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LEADERSHIP, CHANGE AND TALK

A linguistic ethnographic study of workplace conversations

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ANNE MURPHY - Leadership, change and talk: A linguistic ethnographic study of workplace conversations

ABSTRACT

This thesis combines leadership theory with linguistic ethnography to develop insights that have practical relevance for managers in organisations. In learning and development practice, designs are largely based on distanced understandings of leadership which miss much of the detail of how leadership actually happens. The research investigates how close attention to language can extend our understanding of leadership so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. The study comprises three case studies which examine the language practices of five female corporate executives - a total 15 hours of observed, recorded and transcribed interactive data. These data were collected ethnographically in a process that was designed with equal emphasis on research objectives and leadership learning opportunities. For the analysis I adopted the framework of activity analysis to identify critical episodes for more detailed analysis of interactional strategies using discourse analytic tools of linguistics.

The findings reveal felt but invisible leadership processes which instantiate the moment-by-moment co-production of direction, authority and power. The study furthermore provides evidence that linguistic and conversational choices made by managers in the flow of interaction, are neither bound by binary oppositions nor related to decontextualised notions of leadership style. Empirically, the study extends applied linguistics leadership scholarship by providing deeper insights into the dialectical relationships between agency and authority, confirming and giving away power, and doing and changing work. The theoretical contribution to the applied linguistics leadership literature comprises a challenge to the way a foundational task-versus-relationship conceptualisation of leadership practice shapes analyses. In terms of praxis, this thesis has provided deeper insight into ways some binary traps are embedded in in-situ language practices. Overall, the study suggests a role for linguistic analysis in identifying and describing how alternative linguistic choices interconnect in the production of leadership practices.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my mother Mavis Murphy, 29th September 1927 – 18th December 2020, and to my grandchildren, Sebastian, Alaia, Alba and Enara.

The future is in good hands.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This endeavour would not have been possible without the kind dedication of my supervisors, Professor Veronika Koller and Dr Robyn Remke. An immense thank you to both of you for your support and guidance throughout. Special thanks to Veronika, my primary supervisor, for taking the time to teach me how to think, analyse and write like a linguist, and to Robyn for co-authoring a paper with me and for always being there for discussions about the many things I have been unsure about along the way.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my examiners Professors Carole Elliott and Karin Tusting for giving me the privilege of engaging with them in academic debate. The questions and challenges they set, have improved the clarity of my ideas and the strength of my arguments. I really enjoyed the viva – and they made that possible.

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In doing this research, I had the pleasure of collaborating with hundreds of women (and quite a few men) from the PWN Global network. They shared their stories, their challenges and remarkable determination to learn. They inspired me to look deeper and go further. I am very grateful to PWN Global for this supportive space in which to carry out the work. Special thanks must go to Araceli Cabezón de Diego and Mary Jane Roy for believing in my project and making the connections I needed to find such wonderful people to work with. On that note, I am deeply indebted to my five brave and committed research partners for trusting me with their learning and their data. Without them, this research would not have been possible. You stayed the distance, and I can't thank you enough for that. Kate, Nora, Amaya, Sara and Gracia – you know who you are – thank you.

My family has never wavered in support of my academic ambitions. With abundant good humour, encouragement and common sense they have kept me motivated and moving forward. Heartfelt thanks to my children – Eva, Tanya, Elena and Alex, and to my brother, Paul – for providing the back-office critical, technical, political and emotional support.

Finally, I could not have undertaken this challenge without the love and support of my husband, Fernando Oyón, who never once stopped believing in me.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for a degree at any other university. I carried out all the research in this thesis, which is presented in alternative format. None of the work that appears in the thesis has previously been published. Appendix II contains an executive summary of a published chapter I wrote based on the engagement phase of the research. An authorship declaration for the co-authored paper is included on the following page. The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted within the guidelines for research ethics outlined in the Lancaster University guidelines and received approval for phase one of the project on 21st November 2014, and for phase 2 on 21st December 2015.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Authorship statement for Paper 2: Getting work done: A study of oppositional discourses in leaders' everyday workplace talk

Co-authored with Dr. Robyn Remke

I have written the majority of the article and carried out all the linguistic analysis contained in it. I was responsible for collecting and transcribing the data set, carrying out the initial analysis and structuring the argument presented in the paper. The organisation discourse analysis was done in collaboration with Dr. Robyn Remke who also advised on an appropriate focus for the article for an organisation communication and management learning readership. Both authors were responsible for editing the written article.

We always live at the time we live and not at some other time, and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future. This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything. (Dewey, 1938 [1986], pp.29–30)

Chapter 1: Introduction

The centrality of language to the performance of leadership is well recognised in the theory and practice of leadership and organisation development (Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996; Fletcher, 2010; Grint et al., 2016; Mabey, 2016). Recent research in the field of leadership studies has established the mutually constitutive nature of language and leadership (Grint, 2005; Simpson et al., 2018; Tourish, 2014). At the same time, interest in leadership from the field of workplace-orientated applied linguistics is growing (Clifton, 2012, 2017; Schnurr, 2009, 2017; Schnurr & Schroeder, 2019; Vine et al., 2008). However, there are inconsistencies between organisation studies and linguistics in theorising how leadership is accomplished, and an overall lack of research which addresses implications for practice. This thesis sets out to combine leadership theory with linguistic ethnography in order to develop insights that have practical relevance for managers in organisations. The research problem addressed in this thesis is that leadership development is informed by research which misses the detail of how leadership actually happens in talk. The research therefore aims to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of how leadership happens in situated interactions so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. This chapter will provide an introduction to the project by first discussing the background to, and motivation for, undertaking this work and making a case for the importance of the research. I begin by discussing the context for the study, followed by presenting the research problem, the research aims, objectives and questions, the significance of the studies and finally their limitations. The chapter ends with a detailed overview of the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Overview of the research project

1.1.1 Context of the study

The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with sufficient context and relevant background information for my research project to make sense. My professional background underlies the research context in that my experience is data that I draw upon in order to make research decisions. I began working life as a teacher in 1976, but since 1989 I have been in management learning. I have worked with countless managers in many sectors, countries and industries, usually in the context of some kind of organisational change, and always focused on learning. This is important to understand because the motivation for the thesis is primarily personal: I have unanswered questions about changing the way leadership is performed that experience alone cannot address. Management learning as a scholarly endeavour and as a professional practice aims to keep abreast of relevant research which comes from a number of perspectives and includes a diverse collection of disciplines which coalesce loosely around leadership and management studies. These include psychology, philosophy, pedagogy, sociology, systems thinking, design, neuroscience, communications, politics, history and so on, but rarely does management learning turn to linguistics. And yet, my experience tells me that spoken interaction is at the heart of all things organisational, especially all things related to learning. My professional orientation drives both my choice of topic and my choice of research philosophy and methodology.

The research problem is located within learning and development practice, where designs are largely based on distant understandings of leadership which miss much of the detail of how leadership actually happens. The focus was narrowed to a specific group of female corporate executives and their leadership learning challenges. Immediately prior to starting this study I was working with a group of female executives in Madrid. I held preparatory conversations with each of them so that I could help them articulate a focus for their learning. I had never heard stories like these: they captured an element of leadership learning concerning language and power that had previously been hidden from me – and, I realised, also from each other. Corporate executives – in this case female – lacked a space to understand and share their real experiences about language practices and power, and I lacked the understanding to help them. Advice on the topic in practitioner-focused literature is formulaic, and academic research is fragmented across leadership studies, which lack close-up empirical analysis, and (applied) workplace sociolinguistics, which lacks theoretical input about leadership. These insights led me to start this study.

The topic is important in the learning and development industry because not only is leadership development big business – though the exact figures vary wildly – it is also frequently cited as failing people and companies (e.g. Grimson et al., 2022, pp.12–14). However, in the search for improvement, it is important to distinguish between an instrumental view of learning, which aims to make people change the way they behave so that organisations can better reach their goals, and a social constructionist view of (management) learning as a continuous and emergent process which 'starts from the assumption that learning occurs, and knowledge is created, mainly through conversations and interactions between people' (Easterby-Smith et al., 2000, p.787). Concerned with all aspects of learning and knowing within management and organisations, the management learning community of scholars and practitioners is associated with opening up existing ways of thinking to critical scrutiny (Elkjaer, 2022; Reynolds, 1998; Reynolds & Vince, 2020; Stead & Elliott, 2013) and integrating theory, research, methods and practice (Burgoyne & Reynolds,1997). Research addresses how approaches 'perpetuate or challenge current structures, practices and the ways power is exercised' (Reynolds, 2022, p.103), while practices support critical reflection about how social and cultural assumptions are reproduced and disrupted in learning contexts (Stead & Elliott, 2019). Organisational learning is conceptualised as an unfolding aspect of everyday work and organising, as opposed to something that can be controlled and predicted (Elkjaer, 2022). It may, however, be supported (Easterby-Smith et al., 2000; Gherardi, 2009; Vince et al., 2018), and that is what my research aims to do.

My management learning background shapes the core empirical, theoretical and professional commitments of the thesis. Leadership theory informs the study, linguistic ethnography provides the tools for data analysis as well as a methodology to support democratic learning and knowledge creation, and my professional commitments steer the project towards practice, as I describe in the following sections.

1.1.2 Research setting

Over a period of 18 months, I ran workshops with members of a professional network (PWN Global, 2023). This phase of the project enabled me to build trust and to get a better understanding of the problem as expressed in managers' accounts of their relationship with leadership, power and language practices – but no closer to collecting actual spoken data. I also needed to record natural workplace conversations to make progress on the research problem. I asked a few senior executives that I had met during the engagement phase if they would allow me to observe and record their day-to-day interactions. Full ethics approval for this research plan was granted by Lancaster University. Five senior executives accepted my invitation and helped facilitate the necessary informed consent and confidentiality agreements for me to be able to shadow them for a day. These are my research partners. Three of them are Spanish, one is Portuguese and the fifth is Dutch. At the time of the shadowing episodes (2015–16), all held senior executive positions in their respective organisations: A Spanish-based software engineering company operating globally, a multi-national 'tech' giant, a multi-national fast-moving consumer goods company, a printing company with a global presence and a large, multi-national, financial services firm. This period of shadowing took an additional ten months, making for a total of 28 months of research engagement. At the time of writing up the thesis (2022), the partners continue to be involved in the project and I have a strong sense of professional commitment to return something of value to them.

1.1.3 Research aims

The project investigates how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. Understanding leadership work involves an appreciation of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other. The co-production of leadership between interactants, between leaders and interactional settings, and between leadership and organisation is of central importance to the thesis because it highlights the provisional nature of 'the simultaneous interplay between leaders, managers, followers and contexts as well as their ambiguous and potentially contradictory conditions, processes and consequences' (Collinson, 2014, p.48). Building on the analysis, the project also seeks to identify possible leadership development interventions which might meaningfully change or improve such co-production. The novelty of the project lies in its interdisciplinarity. Grounded in practice and designed to yield practical insights, the project draws from the disciplines of organisation studies and linguistics and aims to make unique contributions to both fields. Within organisation studies it responds to calls for empirical analyses of leadership-in-context (Kempster & Parry, 2016; Clifton et al., 2020; Larsson et al., 2021) and in applied linguistics, defined here as 'the theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue' (Brumfit, 1995, p.27), it contributes to conceptualisations of leadership in the field of applied linguistic research into organisational leadership. Furthermore, the study will help management learning professionals (leadership and organisation development consultants, advisors, coaches etc.) base their interventions on understandings of leadership which derive from actual spoken data as opposed to recalled interactions. The findings of the project, informed by linguistics, suggest that leadership interactions are more nuanced and complex than many mainstream approaches claim. Therefore, to support practitioners in their pursuit of establishing alternative ways of working, we should acknowledge and understand this complexity and not, as is so often the case, distance ourselves so far from the interactive data that we miss the micro-detail of what is actually happening and therefore go on to base our advice on a partial picture of how leadership work is accomplished. By extending the body of knowledge about how leadership work actually happens, the study aims to help practitioners whose work seeks to support the learning of people in leadership positions in organisations.

1.1.4 Research objectives

The project sets out to review relevant literature on leadership from organisation studies and linguistics perspectives and, in parallel, use participant observation to gain a broad understanding of the contemporary context for learning challenges related to leadership and spoken interaction. The specific objectives of the research are:

1. To describe some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are performed.

2. To observe how leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done.

3. To identify what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck.

To operationalise these objectives, I designed a strategy to collect interactive spoken data which occur naturally in organisational contexts, to analyse these using methods appropriate to the data sets and aims of the research, and to generate understandings which inform the core theoretical, empirical and professional commitments of the thesis. These methodological questions are addressed in detail in Chapter 3.

1.1.5 Research questions

There are two principal research questions:

RQ1: How does close analysis of spoken interaction extend our understanding of leadership work?

RQ2: Building on this analysis, what interventions to meaningfully change or improve leadership work can be identified?

RQ1 is addressed in Chapter 4 which contains the three papers which make up the core of the thesis. The question is further broken down into three secondary questions which seek to address different aspects of the topic under investigation. These secondary questions are addressed in turn in three papers. These are:

Paper 1: Authority dynamics: A discourse analytic study of leadership agency.
Secondary research objective: To describe some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are performed.

SRQ1.1. What can be learned about leadership agency from a close study of leadership interaction?

Paper 2: Getting work done: A study of oppositional discourses in leaders' everyday workplace talk. Secondary research objective: To observe how leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done.

SRQ 2.1 How do managers in the study orientate to oppositional discourses in their in in situ interactions?

SRQ 2.2 How do they utilise these discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done?

Paper 3: Applying linguistics to management learning: a case study of two executives' leadership styles. Secondary research objective: To identify what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck.

SRQ 3.1 What patterns in leadership talk can be identified through linguistic analysis?

SRQ 3.2 What causes such patterns to remain stuck?

RQ2 seeks to draw out connecting threads from the three core papers in order to make a direct link to leadership and leadership development practice. This question is addressed in Chapter 5.

1.1.6 Limitations

Following Tracey (2010), I aim for transparency in my research about the methods I choose and the challenges these bring (2010, p.840). My research project has a number of methodological limitations. First, I trade depth of analysis for breadth of understanding from different disciplinary perspectives and research sites. This decision is both pragmatic (access to a rich enough single-site case study proved too difficult) and ideological (given my strong conviction that my research should serve practitioners). Secondly, gaining access to rich data in a corporate context is limited by what such organisations are willing to sanction. I was not able to replicate participant-led data collecting techniques such as attaching a small microphone and leaving the choice of recordings in the hands of a manager. And while this technique might have led to better longitudinal data, my one-day cross-sectional data match well my aim of anchoring the research process in real-life leadership challenges as expressed by the participants themselves. Thirdly, I had intended to strengthen the credibility of the research by cycling back a number of times between data collection, sense-making and member participation and, while I was successful in maintaining good connections with my partners, in the long run, I had to adjust my design in order to deal with the operational reality. Finally, there are limitations inherent in combining theory, method and practice which are manifest in my project particularly in the trade-off between technical vocabulary and techniques of linguistics, inter-disciplinary communicability of methods and the applicability of findings. These limitations are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 and in the concluding chapter.

