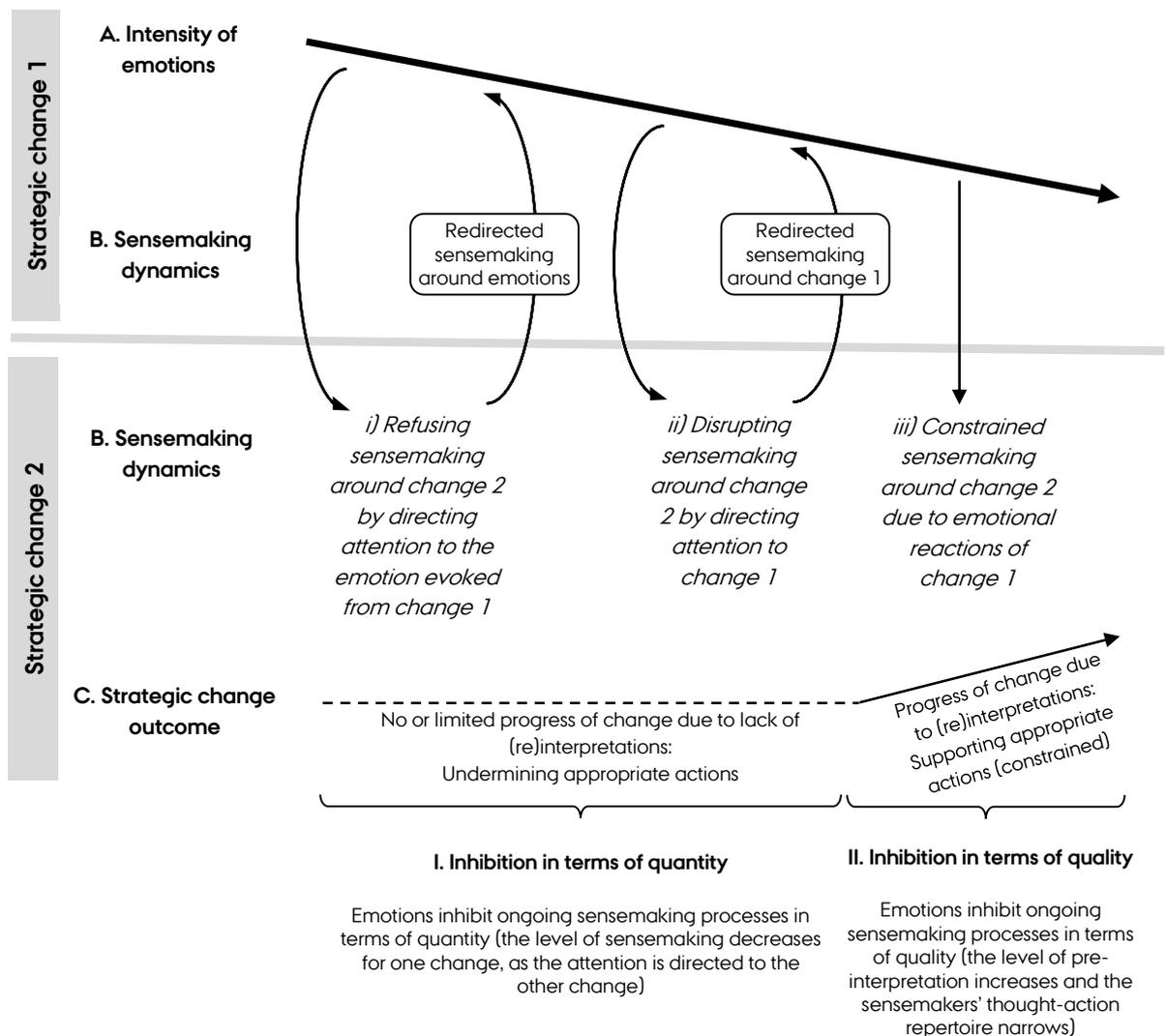


Figure 4.3. A conceptual model around redirection of sensemaking in a situation of dual strategic changes

Hence, the conceptual model distinguishes between two different strategic changes and illustrates their links. It demonstrates how the intensity of emotions (Figure 4.3, A), sensemaking dynamics (Figure 4.3, B), and strategic change outcomes (Figure 4.3, C) interrelate and co-evolve across the strategies. It shows how unfolding negative emotional reactions caused by one strategic change may redirect and/or constrain the sensemaking processes of another change and thereby undermine the implementation.

Contributions to theory

This paper addresses the research questions of how employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes. I have developed a processual framework that shows how emotional reactions, sensemaking dynamics, and strategic change outcomes interrelate and co-arise during implementation and across emotion patterns and strategies. This research contributes to knowledge about emotion, sensemaking, and strategizing in four ways.

First, the paper contributes to literature on emotions' role in sensemaking processes and strategizing by conceptualizing sensemaking dynamics as a link between emotional reactions and strategic change outcomes. Given widespread evidence that emotions are integral to interpretive processes (e.g. Maitlis et al., 2013), applying a sensemaking lens to emotions in strategizing provides more knowledge about how and why strategists act as they do, thereby explaining the link from emotions to organizational strategic outcomes. It appears that the sensemaking pattern comprises three dynamics that employees put into action: refusing sensemaking, disrupting sensemaking, and constraining sensemaking. These sensemaking dynamics reflect how the actors create meaning and contribute to configuring, stabilizing, revising, and shaping strategic changes, highlighting the necessity of understanding the entwined nature of emotions and sensemaking. However, the findings differ from prior works by providing in-depth, nuanced understanding of emotional reactions' role in sensemaking processes. While researchers have argued that triggering events producing negative emotion are more likely to energize the search for meaning (Stein, 2004), this study conceptualizes emotions as sensemaking inhibitors.

Prior studies have argued that emotional reactions to organizational change indicate the need for and energize the search for meaning and an understanding of the situation (Stein, 2004; Maitlis et al., 2013). However, emotions may forestall sensemaking processes due to employees' resulting tendency to refuse and/or disrupt thought processes and direct attention from one strategic change to another or to the emotion itself. The study shows how employee emotions obstruct and prevent sensemaking, portraying emotion as an impediment. By demonstrating in rich detail how emotions and sensemaking dynamics evolve and shape the unfolding processes of strategic change implementation, this paper improves understanding of how organizations attend to wide ranging employee emotions that not only facilitate but also inhibit sensemaking processes and, thereby, the progress of changes.

Second, the paper contributes to literature on emotions in strategizing by distinguishing between different emotions during dual strategic changes. Although it has been highlighted that emotions can influence subsequent interpretation and behaviours, few empirical change studies examine this aspect during concurrently occurring changes (Klarner et al., 2011). This is surprising since it has long been recognized that, over time, organizations are confronted with multiple changes that can occur sequentially or simultaneously (Webb and Pettigrew, 1999). Hence, while several empirical change studies do address the role of emotions, calls have been made to research unfolding emotions at different event stages and across multiple, sometimes simultaneous, events, and to investigate their effect on organizational strategic outcomes (Klarner et al., 2011; Brundin and Liu, 2015). By addressing these calls, this paper elaborates the role of emotional reactions as continual constructs that can coexist and evolve during dual strategic changes. It also tackles the knowledge gap on how change triggers different emotions within an individual and how, in turn, such emotions lead to different employee coping strategies (Klarner et al., 2011). Based on a particular case of one change associated with many strong, dominant, negative emotions and another change with a void of emotions, the study illustrates how emotions are nourished by and shape dual strategic changes. More specifically, the paper demonstrates how several emotions are evoked during changes and how such a mix of emotions leads to different outcomes.

Third, I extend knowledge of emotions' role in strategizing by improving understanding of the relationship between emotions and the implementation processes. Prior studies' illustrations of derailed implementation of strategic change often highlight an implicit form of resistance,

displayed in negative interpretations (e.g. Sonenshein, 2010; Huy et al., 2014), rather than linking the undermined implementation process to inhibited sensemaking processes. My process model extends knowledge of implementing strategic changes (Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Balogun and Johnson, 2005), by showing how, in a dual strategy context, the implementation process may be undermined. The undermined implementation process did not occur as failure to implement one or the other strategy (Huy et al., 2014; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2003), but rather in a subtle interplay in which emotional reactions to one strategy have consequences for both strategies.

Fourth, I elaborate and complexify this relationship by showing that employees' emotions towards one strategy inhibit sensemaking for the other and thereby influence the strategic change outcomes. I thus contribute to the dual strategies literature (Hengst et al., 2020; Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015) by demonstrating an interaction effect between two strategies. By investigating emotions during the process of simultaneous changes (Kiefer, 2002), I elucidate how negative emotions evoked by one change influence the sensemaking and implementation processes of another change. Thus, the paper demonstrates that the implementation of one change may be affected by or draw on emotional reactions to another change. Therefore, the dynamics cannot be understood by looking exclusively at emotional reactions and sensemaking around a single strategic change. To understand employees' appraisal processes, it is important to examine employee emotions during repeated changes.

Conclusion

The patterns identified have conceptual and practical implications for researchers seeking to untangle the complexities of emotions, sensemaking, and strategizing, and for practitioners wanting to improve their sensemaking capabilities in situations of emotional reactions to dual strategic changes. Researchers might gain by focusing on emotional reactions and strategic sensemaking across dual strategic changes. More empirical evidence is needed to confirm the simultaneous presence of the three sensemaking dynamics, and how they engage in praxis in various contexts – not just pluralistic settings. Other ongoing sensemaking dynamics might also be included in the interpretive processes, so researchers could focus on verifying such dynamics' existence. There is still a need to improve understanding of the relationships between emotional

reactions and sensemaking dynamics. These relationships, which are constructed differently by different actors, might change depending on the context and impact of change.

This paper focuses on a mix of negative emotions with different intensities. Its contributions could be extended by studying a mix of positive and negative emotions or just positive emotions in a context of dual strategic changes. Despite only relying on negative emotions, this study's contributions are not necessarily limited to such emotional reactions. However, the focal case is characterized by one change associated with many strong, dominant, negative emotions and another change with a void of emotions; other situations may differ. Actors can potentially carry over negative emotions from one change to the other, perhaps leading to more negative emotional reactions to both changes, or they can potentially have a very strong negative or positive feeling towards one change that predisposes them to feel especially positive or negative about the other change. The context is also influential. Emotions can be directed to delegitimizing the change and maybe the actors behind it, possibly reinforced by showing very positive emotions towards a change initiated by other actors. Thus, future research might examine how emotional reactions to and sensemaking processes of two changes interact intersectionally, investigating whether a certain emotional reaction strengthens, weakens, or totally creates an emotional reaction to the other change.

Finally, by directing attention to employees' emotional reactions and their sensemaking, the paper demonstrates that these interpretive processes and their strategic change outcomes are more than just patterns constructed by top and middle managers. Consistent with the strategy-as-practice agenda for broader conceptualization of strategic practitioners (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Johnson et al., 2003), this paper focuses on employees' emotional reactions. Although the strategy-as-practice perspective acknowledges that anybody in an organization can be a strategist, studies predominantly focus on emotions displayed and experienced by the upper echelons (Brundin and Liu, 2015). This approach may overlook other strategists, such as middle managers (Rouleau and Balogun, 2011) and, above all, the 'ordinary' employees who may also play an important role in organizational strategizing. Brundin and Liu (2015) call for future research to examine the emotions experienced and displayed by organizational members other than top managers and 'appointed' strategists. Accordingly, this paper illustrates that considering other stakeholders such

as ordinary employees opens up possibilities for identifying processes in which emotions are part of strategizing in subtler and less obvious ways.

When attempting to influence understanding of strategic change, employees' sensemaking and their attempts to shape organizational understanding must be considered. For practitioners, the findings provide useful insights into 'ordinary' employees' emotional reactions, which may also play an important role in organizational strategizing. Managers should moderate the effects of and interaction between emotional reactions to dual strategic changes by highlighting that the changes are distinct. Likewise, managers should especially focus on handling employees' negative emotional reactions to some changes in order to facilitate implementing others. Hence, to assure the implementation processes of dual strategic changes, managers need to handle the presence of both changes in their attempts to influence employees' sensemaking and meaning constructions.

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Chapter 5

PAPER II

Resisting by not resisting: The implementation processes of dual strategic changes

RESISTING BY NOT RESISTING: THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES OF DUAL STRATEGIC CHANGES

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ABSTRACT

This paper draws on findings from a case study of implementing dual strategic changes to develop a conceptual model of how actors play one strategy off against the other in order to resist strategic change. Our study identifies four practices – linking, collapsing, undermining, and rejecting – that evolve through three implementation phases – justifying, revising, and delegitimizing – and in doing so, shape the unfolding process of implementing the two strategic changes. The findings contribute to the literature in two ways. First, the study shows how actors camouflage their resistance, building their capabilities, as a precursor that then enables them to engage in active resistance. Second, it illustrates the interactions between strategies and how actors construct and manipulate these interactions to enable resistance.

Keywords: Resistance; dual strategies; strategizing; strategic change; strategy-as-practice; practice theory; employee; strategy implementation

Status: Working paper.

Introduction

Existing studies show that strategies are reinterpreted during their implementation, often with unintended outcomes, and that these reinterpretations may arise from resistance to strategic change, rather than merely lack of understanding (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2005; Mantere et al., 2012; Sonenshein, 2010; Huy et al., 2014). In other words, implementation of strategic change is derailed or altered by resistance from employees (Courpasson et al., 2012). However, although these studies provide insight into resistance to strategic change and its effects upon implementation (e.g. Laine and Vaara, 2007; Thomas et al., 2011; Piderit, 2000), we still have few insights into the social dynamics of strategy implementation and potential resistance to ‘dual strategic changes’, meaning contexts in which more than one strategy is being implemented simultaneously. Yet we expect the implementation of dual strategies to be problematic because dual strategies generate ambiguity (Sillince et al., 2012), conflicts (Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015), and struggles to generate meaning (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017). Such studies show that there is an interaction effect in which the way that one strategy is implemented seems to shape the other. In this paper, therefore, we consider situations of dual strategic changes, in which implementation processes may be more complex than single strategic changes, and which may expose particular forms of resistance.

We draw on an empirical study of a Danish public school over three and a half years⁵ as two changes were imposed at the same time: a new public school reform and new working hour rules. The two simultaneous changes were externally mandated (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019), imposed by the Danish central government and Local Government Denmark (an association of Danish municipalities). Each of the changes consists of a number of strategic initiatives, but only to a limited extent is it centrally specified how they should be implemented. Therefore, it is, to a certain extent, up to the schools, possibly in collaboration with the municipalities, to determine how in practice these initiatives must be implemented. However, to varying degrees, the external mandates specify frameworks for management and teaching, and the school that we study responded to the mandated changes by implementing a new teaching strategy (TEAST) and a new management strategy (MANST). Even though the mandated changes were not intended to be connected, our findings show that the actors themselves connect and establish interpretive links between the two strategies, in ways that support resistance to the implementation of both. Other

⁵ During the period of 3.5 years, the authors had one year without any data collection.

researchers, such as Hengst et al. (2020) and Spee and Jarzabkowski (2011) have investigated the interactions between dual strategies, such as a new strategy in relation to an existing strategy. However, a peculiarity of our context is the presence of dual strategic *changes* taking place simultaneously, and not merely dual strategies.

Our findings show four practices – linking, collapsing, undermining, and rejecting – that emerge through the implementation processes across dual changes. The practices evolve through three implementation phases – justifying, revising, and delegitimizing – and, in doing so, shape the unfolding process of implementation of the two strategic changes. By demonstrating that unintended consequences and failures arise from the way resistance plays out, we illustrate both the practices and dynamics by which actors shape the implementation process in such a way that neither strategy is fully realized. Rather than one strategy not being implemented at the expense of the other, we find a subtle interplay in which doing one strategy has negative consequences for the other strategy and vice versa, thus sabotaging both strategies, whilst not appearing to do so directly. Specifically, actors in situations of dual strategic changes hide their opposition to one strategy behind a benign appearance of making efforts to comply, but being unable to do so because of the other strategy. By using one change to camouflage dissent about another change, actors delegitimize initiatives without directly opposing the intended changes. Yet we also show that such delegitimation gives actors a stronger grounding to resist directly, indicating a processual effect between camouflaged and more direct resistance.

These findings are drawn together in a conceptual process model that makes two main contributions to the literature. First, we contribute to the resistance literature (Ybema and Horvers, 2017; Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995; Scott, 1985) by extending knowledge of various forms of resistance in the context of dual changes. We show how actors camouflage their resistance, building their capabilities, as a precursor that then enables them to engage in active resistance. Second, we contribute to the literature on dual strategies (Hengst et al., 2020; Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015) by demonstrating interactions between strategies and how actors construct and manipulate these interactions. Our processual framework thus extends knowledge on the interaction between two strategies by showing: 1) the specific interactional dynamic through which actors relate dual strategies to each other; and 2) how this enables them to resist strategic change and inhibit the

implementation of both strategies, rather than simply using an old strategy to resist a new strategy (e.g. Sonenshein, 2010).

Theoretical framing

Dual strategic changes

While much research has focused on the social dynamics of implementing a single strategic change, we know that the implementation of dual strategies may be problematic because they generate ambiguity (Sillince et al., 2012), conflicts (Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015), legitimacy struggles (Hengst et al., 2020), and problems in meaning making (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017). Lê and Jarzabkowski (2015) show that implementation of dual strategies generates task and process conflict. However, they find that these two forms of conflict are ultimately productive in helping to understand the new strategy that has to be implemented alongside an existing strategy. Jarzabkowski et al. (2013) develop an empirically grounded process model for how managers in organizations respond to paradoxical tensions that arise between regulatory and market strategies. Other researchers, such as Spee and Jarzabkowski (2017), show that people's diverse meaning systems create challenges when an organization is faced with implementing a new strategy alongside existing strategies, and can lead to lack of agreement about the new strategy. Many of the problems identified in these few studies of dual strategies arise because there is already an existing strategy which has legitimacy, against which any new strategy must be interpreted and actioned. For example, Hengst et al. (2020) show the dynamics of implementing a sustainability strategy alongside an existing mainstream competitive strategy. By demonstrating that the implementation of dual strategies must be made legitimate relative to each other within people's actions, they highlight 'an iterative processual dynamics of legitimating-in-action as critical in enabling mutual reinforcement, rather than conflict, between two or more strategies' (Hengst et al., 2020: 44).

These studies show that there is an interaction effect, whereby the way in which one strategy is implemented shapes the other. However, although these studies indicate that resistance to one or both strategies might be a possible reason for the problems experienced, they: 1) do not take resistance as an explicit lens; and 2) do not investigate dual strategic *changes*. Yet in situations

of dual strategic changes, implementation processes may be more complex and may expose particular forms of resistance. We therefore further examine the resistance literature to better understand how resistance may play out in the context of dual strategic changes.

Resistance

Organizational scholars have acknowledged that resistance is inherent to organizational life (Jermier et al., 1994; Thompson and Ackroyd, 1995; Mumby, 2005), and that it can play out in multiple forms including sabotage, working-to-rule, and strikes (e.g. Burawoy, 1982; Jermier et al., 1994). Traditionally, resistance used to be constructed within a negative paradigm, considered as an open, observable, and organized opposition to management control (Thomas and Davies, 2005; Ybema and Horvers, 2017) and tending to be triggered by power (Kärreman and Alvesson, 2009). More recently, scholars have suggested that totalitarian normative and technological control result in widespread compliance and eliminate worker resistance (Barker, 1993). In response to these studies of control and compliance, critical studies have asserted that in contexts of disembodied, unobtrusive forms of control, resistance is difficult to see (e.g. Fleming and Sewell, 2002; Thomas and Davies, 2005). Therefore, in addition to the traditional conceptions of resistance that emphasize open and organized dissent, researchers have extended their definitions of resistance (Edwards et al., 1995; Gabriel, 1999; Jermier et al., 1994; Knights and McCabe, 2000). Instead of focusing on the ‘visible, explicit and collective oppositional practices such as output restriction ... and sabotage ...’ (Edwards et al., 1995: 291), they have extended resistance to include oppositional practices that are more covert, subtle, and unorganized.

Increasingly the literature has alerted to us this more hidden or unobtrusive resistance (Ybema and Horvers, 2017; Fleming and Sewell, 2002; Thomas and Davies, 2005), that enables subtle undermining of, or disruption to, some form of managerial control or course of action. Instead of the ‘classic Fordist image of resistance’ (Fleming and Spicer, 2008: 203), organizational scholars have recognized that resistance is complex (Thomas et al., 2011) and not always obvious (Fleming and Sewell, 2002). Hence, in accordance with recent research that has studied these forms of subtle disruption and examined the practices of this hidden micro-resistance (Ybema and Horvers, 2017; Harding et al., 2017; Bristow et al., 2017), it is necessary to be alert to less observable behaviours by which actors express and enact their resistance to particular courses of

action. In order to understand resistance at the micro-level, organizational scholars have acknowledged the need to break out of the dualistic debate of ‘compliance with’ versus ‘resistance to’ (Thomas and Davies, 2005), as more ‘quotidian variants’ of resistance (Fleming and Spicer, 2008: 203) often mix resistance with compliance (Ybema and Horvers, 2017). For instance, organizational scholars have highlighted humour (Collinson, 2003), cynicism (Fleming and Spicer, 2008), and scepticism (Fleming and Sewell, 2002) as central resistance practices. These practices can be used by discontented employees to facilitate dissent in a way that ‘covers its own tracks’ (Scott, 1985: 278). In other words, they can be used as means of adopting resistant behaviours while camouflaging their opposition, for example behind a good-humoured appearance (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995). These practices are adopted by employees because they are aware that explicit forms of resistance can intensify control and discipline and result in severe and punitive sanctions from authority (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995). Hence, due to the asymmetrical power relationships in which employees act, they attempt to generate unmanaged and unmanageable terrains within organizations (Gabriel, 1999) where their dissent may be camouflaged and difficult to identify (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995; Schutz, 1995).

Thus, instead of categorizing the intentions, practices, and efforts of subtle resistance as either ‘real’ resistance or ‘mere’ compliance, Ybema and Horvers (2017: 1234) argue the existence of a ‘peculiar coalescence of compliance and resistance’ and clarify how compliance and resistance are produced and performed in workaday life. This has led them to revisit the debate regarding subtle resistance, distinguishing and describing two forms of subtle resistance: frontstage resistance, that mixes open protest with compliant behaviour, and backstage resistance, that unfolds through a benign appearance of staged compliant behaviour.

Other researchers have provided a nuanced understanding of resistance through influence. Instead of seeing resistance as a ‘fixed opposition between irreconcilable adversaries’ (Courpasson et al., 2012: 801), such studies suggest that resistance can be better understood as ‘what resisters do to achieve their ends’ (Courpasson et al., 2012: 801). Courpasson et al. (2012: 815) point out that resisters have the ability to influence top management decisions and facilitate eventual change through subtle political influence. Overall, this gives a more nuanced understanding of resistance as something that is not just about refusing to do things, but could be about using existing power structures to have influence over an actor’s desired outcomes. Thus, to understand resistance

within the context of dual strategic changes, it is necessary to look at what people are actually doing to advance their own interests, in ways that may be more or less overt, and how such actions shape the implementation of the strategic changes.

Resistance in implementation of strategic change

Resistance generally refers to an action that is not aligned with the dominant direction or status quo, and can produce both positive and negative outcomes (Courpasson et al., 2012). Therefore, by emphasizing the consequences and implications of resistance to implementing strategic change, strategy scholars view resistance as either negative (Laine and Vaara, 2007; Thomas and Davies, 2005), potentially facilitative (Balogun et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2011; Ford et al., 2008), or as a mix of the two (Piderit, 2000). Scholars viewing resistance as negative find resistance to change to be illegitimate, subversive, adversarial, and something that derails implementation (Laine and Vaara, 2007; Thomas and Davies, 2005). From such perspectives, resistance is typically constructed as ‘an inevitable and natural reaction, triggered because individuals are fearful, have resistant personalities, or misunderstand the benefits of the proposed change’ (Thomas et al., 2011: 35). These studies frame resistance as illegitimate, unfounded, and a hindrance to successful change implementation (Thomas and Davies, 2005). Resistance may obscure, subvert, or prevent implementation of strategic change, even leading to failure of the strategy (Maitlis and Lawrence, 2003). In line with such negative consequences for the strategy, Thomas et al.’s (2011) study describes the role of oppositional resisting, demonstrating how coercive communicative practices such as dismissing, deploying authority, invoking hierarchy, and reifying lead to degenerative dialogue and oppositional power-resistance relationships. When senior managers are unwilling to make accommodations, middle managers become less likely to engage with others’ meanings and are more likely to defend their own. Consequently, change may still ensue, but by holding on to existing assumptions and refusing to engage with alternative meanings, senior managers reduce the likelihood that it will be innovative or synergistic. Ybema and Horvers (2017) provide insight into how backstage resistance delegitimizes and delays the change process. They argue that through unmanaged spaces, change recipients can ‘communicate, complain and conspire with colleagues, and dedicate themselves to their own principles in daily work, while approaching

change initiatives with a measure of acquiescence, indifference and critique' (Ybema and Horvers, 2017: 1248)

Second, some studies have, in contrast to the typically negative framing of resistance as an obstacle and liability to change initiatives, emphasized facilitative forms of resistance (Balogun et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2011). Ford et al. (2008) point out that resistance can be a resource in the implementation process. Rather than a hindrance to change, facilitative resistance can contribute to change implementation through conceptual expansion, combination, and reframing of the initial strategy (Thomas et al., 2011). Facilitative resistance is constituted from the intersection of communicative practices between senior managers and subordinates, who engage in a series of counteroffers about what each is willing to accommodate, even where these offers differ from the initial change proposed (Thomas et al., 2011: 35). Balogun et al. (2011) also provide insight into how resistance can be both legitimate and beneficial within the implementation of a new strategy. Their study describes the roles of selling, resistance, and reconciliation discourses, demonstrating how spaces in which discourses can unfold in a dialogic strategic planning process of negotiation enable selling discourses to meet resistance discourses. Such processes enable each party in the negotiation process to achieve legitimacy for their discourse and highlight the reconciliation mechanisms operative in moving negotiations from resistance to consensus.

Third, some studies adopt a multidimensional view of resistance (Piderit, 2000). Instead of seeing resistance to change as either subversive or facilitative, Piderit (2000) concludes that a multidimensional view of employee attitudes toward organizational change permits a richer view of the ways in which employees may respond to change. She encourages 'an appreciation for the prevalence of ambivalence in individuals' responses to change' and demonstrates that the degree of ambivalence and resistance in employees' attitudes may have both desirable and undesirable consequences. For instance, she argues that 'a variety of research indicates that divergent opinions about direction are necessary in order for groups to make wise decisions and for organizations to change effectively' (Piderit, 2000: 790).

Such studies thus provide insight into how people resist strategic change, what practices they use, and what effects their resistance has on the implementation. Yet these studies largely focus on the context of a single change, leaving an unanswered puzzle about how such dynamics might play out in the implementation of dual strategic changes. We address this puzzle through

the theoretically informed research question: *How does actors' resistance to strategic change play out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation?*

Research context and methods

Case setting

Consistent with other practice-based interpretive research (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2005), we adopted a real-time, longitudinal single case-study approach. The empirical study was conducted in a Danish public school, located in a small community in a midsize municipality. The school has approximately 400 students, 30 teachers, and a management team consisting of a headmaster, a deputy headmaster, and a pedagogical leader. The school is organized in three sections, called A house, B house, and C house, consisting of the oldest, middle, and youngest students, respectively. Specific details of the case are disguised and all research participants are given pseudonyms to preserve anonymity.

The study was conducted over three and a half year as two changes were imposed: new working hour rules and a new public school reform. The changes were externally mandated, imposed by the Danish central government and Local Government Denmark (an association of Danish municipalities). The implementation of the two changes occurred simultaneously, although they were not intended to be linked (Kjer and Rosdahl, 2016).

The new working hour rules were adopted after national-level negotiations between the public employers (represented by Local Government Denmark) and teachers (represented by the Danish Union of Teachers) had collapsed and been followed by a lockout of 70,000 teachers that lasted for almost four weeks (DLF, 2014). At the core of the dispute was the Danish Union of Teachers' refusal to sign a collective agreement that gave headmasters, rather than the teachers themselves, more power to decide teachers' work schedules. With the Union and Local Government Denmark unable to reach an agreement, the government intervened, forcing teachers to accept the new conditions (Refner, 2014). As a starting point, the new MANST gives the management team greater autonomy to lead and distribute work at the school. School managers would determine the ratio of teaching hours to preparation hours, and total working hours. The change was strategic in altering the deployment of the key school staffing resource, overturning

the maximum 25 contact hours per week that were standard at the time. Teachers thus had more teaching hours (some up to 30 hours) and full-time presence at the school.

Simultaneously with the new working hour rules, a new public school reform was implemented, as the Danish government reached a broad political agreement on a reform to improve standards in Danish public schools. While separate, the reform was implemented at the same time as the new working hour rules. The reform was an accountability-focused school reform, inspired by the US model, involving three main objectives: 1) the public school system must challenge all students to reach their full potential; 2) public schools must curb the impact of social background on academic results; and 3) trust in schools and pupil well-being must be enhanced via respect for professional knowledge and practices (The Danish Ministry of Education, 2013). These objectives were to be achieved through a number of strategic initiatives, including longer and more varied school days and increased teaching quality in a number of subjects. This included, for instance, enhancing exercise and movement, objective-oriented teaching and open schools (The Danish Ministry of Education, 2013). Thus, the reform was very comprehensive with many and varied initiatives, which were fundamentally altering the current teaching strategy.

Table 5.1 shows six key strategic initiatives of each change and summarizes the content of the legislative initiatives as outlined by the government. The initiatives were new central and mandatory elements of school activities, generally applicable from the first year of the change. It should be noted that in the first year, students' participation in 'Homework assistance and academic immersion' was voluntary; however, from the second year it was mandatory. Furthermore, it was in the second year that new simplified learning objectives were introduced to promote 'Objective-oriented teaching'.

Even though the two changes each consist of a number of strategic initiatives, it is only to a limited extent centrally specified how they should be implemented. Therefore, it is to a certain extent up to the schools, possibly in collaboration with the municipalities, to determine how these initiatives must be implemented in concrete terms. The school in our case responded to the mandated changes by implementing a new TEAST and a new MANST.

Table 5.1. Key strategic initiatives

Initiatives setting the framework for the MANST	Initiatives setting the framework for the TEAST
<p>a) No maximum contact hours: The school management is free to determine the teaching to preparation-hour ratio, and total working hours.</p> <p>b) Full-time presence: Teachers have the right and duty to be present full-time at the workplace during the full working hours.</p> <p>c) Scheduling of working time: The work is organized on weekdays, Monday to Friday, during daytime hours. The daily working hours must, to the extent possible, be continuous, rather than split shifts, or entailing preparation outside these working hours.</p> <p>d) Number of working days: The school management/municipality determines the number of days that teachers must work.</p> <p>e) Determination of teachers' tasks: The management prepares a task overview, which must generally indicate the tasks that the teacher is expected to complete.</p> <p>f) No (very limited) flexitime: Teachers have no or very limited flexitime</p>	<p>a) Longer school day: 30 hours for the youngest, 33 for the middle, and 35 hours for the oldest students.</p> <p>b) Homework assistance and academic immersion: Time must be allocated (2–3 hours each week) for students to have academic lessons clarified, receive help with home-work, and be immersed in subjects that are particularly difficult or interesting.</p> <p>c) Exercise and movement: Exercise and movement must be integrated into all students' school days for an average of 45 minutes each day.</p> <p>d) Open school: The school must cooperate with the surrounding community in the local sporting, cultural, and business life.</p> <p>e) Varied and realistic teaching: Traditional blackboard-based teaching must be combined with practical and assisted learning activities that challenge and motivate students.</p> <p>f) Objective-oriented teaching: Learning objectives, student plans, and quality reports are introduced as new requirements.</p>

MANST: management strategy; TEAST: teaching strategy

Data collection

Longitudinal qualitative data were collected over a period of three and a half years as the school implemented the two strategic changes. The data were triangulated by drawing on in-depth observations, interviews, and document analysis.

Over the three and a half year period, over 70 days were spent by the first author at the school, observing meetings, seminars, and daily work. In total, 38 meetings were attended during this period, which lasted 2–5 hours each, resulting in 110 hours of observation. The first author also attended three seminars, including a strategy seminar; these seminars lasted 6–9 hours each. In addition, (s)he engaged in other forms of on-site fieldwork, collecting incidental observational

data, because (s)he regularly sat in the office or the staffroom and was able to join in informal discussions and talk with teachers and managers. The first author observed and participated in informal pre and post-meeting discussions, and observed and shadowed managers and teachers in their everyday work. Alongside daily observations, informal, open ended, and unstructured interviews took place. Detailed field notes, including as many verbatim quotes as possible, were taken and typed up within 24 hours, in accordance with recommended practice (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2013).

To complement our ethnographic observations, a total of 31 semi-structured interviews were conducted, including nine interviews with the three members of the management team and interviews with 22 of the school's 30 teachers. The initial interviews with the management team were relatively unstructured, the purpose being to gather background information regarding the management team and the organization, as well as early responses to changes. The subsequent two rounds of interviews with the managers and the interviews with teachers focused on the implementation of the two strategies. Interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes; all interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Finally, the study included access to internal documents. Documentation such as minutes and agenda items of all meetings attended, strategic plans, calendars, budgets, and executive profiles were collected, allowing additional data triangulation. These documents were used as a secondary data source and provided a supplementary perspective on the implementation process that was useful for engaging interviewees in discussion.

Analysis

The analysis followed an iterative analytic process consisting of four stages (Corbin and Strauss, 1990), in which the first and second author went back and forth between the data, emerging themes, and the literature. First, we wrote a rich description of the case story over time (Langley, 1999), which explained the unfolding of the two strategic changes; the TEAST and the MANST. From this description, we generated insights about the six key initiatives of each change and captured the implementation processes of the two strategies. As we discussed our case story, we identified

three overlapping phases of implementation, which we labelled thematically as the justifying phase, the revising phase, and the delegitimizing phase.

Second, we explored these phases to identify actors' practices – their doings and sayings (Schatzki, 2002) – in implementing the strategies. Specifically, we went back to our interviews and field notes from meetings and other forms of on-site fieldwork to code for what teachers were saying and doing in relation to each strategy. For example, we coded data such as complaining about the difficulty of specific initiatives, disagreeing about what an initiative entailed, talking with other colleagues about the problems with particular initiatives, etcetera. We considered these as first-order empirical codes, which we then arranged into clusters of empirically grounded categories of practices, such as persuading and influencing each other, negotiating what they have to do, justifying the difficulty of strategies, exploiting dissatisfaction, suggesting explicit revisions, demonstrating less commitment, reducing work effort, continuing existing methods, routines, and practices, doing initiatives in their own way, making their own decisions, becoming their own leader, etcetera. Based on the nature of these findings, we increasingly turned to the literature on resistance to strategic change (e.g. Balogun et al, 2011; Thomas et al, 2011) to help us interpret and theorize based on our findings.

Third, we examined how these doings and sayings generated associations between the two strategies. We thus examined the key initiatives for each strategy that we identified in our thick description, tracing how actors' doings and sayings shaped implementation of each of those initiatives, and whether and how they generated associations between the initiatives of one strategy and those of the other strategy. From this analysis, we found that actors frequently generated associations between the ostensibly separate initiatives of the two strategies. We examined how these associations occurred and their effects, eventually clustering them, drawing on Schatzki (2002), into four practices arising from actors' doings and sayings, which we labelled: linking, collapsing, undermining, and rejecting.

Fourth, we began mapping those practices to the phases we had identified to see if they were specific to particular phases of strategy implementation. We found that the four practices do play out longitudinally, insofar as linking happens more in phase one, collapsing more in phase two, and undermining and rejecting happen more in phase three. However, we also found that the practices are not discrete or exclusive to a single phase but may occur across phases; for example,

linking also occurs in phases two and three. Nonetheless, the practices do evolve, and in doing so, shape the unfolding process of implementing the two changes. Hence, our mapping enabled us to see how each practice shapes the evolving strategy implementation process. In particular, we examined the initial intent of the two strategies, and how they developed over time in terms of unintended consequences that could be attributed to the way teachers used the practices identified to resist the implementation of the two strategies. Specifically, even though the new working hour rules and the public school reform were not intended to be connected, actors connected and established interpretive links between the two strategic changes in ways that supported their resistance to each and, in the process, shaped how each strategy was implemented.

Finally, our iterative analysis allowed us to begin establishing the contours of a process model for how actors' resistance to strategic change plays out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation. This process model constitutes the basis for our discussion and contributions.

Findings

We present our findings in two sections. In the first section, we demonstrate how actors associate the initiatives of dual strategic changes. We explain the four practices identified in the case: linking; collapsing; undermining; and rejecting. To illustrate their effects, we link these practices to the six key initiatives of each change presented in Table 5.1 (see also Tables 5.2–5). In the second section, we show how these practices enabled resistance and shaped the longitudinal process of implementing the two strategies.

Section 1: Four practices that associate initiatives between dual strategic changes

Linking. Linking⁶ involves a set of practices whereby actors establish interpretive links between strategies. As shown in Table 5.2, actors separate the two strategies while establishing interpretive links between them. For example, some actors link 'no maximum contact hours' (in the MANST) and 'varied and realistic teaching' (in the TEAST): *'Nothing of this [varied teaching], I think, is*

⁶ 'Linking' is a well-known concept in the middle management literature and has entirely different meaning within that body of work.

bad. But we have to remember that there are certain terms and conditions which make it difficult to make ends meet. (...) We are experiencing an excessive workload, too many teaching hours and too little preparation. (...) So it is aggravating that you keep saying that the MANST is of no consequence. Because it is.' (Employee, Obs.) (See also Table 5.2 for other examples).

Table 5.2. Representative data coded to linking practice

Linked initiatives		Representative data
MANST initiatives	TEAST initiatives	
a) No maximum contact hours	The TEAST as a whole	<i>'The content of the reform [the TEAST] is fine, but I think it imposes some restrictions on the reform that we have much less preparation time.'</i> (Employee, Int.)
b) Full-time presence & f) Limited flexitime	The TEAST as a whole	<i>'The biggest challenge is obviously that with act 409 [working hour rules] we teachers simply do not have the time and flexibility that is needed to carry out our work and implement the reform [the TEAST].'</i> (Employee, Int.)
e) Determination of teachers' tasks	e) Varied and realistic teaching	<i>'It [varied teaching] is difficult when we do not have the freedom to plan and prioritize our own time.'</i> (Employee, Obs.)
The MANST as a whole	The TEAST as a whole	<i>'The result of the reform is not better, as the resources and time in the real world are not sufficient to lift the task.'</i> (Employee, Int.)
a) No maximum contact hours	b) Homework assistance and academic immersion	<i>'However, that [homework assistance] doesn't work in relation to the organization of working time. (...) We do not have the time and we just cannot ignore that. We have to relate to reality as it is.'</i> (Employee, Obs.)
b) Full-time presence & f) Limited flexitime	e) Varied and realistic teaching	<i>'However, our lack of flexibility limits our ability to be creative and give the students a varied teaching.'</i> (Employee, Obs.)
a) No maximum contact hours	c) Exercise and movement	<i>'Without a doubt, I believe that it imposes some limitations on the exercise and movement that we have much less preparation time.'</i> (Employee, Obs.)
a) No maximum contact hours	d) Open school	<i>'It's [open school] hard because the preparation time is not for it. And we have to take into account that reality, so it's a joke that we cannot talk about it.'</i> (Employee, Obs.)