1.2 Overview of the document structure

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to describe the context of this project to the reader and to set out the research aims, objectives and questions. As part of this I have explained why I chose this topic and that it is about understanding leadership through a close study of language practices, which is important for management learning practitioners. I have talked about the engagement phase of the project and how this provided the opportunity to collect naturally occurring spoken data in different organisations by shadowing five senior executives as they went about their daily work. The purpose of providing this detail is to allow future researchers to test my findings in another setting.

1.2.1 Chapter 2

In Chapter 2 a literature review will be conducted. The overall goal of the literature review is to provide a critical assessment of leadership literature from the fields of organisation studies and linguistics which justifies the research that the three core papers of the thesis go on to discuss. It also aims to allow readers from both disciplines to critically engage with the arguments therein. The purpose of the review is to establish my familiarity with the perspectives, theories and bodies of work from both disciplines and, in the process, identify gaps that this interdisciplinary juxtaposition exposes. The review demonstrates where previous studies align in ways that are relevant to my research questions. It also demonstrates areas of misalignment which my interdisciplinary study will seek to realign.

First, from organisation studies, I set out three main challenges to traditional perspectives of leadership that are relevant to the thesis. These are relational leadership, discursive leadership and leadership-as-practice. I go on to discuss the theoretical tension between individual and collective understandings of leadership agency contained in these ideas, including a critique of romantic conceptualisations of both. To this end, I turn to the critical tradition in leadership studies. Two defining concepts of this tradition – positivity and power, gender and dialectics – are relevant to the arguments presented in the three aforementioned papers. In the second part of the chapter, I review the workplace sociolinguistics literature which informs the analysis of empirical data in my study. I set out discourse perspectives on leadership coming from this body of work then go on to argue that these are shaped by the previous considerations of applied linguists who have an interest in applying findings from linguistic research to workplace problems, especially the relationship between language, gender and culture. I critique this work on the ground that while these studies have successfully disrupted binary conceptualisations of culture and gender, the notion of leadership continues to be treated, and therefore reproduced, in terms of binary oppositions. My study addresses this inconstancy and thereby makes a contribution to the small but growing number of inter- and trans-disciplinary research projects conducted at the interface between linguistics and management.

Viewed from the combined perspectives of leadership and organisational development practice, critical leadership studies and applied workplace sociolinguistics, three important gaps in the applied linguistics literature can be identified. These are:

1. An over-reliance in applied workplace sociolinguistics on positional role to define leadership, which leads to a limited examination of how authority interacts with understandings of leadership agency.

2. The perpetuation of the dichotomous positioning of the task-relationship dualism in sociolinguistic analyses of leadership behaviour is in conflict with its potential to disrupt binary thinking.

3. There is a lack of practical grounding in real-life organisational contexts which might allow practitioners to use insights developed from applied workplace sociolinguistic research to bring about change.

My research project addresses these inconsistencies, and the key questions arising from them form the basis for the secondary research questions which are addressed in the three core papers. Although the papers are written as stand-alone articles in order to address different scholarly communities, they are born of an overarching linguistic ethnographic research project which is discussed in Chapter 3.

1.2.3 Chapter 3

Chapter 3 is the methodology chapter; its goal is to provide the rationale and methodological details of the study. Its purpose is to present the conceptual frameworks which underpin the thesis and, following on from this, to lay out the key research design choices I made. I begin by positioning my work within the theoretical framework of social constructionism and presenting linguistic ethnography as epistemology and methodology. I follow this with a detailed description of my research design choices, which include the decision to take a pragmatist philosophical position and to operationalise my research strategy by taking a linguistic ethnographic approach. I go on to provide the reasons behind my choice of grounded theory and case-study research methods, my sampling strategy and data collection methods for two distinct phases of the project, and finally the tools and methods of analysis. I complete the chapter by examining the methodological limitations of the study and detailing how I mitigated the impacts of these in the best way possible.

1.2.4 Chapter 4

Chapter 4 presents the research heart of the thesis, in which three case studies are reported. The thesis straddles disciplinary interests and the three papers that make up the core of the thesis reflect this interdisciplinarity. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the contribution of linguistic ethnography to researching how leadership and organisation are co-produced in everyday conversation in the workplace. Linguistic analysis in the papers reveals important and otherwise invisible aspects of how this co-production is realised. This is important because close analysis uncovers patterns of which speakers themselves are often unaware. Identifying and revealing these patterns is an important step in scoping how and when interventions to meaningfully change or improve such co-production might occur. The papers build on each other indirectly. That is, doing the analysis and writing for each paper led to insights which framed how the data were selected, analysed and written up in subsequent papers. Each chapter is prefaced by a pen portrait of the research partner in question.

The first paper, entitled "Authority dynamics: A discourse analytic study of leadership agency", explores how differently theorised aspects of leadership agency (individualised, interactively accomplished and processual) are manifest in interaction. It responds to Schnurr and Schroeder’s (2019) call for a more systematic, open dialogue between leadership researchers in organisation science on the one hand, and in applied linguistics on the other. The paper is written with the interests of organisation scholars in mind and contributes to leadership research in two ways: i) by using authority-in-interaction as an analytical lens through which to examine different theoretical orientations to leadership agency; and ii) by describing some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are actually performed from these different perspectives. The study contributes to critical leadership studies' challenge to hegemonic, individualised notions of leadership by identifying and describing ways in which leadership agency is (discursively) co-produced. It also demonstrates how a linguistic ethnographic sensibility (Tusting & Maybin, 2007) enables analyses of data which identify how aspects of conversation related to authority (i.e. legitimised power) are rendered both provisional and mobile.

Paper 2, co-authored with Dr. Robyn Remke, is entitled: ‘Getting work done: A study of oppositional discourses in leaders’ everyday workplace talk’. This paper deals with change work in organisational settings and identifies some of the tensions and contradictions of trying to establish alternative ways of doing this work. The study focuses on some of the ways in which two managers in different organisations try to influence how their colleagues interact in line with changing norms of work. The paper is written with the interests of organisation communication and management learning scholars in mind and follows Fairhurst and Putnam's (2019) integrative methodology for studying oppositional phenomena which aligns ‘grounded theory techniques with the little “d” and big “D” orientations of organizational discourse analysis’ (2019, p.917). This approach is designed to identify organisational oppositions and the organising micro-dynamics which produce and are produced by them (see also Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; Gee, 2014; Putnam et al., 2016). The paper contributes to the management learning literature by illustrating how the constant push and pull of trying to change working practices is not an observable, linear progression but is actually brought about from within, by actors simultaneously negotiating oppositional discourses. The paper's contribution to the thesis is to explicate the affordances of a linguistic ethnographically informed methodological tradition (Rampton et al., 2004), and some of the analytical tools of interactional sociolinguistics (Rampton, 2019).

The third paper, entitled 'Applying linguistics to management learning: a case study of two executives' leadership styles', applies insights from applied linguistics leadership research to leadership and management learning in the workplace. The paper uses data collected through a leadership learning process designed to facilitate the engagement of corporate executives, which also included sharing findings with a group of participants to further facilitate learning. In my analysis, I identify discourse strategies and interactive routines that index the executives' leadership speech styles and that can also be seen as perpetuating gender-stereotypical and culturally biased patterns of conversational behaviour. The analysis reveals two specific ways in which unchallenged binary thinking can lead to reified patterns of conversational behaviour which work against explicitly stated learning objectives. First, discourse features indexed for (perceptions of) gender, culture and leadership style simultaneously index each other and this dichotomised and circular referentiality contributes to a discursive pattern which reinforces binary conceptualisations of leadership. Second, robust, recognisable interactional structures, that are built into the meeting form itself, keep the overall pattern stuck at the level of the activity type, even when individuals employ different discourse strategies in an attempt to modify their interactive approach. This paper is written with an applied linguistics scholarly community in mind.

1.2.5 Chapter 5

Chapter 5 presents the integrated findings of the research project. The overall goal of the chapter is to highlight my key research findings and interpret these across the project. The purpose of the chapter is to situate the key findings in terms of my principal research questions and then tie these back to previous studies on leadership from an applied linguistics perspective. In this chapter I also elaborate on the findings in terms of their real-world implications and suggest possible applications for management learning practice. The chapter is divided into three sections. After a brief reminder of the findings in the three core papers, I present three key findings which relate to my overall research aims and the first principal research question, namely, how a close analysis of spoken interaction extends our understanding of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other. I interpret and discuss these findings in relation to the core theoretical, empirical and professional commitments of the thesis. Specific ways in which the findings relate to the leadership literature from an applied linguistics perspective are also discussed. In the second section of the chapter, I answer the second part of my principal research question, namely, which interventions to meaningfully change or improve the co-production of leadership and organisation can be identified. This section discusses the main leadership learning implications of the work and presents first *what* the findings of the research invite practitioners to focus on in their leadership interactions; and second *how* management learning practitioners might go about supporting such a shift in orientation. The final section of the chapter provides a concluding summary.

1.2.6 Chapter 6

Chapter 6 summarises the key research findings in relation to my research aims and research questions, as well as the value and contribution of the work. I also review the limitations of the study and suggest opportunities for future research. The purpose of the chapter is to present a broader perspective on the research outcomes and how these relate to the research aims. Notably, by revealing erstwhile hidden language routines, patterns and practices, the findings of the thesis have important implications for leadership learning. To this end, learning interventions informed by the findings, specifically, making the invisible visible, increasing our awareness of the dynamics of 'authority trouble' and identifying moments of choice in interaction, are identified as actionable recommendations for management learning practitioners. The chapter concludes with a review of overall limitations, from which future research recommendations flow.

The thesis attempts to contribute to the dialogue between organisational researchers, applied linguists and management learning practitioners. It closes with the claim that linguistic ethnography is well suited to close-up data analysis in contextually sensitive organisational research and has the potential to add value to organisation development consulting more broadly.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This thesis is concerned with conducting a close analysis of how spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. This is of interest because there is a tendency in learning and development practice to design interventions based largely on distanced understandings of leadership which miss much of the detail of how leadership actually happens. The project therefore sets out to review relevant literature on leadership from organisation studies and workplace orientated applied linguistics perspectives and, using participant observation in parallel, to gain a broad understanding of the contemporary context for learning challenges related to leadership and spoken interaction. The overall goal of the literature review is to provide a critical assessment of the two bodies of leadership literature which justifies the research that the three core papers of the thesis go on to discuss. It also aims to furnish readers from either discipline with relevant literature from the other perspective so that they can critically engage with the arguments presented in the papers. The area of research that is of interest to my project lies at the intersection of leadership studies and workplace sociolinguistics. The purpose of the review is to establish my familiarity with the perspectives, theories and bodies of work from both disciplines and, in the process, identify gaps that are exposed by the interdisciplinary juxtaposition. The review demonstrates where previous studies align in ways that are relevant to my research questions and demonstrates areas of misalignment.

This literature review is divided into five sections. First, I refer briefly to recent leadership development literature to contextualise and justify the project. This is in line with the research object, namely, to combine leadership theory and linguistic ethnography to develop insights that have practical relevance for managers in organisations. Second, from leadership studies, I set out the main challenges to traditional perspectives on leadership and discuss the theoretical tension between individual and collective understandings of leadership agency contained in these ideas. Third, I set out discourse perspectives on leadership as put forward in (applied) workplace sociolinguistics. I critique this work on the ground that while these studies have successfully disrupted binary conceptualisations of culture and gender, the notion of leadership continues to be treated, and therefore reproduced, in terms of binary oppositions. Fourth, I synthesise the main recurring patterns and ideas and identify connections and contrasts between the two perspectives. I end the review with a brief conclusion.

I begin by providing a warrant for the claim that leadership development designs are largely based on distanced understandings of leadership. I draw on my experience in and knowledge of organisation development consulting to guide my reading of recent literature on trends in leadership development design from both management and applied linguistics perspectives. Next, different ways of conceptualising leadership from a leadership studies perspective are presented. These are relational leadership, leadership-as-practice and discursive leadership, all of which theorise leadership as beyond the individual. I go on to critique these ideas by examining some aspects of leadership that remain hidden when observed from these perspectives. In doing so, I outline two arguments drawn from critical leadership studies: first, I summarise the ideas relating to the 'romance' of collective leadership before going on to examine the implications of such ideas for expressions of power and gender. The next section of the review is dedicated to the ways in which leadership is conceptualised from the perspective of applied linguistics. Two main ideas are presented: first I summarise the conceptualisation of leadership as a balance between task and relationship orientated talk. I then present key ideas about which discourse features are indexed for leadership. These ideas are then critiqued.

The final section examines key alignments and disjunctures between the literatures of leadership studies and applied linguistics. I end the section by identifying three gaps in the applied linguistics leadership literature. First, conflating leadership and position means that aspects of leadership practice, and possibilities for alternative expressions of the same, go unseen. Second, reliance on a task-relationship dualism limits the potential of applied linguistics to contribute to theoretical debates in leadership studies. It also has significant material effects on (most) men's and women's different experiences of leadership. Third, research which aims to use insights from applied linguistics to bring about change could be extended and made more relevant to praxis. I complete the review with a brief concluding section.

2.2 The leadership development context

In this section I justify the claim that leadership development designs are largely based on distanced understandings of leadership.

2.2.1 Distanced understandings of leadership

2.2.1.1 My lived experience

The problem driving the thesis is this: leadership development is informed by understandings of leadership which miss the detail of how leadership actually happens. I draw on my own management learning practice to identify some design-orientated leadership development research, principally to contextualise the review of literature relevant to my research questions. Since completing my Master's (M.A. Management Learning, Lancaster, 1991), I have brought a social constructionist, organisational learning perspective to the design and practice of leadership and organisation development. From this perspective learning is viewed as a continuous process of meaning-making which involves 'contexts, materialities and bodies as well as human minds and motivations' (Elkjaer, 2022, p.585) and therefore involves factors such as power, emotion, other voices, history and economic matters (see for example, Carroll & Smolović Jones, 2018; Tusting, 2005; Easterby-Smith et al.,1999; Vince, 2019; Pedler, 2020). My orientation towards organisational learning (OL) is best summed up by Elkjaer (2022):

> OL is not a functionalist means; a theoretical construct to be applied to adjust human behaviour in accordance with some overall organizational goal detached from the actual work practices and human actors but is unavoidable and uncontrollable. (Elkjaer, 2022, p.585)

It is unusual for practitioners in my field to share this perspective. More commonly, problematic situations, including those perceived to be caused or potentially relieved by leadership, are decontextualised, atomised and removed from the person in their organisational context. Imagined leadership behaviours based on functionalist organisational blueprints then form the basis for the design of leadership and organisational learning interventions. Looking closely at what people *actually do* in the name of leadership is often framed not as gaining a better understanding of the phenomenon, but as gaining a more precise understanding of the problem to be fixed. This is what I mean by 'distanced' understandings of leadership.