MANST: management strategy; TEAST: teaching strategy

Actors argue that the TEAST and the MANST cannot be kept fully separate; the interpretive link is established by arguing that the strategies affect each other. Hence, as the quote illustrates, actors adopt the notion that the initiatives of one strategy influence and shape the realization of the other. Linking substantiates that TEAST-related initiatives are conditioned by MANST-related initiatives. Actors argue that, because of the MANST, they do not have the necessary time and flexibility to implement the TEAST. Through these interpretive links, actors not only emphasize

the implications of one change for the other, but also note their inconsistencies, thereby creating a narrative of conflict between the strategies. They point out that they are experiencing an extensive workload, that they have too many contact hours, and that they lack the time for teaching preparation and for completing other tasks. Thus, they establish interpretive links that they then use to start creating contradiction and establishing that there are inconsistencies between the strategies.

Collapsing. In the collapsing practice, the two strategies are so strongly linked that they are depicted as the same. Table 5.3 shows representative data from interactions where TEAST-related initiatives are collapsed with MANST-related initiatives. For example, during a meeting to discuss initiatives of the TEAST, such as ‘varied and realistic teaching’, actors collapsed it with MANST-related initiatives, such as ‘full-time presence’: *‘Before we were able to spread our preparation over seven days, now we cannot do that. We need to be able to do some of the preparation for teaching at home. Because we need more flexibility to be able to create this exciting teaching that they demand.’* (Employee, Obs.). Other actors collapse ‘exercise and movement’ (the TEAST) and ‘no maximum contact hours’ (the MANST): *‘We can just call the breaks for “movement and exercise”. Then we do not need to use our preparation time on it.’* (Employee, Obs.). More specially, they argue either that an initiative of the TEAST cannot be performed without changing an initiative in the MANST, or that due to an initiative of the MANST a TEAST-related initiative has to be revised (see also Table 5.3 for other examples). As the data in Table 5.3 indicate, a large part of the collapsing relate to ‘no maximum contact hours’ (MANST initiative), specifically the experienced time pressure of the teachers.

The headmaster describes the collapsing as follows: *‘It is vexing that act 409 about the teachers’ presence and working hours and all that, has been muddied with issues in the school reform. Things are mixed up. It sure as hell was not a winner. A whole lot of teachers, when they have been asked about how they relate to the reform, they have expressed that they have had less time. And that has indeed not really been anything to do with public school reform. And even though the teachers are in it, they found it difficult to separate the two things apart.’* (Headmaster, Int.). Similarly, the deputy headmaster says: *‘What is critical is that there are two things that have fallen at the same time. So when you ask me about how I relate to the reform, in my daily work as manager I can separate things. But if you go out to the organization you will meet a total confusion*

about it.’ (Deputy headmaster, Int.). In addition, when employees are asked about the TEAST, they start to comment on the MANST. For example, an employee answered: ‘The fact that we absolutely have to sit here and prepare ourselves I think it’s a horrible, horrible thing. I simply need more flexibility.’ (Employee, Int.).

Table 5.3. Representative data coded to collapsing practice

	Collapsed initiatives		Representative data
	MANST initiatives	TEAST initiatives	
C1	c) Scheduling of working time & f) Limited flexitime	a) Longer school day	<i>‘We need flexibility and trust in the organization of working hours, for example in relation to timetabling days and weeks. It would be a good idea if we could save up hours, for instance, for large-scale tasks like correcting papers and to designate a pool of hours for cooperation with parents.’(Employee, Obs.)</i>
C2	e) Determination of teachers’ tasks	d) Open school	<i>‘Also it would be nice to have a pool of hours for meetings – or the time for this could be allocated in our schedule. Then we would be able to organize academic feature days where we could get away from the school.’(Employee, Obs.)</i>
C3	a) No maximum contact hours & f) Limited flexitime	d) Open school	<i>‘If I’m to succeed in my task, at the very least I need more time. I need greater flexibility in relation to the organization of working time. I won’t be able to lift the task as required, and I know that there are several of my colleagues who feel exactly the same. (...) We need more preparation time. Because as it is, there is simply not enough time to prepare this exciting and versatile teaching.’(Employee, Obs.)</i>
C4	e) Determination of teachers’ tasks	f) Objective-oriented teaching	<i>‘Maybe we should develop a standardized system – a kind of point system where specific tasks [class coordinator, AKT (adfærd/behaviour, kontakt/contact, trivsel/welfare) supervisor, school librarian, interviews, inspection, school board, etc.] are given specific points? (...) We have to have a say in the tasks the individual employee is assigned if we want to make a success of objective-oriented teaching.’(Employee, Obs.)</i>
C5	The MANST as a whole	d) Open school	<i>‘Let’s assume that Theatre and Christmas church are fixed [as the only open school activities]. Because at some point, it will bite us in the ass that we do this. If suddenly we have to do something else, then we will be pressured in the run-of-the-mill, where we are already under pressure. We must take on as little as possible. At the end of the day, we have to limit it to what we can handle.’(Employee, Obs.)</i>
C6	a) No maximum contact hours	a) Longer school day	<i>‘But we will have to make sure we have time to prepare it, otherwise it does not matter. And we will only get this by making the school day shorter.’(Employee, Obs.)</i>
C7	a) No maximum contact hours	b) Homework assistance and academic immersion	<i>‘How about removing homework assistance for the oldest students. Because we do not have the resources to lift the task and it could also release some resources to lift other tasks.’(Employee, Obs.)</i>

MANST: management strategy; TEAST: teaching strategy

Undermining. Undermining is a set of practices whereby actors use the TEAST to undermine the MANST. As is apparent from Table 5.4, actors implicitly attempt to influence either the MANST or its implementation through initiatives associated with the TEAST. For example, in initiatives associated with implementing the TEAST they demonstrate less commitment, reduce work effort, count hours, and place quid pro quo are the centre of their ongoing understandings. In particular, actors put in working effort for exactly those hours they get paid for and no more. For example, an actor explained that some employees use the TEAST initiative ‘homework assistance and academic immersion’ to undermine the MANST initiative ‘determination of teachers’ tasks’: *‘There is a lack of commitment [regarding the implementation of homework assistance]. (...) I experience that. It’s because they feel they lack recognition. (...) They are struggling to get their self-determination back [the MANST].’* (Employee, Int.) (See also Table 5.4 for other examples).

Table 5.4. Representative data coded to undermining practice

Undermined MANST initiative	Used TEAST initiative	Representative data
b) Full-time presence & f) Limited flexitime	e) Varied and realistic teaching	<i>‘There are things that need to change if those working in the public school are to keep up their commitment. They want fun and challenging teaching [the TEAST], but they won’t get it. I am not prepared to work extra - I feel that I’m trampled on. They’ll have to change the flexibility [the MANST] if they want involvement from us.’</i> (Employee, Int.)
e) Determination of teachers’ tasks	d) Open school	<i>‘You became a bit more worker, and you got the working role, where we no longer are a part of the decision making [the MANST]. Thus, you lose your commitment [regarding the implementation of Open school].’</i> (Employee, Informal Int.)
a) No maximum contact hours	d) Open school	<i>‘Hour counting and quid pro quo are really at stake [regarding the implementation of Open school]. (...) This is all because I have much less preparation time and at the same time several classes [the MANST].’</i> (Employee, Informal Int.)
a) No maximum contact hours & b) Full-time presence	c) Exercise and movement	<i>‘They get what they pay for. When so little is given at one end [the MANST], you do not have the energy to provide much at the other end [the TEAST: exercise and movement].’</i> (Employee, Obs.)
b) Full-time presence	f) Objective-oriented teaching	<i>‘It does not help us to sit and bend over that we must not go home [the MANST]. (...) We have to stop blaming the reform [meaning the MANST]. Right now, we let it go beyond this [objective-oriented teaching].’</i> (Employee, Obs.)
The MANST as a whole	e) Varied and realistic teaching	<i>‘There is a form of wage earner mentality developed. And I simply experience that it is because we let this resistance to working time rules [the MANST] hit the reform.’</i> (Employee, Informal Int.)

MANST: management strategy; TEAST: teaching strategy

This underperforming (lack of commitment) in the TEAST-related initiatives generates negative consequences for the TEAST arising from MANST-related initiatives. This process indirectly undermines the MANST, because its performance actually leads to underperformance of the TEAST initiatives. These undermining practices are supported by the linking and collapsing practices. Indeed, the practices to undermine the MANST were not possible without the interpretive links between the two strategic changes. Due to the established interpretive links and collapsing of initiative from the strategic changes, actors can use the TEAST to undermine the MANST. However, beyond using the interpretive links between the changes, actively underperforming of the TEAST is an implicit way of demonstrating and increasing the consequences of the MANST for the TEAST.

Rejecting. Rejecting involves a set of practices whereby actors use the MANST to reject the TEAST. As Table 5.5 demonstrates, actors use MANST-related initiatives to reject TEAST-related initiatives and control expectations of their work from other actors, such as students, parents, and management, who may have positive attitudes to the TEAST. The headmaster describes rejecting as follows: *'When you go into depth with the resistance, then it's about the working-time agreement which was pushed through. So that's where the challenge lies. And then it becomes a matter of it being a nuisance that we have to do movement and exercise every day, and it is also annoying... Because basically, there is nothing in the reform that you might put down as a poor idea. I honestly don't think so.'* (Headmaster, Int.). Similarly, the deputy headmaster explains: *'Even though the core task is the children, it is quickly transferred to stress and lack of preparation. It quickly becomes an excuse. (...) But, objectively speaking, I can just see that they are putting on the brake pads'* (Deputy headmaster, Int.). Thus, actors try to hijack the TEAST by exploiting their dissatisfaction with the MANST. For instance, some actors use 'no maximum contact hours' to reject 'varied and realistic teaching': *'Although it is said that it [varied teaching] should be promoted, then it is barely existent because there is never time to prepare it.'* (Employee, Int.) (See also Table 5.5 for other examples). Because of the established interpretive link between the strategies, actors can say that acting on the MANST means that they cannot act on, and must reject, initiatives for the TEAST. The MANST therefore provides an understandable and acceptable reason or argument for not implementing the TEAST as intended (which is supported by the linking and undermining actors have established). In doing so, teachers legitimize their autonomy and increase their control over the implementation of the TEAST. When implementing

the TEAST, they do it in their own way, making their own decisions, and becoming their own leader.

Table 5.5. Representative data coded to rejecting practice

Used MANST initiative	Rejected TEAST initiative	Representative data
a) No maximum contact hours	d) Open school	<i>'We had to prepare a lot [for open school activities] across hours and professional teams and things like that and we are doing it a little bit – but priority is given to gaining control of its own first. And then there is no time for the other, it is not there.'</i> (Employee, Obs.)
a) No maximum contact hours	c) Exercise and movement	<i>'In such a place here, you become your own leader quickly. You do the things that you think and make your own decisions. (...) but we have also mentioned several times for them that we are pressured on time.'</i> (Employee, Informal Int.)
e) Determination of teachers' tasks	f) Objective-oriented teaching	<i>'I do what [objective-oriented teaching] I have to do. And then I do it in a way so I can be in it. (...) we are still under pressure because of our lack of self-determination.'</i> (Employee, Informal Int.)
f) Limited flexitime & a) No maximum contact hours	b) Homework assistance and academic immersion	<i>'When we cannot meet and coordinate it (...) you may develop your own definition of any of these things [homework assistance].'</i> (Employee, Informal Int.)
e) Determination of teachers' tasks	e) Varied and realistic teaching	<i>'Before there was not as much autonomy/self-government out in different houses [departments], as there is now. (...) That's maybe because we do not have the time to meet.'</i> (Employee, Informal Int.)
b) Full-time presence & f) Limited flexitime	e) Varied and realistic teaching	<i>'I'm just doing what I want. We decide for ourselves, and we do just that and then we see what happens. You could also hear that somebody was doing something, as they usually do, they do a bit of it, a bit of it and a bit of it. One fits their own little everyday life. (...) It's hard because of our lack of flexibility.'</i> (Employee, Informal Int.)

MANST: management strategy; TEAST: teaching strategy

Section 2: Practices enable resistance and shape the strategy implementation process and emerging outcomes

The above four practices, linking, collapsing, undermining, and rejecting, enable resistance and shape the three phases of strategy implementation that we have identified: justifying, revising, and delegitimizing. Although the four practices occur throughout all three phases, linking occurred more in phase one, collapsing in phase two, and undermining and rejecting occurred more in phase three. This section explains how actors use the practices to exercise resistance, how they shape

implementation across phases, and the emerging outcomes of the process. We illustrate each phase with a representative vignette of how the practices play out.

Phase 1: Justifying. The first phase is categorized as the justifying phase. In this phase actors primarily use the bi-directional linking practice to justify their interpretations of the implications of one strategy for the other, and vice versa. In particular, they use interpretive links to point out inconsistencies that mean they cannot implement both the MANST and the TEAST as intended, and so have to choose between the initiatives. Hence, actors start selectively picking particular initiatives they do want to undertake from each strategic change, regardless of which change it is linked to. By linking, actors attempt to persuade and influence each other that these initiatives cannot be done in light of the other strategy, and so seek to negotiate what they do have to do. They use MANST-related initiatives to justify the difficulty of TEAST-related initiatives and TEAST-related initiatives are used to justify the difficulty of MANST-related initiatives. The following representative vignette shows how Emma, who does not like the varied and realistic teaching initiative (TEAST initiative E, Table 5.1), and Thomas, who does not like the no maximum contact hours initiative (MANST initiative A, Table 5.1), justify their interpretations of the difficulty of the two initiatives by linking them.

Vignette: According to the TEAST, the school has to implement varied and realistic teaching (TEAST initiative E). At a meeting with the implementation team, the managers want to discuss the strategy for implementing this initiative. During the meeting, they discuss how traditional blackboard-based teaching can be combined with practical forms of learning that both challenge and motivate students. Thomas (employee) suddenly interrupts: *'Nothing of this [TEAST initiative E], I think, is bad. But we have to remember that there are certain terms and conditions [in the MANST] which make it difficult to make ends meet.'* Jane (headmaster) answers: *'Yes, there are some conditions we need to work "under", but...'* Thomas interrupts again: *'We are experiencing an excessive workload, too many teaching hours and too little preparation [MANST initiative A].'* Jane replies, sounding irritable: *'Well, we can start discussing politics. Because yes, there are some terms. However, why spend energy on discussing it, because we cannot change it?'* Nevertheless, even though Jane attempts to keep the focus on the TEAST-related initiative, Thomas links the TEAST to the MANST-related initiative and points out their inconsistency. This linking, interpreting the strategies as entwined and thus justifying the difficulty of doing, persisted

after the meeting. Emma and Thomas (teachers) have a conversation with Michael (deputy headmaster) in the staff room. Emma uses linking to formulate her interpretation of the TEAST-related initiative and justifies the argument that varied and realistic teaching is the difficult part: *'It [TEAST initiative E] is difficult when we do not have the freedom to plan and prioritize our own time [the MANST].'* Thomas follows up: *'So it is aggravating that you keep saying that the MANST is of no consequence. Because it is.'* After the meeting, when Thomas is asked about the TEAST in an interview, he again explains his interpretation of the MANST by linking it to the TEAST: *'The biggest challenge is obviously that, with Act 409 [the MANST], we teachers simply do not have the time and flexibility that is needed to carry out our work and implement the reform.'* Similarly, in an interview, Emma performs linking to justify her lack of support for varied and realistic teaching: *'I am one of those who is critical. I'm one of those who has a "no-hat" on. (...) I do not know if I think the content of those hours is relevant. I do not know if I think it is relevant that 8th grade should play hide and seek outside.'* Hence, both Emma and Thomas point out the inconsistency using the interpretive link between no maximum contact hours and varied and realistic teaching. However, whereas Emma justifies her position by arguing a TEAST initiative to be the difficult part, Thomas justifies his position by presenting a MANST initiative as the difficulty. Thus, even though Thomas was supporting TEAST initiative E and Emma was supporting MANST initiative A, through linking, ultimately both initiatives are justified as difficult.

Change implications: The outcomes of the justifying phase are that the implementation process begins slowly, with much clarification and querying about what should be done. Linking is central in actors' clarifications of how they can and cannot implement the strategic changes. This creates a narrative of conflict between the two strategies. Because actors use linkages to justify choosing between or deselecting some initiatives, these practices have two key implications that slow down the implementation process. First, through linking, MANST-related initiatives are used to justify the difficulty of TEAST initiatives, potentially by interpreting the TEAST-related initiatives as being impossible, or at least very hard, to do alongside the MANST. Such practices prepare the interpretive grounds for rejecting. The second key implication is that the TEAST initiatives are used to justify the difficulty of the MANST-related initiatives, preparing the interpretive grounds for undermining. Hence, the outcome of the justifying phase is the interpretation that the strategies are not separate, which is used to justify difficulties that actors

encounter in implementing both. This implication of the linking practice is important because as actors began to connect the two strategies and see relationships, some collapsing begin to emerge. That is, these interpretive links enable actors to collapse the strategies and thereby set the ground for the next phase.

Phase 2: Revising. In the revising phase, the interpretive link between key initiatives pertinent to each strategy becomes so strong that they are collapsed. Linking continues and supports this growing dominance of the collapsing practice. Bi-directional collapsing practices enable actors to suggest explicit revisions to initiatives within one strategy by collapsing it with initiatives of another strategy, and vice versa. Actors make suggestions and adjustments in the sense of ‘if you want us to do x, we need y’. They shape the contextual conditions and limitations of both strategies and package them as practical solutions while actually intending them as a form of resistance, e.g. by making unreasonable or unrealistic demands that actors know the organization could not meet. Some actors collapse initiatives to suggest specific revisions to the MANST, whereas other actors use the practice to revise the TEAST. In the following representative vignette, we show how Anders, who does not like the open school initiative (TEAST initiative D, Table 5.1), Rebecca, who does not like the determination of teachers’ tasks initiative (MANST initiative E, Table 5.1), and Lisa, who does not like the no maximum contact hours initiative (MANST initiative A, Table 5.1) and the limited flexitime initiative (MANST initiative F, Table 5.1) manage to revise parts of the initiatives by means of collapsing.

Vignette: One central part of the pursuit of more varied teaching is the open school initiative (TEAST initiative D), in which the school must cooperate with the local community. The intention is that students should be compatible with the community they will be a part of, and local sporting, cultural, and business life should help to create academically competent and capable children and young people. The school board wishes to have an action memo from each department in relation to the open school initiative. Hence, a section meeting is called to discuss the open school initiative and to produce an action memo. At the meeting, employees suggest various revisions that strategically collapse the open school with different initiatives related to the MANST. Anders argues that due to the MANST, the open school initiative has to include fewer activities than actually intended: *‘Let’s assume that Theatre and Christmas church are fixed [as the only open school activities]. Because at some point, it will bite us in the ass that we do this. If*

suddenly we have to do something else, then we will be pressured in the run-of-the-mill activities, where we are already under pressure. We must take on as little as possible. At the end of the day, we have to limit it to what we can handle.'

At the following teachers' meeting, Jane says that the management team are not satisfied with the open school action memos that have been drafted. However, employees respond with frustration, replying that it is not easy when there is so little preparation time, and continue collapsing MANST- and TEAST-related initiatives. Specifically, Rebecca suggests revisions to the determination of teachers' tasks (MANST initiative E), collapsing this initiative with open school (TEAST initiative D): *'Also it would be nice to have a pool of hours for meetings – or the time for this could be allocated in our schedule. Then we would be able to organize academic feature days where we could get away from the school.'* Sounding irritable, Jane responds that they will convene for another section meeting, expressing hope that their action memos will be more ambitious.

At this subsequent meeting, employees continue collapsing the open school initiative that belongs to the TEAST with initiatives associated with the MANST. Lisa suggests a revision that collapses the open school initiative (TEAST initiative D) with the no maximum contact hours initiative (MANST initiative A) and the limited flexitime initiative (MANST initiative F): *'If I'm to succeed in my task, at the very least I need more time. I need greater flexibility in relation to the organization of working time. I won't be able to perform the task as required, and I know that there are several of my colleagues who feel exactly the same. (...) We need more preparation time. Because as it is, there is simply not enough time to prepare this exciting and versatile teaching.'* So even though the meetings are convened to produce an action memo that will enable implementation of the open school initiative, they are characterized by discussions running in many different directions, in which this TEAST-related initiative is consistently collapsed with different MANST-related initiatives. Consequently, even though the open school initiative was intended to include elements of local sporting, cultural, and business activities in school life, the outcome of collapsing is an action memo that incorporates none of these elements. Furthermore, by collapsing, employees managed to revise MANST initiative E by getting time for meetings allocated as workload hours in their schedules.