2.2.1.2 Leadership development designs

Second, contemporary leadership development research draws attention to the dearth of studies based on detailed understandings of the context in which leadership is performed (Fatien & Nizet, 2019; Gipson et al., 2017; McCauley & Palus, 2021). As Kaejergaard & Meier (2022) argue, the 'mundanity of practice rarely corresponds to the theoretical exposés emanating from classrooms' (p.383). Instead, studies claim that most leadership development research understands leadership in traditional functionalist terms (Mabey, 2013), which continue to promote heroic conceptualisations (Larsson et al., 2021; Schweiger et al., 2020), and cover standard leadership development topics such as negotiations and leading change (Ely et al., 2011). Furthermore, common understandings of leadership, which include ideas such as transformational, authentic and servant leadership, tend to employ a limited range of development interventions (Day et al., 2014; Pinnington, 2011). Frequently, such approaches rely either on the sort of reductionist behavioural competencies promoted by assessment centres (Radi Afsouran et al., 2022) or on humanist notions of individual growth and development (Reams, 2020), neither of which involves a close examination of in situ leadership practices. Instead, many designs promote a focus on the 'high potentials' (Hruby et al., 2022) and 'agile practitioners' (Scott, 2017) of corporate discourse in which leadership is a pre-defined activity designed to bring about instrumental organisational change (Mabey, 2013). Some thus claim that leadership development is in crisis (Probert & Turnbull James, 2011) because it has failed to keep pace with contemporary understandings of leadership (Kjaergaard & Meier, 2022). Current trends recognise the limitations of quantitative models of understanding (Riggio, 2018), the importance of networks of relationships (Cullen-Lester et al., 2017) and the need to develop designs which are more sensitive to, and embedded in, organisational contexts (Fatien & Nizet, 2019).

2.2.2 Applied perspectives on leadership development

Approaches to understanding leadership from the applied linguistics tradition offer tools and methods for close empirical analysis of organisational contexts (Mautner, 2016) and detailed examination of actual interactive processes which constitute leaders and leadership (for example, Baxter, 2015; Schnurr, 2022; Mullany, 2011, 2022). A number of contemporary scholars draw attention to the potential of these for leadership development interventions, in particular by applying tools from conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics. Conversation analysis brings a specific perspective to bear on leadership processes, one which focuses primarily on 'understanding the practices of leadership as they unfold in the day-to-day conversations in organisations' (Svennevig, 2008, p.529). By describing regularities and sequential patterns, conversation analysis illustrates how these are oriented to and reproduced by participants in talk in a process described by Clifton (2006) as providing 'a description of the machinery for doing leadership' (2006, p.10). An increasing number of studies of leadership-in-interaction are being carried out from within this methodological and analytical tradition (for example, Clifton et al., 2020; Gadelshina, 2020; Fox & Comeau-Vallée, 2020; Larson et al., 2021; Van De Mieroop, 2020).

Interactional sociolinguistics is also interested in how relationships are constructed and maintained in and through talk. A key difference between these approaches is the consideration of context. In conversation analysis, only references to context made directly by interactants are subject to analysis. Interactional sociolinguistics, on the other hand, pays close attention to the macro-level context in which an interaction occurs and to the relationship between interlocutors. Different ways of doing leadership by constructing and consolidating a more powerful position can be analysed from an interactional sociolinguistic perspective by paying close attention to the way language indexes social relationships, for example by identifying what Gumperz (1999) calls 'contextualisation cues' (1999, p.461), such as prosody, paralinguistic information and turn-taking. Looking at who dominates the talking time, or whose opinions are voiced and whose are not, offers insights into how abstract concepts such as power or leadership are enacted. Schnurr, a prominent scholar of leadership from the interactional sociolinguistic tradition, claims that this approach 'enables researchers to capture the complexities of leadership processes in flight' (2022, p.25). Some scholars of leadership who approach in-situ language analysis from these perspectives claim that language awareness is a tool for developing organisational leaders and leadership (Clifton, 2006, 2019; Darics, 2019; Schnurr, 2022; Svennevig, 2008; Walker & Aritz, 2014). Generally speaking, there are three distinct ways of conceptualising the relationship between language awareness as a tool and the situation for which its usefulness is claimed. I identify these three approaches next.

2.2.2.3 Problem-focused approaches

First, some researchers adopt a problem-focused approach. They argue that the tools of discourse and linguistic analysis can be employed to deepen our understanding of a problem situation. For example, Baxter (2017) refers to 'consultancy research' which she used to help solve common communication problems for female executives, while Murphy (2020a) reflects on how linguistic ethnography might be used in organisations as a tool for understanding organisational problems and for shaping opportunities for change. Darics and Clifton (2019), in making a case for developing the discursive awareness of change management practitioners, coin the term 'diagnostic listening' to refer to language-sensitive skills which 'allow them to make visible, tangible, and thus actionable, the seen but unnoticed underlying assumptions, unshared information, and patterns of collective thinking about change' (2019, p.918). Darics and Clifton end their article with a call for business trainers to take what applied linguistics can offer more seriously.

2.2.2.4 Solution-focused approaches

This evokes a second, solution-focused way of conceptualising the relationship between language awareness and practice. Examples of a solution orientation include Campbell (2006), who proposes a model of 'thinking and acting like a leader' based on speech act theory (Searle, 1976), which highlights the impact of direct and indirect language on subordinates' ego and autonomy needs. Walker and Aritz (2014) offer a further example of solution-focused advice based on knowledge of linguistics. These authors provide a series of normatively framed binary comparisons related to a range of topics such as leadership styles, organisational culture and the gender double bind, which are aimed at management trainers. Similarly, Stokoe (2014) uses anonymised transcripts and recordings of actual interaction (as opposed to imaginary role-play) in her Conversation Analytic Role-play Method. Finally, Clifton (2006, 2019) claims that conversation analyses can be used to identify and isolate successful and unsuccessful linguistic strategies which can then be used in the leadership classroom. In identifying the strategies of successful leaders (for example, Collins, 2001), solution-focused approaches often assume that mainstream understandings of leadership are unproblematic. Challenging or changing the way leadership is expressed is not contemplated.

2.2.2.5 Learning-focused approaches

The third, learning-focused conceptualisation of the relationship between language awareness and practice elevates the role of reflection and reflexivity. Svennevig (2008), for example, emphasises choice in his claim that an understanding of different models of leadership can 'help (leaders) identify and foster the style of leadership that fits their individual preferences and cultural values' (2008, p.535). And in a more direct relationship to the domain of management learning, Sarangi and Candlin (2004) argue that Donald Schon's work (1983, 1987) about learning in the messiness of practice has direct relevance to applied linguists in the field of professional discourse. However, this in-context, in-action approach to leadership learning appears to be the exception in the applied linguistics leadership literature.

In this section I have explored the claim that leadership development designs are largely based on distanced understandings of leadership. I have provided three warrants for this claim. First, in my lived experience I have only rarely encountered leadership and organisation development practitioners whose understandings of leadership learning challenge mainstream functionalist designs. Second, contemporary leadership development literature draws attention to the lack of contextual sensitivity in standard leadership development interventions. Finally, applied linguistics leadership literature concentrates on solution-focused classroom-based training interventions which draw on mainstream conceptualisations of leadership. However, it is important to challenge mainstream understandings of leadership. I turn to this next.

2.3 Leadership studies perspectives on leadership

In this section, conceptualisations of leadership from leadership studies perspectives are presented and critiqued.

2.3.1 Key ideas

In this section I provide brief overviews of three contemporary approaches to leadership research which have caused clear disruption to the standard canon of mainstream thinking and also proved their heuristic value within established bodies of literature of their own. These are relational leadership, leadership-as-practice and discursive leadership. I follow this with a discussion of the theme central to all three, namely, theorising leadership beyond the individual. There are substantial bodies of work on these approaches, including some excellent reviews (Cunliffe & Erikson, 2010; Fairhurst, 2007; Fairhurst & Uhl Bien, 2012; Fletcher, 2012; Nicolini, 2012; Raelin, 2016a, 2020a; Uhl Bien & Ospina, 2012). Here I limit myself to introducing the ideas and to providing some definitional clarity where these are relevant to the ideas in the thesis.

2.3.1.1 Relational leadership

Most theories locate relationships at the centre of the study and practice of leadership. For some, individual intentions govern the quality of such relationships and can be understood by observing what successful leaders do (for example, Collins, 2001; Covey, 1990). The resulting ideas and prescriptions are popular in professional circles and often form the bedrock of leadership development programmes. This stance is sometimes, perhaps confusingly, described as 'relational' because of the premium it places on relationships (for example, Fletcher, 2004). In contrast to person-centred perspectives, the term 'relational' is used by constructivist leadership scholars to refer to an epistemology which privileges relationships over a coherent agentic sense of self (Gergen, 1994; Hosking, 1988). Leadership researchers who subscribe to the view that all claims to knowledge are generated within relationships (see Clegg, 1997) reserve the term 'relational' to refer to an analytical approach which decentres the self, and with it leaders and/or leadership. Viewed from this perspective, all approaches which rely conceptually on a centred agentic subject are defined as 'entitative' (Hosking, 1998) as opposed to 'relational'. Mary Uhl-Bien’s (2006) distinction between what she calls ‘entity ’and ‘relational ’approaches to leadership further refines conceptual distinctions and encourages scholars to answer the call for the development of appropriate methods, and especially more empirical studies. My study responds to this call. In the thesis I use 'relational' in the same sense as Mary Uhl-Bien (2006): to draw a distinction between a centred (entitative) subject and an analytical approach to a decentred (relational) positioning of the self.

2.3.1.2 Leadership-as-practice

Leadership studies recently joined other organisation scholars in taking the ‘practice turn’ (Schatzki et al., 2001) and a growing body of work now sits under an ‘as-practice’ umbrella (Raelin, 2016a, 2020). Briefly, the practice turn is the widespread movement in the social sciences which suggests that the 'basic unit for understanding organisational phenomena [is] practice, not practitioners' (Nicolini 2012, p.7). For leadership studies this has meant a focus on the processes which produce leadership, and not on leaders. Some scholars take an entitative stance associated with the identification of leadership practices, located in discrete individual, organisational and material entities. Other scholars background individual agency in relation to leadership and foreground process (for example, Crevani et al., 2010; Simpson, 2016; Simpson et al., 2018). These latter studies take a variety of approaches but with a strong common thread that takes conversations as an important unit of analysis (Carroll & Simpson, 2012; Crevani, 2018; Ramsey, 2016), an idea I pursue in the thesis.

2.3.1.3 Discursive leadership

Developments in leadership research recognize the advantages of taking a discursive approach which conceptualises communication as being central to the leadership process. Principally associated with organisational communication theory, and particularly with Gail Fairhurst's work on discursive leadership (Fairhurst, 2007, 2009), several other fields have begun to subscribe to a discursive approach, including business communication (Clifton, 2012) and organisation studies (Tourish, 2007; Hardy & Thomas, 2015). From this perspective, leadership is conceptualized ‘as a co-constructed and iterative phenomen[on], socially accomplished through linguistic interaction’ (Tourish 2007, p.1733). Discursive leadership uses discourse analytical tools and methods to analyse how people do leadership, rather than to describe how they think or claim they do it. The approach positions itself in contrast to traditional leadership psychology, upon which most empirical leadership studies are based. While leadership psychology is concerned with leaders' perceptions and self-reflections, discursive leadership focuses on language-in-use, that is, how leaders communicate and interact moment-by-moment with the people with whom they work (Fairhurst, 2007, 2009). The approach emphasises how people operate on a daily basis, including how managers interact with others to achieve leadership in different contexts. Like Gail Fairhurst, I use 'discursive leadership' to refer to a 'constellation of perspectives' on studying leadership 'united by the view that language does not mirror reality, but constitutes it' (2009, p.1608).

2.3.1.4 Theorising leadership beyond the individual

Traditional conceptualisations of leadership, which focus on the actions of individual leaders and their effects on followers, do so from a position which separates acting on the task at hand from a concern with relationships (Bass & Avolio, 1994; MacGregor Burns, 1978; Stogdill, 1974). This task-relationship duality continues to dominate mainstream leadership studies and to influence other disciplines as well as practitioners. As we have seen, a growing number of leadership scholars challenge this essentialist thinking by conceptualising leadership as a process and/or practice which goes beyond the individual leader (for example, Carroll et al., 2008; Drath et al., 2008; Ospina & Foldy, 2015; Raelin, 2016a, 2016b; Simpson et al., 2018). This ‘leadership in the plural’ (Denis et al., 2012) has become known as 'collective leadership'. The respective body of work offers a rich conceptual mix from many schools of thought, including relational leadership (Cunliffe & Erikson, 2011; Uhl-Bien, 2006), leadership-as-practice

(Raelin, 2016a) and networked approaches to leadership (Ospina & Foldy, 2015), and includes notions of leadership as distributed (Bolden, 2011; Gronn, 2002; Kajamaa & Tuuainen, 2022), collectivist (Yammarino et al., 2012), shared (Pearce & Conger, 2003), pluralistic (Denis et al., 2012), integrative (Crosby & Bryson, 2010) and collaborative (Bryson et al., 2015; Chrislip & Larson, 1994; Murphy, 2010). However, these and other scholars who share a theoretical interest in some of the more collective aspects of leadership do not share a unified theoretical underpinning. They typically, but not always, hold to an ontology which is more relational than realist, and an epistemology which tends more towards social constructionism than post-positivism. Even within these broad categories there is a dizzying array of philosophical, theoretical and methodological positions. This thesis does not set out to examine the full range of these positions; there are excellent reviews to be found elsewhere. (For more complete philosophical discussions of theories of knowledge and how they relate to collective dimensions of leadership agency see Fairhurst & Grant, 2010 and Uhl Bien & Ospina, 2012). Rather, the central concern of the thesis is how to think about (and perform) leadership differently to influence the way leadership work is accomplished.

There is no doubt that the tendency towards partnership working across all sectors has made complex collaborative arrangements more common. In a multi-stakeholder endeavour collaborative leadership seems to imply the ability to challenge the dynamics of exclusion and create conditions for people to work together more equitably and effectively (Deering & Murphy, 2003; Gram-Hanssen, 2021; Ospina, 2017; Crosby, 2010). However, the trend towards theorising leadership in terms which emphasise collectivity at the expense of individuality is not without its critics.

2.3.2 Critique: what remains unseen from a collective leadership perspective

My research participants are interested in developing different ways of expressing their leadership and/or encouraging different ways in which leadership is practised in their organisations. Theoretical models orientated towards collective facets of leadership can seem unrelated to their experiences and aspirations, particularly in relation to power (Murphy, 2017). Therefore, the thesis employs a critical definition of leadership, 'the shifting, asymmetrical interrelations between leaders, followers and contexts' (Collinson, 2011, p.181), and thereby seeks to expose the hidden dynamics of power by making the invisible, more visible, and thus 'making discussible what is usually undiscussible' (Leonard, 2010, p.90).