Change implications: The key outcome of the revising phase is that, through collapsing, actors shape how the intended strategies will be implemented, leading to emerging outcomes. Regarding the MANST, it was intended that the headmasters should have a free hand to determine the relationship between teaching and preparation hours and total working hours, and teachers had to accept a full-time presence. However, what was actually enacted during this phase involved significant revisions, including no full-time presence at the school; rather teachers were given the opportunity to work flexible hours and they have maximum student contact hours per year. We summarize the revisions to the intended strategy and emerging outcomes for the MANST in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6. Revisions of the MANST

Intended initiatives	Emerging outcomes
a) No maximum contact hours	Teachers have a maximum number of contact hours per year.
b) Full-time presence	No full-time presence at the school (200 hours per year can be spent outside the school).
c) Location of working time	No revisions.
d) Number of working days	No revisions.
e) Determination of teachers' tasks	A standardized point system (giving a say in the tasks the individual employee is assigned).
f) No (or very limited) flexitime	Teachers get the opportunity to work flexible hours.

MANST: management strategy

Similarly, the TEAST was also revised, leading to emerging outcomes. The intent was to have longer and more varied school days, including assisted learning activities, homework assistance, academic immersion, and the open school initiative. However, through collapsing, we found that this phase resulted in change outcomes whereby the school day was shortened, assisted learning activities were reduced, and requirements for hours of homework assistance and academic immersion were replaced. We summarize these revisions in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7. Revisions of the TEAST

Intended initiatives	Emerging outcomes
a) Longer school day	The school day is shortened (converting assisted learning activities to a 'two-teacher approach').
b) Homework assistance and academic immersion	Requirements for organization and hours of homework assistance and academic immersion replaced.
c) Exercise and movement	No revisions.
d) Open school	No revisions.
e) Varied and realistic teaching	Assisted learning activities are reduced.
f) Objective-oriented teaching	The student plans are simplified.

TEAST: teaching strategy

Phase 3: Delegitimizing. The final phase is the delegitimizing phase. Although some undermining and rejecting practices occur during the previous phases, in this phase they become dominant. During this phase, building on their success in making some revisions to the two strategies, employees engage in more active resistance, delegitimizing specific MANST-related initiatives by means of uni-directional undermining practices and delegitimizing TEAST-related initiatives by means of uni-directional rejecting practices. This delegitimizing is enabled by the previous linking and collapsing practices, which have established that the MANST and the TEAST are difficult to perform together. Employees strengthen these links, using the TEAST to undermine the MANST. Furthermore, they use the undermining and delegitimizing of the MANST to support rejection of the TEAST and thereby further delegitimize those of its associated initiatives that they do not want to perform. The following representative vignette shows how Erik, who, despite revisions, still does not like 'no maximum contact hours' (MANST initiative A, Table 5.1) and 'full-time presence' (MANST initiative B, Table 5.1), delegitimizes these MANST-related initiatives by using 'exercise and movement' (TEAST initiative C, Table 5.1) to undermine them. Further, the vignette shows how Sara, who does not like 'exercise and movement', uses Erik's delegitimizing of the MANST-related initiatives to support her rejecting 'exercise and movement', thereby delegitimizing it also.

Vignette: According to the TEAST, exercise and movement have to be integrated into all students' school days for an average of 45 minutes each day. However, managers feel that it is not being implemented with the oldest students. At a management meeting Jack (department manager)

expressly states: *'I would say that it does not happen in the A house [the oldest students].'* Thus the management team decides to convene a teachers' meeting in order to discuss the strategic initiative and how it could be implemented. However, at the meeting Erik uses the exercise and movement initiative to actively indicate negative consequences of the MANST-related initiatives: *'They get what they pay for. When so little is given at one end, you do not have the energy to provide much at the other end.'* By emphasizing the consequence of the MANST-related initiatives, he is not attempting to avoid the TEAST-related initiatives, but rather to delegitimize the MANST initiatives of no maximum contact hours (MANST initiative A) and full-time presence (MANST initiative B), which he claims give no time for other important initiatives, such as exercise and movement.

Building on Erik's delegitimizing of the MANST-related initiatives in the same meeting, Sara picks up the thread in an attempt to delegitimize movement and exercise, arguing: *'It's [movement and exercise] quite a challenge, I think. If it will have to have some substance, it will take very long to prepare. And then it sometimes gets neglected, because you prioritize something else. The great challenge is preparation time – we don't have enough time to do it.'* Hence, Sara uses the illegitimacy of these MANST-related initiatives generated by Erik to present her reasons for not implementing exercise and movement (which she does not like) as an understandable and reasonable response. Consequently, even though they are supposed to integrate exercise and movement for an average of 45 minutes each day, Sara explains with great certainty that: *'I teach in same way I've always done – it's running amazing.'* She has no concerns about rejecting these TEAST initiatives because she has delegitimized them as unimportant and unnecessary to her teaching.

The entangled nature of undermining of the MANST-related initiatives and rejecting of TEAST-related initiatives by delegitimizing them as unimportant or unnecessary is a consistent theme in this phase. For example, Erik, in an informal interview, frustratedly explains: *'It's not that you think: I'd put my back into it [exercise and movement] – but because you're worn out. We don't have that bit extra [due to the MANST]. It has come to the point where we work for exactly those hours we get paid for and not a second more.'* He is thus claiming that although exercise and movement might be important, he cannot do them because he has to perform these other unnecessary MANST-related initiatives, and in this way he delegitimizes those initiatives. Another

employee, Julie, supports Erik's claims: *'That's certainly because some of us are having a hard time knowing that we can no longer take our work home. (...) and we simply feel that we have too little preparation time.'* As the managers point out during an interview, the effects of undermining the MANST initiatives and rejecting TEAST initiatives, although uni-directional, play out across both strategies. Employees reject TEAST-related initiatives by counting hours, even as their assumed compliance with the MANST actually undermines and delegitimizes initiatives such as 'no maximum contact hours' (MANST initiative A). Jack explains: *'The employees use the lack of preparation time to argue why they cannot include movement and exercise.'*

Change implications: The key implications of this phase are the delegitimizing of both MANST- and TEAST-related initiatives. Through the undermining practice, the TEAST is used to delegitimize the different MANST-related initiatives. For example, actors make the case that it is not legitimate that they have so many student contact hours, that only 200 hours per year can be placed outside the school, and that they still have very limited flexitime. The delegitimizing of the MANST sets the ground for rejecting and delegitimizing the TEAST. Actors use the undermining and delegitimizing of the MANST to support their rejection of initiatives within the TEAST and thereby delegitimize and shape its (non)implementation. Consequently, much of what was intended has not been implemented. Indeed, at the end of our study, very few of the changes had been implemented, even despite employees working to the hours for which they were now contracted under the MANST, and no more. For example, things that they might have been able to do, such as the 'open school' and 'exercise and movement' initiatives, they did only to the minimum level or not at all. As one manager noted: *'Yet, we haven't succeeded to change the routines. (...) For instance, business life and sporting are still not part of our open school activities.'* (Deputy headmaster, Int.). A teacher explains that they could not make exercise and movement happen, because it was not possible to implement the TEAST this way due to the MANST: *'We simply did not do this [exercise and movement], at least in my department. (...) because there is never time to it.'* (Employee, Informal Int.) This entanglement of practices in delegitimizing initiatives associated with each strategy derails the change process and leads to the emerging outcomes summarized in Table 5.8, in which we document additional emerging outcomes arising from further rejection of the TEAST. Together with the revisions in Tables 5.6 and 5.7 already documented, the rejections in Table 5.8 demonstrate specific unintended outcomes that emerged three years after the changes were initiated.

Table 5.8. Rejections of the TEAST

Intended strategy	Emerging outcomes
a) Longer school day	It was not possible to reject this key initiative.
b) Homework assistance and academic immersion	Homework assistance and academic immersion are only implemented to a limited extent. Instead, the time is used for traditional teaching.
c) Exercise and movement	Exercise and movement are not (or are to a very limited extent) integrated in the oldest students' school days.
d) Open school	Neither the local sporting nor business life are part of the school's open school activities.
e) Varied and realistic teaching	Only limited varied and realistic teaching are implemented.
f) Objective-oriented teaching	Teachers are doing what they have to do, but not more.

TEAST: teaching strategy

Discussion

In this paper we explain how employees build associations between two separate strategies in order to resist implementation of both of the strategies. Our findings show four practices, linking, collapsing, undermining, and rejecting, through which actors associate the two strategies with each other. We find that these practices shape the unfolding implementation process across three phases: justifying, revising, and delegitimizing. In doing so, they enable actors to resist aspects of each strategy, with implications for the failure to realize the intended strategy. We now draw these findings together into a conceptual process model (Figure 5.1) that comprises the basis for our contributions.

Figure 5.1 demonstrates the process of implementing dual strategic changes, within which employees' resistance emerges and becomes stronger across the process's phases. As indicated by the arrows in the model, the phases of implementation are shaped by the way that the practices generate associations between the two strategies. In Phase 1, through their linking practices employees interpret the two strategies as related (Figure 5.1, Box 1), using these links to justify their difficulties in acting on both strategies. Hence, in this phase, resistance plays out rhetorically by focusing on creating narratives of conflict between the strategies. During this phase, some collapsing of the two strategies also begins to emerge, which sets the ground for the second 'Revising' phase. In the second phase, the collapsing practice makes the association between the

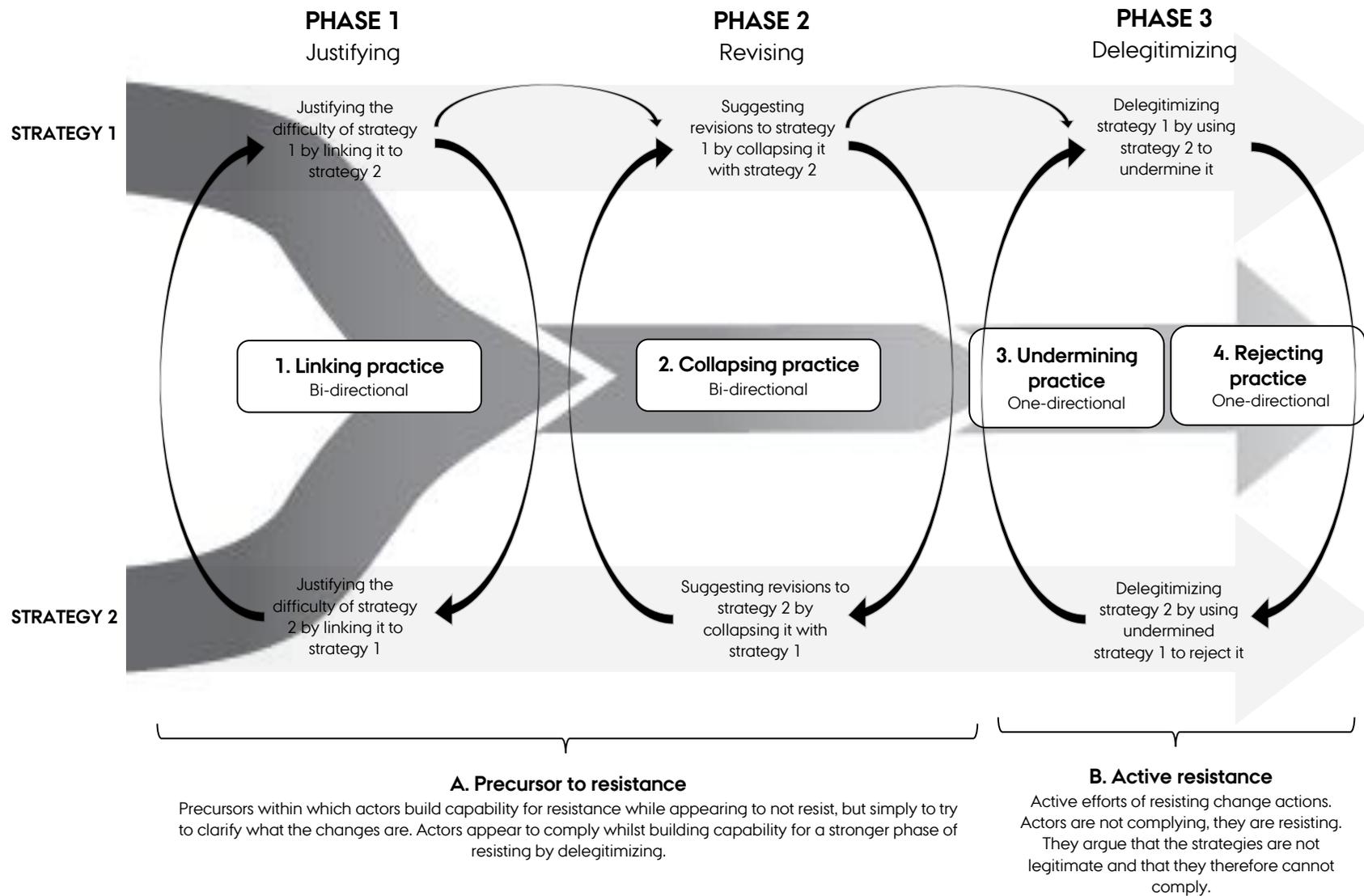


Figure 5.1. Process model of resistance in implementation of dual strategic changes

two strategies so strong that key initiatives that are pertinent to each strategy are depicted as the same (Figure 5.1, Box 2). Employees use collapsing to propose some revisions to initiatives in each strategy. Through these revisions, employees gain some success in resisting those initiatives that they do not want to perform. Hence, in the second phase, resistance goes beyond the more rhetorical focus of the initial phase and plays out by shaping the contextual conditions of both strategies. Actors are packaging the proposed revision as practical solutions while they are actually intended to represent a form of resistance. In the third phase they move to more active resistance, in which undermining (Figure 5.1, Box 3) and rejecting (Figure 5.1, Box 4) become the dominant practices. This in turn leads to the delegitimizing of aspects of both strategies. This delegitimizing is enabled by the previous linking and collapsing practices, which have established that the two strategies are difficult to perform together. Employees can then strengthen these links, using Strategy 2 to undermine Strategy 1. Furthermore, they can use the undermining and delegitimizing of Strategy 1 to support rejection of Strategy 2 and thereby further delegitimize those of its associated initiatives that they do not want to perform.

We theorize these practices and the ways they shape the implementation of the two strategies as increasingly active forms of resistance. In the first two phases, justifying and revising can be categorized as precursors to resistance. During these phases employees are building capability for resistance while appearing to not resist (Figure 5.1, Part A). They do not actively resist, but neither do they comply. In the first phase, actors use the linking practice to clarify what the strategies are and point out how difficult it is to comply with both simultaneously, and in the second phase actors use the collapsing practice to argue that the strategies need to be revised in order to comply. Thus, during the use of the linking and collapsing practices actors are not actively resisting, but neither are they complying. We therefore consider this to be a period of capability building, during which they may be using the linking and collapsing both to build their own resistance to the elements of each strategy and also to camouflage that resistance behind queries that obscure their reluctance to do some of the intended aspects of each strategy (Harding et al., 2017; Ybema and Horvers, 2017; Bristow et al., 2017). Once they have built this capability, by interpreting the two strategies as linked and not possible to be disentangled, they are in a stronger position to move to active resistance (Figure 5.1, Part B). Thus, the capability-building phases can be seen as a precursor to a more active form of resistance.

Within the delegitimizing phase, undermining and rejecting practices are active efforts to resist implementing the two strategies. In this third phase, actors are not complying and are not even trying to comply; they are resisting. They argue that the strategies are not legitimate and that, therefore, they cannot comply. In the case examined, undermining was used to delegitimize Strategy 1 initiatives, and rejecting was used to delegitimize Strategy 2 initiatives. Within both forms of resistance, initiatives in one strategy are used to delegitimize and resist initiatives in the other. Nevertheless, undermining and rejecting can be seen as two different mechanisms/forms of resistance. A possible explanation for the different mechanisms of delegitimizing Strategy 1 and Strategy 2 initiatives may be the different level of detail in the two changes. The mandated change related to Strategy 1 is more specific, whereas the change framework for Strategy 2 is more abstract, ambiguous, and open to interpretation (Sillince et al, 2012). Because Strategy 1 is not as ambiguous as Strategy 2, employees cannot reject it outright. For example, in our study they cannot reject the number of contact hours they are required to perform. However, they can use Strategy 2 to undermine how they fill those contact hours, underperforming the more ambiguous substance of the work, such as what might constitute an ‘open school’, to delegitimize the specific terms of the work. At the same time, they can use the specified terms of work to reject these more ambiguous concepts, such as open school or exercise and movement in our case, which are harder to clarify and enforce. Hence, different practices are used to draw upon one strategy to actively resist performance of the other and vice versa.

We conceptualize these two phases of resistance as a process in which employees appear to comply whilst building capability for a stronger phase of active resisting, in which they delegitimize particular initiatives in order to have grounds not to comply. By linking and collapsing the two strategies, actors are able to generate resistance without overtly resisting. They are not resisting but are pointing out the impossibilities of complying with the two strategies together. This provides a rationale by which their resistance becomes more valid, and hence more active, in the delegitimizing phase. Building links between the dual strategic changes provides a way to support and yet camouflage actor resistance.

Contributions

We address the theoretically informed research questions of how actors' resistance to strategic change plays out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation. We demonstrate that in situations of dual strategic changes, implementation processes may be more complex and expose particular forms of resistance. The conceptual model that we build from our findings, depicted in Figure 1, makes two main contributions to the literature.

First, we contribute to the resistance literature by showing how actors camouflage their resistance, building their capabilities, as a precursor that then enables them to engage in more active resistance. More specifically, we contribute to Ybema and Hovers' (2017: 1234) understanding of a 'peculiar coalescence of compliance and resistance' by showing how such a coalescence unfolds, processually, in a context of dual strategic changes. Ybema and Hovers (2017) observed that employees 'either voiced their resistance openly, while often continuing to work compliantly, or hid their opposition behind a benign appearance'. In this paper, we show that actors in situations of dual strategic changes may hide their opposition to one strategy behind a benign appearance of making efforts to comply, but being unable to do so because of the other strategy. Furthermore, we show that this way of resisting whilst appearing to comply appears to build actors' capability for more overt resistance. We contribute to the understanding of camouflaging and legitimation of dissent (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995; Scott, 1985) by demonstrating how dual strategic changes are used to support, camouflage, and construct resistance. By using one strategy to camouflage dissent about another strategy, actors delegitimize initiatives without directly opposing the intended changes. In such a way, they use more subtle, hidden, and indirect forms of resistance, at least initially. Yet we also show that such delegitimation gives them a stronger grounding to resist more directly, indicating a processual effect between camouflaged and more direct resistance (see Figure 5.1, Parts A & B). We extend the resistance literature by examining the idea that actors need to build capability through their practices, in our case linking and collapsing, in order to introduce enough doubt regarding the strategic changes that their more active resistance of delegitimizing is made possible.

Second, we contribute to the relatively sparse literature on dual strategies (e.g. Hengst, et al. 2019; Lê and Jarzabkowski 2015), by demonstrating how actors construct and manipulate the

interactions between strategies. Some studies show how the efforts to reconcile different strategies involve the legitimization of one in relation to the other, typically in the context of the legitimization of a new strategy in relation to an existing strategy (e.g. Hengst, et al. 2019). Other studies show that where actors cannot generate collective meaning around a new strategy in relation to existing strategies, it will not gain momentum (e.g. Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2011), or that conflict between the two strategies enables both to be further interpreted and acted upon (e.g. Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015). In all of these situations, one strategy is initially privileged, and the other must somehow be reconciled with, reinterpreted, and legitimized in relation to that strategy, in order for it to be implemented. In the present study, we do not show that one strategy is privileged while the other is neglected. Instead, we find an interaction effect in which the two strategies are being traded off against each other to delegitimize both. Our processual framework thus extends knowledge on the interaction between two strategies by showing: 1) the specific interactional dynamic through which actors relate dual strategies to each other; and 2) how this enables them to resist strategic change and inhibit the implementation of both strategies, rather than simply using an old strategy to resist a new strategy (e.g. Sonenshein, 2010).