2.3.2.1 The romance of the collective

In 1985, Meindl, Ehrlich and Dukerich published an article which drew the attention of the leadership studies community to the idea that a romantic ideal of leadership is prominent in 'our collective consciousness' (1985, p.78). By using the term ‘romantic’, the authors wanted to draw attention to an unhelpful and frequently unfounded glorification of the notion of leadership. According to Meindl and colleagues this 'romance of leadership' causes us to attribute great potency to leaders – to praise them extravagantly when they succeed and to damn them when they fail. In other words, by overestimating leaders' influence on organisational success and failure, leadership becomes a catch-all explanatory category which eschews critique. As Collinson et al. point out in their 2018 critique of romanticising tendencies in leadership studies, this is equally true of romanticised notions of heroic individuals as it is of romanticised ideals of post-heroic collectives, noting that 'influential post-heroic theories, often characterised by more collective approaches, can also succumb to similar romanticising tendencies' (2018, p.1634). These authors argue that Meindl et al.’s 1985 paper marks an important turning point in leadership studies when leader-centric models started to be questioned and the (scholarly) search for post-heroic models 'that emphasise the social, situational, relational and collective nature of leadership dynamics' began (2018, p.1627). They explain that this search appears to have lost sight of Meindl et al.'s original critique. Across a whole range of post-heroic approaches to studying leadership, many of which elevate the collective at the same time as they displace the individual, scholars continue to reproduce 'romanticized assumptions that fixate on leaders – or collectives – in heroic terms' (2018, p.1627).

This argument addresses an important aspect of the research problem. My research partners expressed a strong desire to move away from individualised, frequently masculinised, models of leadership and towards a model based on working in partnership. I have also spent much of my career trying to work out how to help people do this in practice (Deering & Murphy, 1998; Murphy & Kok, 2001). However, as Keith Grint (2010a) concludes, '[I]n our desperate search for the post-heroic … we are in danger of an uncritical shifting from the Romance of (Heroic) Leadership (Meindl et al., 1985; Meindl 1995) to the Romance of (Post-Heroic) Collaborative Leadership (Leonard, 2007) without examining the nature of leadership' (Grint, 2010a, p.103). To conclude, if the trend for collective expressions of leadership simply replaces the dominant notion of individualised agency, we substitute one 'romance of leadership' for another (Grint, 2022). The problem of understanding, challenging and changing underlying power dynamics is not addressed.

2.3.2.2 Power and gender

Mainstream leadership studies tend to concentrate on the supposedly exceptional qualities of individual leaders (Collinson, 2011; Jackson & Parry, 2011), reducing the agency of the follower to a foil character in the leadership narrative. As Gronn (2002) points out, these studies portray followers as empty vessels who passively and positively respond to the shaping influence of a leader's vision. Collinson (2012) coins the term 'Prozac Leadership' to capture the contemporary positive gloss on scholarly and practitioner versions of the romanticised post-heroic leader. In his 2011 position piece on the characteristics of critical leadership studies, Collinson argues that mainstream studies, in 'seeking to render leadership a predictable practice and leadership studies a prescriptive endeavour' (2011, p.182), underplay, or worse, completely ignore the complexity of leadership power dynamics in the pursuit of this prescription (Gagnon & Collinson, 2014). The tendency of mainstream studies is to normalise power asymmetries in ways which make leadership authority appear unquestionable. This is achieved by defining leadership 'as a top-down influence process through which leaders change the ways followers envision themselves' (Collinson, 2011, p.182). Critical studies challenge such hegemonic perspectives by 'emphasizing the importance of power asymmetries, [while they] also highlight the significance of follower agency and their potential for dissent and resistance' (Collinson, 2011, p.181). However, as noted in the previous section, the absence of a critical examination of power is not restricted to mainstream studies. Neither does the pursuit of post-heroic 'collective' alternatives necessarily allow complex power relationships to be questioned. Collinson et al. (2018) argue that this is because a key dimension of the romanticising of collective leadership is the prioritisation of consensus and ‘harmonious leadership’ over ‘divisive' power and conflict (2018, p.1635). The collective is portrayed as a natural state of inclusivity, harmonious dialogue and consensus (for example, Chrislip & Larson, 1994; Drath, 2003; Drath et al., 2008; Einola & Alvesson, 2021; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Raelin, 2016b), where positive self-expression and 'natural' mutual respect lead to an inevitable good which is beyond critique and where leadership is hyper-positively framed as 'sensitivity to the emergence of processes, issues and relationships, with an emphasis on dialogue' (Collinson, 2011, p.182). For Pearce and Conger, for example, collective or ‘shared' leadership is defined as ‘a dynamic, interactive process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organization goals or both’ (2003, p.1). There is no room for toxic leaders or followers in such an account – in fact, there is little room for followers at all (Ford & Harding, 2007, 2018).

This is an important critique of post-heroic ideas about leadership. Where leadership research focuses on process to the exclusion of almost all other, more structural concerns, power remains unaccounted for and largely invisible. This thesis aims to appreciate the critical perspective in leadership studies by acknowledging and examining power in conversation. Particularly relevant is the extent to which any conversational move from a leader requires some form of response from a follower, and how this response can both confirm and resist an assumed power asymmetry. Subordinates resist not only through 'strikes, working to rule, output restriction, working the system, sabotage and whistleblowing' (Collinson, 2012, p.96), they also have at their disposal small acts of conversational resistance – a pause, a silence or an unexpected or 'dispreferred' response – with which they can sidestep the subordinated subject position offered by whoever leads them. These dynamics are the subject of Paper 1, 'Authority dynamics: A discourse analytic study of leadership agency'.

Workplace interactions are influenced by gendered norms that shape judgements of what is appropriate for how power and authority are expressed. Despite more relational conceptualisations (Fairhurst & Uhl Bien, 2012) that potentially allow women to express authority in ways beyond those traditionally associated with leadership (Cameron, 1992, 2000), there remain significant challenges for women in positions of authority. This constraint on women's behaviour – the classic 'double bind' (Lackoff, 1973) – highlights a conflict between the attributes stereotypically associated with femininity and those traditionally associated with leadership. This is compounded by conventional studies, particularly those associated with transformational leadership (MacGregor Burns, 1978) which typically draw on highly gendered, heroic 'great man' images of leaders as uniquely positioned agents of change and of followers as 'passive and compliant' (Collinson 2011, p.183). Women managers who wish to lead organizational change therefore face multiple layers of social assumptions about their identity, their agency and their right to act in certain ways. These constraints are reified in the oversimplified dualistic analyses of mainstream management and leadership literature; dualisms that draw upon and (re)confirm gender stereotypes.

Critical leadership and organisation scholars draw attention to forms of enquiry which go beyond oppositional binaries to explore dialectic tensions in a range of contexts, including media representations of women's leadership (Elliott & Stead, 2018; Khan et al., 2021; Stead & Elliott, 2019), inter-organisational change (Hoelscher, 2019) and virtual communities of practice (Martins et al., 2013), to name but a few. Post-structuralist, feminist organisation theory in particular foregrounds gender and power dynamics, revealing the 'intensely gendered nature of control, resistance and consent' (Collinson, 2005, p.1423). For example, post-heroic conceptualisations of leadership with their romanticised avoidance of conflict and power struggle accompany a body of popular literature which positions stereotypical feminine traits as the 'female advantage' (Helgeson, 1990; Hegelson & Johnson, 2010). Such traits are of course not essential aspects of masculinity or femininity, nor do they reflect the behaviour of many men and women, but they nevertheless exert subtle and not-so-subtle pressures on the way women and men do gender, power and leadership and on 'their ability to have their leadership behaviour seen as such' (Fletcher, 2004, p.658). So, while the post-heroic rhetoric circulates widely in today's business environment, it also engages unseen, unacknowledged gender and power aspects of identity which undermine efforts to move towards a 'new' kind of organisational leadership behaviour.

In this section I have presented three contemporary challenges to mainstream understandings of leadership – relational leadership, leadership-as-practice and discursive leadership – which present the idea that leadership is best conceptualised beyond the individual. I have critiqued these ideas on the ground that they compound the romanticism surrounding leadership and thus continue to hide important power asymmetries and social inequalities. I go on to examine related applied linguistics research in in the following section.

2.4 Applied linguistics perspectives on leadership

Leadership theories such as those outlined in the previous section have a disciplinary home in organisational studies, where various forms of discourse analysis have a strong presence. The following section provides an overview of applied workplace sociolinguistic approaches to leadership in which discourse analysis also features strongly. However, organisation studies and sociolinguistics do not use the term 'discourse' in the same way, and this can hinder dialogue between researchers of different disciplines, as well as take-up by practitioners. For example, organisation scholars often use the little d/big D distinction made by the linguist James Gee (e.g. Gee, 1999) whereas linguists require more specificity (see Fairclough 2010, pp.95–96 and Koller, 2012, pp.21–22 for discussions of the word 'discourse'). In the section that follows I use the term 'discourse' to refer to 'connected stretches of language that make sense' (Gee, 1999, p.6). Other differences are rather more difficult to overcome. Disciplinary biases towards or away from what Fairclough calls 'extreme social constructivism' (Fairclough, 2005 p.916) raise theoretical barriers between the more open-ended and interpretive (frequently post-structuralist) preferences of contemporary organisational theorists, and the more formal and technical, frequently realist analytical traditions of linguistics. I also consider some research implications of the epistemological tensions represented by the two disciplines.

2.4.1 Key ideas

Linguistics is as varied a disciplinary field as management studies and it provides a home for scholars with vastly different theories, research interests and methodological commitments. My research draws on the body of applied sociolinguistic studies of workplace discourse where 'practical relevance can be taken as a defining feature of all 'applied' research' (Sarangi & Candlin, 2004, p.272). Scholars whose work is associated with workplace sociolinguistics also draw on other theories, approaches, methods and sub-disciplines of linguistics. These include: critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013; Wodak, 2013), which is an interdisciplinary approach to language analysis that draws attention to hidden dimensions of power embedded in social practices and thus highlights the role of discourse in society; professional discourse analysis (Candlin & Sarangi, 2011), which refers to the analysis of language used by trained specialists and professionals in the particular social domain of the workplace; conversation analysis (Drew & Heritage, 1992, 2006), which is a method of analysis that focuses on sequences of interaction in everyday exchanges; the sub-discipline of pragmatics (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014), that is, the study of meaning in a specific context, including the analysis of specific features of workplace interaction (Angouri, 2012; Schnurr, 2008) and interactional sociolinguistics (Holmes, 2006; Jaspers, 2012; Rampton, 2019), which is a theoretical framework (and some concrete tools and procedures) which combines micro-level analysis which focuses on language use in its social context by close observation of interaction in a particular community with 'information about the macro-level context in which the interaction occurred' (Schnurr 2022, p.24). While there are some points of tension where specific theoretical and methodological commitments of these traditions do not sit comfortably together, in practice, applied linguists frequently combine tools and approaches.

2.4.1.1 Tasks and relationships

For workplace sociolinguists, the analytical point of entry into leadership typically distinguishes between task and relationship orientated talk and draws attention to the ways in which leaders combine 'the dual business objectives of getting work done and keeping people happy' (Baxter, 2008, p.198). Schnurr (2013,

2017) argues that leadership should be defined both in transactional and relational terms. One example of this is the way in which leaders are able to motivate and inspire a team through expressing confidence in their abilities or by setting high expectations (Schnurr, 2013, p.152). According to this author, ‘leadership tasks’ such as motivating subordinates and maintaining harmony within the team exemplify communicative behaviours which are associated with the relational aspect of leadership performance (2013, p.152). In linguistically oriented analyses of leadership this activity is separated from, and positioned in contrast to, ‘more transactional behaviours such as ensuring people know what they’re supposed to be doing: for example, what exactly their role is in a particular project, what tasks they are responsible for, what deadlines to meet and so on’ (2013, p.152). This task-relationship binary provides a baseline to many workplace sociolinguistic analyses of leadership performance (for example, Vine et al., 2008; Wodak et al., 2011; Holmes & Stubbe, 2015). Schnurr's definition highlights the distinction:

> Leadership can productively be viewed as a discursive performance which by influencing others advances the goals of the organisation (transactional behaviour) while also maintaining harmony within the group (relational behaviour). (Schnurr, 2013, p.162)

This broad definition provides the conceptual cornerstone of discourse analytical approaches to a range of different ways of doing leadership, approaches which are influenced by the context in which they are performed, for example studies of cross-cultural leadership (for example, Schnurr & Chan, 2009; Piller, 2011), the relationship between leadership and ethnicity (for example, Holmes et al., 2011; Marra et al., 2006), the relationships between gender, culture and leadership (Angouri, 2018; Schnurr & Mak, 2011), the gendered nature of leadership talk (for example, Holmes, 2006, 2017), the balance between gender and leadership roles (Holmes, 2017; McDowell, 2015, 2021; Marra et al., 2006), leadership and gender composition of teams (Baxter, 2015) and corporate meetings (Angouri & Marra, 2011; Angouri & Mondana, 2017). Of these, my study draws particularly on leadership and gender works. Of particular note are the widely cited features of feminine and masculine interactional styles compiled by workplace sociolinguist Janet Holmes (for example, Holmes, 2006, 2009, 2014, 2017; Holmes & Marra, 2004; Holmes & Schnurr, 2014; Holmes & Stubbe, 2003). According to Holmes (2006), to each conversation interlocutors bring their familiarity with the gendered norms to which women and men are expected to conform to bear on their expectations about appropriate ways of talking. And these include appropriately gendered ways of talking such as competitive, confrontational, direct and task-orientated (masculine) versus facilitative, conciliatory, indirect and people/process orientated (feminine). (See Holmes, 2006, p.6). These so called 'feminine' styles chime with many post-heroic notions of leadership reviewed in the previous section which, by equating feminine with female, *appear* to provide a (biologically determined) warrant that post-heroic models are 'naturally' female.

2.4.1.2 Leadership features

From the perspective of applied workplace sociolinguistics, Schnurr (2013) defines leadership by the sorts of activities that are performed by leaders (pp.150–151), citing mainstream leadership literature (e.g. Yukl, 2013) as a warrant for this claim. Emphasis is placed on linguistic description and analysis focuses 'on what 'leaders' actually do' (Schnurr, 2013, p.151). Specifically, Schnurr defines leadership tasks as predominantly communication-based activities for making decisions, organising work, coordinating, directing, supporting subordinates, developing group cohesiveness, creating and maintaining a productive work climate and ensuring effective communication in the team and wider organisation (2013, pp.150–151). She identifies six features of leadership upon which applied linguists can agree (2013, p.164). These are:

1. There are different ways of doing leadership (e.g. Baxter 2010, 2015; Clifton, 2017; Marra et al., 2006).

2. There is a range of discursive ways of performing relational and transactional behaviour (e.g. Darics, 2020; Vine et al., 2008; Wodak et al., 2011).

3. Leaders shape the norms of acceptable and expected behaviour through their interactive performance (e.g. Holmes, 2006; Holmes & Stubbe 2015; Mullany, 2011, 2022).

4. Effectiveness depends on context and includes personal stylistic preferences, the dynamics and longevity of working groups, the urgency of tasks, budget considerations etc. (e.g. Schnurr 2009; McDowell, 2015, 2021; Mesinioti et al., 2020).

5. Over time groups develop a shared repertoire of behavioural and linguistic norms (e.g. Baxter, 2015; Mullany, 2021, 2022; Schnurr 2009).

6. Over time leaders develop a repertoire of discursive strategies that team members consider appropriate ways of enacting power, taking decisions, holding meetings etc. (e.g. Lockwood & Forey, 2016; Schnurr 2009; Walker & Aritz, 2014, 2015).

Researching leadership in various contexts is of increasing interest to applied linguists. Consequently, studies continue to extend knowledge about the ways in which leadership is indexed in choices affecting language use (Holmes, 2017, 2018, 2022; Ilie & Schnurr, 2017; Larsson et al., 2021; Schnurr, 2022; Schnurr & Omar, 2021; Satio & Cook, 2018). However, among this still relatively small group of applied linguistic leadership scholars, there is less in the way of critique of mainstream understandings of leadership. I provide a warrant for this claim in the following section.

2.4.2 Critique: What remains unseen from an applied linguistics perspective

The thesis aims to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. Leadership development interventions which challenge mainstream conceptualisations of leadership are needed. I examine two issues in the paragraphs which follow. First, the reliance on position and organisational role to define leadership is examined. This is followed by a critique of applied linguistic leadership work which relies on task-relationship dualism.

2.4.2.1 Leadership beyond position

Workplace sociolinguists who first carried out research into leadership did so from an empirical rather than theoretical foundation, using natural spoken data collected in workplace settings (e.g. Holmes, 1998). Scholarly interest focused on how language was used by people who had legitimate positional authority in organisations, not in the nature of that authority, nor in the phenomenon of leadership itself. Hence, scholars of this tradition are primarily interested in linguistic and conversational features of talk that have operational consequences for those usually termed 'subordinates' (e.g. Schnurr 2013, p.152). The notion of leadership is not usually contested; rather, it is conceptualised in a straightforward way as the sorts of tasks and activities undertaken by leaders (Schnurr, 2013, pp.150–151). That said, it should be noted that the research of contemporary applied linguists takes into consideration different leadership constellations such as co-leadership (Schnurr & Chan, 2011), so-called leaderless teams (Choi & Schnurr, 2014) and yet more recently conversation analytic explorations of distributed leadership from post-heroic (Larsson et al., 2021) and post-humanist perspectives (Clifton & Mueni, 2021). It may be that this vanguard represents a direction of travel that will provide a timely counterbalance to the work that has for the last 20 years or so been based on mainstream (as opposed to critical) conceptualisations of leadership.

There are two problems with conceptualising leadership based on mainstream leadership theorizing. First, anchoring management and leadership in the sorts of activities managers and leaders do (e.g. Darics & Koller, 2018, p.122; Schnurr, 2013, p.162; Schnurr, 2017, pp. 323–335) can have the unintended consequence of reconfirming heroic models of leadership whereby the mundane business of management is left to managers so that leaders can get on with the more prestigious job of leading. From a critical leadership studies perspective, dichotomising management and leadership in this way risks oversimplifying complex and essentially contested relationships and expressions of power (Grint, 2006, 2020) and leaving followers out of the picture altogether (Collinson, 2006; Ford & Harding, 2018). Second, while relationships are understood as being co-produced, agency itself is conceptualised largely in entitative terms, leaving the leadership studies literature which re-conceptualises leadership agency as a collective and processual as opposed to a characteristic of bounded entities or constellations of entities (Hosking, 2011; Niccolini, 2012; Uhl Bien, 2006) somewhat under-explored. In other words, conceptualising leadership principally through the prism of position (Grint et al., 2016) is unlikely to lead to critical questions about how leadership might be conceptualised and exercised differently. I address the issue of agency and authority in paper one, 'Authority dynamics: A discourse analytic study of leadership agency'.

2.4.2.2 The task-relationship dualism

In workplace sociolinguistics, leadership activity is primarily defined as a dichotomy between task and relationship, which are treated as separable discursive processes (for example, Vine et al., 2008). Relational talk, in contrast to the organisation studies use of the term 'relational', is defined here as 'talk that aims at enhancing personal relationships' (Schnurr 2013, p.3), while transactional talk is associated with achieving workplace goals or targets. For example, in an examination of spoken data from corporations in the US and UK, Koester, while recognising that the distinction between task and relationship is not clear-cut, nonetheless finds that transactional goals are the participants' main concern (Koester 2006, p.26, see also Koester, 2004). Drawing attention to the linguistic features associated with such talk relies on the (continuing) existence of a task-relationship binary. However, setting tasks and relationships in opposition has real-world consequences, not least in terms of perpetuating hegemonic ideologies of gender and culture. By appealing to common-sense knowledge about what is gender-appropriate and culturally acceptable, practitioners are encouraged to see themselves reflected in one pole or another of a management/ leadership binary. For example, Darics and Koller (2018) draw a distinction between agentic and communal behaviour, citing a psychological model by Eagly & Johannensen-Schmidt (2001). According to these authors 'agentic behaviours might include speaking assertively, competing for attention, influencing others, initiating activity directed to assigned tasks, and making problem focused suggestions [while] communal behaviours might include speaking tentatively, not drawing attention to oneself, accepting others' direction, supporting and soothing others, and contributing to the solution of relational and interpersonal problems' (2001, p.783, cited in Darics & Koller, 2018, p.125). Drawing also on work by Baxter (2008, pp.59–61) and Holmes & Stubbe (2003, p.574), Darics and Koller (2018) identify typical linguistic and conversational features which instantiate leadership styles associated with the agentic-communal binary (2018, p.127).

Examples include focusing on the self (first person singular) versus focusing on the group (first person plural) and being competitive (aggressive interruptions) versus being collaborative (minimal responses). Thus, in the same way that speech patterns become indices of gender, specific patterns of linguistic and conversational behaviour become indices of leadership style. More specifically, routines (about who gets to speak when), questions (who asks questions and what are their functions), topics (how agendas are formed and new ideas introduced) and agreements (who gets to take decisions) may function as indices of hierarchical, individualistic and egalitarian systems of social organisation (Grint, 2005; Murphy et al., 2015).

However, binary lists of this kind, in which each element is defined by its supposed opposition, invite choices about professional identity which in turn influence conceptualisations of leadership; and these are sensitive to cultural understandings (Pittaway et al., 2005; Van De Mieroop & Clifton, 2012). In other words, 'style' becomes a signifier for normative judgements about 'good' leadership which exclude some people and elevate others. Acknowledging the limitations of a conceptual framework which is limited to conventional binary oppositions, Darics and Koller (2018) propose two ways of looking at leadership discourses:

1. As a dichotomy or binary relationship between agentic, transactional behaviour versus communal, relational behaviour. Presented as 'either or' linguistic choices between say, being competitive (e.g. by making aggressive interruptions) or being collaborative (e.g. by using only minimal responses in order to encourage other speakers to contribute or continue);
2. A graded scale between authoritarian and autocratic behaviour on the one hand with *laissez-faire* behaviour on the other with, and between the poles behaviour which can be identified as paternalistic, participatory or delegatory.

A critical leadership studies perspective may offer a third way of looking at the problem. The example of gender illustrates the practical challenge of disrupting the dichotomisation of interaction styles. There is agreement in linguistics and leadership studies that systemic change at the organisational and societal levels is needed if culturally embedded and gendered perceptions of who is appropriate as a leader are to be changed (Mavin & Gandy, 2016; Schnurr, 2013; Stead & Elliott, 2019). In particular, the dominance of binaries in the construction of leadership has a negative effect on the identification of women as leaders (Elliott & Stead, 2018; Ibarra et al., 2013; Mavin & Grandy, 2012, 2016; Muhr, 2011). Feminist critical leadership scholars examine how gendered power relations work by extending understandings of leadership as a dialectic process (Collinson, 2005, 2014; Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014; Elliott & Stead, 2018). By encouraging a move away from a reliance on dualisms, this kind of feminist theorising recognises 'how relationships emerge from the interplay of oppositional pairs' (Putnam, 2015, p.707). As Elliott and Stead (2018) argue, '[u]nlike binary understandings of gender which emphasize the oppositional, attention to the dialectics of the leadership construction process focuses our attention on how alternative perspectives interconnect in the production of leadership representations' (2018, p.21). In other words, reducing complex interactions to binary oppositions, such as male/ female, masculine/ feminine, agentic/ communal, hierarchical/ egalitarian and so on, reifies social relationships while also fixing expressions of leadership into concrete 'ontological representations of reality' (Collinson, 2005, p.1421). Thus, as Muhr (2011) notes, the difficulty of 'escaping the essentialism underlying binary thinking' (2011, p.349) requires thinking more in terms of multiplicity. Elliott and Stead (2018) argue that this should include an examination of the construction of women's leadership as a dialectical process in order to uncover 'pockets of resilience and change' (Elliott & Stead, 2018, p.21).

Sociolinguistic methods and tools which have been used to challenge and disrupt binary conceptualisations of culture and gender might also be employed to disrupt binary conceptualisations of leadership. Precisely because the task-relationship dualism is itself gendered, its reproduction reconfirms the gender binary. There is evidence in my ethnographic data (Murphy, 2017) that managers orientate their aspirations and actions towards binary conceptualisations of leadership that circulate in the discourses of organisational change, and while this does not define them or their aspirations, it does affect their opportunities. In paper two, 'Getting work done: A study of oppositional discourses in leaders' everyday workplace talk', I address the role of oppositional tensions in leadership work aimed at producing change.

In this section I have reviewed a body of leadership literature in applied workplace sociolinguistics. I have pointed out some points of tension where specific theoretical and methodological commitments of these traditions do not sit comfortably together. I have identified two such areas of disjuncture: first, the reliance in some applied linguistic studies on position and organisational role to define leadership, and second a critique of applied linguistic leadership work which relies on the task-relationship dualism. The section concludes that leadership development interventions which challenge mainstream conceptualisations of leadership are needed, and these should include a critique of understandings of leadership contained in applied linguistic research.

2.5 Connections and contrasts between the two perspectives

In this section, three gaps in the applied linguistics leadership literature are identified, as well as demonstrating how my research addresses these gaps.

2.5.1 Alignments and disjunctures

This section summarises key alignments and disjunctures between the relevant literatures of leadership studies and applied (workplace) linguistics. Analytical approaches associated with the traditions of each discipline highlight different aspects of the problem. These perspectives are frequently complementary: research from both disciplinary perspectives recognises the centrality of power relationships in the construction of gendered and differential experiences of leadership (Cameron, 2000; Fletcher, 2004) and can provide powerful evidence which instantiates how this is constituted (for example, Simpson et al., 2018; Holmes & Stubbe, 2015). There is further correspondence in the recognition that systemic change at organisational and societal levels is needed if culturally embedded notions of appropriate leadership behaviours are to be challenged (Mullany, 2011, 2022; Schnurr, 2013, 2022; Stead & Elliott, 2009). Different, and complementary, aspects of contextualised leadership practice are of interest to scholars of both disciplines as objects of research. Leadership studies scholars frequently highlight the importance of processual understandings (for example, Gherardi, 2015; Nicolini, 2012; Simpson, 2016), where applied linguists tend to focus on spoken interaction, but this combination of methods may meet a call for data collection and analysis when leadership is not understood as an individual endeavour (Alvehus & Crevani, 2022; Crevani & Endrissat, 2016; Kempster et al., 2016; Larsson et al., 2021).

There are also three key areas of disjuncture. First, most applied linguistic leadership research does not engage with critical leadership studies which calls into question the validity of mainstream conceptualisations. Instead, applied linguistics work focuses on identifying and describing features of talk which instantiate supposedly pre-existing characteristics of leadership behaviour (for example, Darics & Koller, 2018; Holmes et al., 2007, Schnurr, 2017). This tendency obfuscates potential areas of complementarity because it fails to take into account organisational studies approaches where different aspects of leadership itself are called into question (for example, Mabey, 2013; Mavin & Grandy 2012, 2016; Tourish, 2014). This becomes problematic when the real-world problem requires the reshaping of what we mean by leadership (Elliott & Stead, 2018), including who can claim legitimacy as a leader (Stead et al., 2021). Secondly, there is a disjuncture between the dialectic approaches favoured by critical leadership studies (for example, Collinson, 2020) and the reliance on binary distinctions in the description of how leadership is manifest in interaction (e.g. Walker & Aritz, 2014, 2015). This increases opacity as opposed to clarity and thus makes collaborative research across the disciplines more challenging. Finally, translating linguistically informed insights into leadership development opportunities which contemplate situated learning grounded in real problems (Revans, 2011) is not yet explored in the leadership canon of applied linguistics. These areas of alignment and disjuncture highlight gaps in the applied linguistics leadership literature that this thesis aims to fill.

2.5.2 Gaps in the applied linguistics literature

Viewed from the combined perspectives of leadership and organisational development practice, critical leadership studies and applied workplace sociolinguistics, three important gaps can be identified in the leadership literature born of the tradition of applied linguistics. I deal with each one in turn.

2.5.2.1 Leadership as position

The reliance on position and role to define leadership leads to a limited examination of how authority interacts with understandings of leadership agency. In other words, because conceptualisations of leadership tend to rely on entitative understandings, workplace sociolinguists pay less attention to relational perspectives in the organisational studies use of the term (but see Van De Mieroop et al., 2020), even when they examine post-heroic models of leadership in their work (Clifton, 2017). The dynamic relationship between position, power, authority and agency is explored in paper 1, 'Authority dynamics: A discourse analytic study of leadership agency', which asks what can be learnt about leadership agency from a close study of spoken interaction.

2.5.2.2 Leadership dualisms

The perpetuation of the dichotomous positioning of task and relationship, and particularly the unexamined biological determinism which conflates relationship with femininity, has real-world consequences for organisational managers who can become trapped in polarities which perpetuate hegemonic representations of the leadership norm. For example, male and female leaders who are seen to be good at 'doing relationships' are often evaluated differently because women are understood to be only doing what comes 'naturally'. Sociolinguistic analysis makes visible what goes on between people rather than what goes on inside the heads of individuals, and therefore holds the potential to disrupt processes which continually reconfirm the binary. The extent to which sociolinguistic analysis can shed light on the discursive construction of this process is explored in paper 2, 'Getting work done: A study of oppositional discourses in leaders' everyday workplace talk'. Two questions are posed: first, how do the two managers in the study orientate to oppositional discourses in their in-situ interactions; and second, how do they utilise these discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done.

2.5.2.3 Using insights to bring about change

Applied linguistics provides detailed descriptions of leadership interactions but less in the way of guidance as to how these can be put into practice beyond extending formal management education curricula. A central concern of applied linguistics is to investigate and address ‘real-world problems in which language is a central issue’ (Brumfit 1995, p.27), and paper three applies insights from applied linguistics leadership research to leadership and management learning in the workplace. The paper, entitled ‘Applying linguistics to management learning: a case study of two executives’ leadership styles’ sets out to analyse and describe the managers' language practices with a view to identifying insights that can be applied to their learning. In relation to these objectives, two questions are asked: first, what patterns of leadership talk can linguistic ethnographic analysis help to identify; and second, what is keeping patterns stuck?

This section has summarised key alignments and disjunctures between the relevant literatures of leadership studies and applied (workplace) linguistics. I have identified areas of complementarity and drawn attention to three areas of disjuncture. These are, first the tendency of applied linguistic leadership research to overlook critical leadership studies which call into question the validity of mainstream conceptualisations; second, the disjuncture between the dialectic approaches favoured by critical leadership studies and the reliance on binary distinctions in many applied linguistic descriptions of how leadership is manifest in interaction and finally, that translating linguistically informed insights into situated leadership learning is under-explored in applied linguistic leadership studies. Each of the three papers that make up the core of the thesis addresses one of these areas of disjuncture.