Conclusion

Our processual framework is based on a study of a public school undergoing externally mandated changes (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019) imposed by the central government and local government, suggesting some boundary conditions to our framework and grounds for future research. Our study has examined how resistance plays out in the context of a school experiencing top-down, centrally-regulated demands and standards, internal demands from a professional workforce and students, and external expectations from parents and the local community. The external pressure to enact multiple strategies typically puts pressure on professional autonomy and self-interest (Jarzabkowski and Fenton, 2006), even as it is difficult to promote agreement to changes due to such self-interest and professional autonomy (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017; Brown, 1998). Hence, given the pluralistic nature of the school (Denis et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2017), our findings may be grounded in professional workers' efforts to protect their self-interest and professional autonomy. Therefore, our results are expected to have particular relevance in potentially similar contexts, such as hospitals and universities, where professional workers resist externally imposed

efforts to control their work (Noordegraaf, 2011). We therefore expect our processual framework to provide grounds for future research on how resistance plays out in other non-professional contexts that might have a more hierarchical approach to strategic change.

Our study has investigated strategy implementation processes across dual simultaneous changes, in the case of two different types of changes with different degrees of detail. The new working hours rules, imposed by the local government, are about the terms of the work, i.e. how teachers' working time is organized, and are more specific, whereas the public school reform, imposed by the central government, is about the substance or content of the work, i.e. teaching and the students' school day, and is more abstract, ambiguous and open to interpretation (Sillince et al., 2012). Both changes needed to be realized in line with their underlying intention, but it was easier for teachers to reverse or modify the envisioned nature of the TEAST strategy because rejecting the terms of the work was not possible to the same extent as rejecting the substance of the work. Therefore, the type of change and degree of detail may shape the processual dynamics explained in our conceptual framework. Accordingly, future research might examine whether the degree of detail shapes the specific processes by which actors build resistance capability to delegitimize one or more strategies.

Finally, our study provides grounds for future research into the dual strategies and resistance literature. Research on resistance during change often focuses on a single change (Balogun et al., 2011; Ybema and Horvers, 2017), overlooking that organizations often have to make changes in response to multiple concurrent pressures that can occur either sequentially or simultaneously (Webb and Pettigrew, 1999). Whereas our study is conducted in a school context, which often face changes arising from new government policies, there are likely to be other contexts, such as in regulated companies, in which two or more new strategies need to be implemented at the same time (Jarzabkowski et al., 2013; Marcus and Geffen, 1998), giving rise to particular types of resistance during their implementation.

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Chapter 6

PAPER III

Structuring emergence during implementation of
strategic changes: Practices within
and between meetings

STRUCTURING EMERGENCE DURING IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC CHANGES: PRACTICES WITHIN AND BETWEEN MEETINGS

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ABSTRACT

While research has addressed the role of meetings in strategy implementation, the interactive processes between and within meetings are an integral but relatively poorly understood aspect of how managers structure strategy emergence. Using a practice-based approach, the authors address this issue by studying how managers during the implementation of strategic changes structure strategy emergence through practices of exerting influence within and between meetings. Drawing on a case study, the paper shows four sets of practices that are put into action by managers: conflict resolution, using facilitators, shaping interpretations, and restricting discussions. The core contribution of the paper is a processual framework that describes the dynamic and interactive process in which the four practices of exerting influence are carried out. The paper demonstrates that managers during strategy implementation structure the framework within which strategy emergence arises through a combination of interrelated interactions with various actors embedded within and between meetings. Due to the range of interacting actors and whether employees support or undermine the strategic orientation, managers strategically differentiate practices across interactions and employees. The ongoing dynamic and interactive process that is punctuated by, but not beholden to, meetings enables managers to *both* suppress variation that does not align with the strategic orientations *and* enable variation that aligns with the strategic orientation. As a result, the cumulative implications of the flow of interaction enable, and partially structure, strategy emergence.

Keywords: Strategy emergence, meetings, strategy-as-practice, practice theory

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Introduction

Since Mintzberg (1978) and Mintzberg and Waters (1985) first noted that strategy content emerges through implementation, management scholars have described the unpredictable and emergent nature of change (Ogbonna and Harris, 2002; Pettigrew, 2013; Mintzberg, 1978; Johnson, 1987). Scholars have shown that strategy-making should be viewed as a context-dependent, non-linear process (Hutzschenreuter and Kleindienst, 2006; Vaara and Whittington, 2012; Tsoukas, 2010) in which intended strategies often lead to unintended consequences (Balogun and Johnson, 2005). In accordance with the unveiling of the emergent nature of change, studies have contributed to the understanding of how strategy is realized through human dynamics and how it emerges during implementation (e.g. Huy et al., 2014; Sonenshein, 2010). Studies have additionally highlighted the role of meetings in strategy implementation. For instance, Hodgkinson et al. (2006) conclude that strategy workshops are important vehicles for emergence, and Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) examine how potential variations in strategic orientations emerge within meetings, as meetings have implications for both stabilizing and destabilizing strategic orientations. Hence, although emergent strategies have received less attention in SAP research as compared with formal strategizing (Vaara and Whittington, 2012: 313), the approach has nonetheless yielded insights.

In this paper, we apply the concept of strategy emergence to refer to emergent components during strategy implementation. These strategy components may serve as input to strategic changes emerging within meetings. The emergent strategy components enable some variation to evolve and can potentially lead to modification and evolution of strategies. Whittington et al. (2006) also recognize emergence; however, based on the concept of planned emergence, they argue that managers and formal strategy work still have roles in organizing and structuring strategic change. It is argued that managers must control, coordinate, and communicate the strategy work (Whittington et al., 2006; Thomas and Ambrosini, 2015). One purpose of allowing, but partially structuring, emergence is to potentially involve new input or cause local variation to emerge, especially in complex organizations where standardized strategy is not necessarily optimal. Jarzabkowski (2008: 621) argues; ‘Mintzberg’s (1978) concept of strategy formation, in which strategy formulation is entwined with implementation in an ongoing, mutually constructive process, positions top managers as active participants in the strategy process’. Recent literature on strategizing further develops this research agenda, recommending a focus on the ‘pixels of

managerial influence' within the social dynamics of strategy formation (Denis et al., 2007; Floyd and Lane, 2000; Jarzabkowski, 2005; Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Whittington et al., 2006; Miller and Sardais, 2011). Hence, planned and structured emergence is not just realization of intended strategies; it also recognizes that managers structure the framework within which strategy emergence arises.

Using a practice-based approach, this paper identifies practices and processes underlying the structuring of emergence during strategy implementation. More specifically, the paper aims to demonstrate how various practices of exerting influence can be used by managers to enable, but partially structure, emergence. Although it is of key importance to understand the interplay between meetings (Seidl and Guérard, 2015; Jarzabkowski et al., 2016), only a few studies have focused on the interplay between interactions within and between meetings (e.g. Clarke et al., 2012; Hoon, 2007; McNulty and Pettigrew, 1999). Our paper addresses this knowledge gap by showing how practices within and between meetings can be used and combined to partially structure strategy emergence. We link within and between meeting dynamics to uncover the 'flow of interaction' and to study emergence as an ongoing dynamic and interactive process that is punctuated by, but not beholden to, meetings. The overarching question in the paper is: how do managers enable, and partially structure, emergence during strategy implementation through practices within and between meetings? While existing studies emphasize the role of meetings in shaping strategic change (e.g. Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008), in this paper, we examine how practices of exerting influence are used in a flow of interactions within and between meetings to partially structure strategy emergence.

To resolve these questions, we study the structuring of strategy emergence across multiple strategizing episodes of everyday interaction, such as large-group meetings, committee meetings, and informal one-to-one conversations. We draw on a longitudinal case study of the strategy implementation processes in three Danish public schools that have recently undergone dual changes involving new working hour rules and a school reform. Owing to the pluralistic nature of the school context (Denis et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2017) and more specifically the professional workforce's attempt to protect their self-interests and professional autonomy (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017; Brown, 1998), our setting provides an interesting context to examine how managers structure emergence during strategy implementation. In accordance with a practice

perspective, this paper addresses the dichotomies such as formulation/implementation and intended/emergent as mutually constitutive. Therefore, even though this paper is framed in the strategy implementation literature and uses the concept to uncover the realization of mandated changes (see e.g. Hengst et al., 2020; Huy et al., 2014), it still goes beyond these inadequacies in the academic construction of strategy by examining strategy as a practice. It means that implementation refers not just to the execution of strategies but also the formulation of strategy content.

By studying the flow of interactions between managers and employees both within and between meetings, the paper introduces two concepts: (1) between meetings, managers try to resolve conflicts proactively and persuade people to join their side so to speak, and (2) within meetings, managers try to enable, and partially structure, strategy emergence by (a) excluding those who resist the strategy and (b) allowing and facilitating their supporters to take over the meeting. The paper shows four sets of practices that managers put into action when they partially attempt to control, coordinate and communicate the strategy: conflict resolution, shaping interpretations, restricting discussions, and using facilitators. Based on these findings, each practice is illustrated separately to explain how it is defined. We provide four vignettes showing how the practices of exerting influence play out in action and describe the structuring implications. Furthermore, we illustrate the dynamic process in which the four practices are played out. This study demonstrates a dynamic pattern of moving between different types of interactions with various ranges of actors embedded within and between meetings. It is shown that managers structure strategy emergence by strategically differentiating practices of exerting influence across actors, in particular as a result of the range of interacting actors. Finally, the paper demonstrates that the interactions and practices of exerting influence are enabled by and dependent on other practices of exerting influence, and, simultaneously, they also influence and shape each other. This sequential interplay between different types and paths of interactions can be employed by managers to partially structure and enable emergence of strategy. More specifically, the combination of interactions allows managers to *both* suppress variation that does not align with the strategic orientation *and* enable variation that aligns with the strategic orientation. Hence, we do not mean that managers are in full control: managers do not as such ‘manage’ the implementation processes, but exercise more subtle control over the process, which enhances their

ability to contribute to these processes. In other words, they structure the framework within which strategy emergence arises.

The findings make three main contributions to the literature. First, we extend knowledge of strategy emergence (Vaara and Whittington, 2012; Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014) by demonstrating how managers, in practice, enable, and partially structure, emergence during strategy implementation. Second, we contribute to the literature on meetings (Seidl and Guérard, 2015; Clarke et al., 2012; Hoon, 2007; Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008), by showing 1) how practices of exerting influence are used in the flow of interactions within and between meetings and 2) how the cumulative implications of meetings are consequential for strategy emergence. Third and finally, we contribute to the literature on influence in strategy processes (Laine and Vaara, 2007), Vaara et al., 2019), by showing how allocation of influence is used to structure strategy emergence; allocated and differentiated depending on whether the employees undermine or support strategic orientation.

In the next section, the paper outlines the conceptual background of the study, and in the third section, an explanation of the methodology applied follows. In the findings section, each practice is first illustrated separately, before the dynamic process by which the four practices of exerting influence are played out is illustrated. The final section presents a discussion of the findings and consideration of the research contributions and concludes the paper.

Theoretical background

Strategy emergence within meetings

Research typically distinguishes strategy *formulation* from *implementation*, assuming that the latter follows the former (Mintzberg et al., 2005). In contrast, Mintzberg (1978) illustrates that emergent strategy – a pattern in action that is realized despite or in the absence of intentions (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985) – is an important component of empirically realized strategies. Mintzberg (1978) demonstrates how an intended strategy does not necessarily come to realization, thus resulting in unrealized strategy. Realized strategy includes actions that do not derive from the intentions of top management, termed emergent strategy, and can, therefore, be analysed as having both deliberate and emergent components (Boyett and Currie, 2004).

Within the strategy-as-practice literature, emergent strategies have received less attention as compared with formal strategizing (Vaara and Whittington, 2012). Largely, strategy-as-practice research ‘has concentrated on formal planning and strategizing activities’ (Vaara and Whittington, 2012: 313). These include ‘formal procedures involved in direction setting, resource allocation, and monitoring and control’ (Jarzabkowski, 2003: 32), practices associated with strategy workshops (e.g. Hodgkinson et al., 2006; Johnson et al., 2010) and the use of analytic tools (Jarratt and Stiles, 2010). Finally, it also includes meetings (Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008). Within strategy-as-practice research, it is widely recognized that meetings shape the activities that take place within their span; in particular, management scholars have investigated how meetings influence strategy (Seidl and Guérard, 2015). Kwon et al. (2014) examine how meetings and the discursive practices associated with them affect the development of shared views on strategic issues. Spee and Jarzabkowski (2011) demonstrate how meetings enable discussion of strategy and the production of strategy text. Hoon (2007) investigates how strategic meetings bring middle and senior managers together to negotiate and agree on consistent collective action.

However, while these studies focus primarily on formal strategizing, there are also studies on meetings and workshops which recognize strategy emergence. Drawing on Grant’s (2003) softer approach to strategy-making in terms of ‘planned emergence’, Johnson et al. (2010) and Hodgkinson et al. (2006) conclude that strategy workshops are important vehicles for the planned emergence of strategy. Workshops are the ‘very forums in which such emergent strategy is thought through, translating, perhaps even legitimizing and formalizing, that which has its origins lower down the organization’ (Hodgkinson et al., 2006: 488). This does not necessarily contradict the concept of emergent strategy; rather it indicates that workshops could be an effective bridge between formal design and informal emergence.

Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) argue that meetings are related to consequential strategic outcomes. They examine ‘how meetings are involved in either stabilizing and reconfirming existing strategic orientations or proposing variations that cumulatively generate changes in those orientations’ (Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008: 1393). They additionally demonstrate how strategy is changed and stabilized through a series of meetings by distinguishing between four different meeting discussion practices: free discussion, restricted free discussion, restricted discussion, and administrative discussion. They demonstrate how the various meeting discussion practices

contribute to the stabilization or destabilization of existing strategy. Within this demonstration, they argue that ‘because of its self-organizing character, free discussion allows participants to step out of existing discursive and cognitive structures and routines and experiment with tentative new ideas that may challenge the existing orientations’ (Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008: 1405).

Meetings and workshops may be triggered by employees’ attempt to shape strategy, which highlights the importance of a research agenda that looks beyond top managers to study other levels of employees as strategic actors, and incorporates lower-level employees (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Whittington, 2003). Previous research has investigated how frontline workers contribute to an organization’s realized strategy, emphasizing these workers and their daily work in implementing strategy (Balogun et al., 2015). Accordingly, further research of these non-managers is warranted (Laine and Vaara, 2015, Vaara et al., 2019). Therefore, while many strategy-as-practice (SAP) studies focus on the importance of incorporating middle managers in the strategy-making process (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Rouleau and Balogun, 2011; Rouleau, 2005), this paper focuses on managers *and* non-management employees as the organizational group of practitioners that shape strategy. Hence, while most recent research focuses on meetings at the top management level (Seidl and Guérard, 2015), this paper focuses on interactions between managers and employees within and between meetings.

Therefore, because it is argued that managers in the present-day complex environment must be able to ensure control, coordination, and communication of strategy (Whittington et al., 2006), a more explicit focus on the structuring of emergent strategy components and inputs is necessary during implementation.

Structuring emergence within implementation

Whittington et al. (2006) recognize emergence; however, based on the concept of planned emergence, they argue that managers and formal strategy work still have roles in organizing and structuring strategic change. Whittington et al. (2006) highlight the close relationship between strategizing and organizing. Their study outlines that strategy must give more weight to the practices and processes through which strategizing and organizing are carried out (Whittington et al., 2006). They highlight that practical ‘craft’ holds as much importance as analytical ‘science’.

While Mangham and Pye (1991) argue that managers are increasingly seen as ‘craftspeople’, Mintzberg (1994) suggests that strategy should be viewed as ‘crafted’ through emergent processes, and that formal strategy analysis is a distraction. Whittington et al. (2006) take the middle view. Their argument is that ‘formal strategy can be renewed by a greater appreciation of the everyday practical, non-analytical skills required to carry it out’ (Whittington et al., 2006: 616). They thereby ‘extend the general claim that management and strategy can be best thought of as crafts by emphasizing the practicalities involved, even in formal strategizing’ (Whittington et al., 2006: 616).

Other studies argue for the need of control, coordination, and communication to shape meaning and achieve agreement to change; Spee and Jarzabkowski (2017) argue that multiple meanings persisting during change processes challenge the motivation of actors. It is difficult to promote agreement to changes, as the actors tend to protect their self-interests and professional autonomy (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017; Brown, 1998). If actors attempt to maintain their opinions, this can lead to tensions and resistance (Hardy and Glennie, 2014). In addition to the pluralistic context increasing potential tensions and conflicts (Cohen and March, 1974; Denis et al., 1996), Lê and Jarzabkowski (2015) show that conflict is revelatory of the emergent process of strategy implementation, and thus integral to how managers strategize in practice.

Mirabeau and Maguire (2014: 1203) ‘problematize the assumed distinction and sequencing of strategy formulation and implementation to address the relationship between particular strategy content and the processes from which it is generated’. Their study theorizes ‘the role of practices of strategy articulation in emergent strategy formation, and explains why some autonomous strategic behavior becomes ephemeral and disappears rather than enduring to become emergent strategy’ (Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014: 1202). In identifying practices of articulation and explaining the role they play, Mirabeau et al. demonstrate how emergent strategy forms. More specifically, they outline key activities through which autonomous strategic behavior becomes the emergent strategy aspect of the realized strategy (Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014).

Even though these studies demonstrate the need for control, coordination, and communication of the strategy, unanswered questions remain. Although Mirabeau and Maguire (2014) show how emergent strategy forms, structuring of strategy emergence during strategy implementation remains unclear. How can managers enable, but partially structure, strategy

emergence during strategy implementation? Even though meetings are important vehicles for emergence, can an ongoing flow of interactions within and between meetings be used by managers to structure emergence? The present paper aims to address these unanswered questions.

The interplay between meetings

Scholars have, to date, concentrated their efforts on practices and strategy emergence within meetings (e.g. Jarzabkowski and Seidl, 2008). Only a few studies have noted that discursive practices in strategy meetings are influenced by contextual factors such as previous conversations (Clarke et al., 2012), and that informal conversations between meetings influence formal discussion within a meeting (Hoon, 2007; McNulty and Pettigrew, 1999). However, it is of key importance to understand the interplay between meetings (Seidl and Guérard, 2015). Meetings help sustain the unity of the organization by ‘socially validating’ the current order, or by serving as a forum for participants’ sensemaking (Schwartzman 1989; Weick 1995). Commensurate with this approach, meetings are posited to be part of an ongoing flow of organizational activities, e.g. by giving rise to subsequent meetings (Schwartzman 1989). Thus, the interrelation between meetings is posed as a valid topic for study. Our paper examines this topic by showing how the interplay between practices within and between meetings can be used and combined in order to structure strategy emergence. Therefore, in accordance with other researchers (e.g. Hoon, 2007; Dutton and Ashford, 1993), we distinguish between formal and informal interaction. Formal interaction includes practices such as meetings, seminars, and workshops, while informal interaction refers to practices oriented towards conversations around and between the formal interaction (Hoon, 2007).

We expect that both the formal and informal interactions can shed light on strategy emergence, which remains undertheorized despite the importance of the concept. We, therefore, link within and between meeting dynamics to uncover the ‘flow of interaction’ and to study emergence as an ongoing dynamic and interactive process that is punctuated by, but not beholden to, meetings. Our study is therefore guided by the question: How do managers enable, and partially structure, emergence during strategy implementation through practices within and between meetings?

Methodology

Case setting

The empirical study was conducted in three Danish public schools that have recently undergone dual changes involving new working hour rules and a school reform. Although the changes were externally mandated and imposed by the Danish central government and the Local Government Denmark (an association of Danish municipalities) and to varying degrees set the framework for management and teaching, the schools set strategies within the framework of specific strategic initiatives. Hence, the changes imposed were ambiguous and open to interpretation, and the schools responded to the mandated changes by implementing a new teaching strategy (TEAST) and a new management strategy (MANST).

Due to the dual mandated changes, the schools offer an insightful research case study for examining how managers structure strategy emergence through practices of exerting influence during their implementation. In the context of mandated changes, managers have to enable, but partially structure, emergence. Because, on the one hand, they have to maintain the mandated strategic orientation, and on the other hand, they have to contribute to progressing and advancing of strategies. In other words, they have to enable variations that constitute modifications to and/or evolutions of the mandated strategic orientations, but simultaneously suppress variation that does not align with the mandated strategic orientation. Furthermore, the longitudinal cases provided a salient pluralistic setting for investigating the structuring of strategy emergence. Pluralistic organizations are typically characterized by multiple, fragmented, and potentially conflicting strategic objectives, diffuse distribution of power, and autonomous professional workforces (Denis et al., 2001; Denis et al., 2007). Accordingly, schools experiencing top-down centrally regulated demands and standards, internal demands from autonomous teachers and students, and external expectations from parents and the local community (OECD, 2007) offer a typical example of pluralistic strategizing tension. Pluralistic settings have the potential to provide greater theoretical and practical insight into strategizing and organizing processes (Jarzabkowski, 2005; Jarzabkowski and Fenton, 2006) because the critical characteristics and issues involved in strategizing in pluralistic organizations expose the core themes that underpin a socio-practice perspective (Denis et al., 2007). Specifically, due to the multiple demands and divergent goals and interests of various groups within and outside the organization, the pluralistic context adds depth

and complexity to the shaping and structuring of strategy. Hence, it is an interesting case setting to investigate how managers can contribute to realizing mandated changes by shaping the framework within which emergence arises in a way that lets autonomous teachers exert influence.

Data collection

Longitudinal qualitative data were collected over a period of three and a half years⁷ during the implementation of strategic changes by the schools. The data were triangulated, drawing on multiple methods of data collection including observations, in-depth interviewing, and documentary analysis.

One of the researchers spent 85 days observing various strategizing episodes involving everyday interactions between managers and employees. It has been argued that although meetings are not necessarily directly focused on strategy, they may include strategic issues (Seidl and Guérard, 2015). Therefore, we studied the structuring of strategy emergence across multiple strategizing episodes involving everyday interaction such as large-group meetings, small-group meetings, and informal one-to-one conversations. The small group meetings involved various committees (e.g. cooperation committees, pedagogical committees, and implementation teams). These may be mandatory groups such as the cooperation committee which is a committee of workgroup representatives, chaired by the principal, and which includes multiple employee-selected members. The pedagogical committee focuses on professional aspects of teaching; its members hold key positions in regard to pedagogical issues, and, often, members are appointed by the manager. Finally, the implementation teams are *ad hoc* in nature, focus on specific issues, and are mostly appointed by managers. In total, 52 formal meetings were attended over this period. The meetings lasted between two and five hours, resulting in 155 hours of observation. The researcher also attended four seminars, including a strategy seminar; these seminars lasted about six to nine hours each.

Over the 36 month period, 22 semi-structured interviews with managers were conducted, consisting of two rounds of interviews with three management teams. The interviews with the managers focused on their strategic work, how they handle strategic issues, and how they control

⁷ During the period of 3.5 years, the authors had one year without any data collection.

meetings. Each interview lasted about 45 to 60 minutes; all interviews were recorded and transcribed.

In addition, the researcher engaged in other forms of on-site fieldwork to collect incidental observational data; the researcher regularly spent time in the office or the staffroom, which enabled her to join in informal conversations with employees and managers. The researcher observed and participated in informal pre- and post-meeting discussions, and observed and shadowed practitioners during their everyday tasks. Detailed field notes, including as many verbatim quotes as possible from these meetings, seminars, and on-site fieldwork, were taken and typed up within 24 hours, as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Analysis

All data were imported into the qualitative software package NVivo 10 to carry out the analytic process of indexing and comparing units of coded data. The analysis followed an iterative analytic process consisting of six stages (Corbin and Strauss, 1990) that involved going back and forth between data.

Stage 1: Writing case stories. First, the first author wrote three chronologies telling the story of the implementation of changes in each case over time (Langley, 1999). As the aim of the chronological case stories was to describe, in rich detail, the everyday interactions related to the implementation of changes, a thick description mode of analysis was used (Geertz, 1973). The data provided a sequence of meetings and conversational interactions related to the strategies; based on these episodes, the three stories captured the unfolding interactions between managers and employees.

Stage 2: Identifying initiatives and flows of interactions. In the second stage of analysis, we identified 12 strategic initiatives. This identification was made in order to be able to analyse the episodes linked to each initiative as a flow. For each flow (each initiative) we analysed episode by episode, where the episodes represent (a) meetings, and (b) interactions between meetings.

Table 6.1. Strategic orientation of strategies

	Initiatives*	Content
1	No maximum contact hours	The school management is free to determine the teaching to preparation-hour ratio, and total working hours.
2	Full-time presence	Teachers have the right and duty to be present full-time in the workplace during full working hours.
3	Scheduling of working time	The work is organized on weekdays, Monday to Friday, during daytime hours. The daily working hours must, to the extent possible, be continuous, rather than split shifts, or entailing preparation outside these working hours.
4	Number of working days	The school management/municipality determines the number of days that teachers must work.
5	Determination of teachers' tasks	The management prepares a task overview, which must indicate the tasks that the teacher is expected to complete.
6	No (very limited) flexitime	Teachers have no or very limited flexitime.
7	Longer school day	30 hours for the youngest, 33 for the middle, and 35 hours for the oldest students.
8	Homework assistance and academic immersion	Time must be allocated (2–3 hours each week) for students to have academic lessons clarified, receive help with homework, and be immersed in subjects that are particularly difficult or interesting.
9	Exercise and movement	Exercise and movement must be integrated into all students' school days for an average of 45 minutes each day.
10	Open school	The school must cooperate with the surrounding community in sporting, cultural, and business life.
11	Varied and realistic teaching	Traditional blackboard-based teaching must be combined with practical and assisted learning activities that challenge and motivate students.
12	Objective-oriented teaching	Learning objectives, student plans, and quality reports are introduced as new requirements.

*Initiatives 1-6 indicate the strategic orientation for the MANST (management strategy), and initiatives 7-12 indicate the strategic orientation for the TEAST (teaching strategy)

Stage 3: Identifying the role of employees. During meetings and conversations, employees proposed variations that might, if adopted, constitute modifications to or evolution of the strategies. We coded these proposed variations and distinguished between whether the proposal was aligned with the strategic orientation (e.g. ‘I think we should to a greater extent think of it [exercise and movement] as part of the teaching’) or not (e.g. ‘How about dropping exercise and movement for the oldest students?’ or ‘They [the students] use the breaks to move, so why not just say that it is exercise and movement?’). We identified two roles of employees; when the proposal was aligned with the strategic orientation, it was coded as employees who undermine strategic change, while when the proposal was not aligned with the strategic orientation, it was coded as employees who support strategic change. In order to get a full understanding of the employees, we also coded positive (employees who support) and negative employee statements (employee who undermine) related to the strategic changes.

Stage 4: Coding the dynamic within the interactions. In the fourth stage of analysis, we started from the beginning, in each school, analyzing the dynamic in the meetings and interactions. We coded the strategizing episodes, seeking to identify the structure of interactions and clarify how managers structure strategy emergence through interaction with employees. The descriptive empirical codes are shown in Table 6.1. Following Gioia et al. (2013), we then interpretatively clustered the identified empirical codes into broader thematic categories according to their content, which we labelled ‘practices of exerting influence’. This fourth stage of analysis derives four ways of structuring emergence: conflict resolution, shaping interpretations, restricting discussions, and using facilitators. Conflict resolution and shaping interpretations unfold between the meetings, while restricting discussion and using facilitators unfold within the meetings. The four practices of exerting influence are shown in Table 6.1. As shown in the table, the four practices unfolded at all schools and no differences across schools were found.

Stage 5: Analyzing the interrelations. After analyzing the dynamic and structure of interactions, we started analyzing how this was informed, shaped and enabled by past interactions. In analyzing how the managers structure strategy emergence, we recognized that managers differentiate practices of exerting influence according to whether employees support or undermine the strategic orientation. There was a connection between employees proposing variations not aligned with the strategic orientation and employees who were the target of ‘conflict resolution’ and ‘restricting discussion’. Further, there was a connection between employees proposing variations aligned with the strategic orientation and employees who were the target of ‘shaping interpretations’ and ‘using facilitators’. Furthermore, the analysis revealed an interplay between practices. Practices related to using facilitators are supported by the practice of shaping of interpretations, as it contributes to influencing employees and convincing them about a certain strategy direction. Furthermore, practices related to restricting discussion are supported by conflict resolution, which is used to avoid the complaint-oriented and conflict-driven interactions within meetings.

Stage 6: Analyzing the implications. In the sixth stage, we analysed how the proposals, actions and adoption of variation evolved over time as the practices were put into action. This analysis revealed that as the practices were put into action, the extent of variation proposals that

Table 6.2. Data structure

Descriptive empirical codes of exerting influence	Practices of exerting influence	Representative data coded to practices	Mechanisms
Negotiating; Creating reflection; Gathering input; Complaint-oriented or conflict-driven interactions; Reducing tension and defusing polarized groups	Conflict resolution	<p><i>"Do you talk to [an employee] before the meeting tomorrow so that we get our expectations matched so that it does not end up as wrong as the last [the last meeting]?"</i> (Obs., School A)</p> <p><i>"Maybe we should get in touch with [a certain employee] to prepare the ground just to explain to him what it's actually all about, before he throws a tantrum."</i> (Obs., School B)</p> <p>A manager tries to make an employee feel that she has a say in an issue in order to subdue her in relation to another issue. (Obs., School C)</p>	Unfolding between meetings; Informal interactions; Target is employees tending to undermine; Managers and employees exert influence.
Guide perspectives along a certain direction; 'Getting them in the boat'; Increasing commitment; Sowing seeds	Shaping interpretations	<p><i>"I'm good at sowing seeds. I plant a lot of everything, about all sorts of things. When I believe that somebody will get in the boat with me."</i> (Int., School A)</p> <p><i>"Sure, we have to discuss this with everybody, but we'll start in a group where we can influence the direction we want to take and then it will hopefully trickle out of the door little by little."</i> (Obs., School B)</p> <p><i>"...the informal chats at lunch, for instance, where you have the chance to say something that sends somebody in a certain direction or where you try to send somebody in a certain direction without actually saying it in so many words. This is how we're going to do it."</i> (Informal int., School C)</p>	Unfolding between meetings; Formal and informal interactions; Target is employees tending to support; Managers exert influence.
Managing the flow of discussion; Setting the agenda; Drawing on a relatively fixed structure; Ensuring participation from all employees; Keeping discussion on track	Restricting discussions	<p><i>"We are currently running with a fairly solid structure at our large group meeting. This is simply necessary to prevent the same from steering the meeting"</i> (Informal int., School A)</p> <p><i>"Ensure that there won't be discussion about why but rather a qualification of what".</i> (Obs., School B)</p> <p>The managers directly manage the flow of discussion by drawing on a relatively fixed structure and setting the agenda. (Obs., School C)</p>	Unfolding within meetings; Formal interactions; Target is employees who tend to undermine; Employees' influence is restricted.
Getting certain employees to speak; Letting them promote specific strategic initiatives; Exploiting employees' support; Selecting facilitators of the breakout groups; Getting employees to convince each other or even go against key actors	Using facilitators	<p><i>"...I used the shop steward a lot as she carried much informal clout. She and I together made things work, even when we disagreed. The employees would then follow suit."</i> (Int., School A)</p> <p><i>"If we led him [an employee] to promote it [exercise and movement], I think it will be easier for us to convince them [a group of employees]"</i> (Obs., School B)</p> <p><i>"When we're met with resistance, I will want to exploit that the pedagogical committee can see itself in this (...)"</i> (Int., School C)</p>	Unfolding within meetings; Formal interactions; Target is employees who tend to support; Employees exert influence.

were not aligned with the strategic orientation decreased, and the extent of variation proposals aligned with the strategic orientation increased. It also means that the actions of such variations decrease (indication for structuring emergence) and increase (indication for strategy emergence), respectively. As a result, the cumulative implications of the flow of interaction enable, but partially structure, strategy emergence.

Findings

We present our findings in two sections. In the first section, we demonstrate how managers partially enable and structure strategy emergence through four practices of exerting influence. Each practice (see Figure 6.1) is illustrated separately in order to explain how it is defined. In the second section, we illustrate the dynamic process in which the four practices of exerting influence are played out.

Four practices of exerting influence that enable and structure strategy emergence

By examining the structuring of strategy emergence, four practices of exerting influence are identified: conflict resolution, shaping interpretations, restricting discussions, and using facilitators. An overview of the four practices of exerting influence is shown in Figure 6.1.

The figure illustrates the patterning of informal and formal interactions, and whether the four practices are characterized by employees and/or managers exerting influence. The distinction of practices stems from (1) whether the practices unfold between or within meetings and (2) whether the employees undermine or support the strategic orientation. Some employees have negative reactions to the strategic change initiatives, leading to potential conflicts, resistance and undermining. These employees tend to propose variations that might, if adopted, constitute a modification to or evolution of the strategy that does not align with the strategic orientation. Through critique, inaction, and negative discussion, these employees delay, suppress and/or constrain the change process. Other (or the same) employees have positive reactions to the strategic change initiatives, leading to potential support. The acceptance and contentment of these employees reconfirm the strategic orientation and have implications for modification and/or evolution of the strategies. In order to enable, but partially structure, emergence, managers

distinguish between these two types of employees. The following sections define the practices; for each practice, we explain the implications and provide a vignette showing how it plays out in action.

		Where the practice unfolds	
		Between the meetings	Within the meetings
Target of practice	Employees who undermine the strategic orientation	<p>Conflict resolution</p> <p>Managers and employees exert influence</p> <p>(informal)</p>	<p>Restricting discussions</p> <p>Employees' influence is restricted</p> <p>(formal)</p>
	Employees who support the strategic orientation	<p>Shaping interpretations</p> <p>Managers exert influence</p> <p>(formal and informal)</p>	<p>Using facilitators</p> <p>Employees exert influence</p> <p>(formal)</p>

Figure 6.1. Practices of exerting influence that enable and structure strategy emergence

Conflict resolution. Conflict resolution refers to a set of practices of exerting influence that emerge between the meetings, the targets being employees who tend to undermine the strategic orientation. This first set of practices of exerting influence is characterized by both managers and employees exerting influence. It increases employee input towards decisions; in addition, it creates a sense of influence by letting employees feel they have been heard. It is important to make these employees feel that they have a say in order to minimize undermining; therefore, managers do not only influence employees' interpretations, but also strategically allow them to influence the strategy. One example may be a compromise where an employee is allowed to influence one issue in order to subdue him/her in relation to another issue. Furthermore, managers use this meeting practice to create reflection. Strategically, they approach employees who tend to undermine strategic orientation in order to avoid complaint-oriented and conflict-driven interactions within

meetings. In order to enable, but partially structure, emergence, managers prefer to have complaint-oriented and conflict-driven interactions between meetings, where the range of interacting actors is lower than within meetings. One manager argues: *'Maybe we should get in touch with [a certain employee] to prepare the ground just to explain to him what it's actually all about before he throws a tantrum.'* (Headmaster of School B, Obs.)

Moreover, managers use this practice between meetings to gather input in order to shape structure, select actors, and for formulation purposes: *'It's our way of adapting expectations and having our ear to the ground, what are their thoughts, do they think we're stark raving mad.'* (Deputy Headmaster of School C, Int.) Therefore, such input is important, not in relation to creativity or shaping strategy, but in order to match expectations. The outcome of the meeting practice of resolving conflicts, unfolding in and between meetings, is that managers counter disruption, keep strong personalities from dominating, escape irrelevant discussion/structure hijacking, reduce tension, and defuse polarized groups. Furthermore, managers avoid complaint-oriented or conflict-driven sessions as well as resistance and negativity. The following vignette shows how this meeting practice of resolving conflicts plays out in action. It illustrates how the manager, Tom, through interaction between the meetings resolves conflicts with the employee, Julia, who is very critical and dislikes the reform element called exercise and movement. She does not understand why older students should spend their time on this.

Vignette: According to the reform, an average of 45 minutes of exercise and movement must be integrated into the school day of all students. However, the managers find that this is not being implemented in the group featuring the older students [the A-house], and are aware that some of the employees in this section are very critical. At a management meeting, Jack (department manager) expressly states: *'I would argue that it does not happen in the A-house.'* As the management team decides to discuss this issue at the upcoming staff meeting, they attempt to resolve conflicts before the meeting with, among others, Julia, who tends to contribute to negativity and resistance. Julia enters the manager's office because she wants to take some of her remaining annual leave. Having sorted this, Tom says: *'We have decided to cut one lesson each day (...) and in the future, the exercise element must, therefore, be incorporated into the teaching.'* Julia attempts to indicate her disappointment and disgust, and, shaking her head, she stresses: *'It is simply a wrong focus that we must do 45 minutes of exercise every day.'* Tom knows that Julia

supports cutting a lesson and tries strategically to emphasize this: *'When we cut a lesson, then there is not enough time for the exercise part to take up separate lessons.'* Thereby, Tom tries to make Julia feel that she has a say in this issue in order to moderate her view on the exercise issue. Finally, after a very conflict-driven interaction, Julia says with irritation: *'I suppose then we must try to incorporate the 45 minutes of exercise...'* and leaves the office. Tom feels he has reduced Julia's resistance to the initiative of the reform.

Shaping interpretations. The second practice of exerting influence is shaping interpretation. Like conflict resolution, this practice also unfolds between meetings; however, the target is employees who support the strategic orientation. Between meetings, managers attempt to influence employees' interpretations, guiding their perspectives in a certain direction. Hence, it is characterized by managers exerting influence. One manager describes the practice as follows: *'I'm good at sowing seeds. I plant a lot of everything, about all sorts of things. When I believe that somebody will get in the boat with me.'* Another manager explains: *'...the informal chats at lunch, for instance, where you have the chance to say something that sends somebody in a certain direction or where you try to send somebody in a certain direction without actually saying it in so many words. This is how we're going to do it.'* (Headmaster of School A, Int.) Additionally, in the committee meetings between the large-group meetings, the managers attempt to enable, but partially structure, the strategy emergence by shaping interpretations: *'Sure, we have to discuss this with everybody, but we'll start in a group where we can influence the direction we want to take and then it will hopefully trickle out of the door little by little.'* (Headmaster of School B, Obs.) This practice contributes to influencing employees' interpretations, convincing them about a certain strategic direction, and 'getting them in the boat' in order to increase commitment. The following vignette shows how shaping of interpretations unfolds in action. We illustrate how between the meetings, Tom shapes Thomas' interpretation of exercise to create a way of anchoring this issue within the meeting.

Vignette: Tom meets Thomas at the coffee machine in the staff room; Thomas is an employee who is in favour of exercise and movement. Tom says: *'I hear from Rebecca [department manager] that it is going well with the exercise.'* Tom explains that they are planning to incorporate exercise more into the teaching in the future. Thomas responds very positively: *'It sounds like a great idea.'* When, a couple of days later, Thomas enters the office to ask for a

schedule for the next school year, Tom asks if he can spare a moment. Tom closes the door and says: *'I need someone to be responsible for exercise in the A-house.'* Thomas answers without hesitating: *'To put it plainly, there is only one thing about exercise in the A-house: You'll have to pull in somebody who doesn't want to be pulled in.'* Subsequently, he asks: *'What about Lisa and Sara. They know something about exercise. What can I do that they can't?'* Tom answers: *'With your attitude, you can handle the resistance.'* Thomas accepts and takes on the responsibility for exercise in the A-house.

Restricting discussions. The third practice of exerting influence is restricting discussions. This set of practices plays out within the meeting, and the target is employees who undermine the strategic orientation. It is characterized by a restricted influence of employees. The managers directly manage the flow of discussion by structuring and setting an agenda that supports their own interests. Within the meeting, the managers draw on a relatively fixed structure. They open with an introduction and presentation, and then employees split into breakout groups. In the breakout groups, actors exchange ideas, appreciate/acknowledge each other's perspectives, bring ideas to the table, and generate new understandings during the discussion. The discussion is, however, partly restricted. Finally, the group output is sometimes realized through a process where all actors share their viewpoints and input with the entire group. The strategy input from these groups is not discussed in plenary, yet it is (sometimes) incorporated into the management's further strategy work. Hence, within the meetings, the employees who exert a destabilizing influence do not have the same opportunity to influence the strategy as they did between the meetings. Restricting discussion has various implications. The managers make sure that all employees participate, keep the discussion on track, and establish a step-by-step process for handling and managing the flow of discussion. The following vignette shows how the meeting practice of restricting discussions plays out in action.