2.6 Conclusion

The overall goal of this chapter has been to present and critique leadership studies and applied linguistics research that conceptualises leadership in different ways. The review has synthesised the main recurring patterns and ideas that emerged from my reading of these bodies of literature and the areas of alignment and disjuncture that the juxtaposition revealed. First, I justified the claim that leadership development designs are largely based on distanced understandings of leadership. Second, conceptualisations of leadership from leadership studies perspectives were presented and critiqued. This was followed by the presentation and critique of conceptualisations of leadership from applied linguistics perspectives. Finally, I identified three gaps in the leadership literature associated with applied workplace sociolinguistics and demonstrated how my research addresses these gaps.

The thesis sets out to combine leadership theory with linguistic ethnography to develop insights that have practical relevance for managers in organisations. The research problem addressed in this thesis is that leadership development is informed by research which misses the detail of how leadership actually happens in talk. The research aims, therefore, to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of how leadership happens in situated interactions so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. This literature review has therefore provided a summary of the ideas from organisation studies and applied linguistics about how leadership is accomplished. Specifically, it has provided a critical assessment of the two bodies of leadership literature which justifies the research that the three core papers of the thesis go on to discuss. The area of research that is of interest to my project lies at the intersection of leadership studies and workplace sociolinguistics and the review has identified gaps that are exposed by this interdisciplinary juxtaposition.

From an organisational studies perspective, I identified three contemporary challenges to mainstream understandings of leadership – relational leadership, leadership-as-practice and discursive leadership – which present the idea that leadership is best conceptualised beyond the individual. Drawing on critical leadership studies, I critiqued these ideas on the grounds that they compound the romanticism surrounding leadership and thus continue to hide important power asymmetries and social inequalities, including the ways in which stereotypically feminine interactional styles have become strongly associated with post-heroic leadership aspirations. I followed this critique with a review of the leadership literature in applied workplace sociolinguistics. I pointed out some points of tension between the theoretical and methodological commitments of these traditions, namely, the reliance in some applied linguistic studies first on position and organisational role and second on the task-relationship dualism to define leadership. Finally, I identified areas of complementarity and drew attention to three areas of disjuncture. These are, first the tendency of applied linguistic leadership research to overlook critical leadership studies which call into question the validity of mainstream conceptualisations; second, the disjuncture between the dialectic approaches favoured by critical leadership studies and the reliance on binary distinctions in many applied linguistic descriptions of how leadership is manifest in interaction and finally, that translating linguistically informed insights into situated leadership learning is under-explored in applied linguistic leadership studies.

The inconsistencies between organisation studies and linguistics in theorising how leadership is accomplished and the overall lack of research which addresses implications for practice are of significance to my overall research questions. These are to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other, and building on this analysis, to identify which interventions might meaningfully change or improve such co-production. My research contributes to new knowledge by combining leadership theory with paying close attention to language use to reveal language routines, patterns and practices which may inform leadership and management learning practice. In doing so, the thesis attempts to contribute to the dialogue between organisational researchers, applied linguists and management learning practitioners. Designing and conducting inter-disciplinary research to provide a way of connecting three usually discrete domains was therefore critical to my research goals. The next chapter describes the core research design decisions needed to accomplish this, including the theoretical framework and overall methodological approach, specific research design choices and methodological limitations. I turn to this next.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In learning and development practice, designs are largely based on distanced understandings of leadership which miss much of the detail of how leadership actually happens. My research aims to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. The project sets out to review relevant literature on leadership from organisation studies and applied linguistics perspectives and, in parallel using participant observation, to gain a broad understanding of the contemporary context for learning challenges related to leadership and spoken interaction. The specific objectives of the research are:

1. To describe some of the discursive processes via which aspects of leadership are actually performed.
2. To observe how leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done.
3. To identify what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck.

Overall, the research asks how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work and, building on this analysis, seeks to identify possible interventions to meaningfully change or improve this work.

In this chapter I discuss my core research design decisions, including the theoretical framework and overall methodological approach, specific research design choices and methodological limitations. In order to discuss these issues, the chapter is laid out in the following way. I begin by presenting the conceptual frameworks which underpin the thesis. This includes a discussion of linguistic ethnography as epistemology, methodology and perspective on practice. Next, I describe my research design choices, including a pragmatist philosophy to align with my stance on organisational learning practice. Following this I outline the operational aspects of my linguistic ethnographic research strategy, the research methods I employed, my sampling strategy and data collection methods and, finally, the tools and methods of analysis of grounded theory and discourse analysis, specifically, activity type analysis, conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics. I complete the chapter by examining the methodological limitations of the study and detailing how I mitigated their impact.

3.2 Conceptual frameworks

This section presents the conceptual basis for the approach I adopted to investigate my topic. This includes a statement on my theoretical orientation vis-à-vis social constructionism, the linguistic ethnographically informed methodological approach I followed, as well as the practice perspective that underlies my work.

3.2.1 Theoretical assumptions

Closely aligned to a view of organisational learning that knowledge and reality are constructed through conversation (Easterby-Smith et al., 2000), the theoretical framework for the research is informed by social constructionism, i.e. from an epistemological position which assumes that social reality is constructed through individual and collective actions, including conversations, rather than being pre-discursive (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Gergen, 1994; Lazzaro-Salazar, 2018; Mead & Morris, 1934). Social constructionism, as a theory of knowledge, accounts for how individuals develop and use knowledge in the world. There is no single definition but, according to Burr (2015), four beliefs are widely shared. First, scholars adopt a critical stance towards taken-for-granted processes of knowing which assume knowledge is derived from objective, unbiased observation. Second, research rests on the assumption that all knowledge exists as part of a specific historical and cultural context and is thus always relative. Third, that knowledge is constructed and sustained through social interaction and is, therefore, multiple as opposed to unitary and, finally, that knowledge about the world and social action within it are inseparable (Burr, 2015, pp.2–5). I chose this framework because it mostly aligns with theoretical perspectives across management learning, leadership studies and applied linguistics. I say 'mostly' because social constructionism comprises a range of positions rather than a single point of view and scholars from the different disciplines tend to defend different theoretical positions. Proponents of weak social constructionism construct individual understandings over a set of objective or material facts, whereas the strong social constructionist position perceives all knowledge as constructed by human society through social interaction. I adopted a pragmatic stance on this. By this I mean that I adopted a flexible position depending on the requirements presented to me by the real-world situation in which I carried out the research. This understanding emerged as a result of the research process, as I explain and justify in the following section which deals with my methodological approach.

3.2.2 Methodological approach

The project is informed methodologically by linguistic ethnography (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Copland & Creese, 2015; Rampton 2007; Rampton et al., 2004; Rampton et al., 2014; Snell et al., 2015; Tusting, 2019) which combines an ethnographic, field-based approach to investigating and comprehending tacit and articulated understandings of participants' perspectives and activities, with the empirical procedures and analytical tools of linguistics. From this perspective, ethnographic fieldwork is not simply a method or technique. It has behind it what Blommaert and Dong (2010) call 'a theoretical complex, a paradigm, of considerable sophistication' (2010, p.85). For Blommaert and Dong, the ethnographic paradigm involves an ontological perspective on language in that language *is* context (see also Blommaert, 2007). It is not a separate or separable thing that can be removed and studied. In fact, it is the step-by-step construction of sentences and utterances as a '*process* and not its linguistic product (stratified and reified sentences and utterances) that needs to be understood in ethnography' (2010, p.9, italics in the original). This ethnographic perspective on language differs from many other branches of the study of language. Blommaert's position on ethnography as epistemology also makes this clear. He argues that 'the process of fieldwork cannot be separated from the *products* of fieldwork' (2018, p.124, italics in the original) because, in ethnography, 'fieldwork and the ensuing situatedness of the data gathered through real interaction process between researcher and informant have an important epistemological status' (2018, p.124). This means that background and stories are not context for data, they are the data. The whole process of developing knowledge is part of the knowledge that is produced or, as Blommaert and Dong put it, 'knowledge construction is knowledge, the process is the product' (2010, p.10).

In my project I became very aware of an unfolding and interactively produced understanding – this 'ethnography-as-data perspective' (Blommaert, 2018, p.ix) – which required I adopt different approaches at different times in the research process as I began to theorise my data into cases of something of wider significance, going some way, I hope, towards what Hymes calls 'democratic': 'a mutual relation of interaction and adaptation between ethnographers and the people they work with, a relation that will change both' (1980, p.89). Furthermore, the theories, methodologies and methods of linguistics are not a singular, unitary kind of disciplinary knowledge. The sub-disciplines of linguistics cover a wide range of epistemological positions including reliance on formal abstractions which remove linguistic data from their context. This has been difficult for me to reconcile with the more ethnographically informed, actor-centred standpoint (Hammersley, 1992, 2019; Neyland, 2008; Ybema et al., 2009) with which I was more familiar as an applied organisation researcher. I recognised the need for coherence, but I was also aware of the dangers of sheering off multiple strands of difference in the name of methodological homogeneity. Linguistic ethnography helped me hold these epistemological tensions without the need to resolve them.

The term 'linguistic ethnography' is used to represent the activities of a community of scholars and scholarly practitioners who share a commitment 'to combining ethnographic approaches to research with close attention to language use' (Tusting, 2019, p.1). It is not, strictly speaking, a theoretical framework, as scholars who align with this tradition point out. Scholars variously call it ‘an umbrella term’ (Rampton, 2007, p.2), ‘a site of encounter’ (Rampton, 2007, p.585), ‘a cluster of research’ (Tusting & Maybin, 2007, p.578) or an ‘orientation’ (Creese, 2008, p.237). More of an intellectual meeting place than anything too paradigmatically grandiose, Tusting and Maybin describe it thus:

> UK linguistic ethnography includes a cluster of research which studies relationships between the micro-level of language practices and the broader social context and social order, drawing on linguistics, social

> theory and on ethnographic methodology which places the researcher at the heart of the research. (Tusting & Maybin, 2007, p.578)

While still ‘in the process of negotiating itself into being’ (Creese, 2008, p.238), linguistic ethnography has taken a post-structuralist position on the critique of essentialist accounts of social phenomena and that this draws on a range of disciplinary influences including cultural, post-structuralist feminist and social theory. It is these theoretical underpinnings which provide my study with a navigable channel between feminist, frequently post-structural research in organisation and leadership studies on the one hand, and the use of linguistic and discourse analytic tools to analyse situated workplace conversations on the other. In this way, linguistic ethnography helped me plot a course between my theoretical interests, a social constructionist epistemology and an ethnographically informed methodological tradition in which language analysis plays a central role. I turn now to these traditions.

3.2.3 Epistemological and methodological traditions

Linguistic ethnography positions itself alongside anthropological traditions for the study of language (Hymes, 1977, 1986; Gumperz & Hymes, 1972; Gumperz, 1982) but is open to a wider range of interpretative approaches, including from linguistics and sociology. Thus, it maintains similarities with its antecedents in anthropology but maps out a different methodological space which takes language, rather than culture, as its first point of analytic entry. The resulting methodological eclecticism has not been without criticism, particularly on the ground of epistemological incommensurability between, for example, qualitative conversation analytic work and sociolinguistic quantitative empirical studies (Koole, 2007). However, in protecting a more open interdisciplinary space, linguistic ethnography chooses to take a flexible position with regard to foundational beliefs and at the same time holds:

1. …that the contexts for communication should be investigated rather than assumed. Meaning takes shape within specific social relations, interactional histories and institutional regimes, produced and construed by agents with expectations and repertoires that have to be grasped ethnographically; and

2. that analysis of the internal organisation of verbal (and other kinds of semiotic) data is essential to understanding its significance and position in the world. Meaning is far more than just the ‘expression of ideas’, and biography, identifications, stance and nuance are extensively signalled in the linguistic and textual fine grain.

(Rampton, 2007, p.585)

This interlinking of individual agency and institutional processes through the detailed study of situated encounters and micro-level language practices connects the theoretical and empirical interests of linguistic ethnography and provides its methodological scope, one in which the interests of ethnography and linguistics combine to strengthen both, as Creese explains:

> Ethnography provides linguistics with a close reading of context not necessarily represented in some kinds of interactional analysis and linguistics provides tools, concepts analytical frameworks – and a range of established procedures for isolating, identifying and analysing linguistic and discursive strategies. (Creese, 2008, p.233)

This connection between the openness of an ethnographic sensibility and the formal, abstract methods of analysis of linguistics is not without theoretical tensions. Rampton’s claim that ‘ethnography opens linguistics up and linguistics (and linguistically sensitive discourse analysis) ties ethnography down by pushing cultural description towards the analysis of clearly delimit-able processes’ (Rampton, 2007, p.596) draws attention to the dissonance between relativist and realist truth claims inherent in the project. However, linguistic ethnography does not claim to resolve these tensions. Rather, it offers researchers a means for working with them by grasping practices from within and, at the same time, getting analytical distance on the ideological and interactional processes that constitute the everyday (Tusting & Maybin, 2007; Rampton et al., 2015).

In the context of my study, linguistic ethnography has three key strengths: first, it is oriented to real world issues in the problems it seeks to address and the way in which it invites participants into the research process; second, it situates linguistic research within an ethnographic methodology which is widely shared across the social sciences, including in management and organisation studies where it has seen a recent resurgence of interest (Kostera & Harding, 2020; Pandeli et al., 2022; Rouleau et al., 2014) and which therefore supports work across and between disciplines; finally, the emphasis on reflexivity on the part of the researcher (Patiño-Santos, 2019) overcomes my unease with some forms of linguistic analysis which, as Tusting and Maybin point out, 'draws the analysis away from the participants' situated knowledge and understandings – and this creates tension particularly if this challenges or even contradicts participants' understandings' (2007, p.798). The acknowledgement of this tension enabled me to stand on rather different epistemological ground as a researcher than that to which I am accustomed as a practitioner. More analytic distance, as described by Tusting and Maybin, also means that as a linguistic ethnographer, my practice values emic understandings and etic analyses equally, and both have implications for practice, the subject of the following section.

3.2.4 Practice perspective

My aim in turning to linguistics is to uncover hidden or unnoticed meanings, details and patterns which are carried in discursive processes, and to do this in ways that can help leaders and leadership developers. Early in the project I was actively involved in the social activity under study and heavily invested in the situated understandings of my research participants. I struggled to reconcile these understandings with the technologies of language analysis and the process of interpreting communicative encounters through them. But by embracing both, linguistic ethnography reflects my beliefs about the nature of the world and at the same time offers productive ways of being a researcher in that world. This is because as well as taking a linguistic point of entry into analysis, linguistic ethnography takes an interpretive approach to the study of 'the local and immediate actions of actors from their point of view and considers how these interactions are embedded in wider social contexts and structures' (Copeland & Creese, 2015, p.13.) Methods of data collection and data analysis derive from both ethnographic and linguistic traditions which work together from an epistemological position that 'generally holds that to a considerable degree, language and the social world are mutually shaping, and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity' (Rampton et al., 2015, p.2). This notion is central to my research goals as I describe in the next section.

3.2.5 The dynamics of difference project

The 'Dynamics of Difference' project was conceived as an applied endeavour to be developed with and for professional women, which could yield insights capable of guiding interventions. Applied work requires real problems and settings, and commitment from people for whom both setting and problems are important enough to invest energy in. Creating and maintaining interest and momentum takes experience and I began the research project with little more than confidence in my ability to generate such activity by returning practical insights to people who invested their time (e.g. Murphy, 2016). Application is not an afterthought, it is the starting point of a collaborative and action-orientated enquiry, an orientation that underpins the methodological and democratic principle of joint learning and knowledge production I adopted. Projects of this nature are designed so that people can use the knowledge and understanding they co-create to act in more informed and effective ways. Linguistic ethnography offers a theoretical space which accommodates this orientation, not least because linguistic ethnographers take a reflexive approach to data collection and analysis where 'truth claims made by the research' are informed by the role the researcher has played in it (Tusting & Maybin, 2007, p.579; see also Patiño-Santos, 2019). For scholars and practitioners of management learning and leadership, this approach can provide valuable insights into the 'patterned nature of language behaviours, even where this is opaque to those concerned' (Tusting & Maybin 2007, p.579). In this way, linguistic ethnography provided me with a coherent way of connecting different aspects of my project without having to abandon my beliefs about the nature and value of research, or my practice orientation as I go on to describe in the following paragraphs.

3.3 Research design choices

The aim of this section is to demonstrate how my research design helped me to achieve my aims and objectives, answer my research questions and address the research problem I outlined in the brief introduction to the chapter. In the remainder of the section, I detail the interrelated choices I made as I crafted my research design at the same time as I progressed my engagement strategy. These include a statement on my pragmatist research philosophy and the qualitative, inductive-abductive approach I took. I follow this by describing and justifying the linguistic ethnographic research strategy I chose, including my decisions regarding the cross-sectional time horizon and case-study approach. I discuss the sampling strategy and data collection methods in some detail before going on to present the tools and procedures of linguistics that I used to analyse these data.

3.3.1 Research philosophy and approach

I adopted a pragmatist philosophy, a decision which served as the foundation of my other design choices. My philosophical orientation to organisational learning practices is rooted in a pragmatist perspective on learning (Elkjaer, 2009, 2018), specifically through the ideas of John Dewey (Dewey, 1933 [1986], 1938 [1986]). Dewey's understanding of learning is grounded in his concept of experience. As Elkjaer explains, for Dewey, experience is ontological and based upon the transactional relationship between subject and worlds; and as the objective world is always woven into the subjective, experience is not solely subjective and private. Experience is connected to the future because forward thinking is more important for action and cognition than recollection. This view of experience as a series of connected situations through time means that it is possible to use it as a foundation for knowledge and to guide future actions. Finally, it is possible to transform difficult situations through the mediation of thinking and action, which means experience is not beyond reasoning (Elkjaer, 2009, pp.79–80). Put simply, this is a continuous interaction between individuals and their environments, including emotions, aesthetics and ethics as well as knowledge. Elkjaer describes it as 'the relation between individual and environments', or 'subject' and 'worlds', which are the terms she uses to connote the socialised individual and the interpreted world (2009, p.75). Dewey himself argues:

> To ‘learn from experience’ is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions, doing becomes a trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like; the

> undergoing becomes instruction – discovery of the connection of things. (Dewey, 1916 [1980], p.147)

The concept of pragmatism coincided naturally with my position as a researcher. Collaborative learning relationships provide my professional anchor and conceptualising problem-focused learning thus, helped me to articulate the benefits to potential research partners. This meant that my research design should indicate a route via which the research process and its findings might be understood, taken up and applied in my research community. A pragmatist philosophy offered this possibility.

Pragmatist philosophy is concerned with the understanding of the meanings of phenomena in terms of their consequences. In other words, meaning is not ascribed in an a priori ('if-then') way; it is identified by anticipating 'what-if ' consequences to potential actions and conduct. The American pragmatist philosophers (for example, Peirce, (1992 [1878]); James (2010 [1907]); Mead, (1932); Dewey, (1916 [1980]), demanded that philosophy be of practical use in responding to difficult situations that need to be resolved. In pursuit of a better world, Dewey argued for enquiry as a method in which working hypotheses are generated through anticipatory imagination of consequences and later tested in action (Dewey, 1933 [1986], 1938 [1986]). For Dewey, pragmatism is a method for examining how different ideas, hypotheses, concepts and theories (tools for thinking) affect the results of enquiry. Elkjaer, whose theories of organisational learning are inspired by Deweyan ideas, sees that the pragmatist philosophical view of thinking, defined as 'critical anticipation of and reflection on the relation between defining and solving a problem' (Elkjaer, 2009, p.77), can help to define the uncertainties that occur in experience without reliance on general theoretical rules or grand theories. Explicating the connection between organisational learning, pragmatist philosophy and research methodology she goes on to argue:

> The situation determines which concepts and theories are useful for an analysis of a given problem. One can often use various theories and concepts as tools ('instruments') in an experimental process, the aim of which is to transform a difficult situation to one that is manageable and comfortable for the subject. (Elkjaer, 2009, p.77)

Learning, enquiring and investigating are very close in this account. In fact, Elkjaer's view is that, for learning to occur, we need enquiry for which we use concepts and theories that 'allow us to think about, anticipate and reflect on action and upon ourselves as acting' (2008, p.78).

Research in this pragmatist tradition seeks to understand the multiple factors involved in people's actions in a given situation. It avoids abstract, fixed principles and does not pretend that there is a single indomitable truth. Instead, a pragmatic study defines its terms by its application to human experience. Broadly speaking, the process requires the identification of a problem which should be viewed in its broadest context, and this is then followed by research enquiry which seeks to better understand and ultimately solve the problem (Morgan, 2014a). The advantage of this is that it allows a combination of research methods which are selected and used pragmatically in order to advance a specific piece of work in the best possible manner. My project was born out of a problem I had identified within a particular community of learners, one which also highlighted a related problem within the realm of management learning practice. I needed to better understand the problem as experienced by network members (how to be a better a leader), in order to make useful progress on the problem I had identified for management learning professionals (how to better support leadership learning). These interconnected problems required different approaches at different moments as I go on to explain.

A number of tenets of pragmatism have been applied in my study. Here I highlight four of these. First, initial immersion in the research without the prerequisite to identify invariant prior knowledge, laws or rules governing what is 'true' or 'valid' (Maxcy, 2003). This enabled me to take immediate advantage of opportunities which came my way in order to broaden my understanding of the context in which the problem was located. Second, a rejection of traditional philosophical dualisms of objectivity and subjectivity (for Dewey, realism and idealism), seeking instead 'to abandon forced dichotomies which are post-positivism and constructivism' by adopting different modes of enquiry based on how well they work in solving the problems under investigation (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p.4). This allowed me to see disciplinary preferences at different ends of the weak-strong social constructionism dimension, not as necessary allegiances to particular methodological traditions but as choices about which 'tools to think with' for the problem I was investigating (Elkjaer, 2009, p.75). Third, that meaning is created from human experience offers a view of knowledge as being constructed based on real-world experiences in that 'actions cannot be separated from the situations and contexts in which they occur' (Morgan 2014b, p.26). This enabled me to focus on the nature of the real-world and in-context experiences of my research participants. Finally, that pragmatism understands human experience through language and communication (Elkjaer, 2009, p.87) underpins the project. In sum, adopting a pragmatic approach to my research enabled me to work with different epistemological traditions in order to focus on the consequences of my research and research questions, rather than on methods.

My aim then, in adopting pragmatism, was to approach the research problem from a practical point of view without being tied to a specific methodological doctrine. My early attempts to splice leadership studies and applied linguistics into a single thread ran into fairly entrenched lines of defence. My strong conviction that 'paradigm wars' (Denzin, 2010) would detract from my research focus led me to the decision to combine several qualitative approaches. This strategy is not without its critics. Silverman argues that in employing different qualitative methods, problems of triangulation can arise because, for example, discourse analysis presumes that accounts are socially constructed, while traditional interview formats assume that interview accounts give a definitive version of reality (Silverman, 2005, p.121). However, my reading of Dewey's position on knowledge, or 'warranted assertabilities' as he preferred, is that knowing depends 'on world-views that are socially shared sets of beliefs' (Morgan, 2014b, p.27) and is therefore never fixed or unitary. In this sense, pragmatic studies are inductive in that they move from a real-world problem to a better understanding which will ultimately improve the situation in which the problem is identified. Therefore, in the engagement phase of the research, I began in exploratory mode, gathering data and making sense of them inductively. As my understanding of the situation grew, I became aware that my logic was shifting. During the analysis and subsequent writing of the three papers I moved back and forth between trying to infer some general principle from the analysis and trying to infer a possible explanation for the reified patterns I had observed.

In other words, I shifted between inductive and abductive reasoning: moving between data sets and to literature and back again in order to offer plausible 'most likely' explanations for the phenomena I sought to understand and explain.

3.3.2 Research strategy

I operationalised my linguistic ethnographic strategy by phasing my research activities so that I was able to engage differently with my research community in order to focus on the different kinds of data required to answer my questions. I summarise these below:

3.3.2.1 Engagement phase

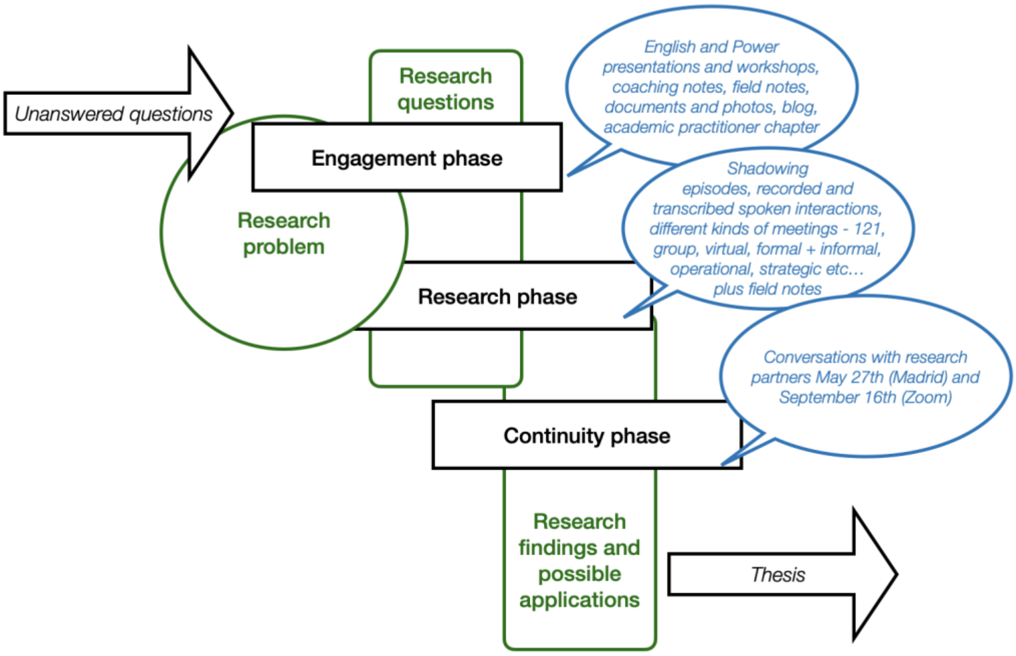
As soon as I had taken the decision to write a PhD proposal, I discussed my plans with a number of people in my network in order to gauge how far the idea of carrying out this level of research resonated with their interests and influence in the corporate world. One of these people was the PWN board member who had created the opportunity in Madrid for me to work with a group of senior managers on issues related to language and power. This led to the opportunity to engage more closely with network members, as I describe in more detail below in the section on sampling strategy and data collection methods. My strategy in the engagement phase was to record and collect data systematically from workshops I ran as well as being an 'observant participant' (Moeran, 2009; Papen, 2019) in and around them, by which I mean playing an active role in the field. The engagement phase yielded self-reported data, pre-workshop coaching notes on participants, recordings of workshops, field notes on observations and conversations, documentary sources and some photographs. It also gave access to executive managers able and willing to engage in the research by being shadowed (Czarniawska, 2021). Shadowing is risky for both researchers and researched as 'shadowing is not only a method but also an attitude' (2021, p.47), one which means opening up to scrutiny, questions from colleagues, feelings of vulnerability and a huge emotional investment from both parties; and this requires, above all, working with mutual empathy and respect. Outputs from the phase include the English and Power blog (Murphy, 2016) and the book chapter *Talking Power* (Murphy, 2017) both of which were produced as instruments of knowledge co-generation. An executive summary of the book chapter can be found in *Appendix II: Talking Power* (p. 261).

3.3.2.2 Research phase

The engagement phase informed and sharpened the research questions and subsequent analysis. The research phase yielded spoken data for the linguistic analysis required to address these questions. The data were collected during five shadowing episodes, a process which I describe in more detail below. My strategy was to follow the executive in participant observer mode and to attend and record as many of her meetings as she was able to sanction. The strategy required significant preparation, particularly around ethics (Copeland, 2019). I held discussions with the shadowees to agree: first, that the study would be limited to the conversations they approved post-recording; second, that each of them (and no one else) would be the subject of the research and that it would remain focused on their expressed learning objectives; third, that wherever possible other subjects would be incorporated only if signed, written consent was obtained (although in reality, some companies preferred to obtain a verbal agreement which was recorded as part of the conversation or meeting); fourth, what I would do with the data and the levels of anonymity and, in some cases, confidentiality that were required; and finally, at what point the research subjects would have access to the observations and transcripts. The research phase yielded 15 hours, 8 minutes and 23 seconds of recorded and transcribed interactive data, plus field notes, which were made at the end of each shadowing day.

3.3.2.3 Continuity phase

This phase began in the closing stage of the analytical process. Although I had maintained some contact with my research partners, I had not kept all of them abreast of every move. However, testing with them the threads of meaning that I was beginning to draw out from the separate analyses of their conversational data was always an aspiration. I sent an email to members of the community early in 2022, setting out my aspirations and gauging their interest in a meeting. I was pleasantly surprised by their responses. All answered and committed to attending a face-to-face meeting. I chose Madrid because five of the seven are based in the Iberian Peninsula, the other two being from the Netherlands. We met on May 27th. On completion of the May meeting, we agreed to touch base again at some point. I made the recording of the meeting available until August 31st and scheduled a follow-up Zoom call on September 16th as shown in the diagram below. For a variety of reasons, the September 16th date slipped and instead, I suggested that I would follow up with each of them separately. These conversations are ongoing.



3.3.3 Methods

Figure 0-1 Overview of the research process

I employed three main research methods. These are: ethnography, grounded theory and case study.

3.3.3.1 Ethnography

First, the entire project – engagement, data collection and data analysis – has been shaped ethnographically. By this I mean that the overall aim has been to develop an in-depth understanding of the concrete challenges of leadership for members of the learning network in the real-life, in-context settings of their accomplishment, and to do this through my direct immersion and interaction in that community (Kostera & Harding, 2021). Also, my own experiences, perspectives and interpretations as a seasoned practitioner have been integral to the research choices I made, as well as to the findings and conclusions of the study.