Vignette: Before the meeting, the management team has decided to remove a lesson every day and instead incorporating exercise in the teaching. This is at the top of the large-group staff meeting agenda. However, the management team does not want to discuss this decision within the meeting. Instead, they want the employees to discuss *how* it can be incorporated. Within the meeting, Tom says: *'This is not going to be discussion about why but rather a qualification of what.'* Even though some of the critical employees point out that it seems a roundabout way to

convey a decision that has already been made by the management team, they stick to the agenda. To steer the flow of discussion, the managers split employees into breakout groups. In order to establish a step-by-step process for handling and managing the flow of discussion in the groups, each employee has to come up with ideas on how exercise can be incorporated into the teaching based on a round table discussion. The management team had foreseen that the A-house employees would dominate with negativity and resistance: *'So let's think through how we want to compose the breakout groups.'* Therefore, the managers ensured that the employees who tend to undermine the strategic initiative were put in different groups to avoid complaint-oriented or conflict-driven sessions, instead keeping the discussion on track.

Using facilitators. The fourth practice of exerting influence is using facilitators. This practice unfolds within meetings, and the target is employees who support the strategic orientation. It is characterized by employees exerting influence. After having shaped the interpretations of this type of employee and 'getting them in the boat', managers use them as strategists to anchor issues within meetings, and to convince others. Between meetings, these employees are influenced; however, within meetings, they act as influencers. Managers strategically get these employees to speak out, e.g. to have them promote a specific strategic initiative. In this way, managers attempt to exploit these employees' support (achieved between the meetings) and use them to counter employees who undermine strategic orientation. In the organization of breakout groups, the managers ensure that they allot these employees speaking time. For instance, they become facilitators of the breakout groups to guide the discussion and note down the group's ideas. One manager explains: *'...I used the shop steward a lot as she carried much informal clout. She and I together made things work, even when we disagreed. The employees would then follow suit.'* (Headmaster of School C, Int.) They also use groups of employees, such as committees, as an entry point to anchor issues within meetings. One manager explains: *'When we're met with resistance, I will want to exploit that the pedagogical committee can see itself in this (...).'* (Headmaster of School A, Int.) Another manager explains that they use employees to keep the discussion on track at large-group meetings: *'Making sure that there won't be any discussion about why but rather a qualification of what (...). If somebody starts blaming the school reform, then you need to stop them.'* (Deputy Headmaster of School B, Obs.) By shaping interpretation between meetings, managers create a means of using facilitators within meetings. The aim is getting

employees to influence each other, convince each other, or even go against key actors. The following vignette shows how the meeting practice of using facilitators unfolds in action.

Vignette: The management team has become aware that Lisa and Sara have a positive approach to movement and exercise, and that they have made many good suggestions for how to incorporate it into the teaching. It is therefore important for the managers to actively involve them within the meeting and strategically use them as a means to anchor the issue. Accordingly, the management team selects stabilizing employees as facilitators so they can contribute to convincing other employees or even opposing key actors. As the critical employees start to grumble and disagree that this strategy would work in the A-house, another employee attempts to keep the conversation on track: *'In the C-house [department with the youngest students], I think that students generally like exercise in the teaching. And that does not mean that you need to end up all sweaty.'* In another group, Julia, the employee who the manager has a conversation with before the meeting, argues: *'Now we have seven instead of eight lessons. This is a sign that it is moving in the right direction.'* Hence, Tom manages to subdue Julia before the meeting, which minimizes her undermining influence within the meeting.

The dynamic process of exerting influence

The findings reveal four practices of exerting influence, conflict resolution, shaping interpretations, restricting discussions, and using facilitators that emerge within and between meetings. Each practice is illustrated and shown separately in order to explain how it is defined. However, our findings also describe the dynamic process in which the four practices of exerting influence are played out. The interactions and practices of exerting influence are enabled by and dependent on other practices, and, at the same time, they influence and shape each other. This section will outline the dynamic process in which the four practices are played out by explaining four interrelations between the practices.

Interrelation 1: Variation proposed by employees shapes interaction paths. The first interrelation between the practices indicates that the path of interaction is based on employees' proposals for variations of strategic changes. Employees tend to support and/or undermine strategic orientation; they propose variation that might if adopted, constitute a modification to or

evolution of the strategy that either aligns or does not align with the mandated framework. Therefore, the proposals of employees help managers to uncover who may be undermining vs. supporting the strategies. Therefore, the findings demonstrate two different paths of interactions: for employees perceived as tending to support strategic orientation, managers attempt to shape their interpretations; in contrast, managers attempt to resolve conflicts with employees they perceive as tending to undermine strategic orientation. This means that the action of managers are informed by past interactions and the proposals within them.

Interrelation 2: Practices between meetings enable practices within meeting. The second key interplay between the practices is that practices between the meetings enable and set the ground for those within the meeting. When managers resolve conflict between the meetings, reflection and a sense of influence is created by increasing employee input towards decisions, e.g. where employees are given the opportunity to influence one issue in order to subdue them in relation to another issue. The sense of influence and prior conflict resolution created between the meetings sets the stage for managers to restrict discussion within the meeting. Therefore, the actions related to the practice of restricting discussion are supported by conflict resolution, which is used to avoid the complaint-oriented and conflict-driven interactions within meetings. A similar interplay exists between the two other practices. Shaping the interpretations of employees between the meetings enables managers to anchor issues within the meeting. The actions related to using facilitators are supported by the practice of shaping of interpretations, as it contributes to influencing employees and convincing them about a certain strategy direction. Therefore, the practices between the meetings can be categorized as precursors to the practices that play out within the meeting.

Interrelation 3: Practices within meetings influence and shape each other. The third interplay is the connection between the two practices within the meeting: restricting discussion and using facilitators. These two practices influence and shape each other. Within the meetings, managers strategically get employees who tend to support the strategic orientation to speak out, letting them promote a specific strategic initiative, for example. In this way, managers attempt to exploit these employees' support, which was achieved between the meetings, and use them to counter employees contributing to undermining. In the organization of breakout groups, the managers ensure that they allot these employees speaking time, for instance by designating them

as facilitators of the breakout groups to guide the discussion and note down the group's ideas. The outcome is getting employees to influence each other, convince each other, or even go against key actors. This outcome shapes and is shaped by managers' restriction of discussion. Managers ensure that all employees participate, keep the discussion on track, and establish a step-by-step process for handling and manage the flow of discussion.

Interrelation 4: Strategy emergence is structured by practices. Enabling, but partially structuring, emergence is an ongoing dynamic process. The interactions set the ground for new proposals and thus emergence. These proposals for variations reveal whether the interrelation of practices across several interactions, unfolding within and between meetings, have been successful in enabling, but also partially structuring, strategy emergence. Over time (and from initiative to initiative), employees can shift from tending to undermine strategic orientation to tending to support strategic orientation, and vice versa. The proposals therefore influence subsequent interactions and, accordingly, the dynamic process of meeting/interaction practices continues in an ongoing flow of activities. This shifting from undermining to supporting or vice versa indicates different temporal paths and a potential temporal evolution of the implementation. The implementation of 'exercise and movement' was initially derailed (e.g. the group that was not doing this), and then the practices of exerting influence enabled managers to get back on track for implementation. The better the managers can see through the roles of the employees, the easier it becomes for them to target their practice and structure emergence. This is shown by fewer proposals and actions of variation that do not align with the mandated strategic orientation, and more proposals and adoptions of variation that do align with the mandated strategic orientation. It means that the strategy evolves and emerges over time.

Discussion

The study outlines that managers strategically draw on practices within and between meetings, further differentiating their practices depending on whether the employee undermine or support the strategic orientation. The findings contribute to the theorizing of structuring emergence, which is summarized in a conceptual model (Figure 6.2). Figure 6.2 demonstrates the process of structuring strategy emergence through interactions and shows how the dynamic pattern

of flow between various types of interactions, with a range of actors, is embedded between and within meetings.

In addition to illustrating the two different paths of interactions, Figure 6.2 illustrates the four interrelations (box 1-4) between the practices. As indicated by the arrows in the model, the interactions and practices of exerting influence are enabled by and dependent on other practices, and they simultaneously influence and shape each other. The practices between meetings represent an iterative process of communication and negotiation that is used to structure strategy emergence within meetings. Managers structure strategy emergence by restricting influence and differentiating the degree of influence across employees over time.

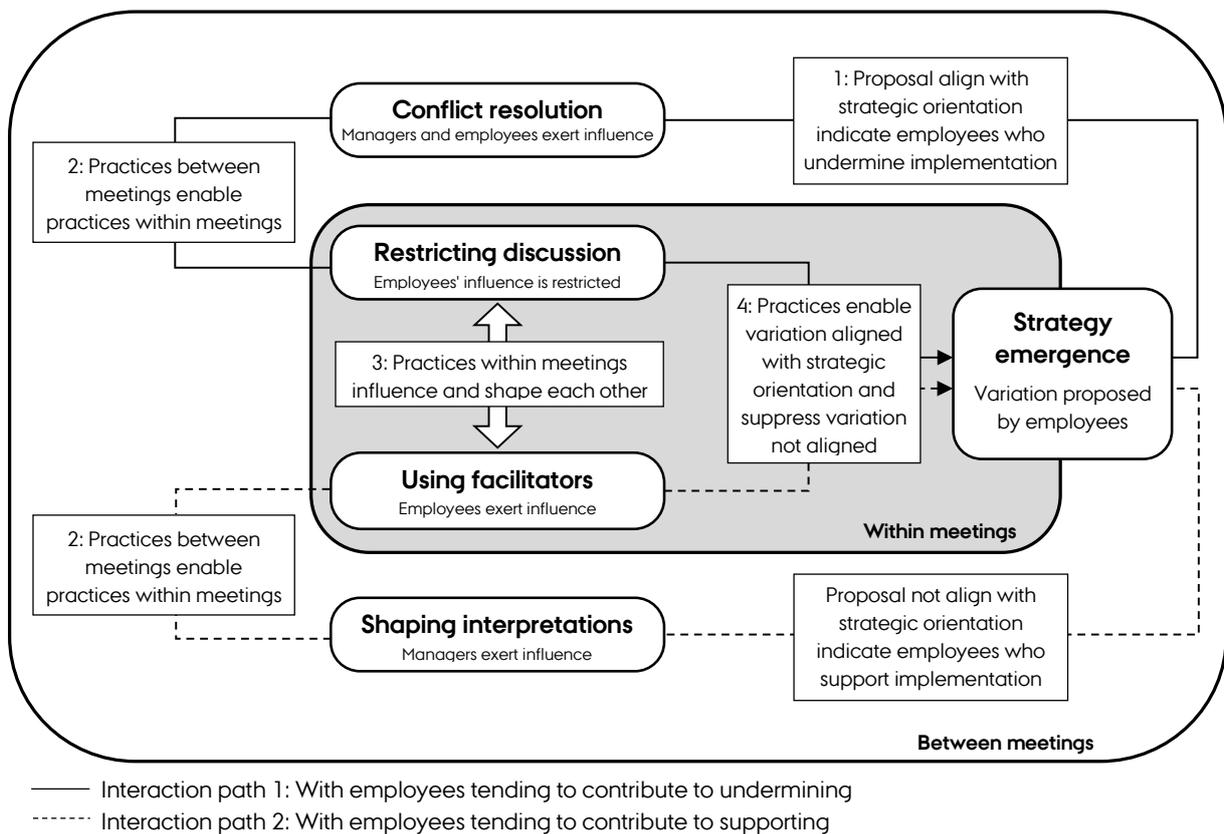


Figure 6.2. Process model for structuring strategy emergence through interrelated interactions

Between the meetings, employees tending to support the strategic orientation have a low degree of influence, while employees tending to undermine strategic orientation have a high degree of

influence. In contrast, within meetings, the opposite plays out: employees tending to support the strategic orientation have a high degree of influence, while employees tending to undermine strategic orientation have a low degree of influence. Hence, managers attempt to give employees contributing to undermining high influence when the range of interacting actors is small, whereas the influence of these employees is reduced when the number of interacting actors is high. In contrast, when employees tending to support strategic orientation have the opportunity to exert influence, the range of interacting actors is high, while their influence is lower when the range of interacting actors is low. It should be noted that employees who support strategic orientation also have influence between meetings. Hence, in order to structure strategy emergence, managers differentiate the range of interacting actors through the process of interaction, and further distribute influence among employees in accordance with the range of interacting actors; for instance, managers restrict discussions in breakout groups based on the identity and range of interacting actors.

Figure 6.2 demonstrates how a sequential interplay between different types and paths of interactions can be employed by managers to structure and shape strategy. The flow of interactions demonstrated in Figure 6.2 is related to one strategic initiative, and therefore such a flow will usually unfold alongside other similar flows. As illustrated in the dynamic process of practices of exerting influence, the meetings are complemented by interactions between the meetings. In addition to structuring strategy emergence within meetings, managers use interactions between meetings in order to structure emergence because, without strategically drawing on close and informal interactions and committee meetings between meetings, it is challenging for managers to structure strategy emergence within these meetings.

Contributions

This paper addresses the research question of how managers enable, but partially structure, emergence during strategy implementation through interactions within and between meetings. The core contribution of the paper is the conceptual model: we have developed a processual framework that reveals the dynamics by which managers structure the emergent process of implementation through combination and interrelation of interactions within and between meetings. The combination of interactions enables managers to *both* suppress variation that does not align with

the strategic orientation *and* enable variation that aligns with the strategic orientation. Hence, we do not mean that managers are in control: managers do not as such ‘manage’ the implementation processes, but they exercise more control over the process, which enhances their ability to contribute to these processes.

This paper responds to Vaara and Whittington’s (2012) call for studying strategy emergence. They argue that ‘close studies of strategy emergence is a significant opportunity for advancing SAP research’ (Vaara and Whittington, 2012: 313). Although previous research has addressed the role of meetings in the implementation of strategic change, the practice of meetings is an integral but relatively poorly understood aspect of how managers structure strategy emergence. By demonstrating how managers, in practice, enable, but partially structure, strategy emergence through ongoing interactions within and between meetings, we address this knowledge gap and contribute to the literature in three ways.

First, the findings show that the structuring of strategy emergence involves four sets of practices that managers put into action on a daily basis: conflict resolution, using facilitators, shaping interpretations, and restriction of discussion. These findings differ from prior works by providing an in-depth understanding of how these four practices of exerting influence and the interrelation between them are used as a tool to partially structure strategy emergence. While Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) identified and examined structuring characteristics of strategy meetings with regard to their potential for stabilizing or destabilizing strategic orientations, this paper demonstrates how managers partially enable, but also structure, strategy emergence. Therefore, while conflict has been shown to be an integral part of the implementation of strategies by managers (Lê & Jarzabkowski, 2015), this paper shows how managers structure emergence through a process of practices of exerting influence to deal with and minimize conflict. Further, although Mirabeau and Maguire (2014) have described how emergent strategy forms, the structuring of strategy emergence has not been fully explicated. In this paper, we address this gap in the literature by demonstrating how practices of exerting influence can be used as a tool to structure strategy emergence. We show how various practices of exerting influence are played out and demonstrate that the interactions involved are enabled by and dependent on other practices and simultaneously influence and shape each other.

Second, the paper demonstrates the dynamic process of interrelated interactions within and between meetings. Although it is of key importance to understand the interplay between meetings (Seidl and Guérard, 2015), only few studies have investigated this topic (Clarke et al., 2012; Hoon, 2007; McNulty and Pettigrew, 1999). In this paper, we show how practices within and between meetings can be used and combined in order to structure strategy emergence. Hence, by connecting strategizing within and between meetings, the findings uncover the notion of flow and contribute to the understanding of how the process of structuring strategy emergence unfolds across meetings. These findings differ from those of prior works by providing an in-depth understanding of how the practices are used in the flow of interactions within and between meetings, e.g. how managers subdue employees between meetings in order to avoid a conflict-driven session within meetings. Therefore, the paper illustrates how the range of interacting actors is a central issue in structuring strategy emergence. Both within and between meetings, the managers exploit the range and selection of interacting actors to structure strategy emergence. Even in all-staff meetings, the organizations vary and restrict the range of organizational actors that interact. It is the combination and interrelation of different practices across several interactions that suppresses potential undermining and structures emergence.

Third and finally, the paper shows how the allocation of influence is used to structure strategy emergence. Scholars have noted that strategic participation may not mean that people participate equally, instead, it often involves only the participation of specific actors and their corresponding influence on strategy, while others lose their voice in the strategy processes (Laine and Vaara, 2007). The paper contributes to the existing body of research in showing that the structuring of strategy emergence demonstrated herein is a way of allocating influence. Because influence is given to different employees within different interactions at specific times, the structuring of emergence has implications for the influence and power of the strategist. This highlights the importance of understanding the practices of exerting influence outlined in the paper.

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PART III

Conclusion

Part III binds the dissertation together. Chapter 7 summarizes the key findings. By detailing the contributions of the studies individually and in combination, the chapter shows how the dissertation has met its overall aim: to advance our understanding of how the micro-practices and social dynamics of strategizing play out in the context of dual strategic changes, and what are the implications for their implementation. The chapter ends by outlining the practical implications of the dissertation and identifying potential areas for future research.

Chapter 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Key findings

The dissertation sets out to advance our understanding of how micro-practices and social dynamics of strategizing play out in the context of dual strategic changes, and what are the implications for their implementation. The three papers of the dissertation each contribute to addressing the overall question. In the following, the key findings of each paper are summarized.

Paper I addresses the research question: How do employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how do these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes? It demonstrates how varying intensities of negative emotional reactions affect sensemaking processes, identifying three sensemaking dynamics that emerge through the implementation processes of dual strategic changes: refusing sensemaking, disrupting sensemaking, and constraining sensemaking. The findings are summarized in a conceptual model that links employees' emotional reactions with their co-arising responses to managers' sensegiving, illustrating how these responses in turn shape the strategic change outcomes. It illustrates that emotions may forestall sensemaking processes due to employees' resulting tendency to direct attention from one strategic change to another. This means that the level of sensemaking decreases for one change as the other change is in focus; however, sensemaking will still be a continuous process as it will be redirected from one to another change.

Paper II examines the research question: How does actors' resistance to strategic change play out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation? It identifies four practices that emerge through the implementation processes of dual changes: linking, collapsing, undermining, and rejecting. The practices evolve through three implementation phases – justifying, revising, and delegitimizing – and thereby shape the unfolding process of implementing the two strategic changes. By demonstrating that the unintended consequences and failures arise from the way resistance plays out, we illustrate both the practices and dynamics through which actors shape the implementation processes in such a way that neither strategy is fully realized. Rather than one strategy not being implemented at the expense of the other, we find a subtle interplay in which pursuing one strategy has negative consequences for the other strategy and vice versa, thus sabotaging both strategies while not appearing to do so directly. Specifically, actors in situations of dual strategic changes may hide their opposition to one strategy

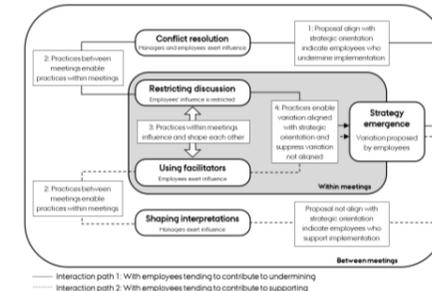
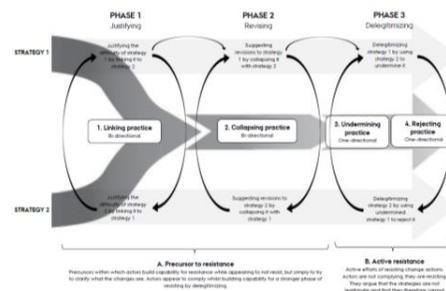
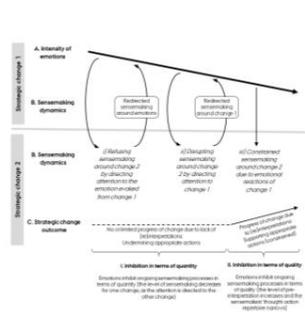
behind a benign appearance of trying to comply but being unable to do so due to the other strategy. By using one change to camouflage dissent about another change, actors delegitimize initiatives without directly opposing the intended changes. Yet such delegitimization also gives them a stronger grounding to resist directly, indicating a processual effect between camouflaged and more direct resistance.

Paper III answers the research question: How do managers structure emergence during strategy implementation through practices within and between meetings? By analysing the strategizing episodes of interaction between managers and employees both within and between meetings, this paper identifies four sets of practices that managers put into action when they attempt to control, coordinate, and communicate the strategy: conflict resolution, shaping interpretations, restricting discussions, and using facilitators. Each practice of exerting influence is illustrated separately to explain how it is defined. We provide four vignettes showing how the practices play out in action and describing the structuring implications. Furthermore, we illustrate the dynamic processes in which the four practices play out. This paper demonstrates a dynamic pattern of moving between different types of interaction with various actors embedded within and between meetings. Finally, the paper demonstrates that the interaction and meeting practices are enabled by and dependent on other meeting practices, and that they simultaneously influence and shape each other. This sequential interplay between different types and paths of interaction can be employed by managers to shape strategy. The combination of interactions allows managers to enable, and partially structure, strategy emergence. Thus, managers are not in full control: rather than ‘managing’ the implementation processes, they exercise more subtle control, which enhances their ability to contribute to these processes.

Table 7.1 provides a summarizing overview of the three studies. Taken together, these studies demonstrate the complex and emergent nature of strategic changes, showing how dual strategies emerge during implementation. They show how dual strategies are realized through micro-practices and social dynamics, emphasizing strategy *activities* and their relationship to strategic *outcomes*.

Table 7.1. Summarizing overview of the three papers

	Paper I	Paper II	Paper III
Main dynamics and practices examined & research aim	<p><i>Emotion and sensemaking</i></p> <p>How do employees' emotional reactions shape their co-arising sensemaking of dual strategic changes, and how do these responses and their interactional effects in turn influence the implementation processes?</p>	<p><i>Resistance</i></p> <p>How does actors' resistance to strategic change play out in the context of dual strategies, and with what implications for their implementation?</p>	<p><i>Meetings</i></p> <p>How do managers structure emergence during strategy implementation through practices within and between meetings?</p>
Method	<i>Single case study</i>	<i>Single case study</i>	<i>Multiple case study</i>
Data (primary)	<p>On-site fieldwork: 72 days</p> <p>Meeting observations: 38 meetings & 3 seminars</p> <p>Interviews with managers and employees: 31</p>	<p>On-site fieldwork: 72 days</p> <p>Meeting observations: 38 meetings & 3 seminars</p> <p>Interviews with managers and employees: 31</p>	<p>On-site fieldwork: 85 days</p> <p>Meeting observations: 52 meetings & 4 seminars</p> <p>Interviews with managers: 22</p>
Key findings	<p>A conceptual model of how different intensities of negative emotional reactions affect sensemaking processes, identifying three sensemaking dynamics – <i>refusing sensemaking, disrupting sensemaking, and constraining sensemaking</i> – that emerge through the implementation processes of dual strategic changes. The emotional reactions and sensemaking dynamics co-evolve and thereby shape the unfolding process of implementing changes.</p>	<p>A conceptual model of how actors play one strategy off against the other to resist strategic change. The study identifies four practices – <i>linking, collapsing, undermining, and rejecting</i> – that evolve through three implementation phases – <i>justifying, revising, and delegitimizing</i> – and thereby shape the unfolding process of implementing the two strategic changes.</p>	<p>A conceptual model of how managers structure strategy emergence during the implementation of strategic changes through the combination and interrelation of practices within and between meetings. The paper identifies four sets of meeting practices that managers put into action: <i>conflict resolution, anchoring issues, shaping interpretations, and restricting discussions</i>.</p>



Contributions

The dissertation elucidates how strategy emerges during implementation – more specifically, how it is realized through the micro-practices and social dynamics of strategizing. Papers I and II set out to illuminate the micro-practices and social dynamics of obstructing strategic changes, while Paper III uncovers the micro-practices and social dynamics of shaping strategy emergence. By examining how such micro-practices and social dynamics play out in a context of dual strategic changes and how they are related to consequential strategic outcomes, the dissertation contributes to existing research in different ways.

The three papers contribute to particular literatures on different social dynamics and micro-practices according to their main focus. Specifically, Paper I contributes to the literature on emotion and sensemaking, Paper II to the resistance literature, and Paper III to the meetings literature. Due to their secondary focus on implementation processes in a context of dual strategies, the papers also contribute to the literature on dual strategies and strategy emergence. The contributions of each are summarized in Table 7.2. In the following, I first outline the contributions of the individual papers (evaluated in more detail in the respective papers), and then discuss the contributions across the papers to the literature on dual strategies and strategy emergence.

Contributions of the individual studies

Paper I contributes to the emotion and sensemaking literature (e.g. Huy, 2002; Kiefer, 2005; Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010), demonstrating how several emotions are evoked during changes, and how, in turn, such a mix of emotions leads to different strategy implications. It emphasizes emotions as continual constructs that can coexist and evolve during dual strategic changes. While researchers have argued that triggering events producing negative emotions are more likely to energize our search for meaning (Stein, 2004; Maitlis et al., 2013), this paper demonstrates three sensemaking dynamics conceptualizing emotions as sensemaking inhibitors. Paper II contributes to the resistance literature (Ybema and Horvers, 2017; Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995; Scott, 1985) by showing how actors camouflage their resistance, building their capabilities, as a precursor to engaging in more active resistance. Paper III contributes to the meetings literature, showing how practices can be used as a tool to enable, and partially structure, strategy emergence. It illustrates

how various practices of exerting influence are played out and demonstrates that the interactions involved are enabled by and dependent on other practices, moreover that they simultaneously influence and shape each other.

Table 7.2. Summarizing overview of the contributions

	Contributions of individual papers		Contributions across papers	
Literatures	Emotion, sensemaking, resistance, meetings		Dual strategies	Strategy emergence
Paper I	<p>Contributes to the <i>emotion and sensemaking literature</i> by showing how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) employee emotions not only facilitate but also inhibit sensemaking processes; ii) emotions as continual constructs can coexist and evolve during dual strategic changes. 		<p>Contributes to the <i>literature on dual strategies</i> by linking employees' emotional reactions to one strategic change with their co-arising responses to another strategic change, and demonstrates how these responses in turn shape the strategic change outcomes of both strategies.</p>	<p>Contributes to the <i>literature on strategy emergence</i> by showing how unintended outcomes arise from not only reinterpretations but also inhibited sensemaking processes (caused by emotional reactions).</p>
Paper II	<p>Contributes to the <i>resistance literature</i> by showing how actors camouflage their resistance, building their capabilities, as a precursor to engaging in more active resistance.</p>		<p>Contributes to the <i>literature on dual strategies</i> by showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the specific interactional dynamic through which actors relate dual strategies to each other; and ii) how this enables them to resist strategic change and inhibit the implementation of both strategies, rather than simply using an old strategy to resist a new one. 	<p>Contributes to the <i>literature on strategy emergence</i> by showing how employees' resistance to one strategy provokes unintended consequences for the other and vice versa, as actors can use one strategy to resist another.</p>
Paper III	<p>Contributes to the <i>meetings literature</i> by demonstrating how a combination and interrelation of different practices within and between meetings enable managers to structure strategy emergence during implementation.</p>			<p>Contributes to the <i>literature on strategy emergence</i> by showing how the cumulative implications of practices within and between meetings are consequential for strategic outcomes, as they enable managers to structure strategy emergence.</p>

Contributions to the literature on dual strategies

Papers I and II both contribute to the relatively sparse literature on dual strategies (e.g. Hengst et al., 2020; Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015) by extending knowledge on the interaction between two strategies. Existing studies have shown how the efforts to reconcile different strategies involve legitimizing one in relation to the other, typically the new strategy in relation to an existing strategy (e.g. Hengst et al., 2020). Alternatively, they have shown that where actors cannot generate collective meaning around a new strategy in relation to an existing strategy, it will not gain momentum (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2011), or that conflict between two strategies enables both to be further interpreted and actioned (Lê and Jarzabkowski, 2015). In all these situations, one strategy is initially privileged, and the other must somehow be reconciled with, reinterpreted, and legitimized in relation to it in order to be implemented.

Paper I links employees' emotional reactions to one strategic change with their co-arising responses to another strategic change, and it demonstrates how these responses in turn shape the strategic change outcomes of both strategies. The paper's conceptual model advances insight into the interaction between two strategies by showing that the emotional reactions to one strategy imply that the other strategy is being less (re)interpreted and actioned.

Paper II contributes to the dual strategies literature by demonstrating how actors construct and manipulate the interaction between strategies. Its findings do not show that one strategy is privileged while the other is neglected. Instead, in the context of dual strategic *changes* taking place simultaneously, and not merely dual strategies, there is an interaction effect in which the two strategies are traded off against each other to delegitimize both. The paper's processual framework thus extends our knowledge of the interaction between two strategies by showing (i) the specific interactional dynamic through which actors relate dual strategies to each other, and (ii) how this enables them to resist strategic change and inhibit the implementation of both strategies, rather than simply using an old strategy to resist a new one (e.g. Sonenshein, 2010).

Contributions to the literature on strategy emergence

Despite Vaara and Whittington (2012: 313) arguing that 'close studies of strategy emergence is a significant opportunity for advancing SAP research', emergent strategy has received much less

attention than formal strategizing in the strategy-as-practice literature (Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014; Vaara and Whittington, 2012). Yet existing studies have demonstrated how sensemaking leads to reinterpretation of strategic change, such that it is implemented in different ways to those initially intended (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2005; Mantere et al., 2012). Often, these unintended outcomes do not simply arise from employees' reinterpretations of a new strategy (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2005; Mantere et al., 2012) but are aligned with their emotional reactions and resistance to it, which shapes the way they (re)interpret and implement that strategy. Hence, existing studies' illustration of derailed implementation of strategic change often highlight an implicit form of resistance and/or emotion, displayed in negative interpretations (e.g. Sonenshein, 2010; Huy et al., 2014), rather than linking the unintended consequences to inhibited sensemaking processes (Paper I) or directly to resistance (Paper II).

In Paper I, my process model extends our knowledge of the unintended consequences of implementing strategic changes (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Balogun and Johnson, 2005) by showing how, in the context of dual strategies, such consequences arise from emotional reactions and inhibited sensemaking. In this paper, both strategies have unintended consequences. However, rather than a failure to implement one or the other strategy (Huy et al., 2014; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2003), there was a subtle interplay in which emotional reactions to one strategy affect both. These findings enrich the unintended consequences literature (e.g. Sonenshein, 2010; Huy et al., 2014; Mantere et al., 2012). Specifically, my findings and processual framework in Paper I strengthen the link between emotional reaction and unintended consequences by conceptualizing emotional reactions as sensemaking inhibitors. I further elaborate and complexify this implicit link by showing that employees' emotional reactions to one strategy provoke unintended consequences for the other.

In Paper II, our conceptual framework advances our understanding of the unintended consequences of strategy implementation (e.g. Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Balogun and Johnson, 2005) by demonstrating how, in the context of dual strategies, such consequences arise from resistance. The unintended consequences of both strategies result from a subtle interplay in which one strategy has negative consequences for the other and vice versa, so sabotaging both strategies while not appearing to do so directly. These findings enrich the unintended consequences literature (e.g. Sonenshein, 2010; Huy et al., 2014; Mantere et al., 2012) by strengthening the link between

resistance and unintended consequences. More specifically, they reveal a more explicit form of resistance, particularly the use of one strategy to resist another and vice versa.

Paper III extends our knowledge of unintended outcomes by showing how the cumulative implications of practices within and between meetings are consequential for strategic outcomes, as they allow managers to enable, and partially structure, strategy emergence. By drawing on different practices within and between meetings, managers can shape strategy emergence and thereby overcome some complexities.

Practical implications

Besides its theoretical contributions, the dissertation also has implications for practice. First, it examines the complexities that can be expected when implementing dual strategic changes. Strategy implementation is shown to be complex in part because it is critically affected by social dynamics. The dissertation identifies different social dynamics that managers need to deal with in implementing dual strategic changes, emphasizing particular aspects and forms of emotions and resistance. For practitioners, the findings therefore provide useful insights into the social dynamics of employees, which may play an important role in strategizing.

The dissertation suggests how managers can effectively deal with emergent components during the implementation of dual strategic changes. Managers can moderate the effects of and interaction between dual strategic changes by articulating and highlighting that they are different changes. Likewise, managers should especially focus on handling employees' negative emotional reactions to some changes in order to facilitate implementing others. Hence, to assure or facilitate the implementation processes of dual strategic changes, managers need to handle the presence of both changes in their attempt to influence employees' sensemaking and meaning constructions. The dissertation emphasizes that dual strategies need to be understood and dealt with in interaction, and not in isolation.

Furthermore, the dissertation also describes how managers strategically set up interactions aimed at tackling and dealing with emergent components thereby overcoming some complexities. Such strategic interactions were observed not only within but also between meetings. Practices between meetings are used strategically to, for instance, avoid complaint-oriented and conflict-

driven interaction within meetings. Conversely, an advantage of allowing, but partially structuring, emergence is to potentially involve new input or cause local variation to emerge, especially in complex organizations where standardized strategy is not necessarily optimal.

Boundary conditions and grounds for future research

My dissertation is based on a study of three public schools undergoing externally mandated changes (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019) imposed by central and local government, suggesting some boundary conditions of the frameworks and grounds for future research. The dissertation examines how micro-practices and social dynamics play out in schools experiencing top-down, centrally regulated demands and standards, internal demands from a professional workforce and students, and external expectations from parents and the local community.

Research has shed light on how unintended consequences shape the way strategic changes are realized. Existing studies demonstrate that actors generate unintended consequences as they reinterpret and modify the espoused change (Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Mantere et al., 2012; Sonenshein, 2010), or ‘engage in workarounds through which they undermine or sidestep the change’ (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019). In contrast, in the context of a mandated change, defined as ‘one with which an organization must comply or face sanctions, often because it is imposed by a powerful external actor, such as a government or regulator’ (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019), managers could not allow these modifications, reinterpretations and unintended consequences to shape the change process. Whereas other situations permit managers to resist, reverse or modify the envisioned change, in situations of mandated change, managers need to find a way to make the change work (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019). Therefore, as illustrated in some studies examining externally-imposed change (e.g. Denis et al., 2001; Jarzabkowski et al., 2019), a mandated change shapes actions. Obviously, the constraint of a mandate has also informed the processual dynamics clarified in this dissertation. Thus, theorizing of the dissertation is expected to be particularly relevant to contexts of mandated changes. Nevertheless, the mandated change provides an opportunity for theoretical insight into strategizing, as it is constrained in modifying or working around the espoused change.

Furthermore, the external pressure to enact multiple strategies typically puts professional autonomy and interests under pressure (Jarzabkowski and Fenton, 2006), even as it is difficult to promote agreement to changes due to such self-interest and professional autonomy (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2017; Brown, 1998). Hence, given the pluralistic nature of the schools (Denis et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2017), the findings may be grounded in professional workers' efforts to protect their self-interest and professional autonomy. Therefore, the results of the dissertation are expected to be particularly relevant to potentially similar contexts, such as hospitals and universities, where professional workers resist externally imposed efforts to control their work (Noordegraaf, 2011). However, the theoretical transferability of the contributions are not necessarily limited. Even though it is a particular context of mandated changes and professional workers, it embraces dynamics making general contributions to the understanding of strategizing. Nonetheless, I expect my processual frameworks to provide grounds for future research on how micro-practices and social dynamics play out in other, non-professional contexts that might have a more hierarchical approach to strategic change.

In the same vein, the dissertation provides grounds for future dual strategies research. Studies on social dynamics during change, such as resistance and emotion, often focus on a single change (Balogun et al., 2011; Ybema and Horvers, 2017), overlooking that organizations often have to make changes in response to multiple pressures occurring sequentially or simultaneously (Webb and Pettigrew, 1999). While the three papers are all conducted in schools, which often face changes arising from new government policies, there are likely to be other contexts, such as regulated companies, in which two or more new strategies need to be implemented simultaneously (Jarzabkowski et al., 2013; Marcus and Geffen, 1998), potentially giving rise to particular types of emotion and resistance during their implementation.

Finally, by directing attention to employees' social dynamics, the dissertation demonstrates that these interpretive processes and their strategic change outcomes are more than just patterns constructed by top and middle managers. Consistently with the strategy-as-practice agenda for broader conceptualization of strategic practitioners (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Johnson et al., 2003), this dissertation considers employees' social dynamics during strategy implementation. Although the strategy-as-practice perspective acknowledges that anybody in an organization can be a strategist, studies predominantly focus on the emotions displayed and experienced by the

upper echelons of the organization (Brundin and Liu, 2015). Consequently, we may be overlooking other strategists, such as middle managers (Rouleau and Balogun, 2011) and, above all, ‘ordinary’ employees: as this dissertation demonstrates, they may also play an important role in organizational strategizing. To understand the whole picture of organizational strategizing, future research should focus on examining the social dynamics of organizational members other than top managers and ‘appointed’ strategists. In line with this, the dissertation illustrates that considering other stakeholders, such as ordinary employees, opens possibilities for identifying processes in which social dynamics are part of strategizing in subtler and less obvious ways.

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APPENDIX: Co-author statements



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
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Declaration of co-authorship*

Full name of the PhD student: Maria Skov

This declaration concerns the following article/manuscript:

Title:	Resisting by not resisting: The implementation process of dual strategic changes
Authors:	Maria Skov, Paula Jarzabkowski

The article/manuscript is: Published Accepted Submitted In preparation

If published, state full reference:

If accepted or submitted, state journal:

Has the article/manuscript previously been used in other PhD or doctoral dissertations?

No Yes If yes, give details:

The PhD student has contributed to the elements of this article/manuscript as follows:

- A. Has essentially done all the work
- B. Major contribution
- C. Equal contribution
- D. Minor contribution
- E. Not relevant

Element	Extent (A-E)
1. Formulation/identification of the scientific problem	B
2. Planning of the experiments/methodology design and development	A
3. Involvement in the experimental work/clinical studies/data collection	A
4. Interpretation of the results	B
5. Writing of the first draft of the manuscript	A
6. Finalization of the manuscript and submission	B

Signatures of the co-authors

Date	Name	Signature
06/04/2020	Paula Jarzabkowski	

In case of further co-authors please attach appendix

Date: 14/04/2020

Signature of the PhD student

*As per policy the co-author statement will be published with the dissertation.



Declaration of co-authorship*

Full name of the PhD student: Maria Skov

This declaration concerns the following article/manuscript:

Title:	Structuring emergence during implementation of strategic changes: Practices within and between meetings
Authors:	Maria Skov, Jesper R. Hansen

The article/manuscript is: Published Accepted Submitted In preparation

If published, state full reference:

If accepted or submitted, state journal: Strategic Organization

Has the article/manuscript previously been used in other PhD or doctoral dissertations?

No Yes If yes, give details:

The PhD student has contributed to the elements of this article/manuscript as follows:

- A. Has essentially done all the work
- B. Major contribution
- C. Equal contribution
- D. Minor contribution
- E. Not relevant

Element	Extent (A-E)
1. Formulation/identification of the scientific problem	B
2. Planning of the experiments/methodology design and development	B
3. Involvement in the experimental work/clinical studies/data collection	A
4. Interpretation of the results	B
5. Writing of the first draft of the manuscript	B
6. Finalization of the manuscript and submission	B

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In case of further co-authors please attach appendix

Date: 14.04.20

Signature of the PhD student

*As per policy the co-author statement will be published with the dissertation.