3.3.3.2 Grounded theory

Second, in the engagement phase of the research I took a grounded approach to data analysis (Charmaz, 2014). By this I mean that by using the coding protocols of grounded theory, I allowed the data to inform the development of models and frameworks which might explain leadership challenges based on the direct experiences and perspectives of my participants. I used these emergent ideas for two purposes: first to gain more clarity about the research problem in context, and second to strengthen my relationship with participating members of the network by (re)presenting the sense I was making of the data back to them. This cyclical process of engagement, data gathering, sense-making and analysis and feedback to the community has been a central tenet of my research strategy.

3.3.3.3 Case study

The three papers which form the core of the thesis are case studies developed around the learning challenges of the five executive shadowees who took part in the main research phase of my study. These are in-depth studies of how each of them accomplishes leadership work in situ through their spoken interactions. In each case, the analysis highlights important contextual factors. This enabled me to compare patterns and experiences across the different settings and to draw out threads of meaning which suggest subtle shifts in perspective on management learning practice.

3.3.4 Time horizons

My research is focused on the experiences and behaviours of corporate executives. The difficulty of gaining access to members of this community limited my choices concerning time horizons. Early in the doctoral process I looked for an opening to accompany an organisational change project over time on a single site, but I decided against this strategy because I suspected that tensions between the expectations of senior executives in terms of rapid turnround of results and my longer-term research aspirations would not sustain an equal relationship over time. I turned instead to a strategy based on snapshots of multiple sites. Furthermore, given the time and cost limitations inherent in a part-time doctoral project, a cross-sectional study was the most practical choice. Thus, the data were collected at separate single points in time in order to build up a rich enough data set comprising multiple sites and sources. Such practical considerations also shaped my sampling strategy and data collection methods, which I describe next.

3.3.5 Sampling strategy and data collection methods

I defined my research site and community as a professional women's network and its members. The network (PWN Global, 2023), currently organised around 27 European cities, provides opportunities for learning, career progression and networking. The community of interest I generated, with the support of the PWN board, meant I had a stable site (albeit with permeable boundaries) within which to carry out my research. At first, I took a convenience sampling approach working in a networked way from two original board members – one in Spain, the other in the Netherlands. With their personal introductions and support, I networked into five of the city networks by offering them a tailored, small group workshop about language, leadership and power I called the 'English and Power programme'. When I visited a city, I also offered a workshop-cum-lecture to a larger audience. In this engagement phase of the project, participants self-selected. When the data analysis of this phase was nearing completion and initial findings pointed towards more concrete aspects of the research problem, sampling became more targeted and theoretically informed. Specifically, the aspect of the research problem that came into focus at this critical decision point was how to change the way leadership is practised. Therefore, I sought interactive spoken data occurring naturally in organisational contexts where a leader aimed to influence how leadership was expressed in that context. I approached a number of members with whom I had developed a relationship through the engagement phase (and one non-member) to have a conversation about how I might deepen my understanding of the research problem, what sort of data I needed and why. Six initially accepted my proposal and five of these converted into research partners. I selected this networked approach to sampling because, as a member and peer, the relationship I was able to establish with members of the network was not tainted by the dynamics of 'selling' a product. I was offering my expertise without charge and engaging them in my research project in return. As the funnel became narrower and sampling more targeted, fewer participants were involved. Numbers of people attending larger events and meetings across all sites were: Benelux 50, Barcelona 110, Lisbon 70 and Madrid 75; there were 60 participants in the English and Power programme and just five executive shadowees. In total this strategy yielded 370 participants across the different sites and phases of the project.

This strategy also yielded two data sets. First, during the engagement phase (data set 1), generic qualitative data were generated through participant observation and captured in extensive field notes which were taken in and around my lectures and workshops, including notes and recordings made during the English and Power programme. With financial support from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Lancaster University, from April 2014 to June 2015, I carried out eight workshops in four countries – the Netherlands (1), Portugal (2), Spain (4) and Austria (1), plus a focus group on the topic in a fifth, Sweden. In total, 60 women managers from a range of multinational companies were involved. The intervention, a small group-learning event about leadership, language and power, involved inviting the participants to reflect in writing about professional identities, influence and inclusion. In a second stage, I interviewed each of the participants by telephone, elicited their ideas about significant power/ language-related challenges at work, and took notes during these interviews. Finally, the participants came together for a half-day workshop to share experiences and try out different conversational behaviours. These workshops were audio-recorded. In parallel, during this period, 21 semi-structured interviews with key informants were carried out. These interviews, which also included the five shadowees, were with senior executive managers in a range of companies whom I reached through personal networking effort. The interviews were recorded and notes were taken. Confidentiality agreements prevent me from providing further detail on which companies and managers were involved. I can say that, in general, these were senior managers from large multinational corporations in diverse sectors which included professional services, financial services and banking, fast-moving consumer goods, manufacturing, engineering, IT, telecommunications and printing.

Preliminary analysis of the interview and workshop data set suggested that at the same time as professionals strive to be better leaders, they slip into routines of interaction which make meeting their goals less likely: in short, people get stuck in their own patterns of conversation. Many of the English and Power participants expressed an uneasy tension between the way they behave as leaders and their sense of themselves as women. Alternative, supposedly more ‘feminine’ styles of leadership were at the same time attractive but rare and largely marginal. The data also revealed the extent to which dichotomous thinking influences popular notions of how leadership ought to be done. The second phase of the study was, therefore, designed to collect naturally occurring spoken data in order to get a deeper understanding of the problems related to trying to lead differently and to consider interventions which might better support leadership and leadership development.

The second data set (data set 2) was generated from five day-long shadowing episodes with the five research partners who had accepted my invitation to be involved. The executives I shadowed were all women and all had the organisational mandate to suggest recording some of their interactions with colleagues as they went about their day-to-day work. Furthermore, they all wanted to change patterns of conversation in some way *and* had the formal power to do something about it. They were also able to obtain the necessary informed consent. I collected data from naturally occurring formal and informal meetings, team briefings, an away-day, a board meeting, conference calls, operations meetings and one-to-one conversations. The participants presented the shadowing to colleagues in ways which they thought would be understood in the context of their role and their firm, for example, as an opportunity to understand and improve inclusive leadership across the firm, as a way of analysing and improving levels of participation in conference calls, as an opportunity to receive personal feedback on leadership style and so on. As with data set 1, the method served both research and learning and development goals. Although the shadowing episodes were designed principally with the research objectives in mind, the research partners were also looking for individual feedback of various kinds on their conversations and on their leadership. I talked at length with the five executives about their challenges and learning objectives regarding leadership, power and language. These learning objectives are an important part of the data. Finding a meeting point between their learning objectives and my research objectives was critical. I had to take their learning goals seriously and yet keep my own research objectives close to my operational decisions. In total there are four and a half days of shadowing data comprising field notes, photographs and recordings. Salient extracts from these recordings have been transcribed to facilitate close analysis. These extracts were chosen because they exemplify different meeting genres (Fairclough, 2010b) – conference calls, strategy ‘away days’, executive board meetings, weekly management meetings and so on, and different types of conversational activity (Levinson, 1979), such as brainstorming ideas, doing 'SWOT' analyses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, or reviewing the performance of team members.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants in both phases.

3.3.6 Tools and methods of analysis

In this section, I explain how I went about analysing the data I collected. I describe the specific techniques and procedures of grounded theory and discourse analysis that I used. The data collection was iterative. The engagement phase served not only to recruit participants but also to gain a broad understanding of these participants' learning challenges regarding leadership, language and power in workplace conversations. In this phase I decided to foreground an emic understanding by making use of the tools and procedures of grounded theory. My specific research objectives, which were drawn up in response to these initial findings, are to: i) describe some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are performed; ii) observe how leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done and iii) identify what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck. The second phase of data collection was therefore designed to yield spoken data which could be subjected to linguistic analysis using discourse analytic tools and methods. It is these data that I analyse in the three core papers to answer my research questions so, after an overview of the grounded theory approach used in the engagement phase, I go on to concentrate primarily on discourse analytic methods in this next section.

3.3.6.1 Grounded analysis of engagement phase data

Prior to the English & Power pre-programme interviews, participants were asked to reflect on and describe one or two situations where, when speaking English at work, they felt lacking in power or influence. This was the starting point for the interview during which participants were asked about the context for this (and other) interactions in English (with regard to bosses, colleagues, reporting relationships, culture, gender and so on). The interviews concluded with the questions: 1. So what do you want to change? 2. What is the most pressing challenge? Examples of these challenges can be found in *Appendix III: English & Power participant challenges* (p. 267). Eight English & Power workshops were designed to explore the issues raised by different sets of participants in the pre-programme interviews. Each of these workshops lasted around three hours. They were recorded, partially transcribed and analysed thematically using grounded theory techniques.

The starting point for extracting meaning from the learning challenges reported by participants of the English and Power programme was to acknowledge that my research methods developed within this specific context, rather than being context-free. Grounded theory facilitates understanding issues that require the researcher to go beyond received theory and look for a fresh view based on ideas and concepts that come directly from the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1968). For the qualitative analysis of data, I relied on constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014), drawing on inductive methods and analytical coding tools such as line-by-line coding, analytical memo-writing and constant comparison (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). It was important, given the emergent nature of my research strategy, to route my work 'in an analytical direction while still in the early stages of research' (Charmaz 2014, p. 136). Of analytical interest were the topics seen by the participants themselves as important for discussion and for learning. These are exemplified by the initial coding episode of the data collected during the first

English and Power workshop in Madrid which produced over 300 codes. These can be found in *Appendix IV: Initial English & Power coding* (p. 268). I followed Lansisalmi et al. in using this within an approach that is both context-based as well as one that applies some a priori concepts (Lansisalmi et al., 2004), in this case ideas about management learning and leadership. I agree with these authors, in that 'grounded theory gives room for the interpretation of lived experiences of the participants and also provides a systematic means to efficiently analyze large quantities of unstructured qualitative data' (2004, p.253). The data were first read and reread several times in order to conduct open coding of the 60 written accounts of the English and Power participants, alongside corresponding research notes taken during the pre-programme coaching conversations and complemented by my field notes. I used line-by-line coding, recurrence and repetition to identify themes. The next step involved integrating categories using axial coding (for example, Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014) to make connections between them, and collapsing categories with overlapping conceptual domains. I sought to move 'from the specific to the general in a series of steps of increasing abstraction' (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2019, p.921). After a close reading and comparative analysis of codes, emerging categories of the experience of leadership, language and power were identified. I developed codes with the objective of categorising the data incisively and completely 'in order to advance the theoretical direction of the work' (Charmaz 2014, p. 138). Focused codes were synthesised slowly by hand, first workshop by workshop and then over the whole English & Power data set, including the transcripts of pre-programme interviews. These codes pointed to the centrality of power dynamics (gaining it and losing it, wanting it while also feeling uncomfortable with it) as well as tensions inherent in doing leadership work (doing work well at the same time as changing how it is done, being in charge and being oneself). Explicit references to gender were present but were secondary to the theme of leadership ambition as can be seen in *Appendix V: English & Power focused codes* (p. 273).

The next step was to move beyond description in order to establish a strong theoretical direction (Charmaz, 2014, p. 246). Therefore, following the analytical direction suggested by coding of the workshop transcripts – especially power, identity and visibility - I attempted to identify patterns across the entire data set by revisiting the transcripts of pre-programme interviews. These transcripts had been coded originally in 2015 using grounded theory techniques of line-by-line coding and constant comparison. I revisited these data and codes in 2016 after having carried out the analysis of the workshop data. In this phase of analysis I began to synthesise and conceptualise larger segments of the data and to compare codes with codes, and codes with memos in order to identify the kinds of theoretical categories indicated by the coding process. Three main categories emerged - sites of interaction (suggesting ethnographic research methods), experiences of power (relating to debates in leadership and organisation studies) and discourse features (drawing on the tools and methods of linguistics). See *Appendix VI: Analytic categories and concepts* (p. 274) for details. These categories provided the structure for a chapter I had agreed to write for an International Leadership Association publication about how women orientate to power in workplace conversations (Murphy, 2017) the main themes of which can be found in *Appendix II: Talking power, an executive summary* (p. 267). A more thorough treatment of these initial ideas can be found in the chapter itself which is entitled '*Talking power: Women's experiences of workplace conversation*'.

I summarise my research choices in the table below.

RESEARCH GOALS (ENGAGEMENT)	**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**	**DATA**	**ANALYTICAL METHODS**
To engage with women leaders and managers about their experience of workplace conversations.	a) How do women experience power, influence and inclusion in workplace conversations?	First-person reflections and accounts of experience from managers in multinational corporations.	Grounded analysis to develop codes and categories. Content analysis to reveal hidden aspects of power, informed by feminist post-structural theory.

To Identify reported discourse features which shape the dynamics of power in spoken interaction.	b) Which reported discourse features shape the experience and the dynamics of power in spoken interaction in these settings?	Written reflections and recordings of small group discussions between women managers on the English and Power programme which identify specific discourse features.	Identification of discourse features and meta-communicative awareness, informed by applied (workplace) sociolinguistics.

Table 1 Phase 1 research decisions

Carrying out the grounded analysis at the same time as engaging with colleagues and clients in coaching and workshop settings forced me to think again about the focus of my research. I began with an explicit interest in gender but this was not the concept that was gaining momentum among the community of research participants. I captured this shift of focus in analytic memos, an example of which is provided in *Appendix VII: Sample analytic memo* (p.275). The shift shaped the collection and analysis of the shadowing data resulting in a stronger focus on legitimate power and organisational leadership.

3.3.6.2 Analysis of the research phase shadowing data

The three papers which make up the core of the thesis were analysed using discourse analytic tools of linguistics. The term 'discourse analysis' has multiple meanings across the disciplines of management learning, leadership studies and applied linguistics. In linguistic ethnography it indicates an authoritative analysis of language use (Rampton et al., 2004). As such it employs a range of discourse analytic tools which are selected from the different sub-disciplines of linguistics (such as pragmatics, sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, critical discourse analysis, interactional sociolinguistics and so on), applied using well established procedures and described using relatively technical vocabularies.

The first step in managing and preparing the data for analysis was to transcribe the 15 hours of spoken data collected during the shadowing episodes (i.e. data set 2). This was naturalised transcription (Bucholtz, 2000) with a view to familiarising myself with the data. I immersed myself in these data, reading and re-reading the transcriptions many times, guided at first in directions suggested by my grounded analysis of the engagement data. I noticed episodes where authority and power were negotiated; where direction and momentum were generated and where different styles of leadership were suggested by the interaction. At each reading I annotated the transcriptions by hand as I slowly developed a coding system in line with linguistic features cited in the literature I was reading. Although I knew the data very well, I could not see patterns which helped me connect the close analysis of language with the learning goals of these (women) executives. I needed a higher-level view of the data set.

At this point I carried out six detailed activity type analyses using the categories suggested by Levinson (Levinson, 1979) to compare aspects of the data and also to focus on specific episodes of interest for honing the questions I wanted to ask in each of the papers. (The activity type analysis tables can be found in *Appendix VIII: Activity type analyses (a) to (f)* (p. 277)). According to Levinson (see also Culpepper & Haugh, 2014), categories include analytical descriptions of: participants and setting; social roles; goals and purposes; social parameters; norms of information exchange, politeness or interpretation; discursive strategies; sequential structure of the conversation, and constraints on participants and modes of participation. Levinson's contribution to the ways in which interactants are constrained by different types of conversational activity in the workplace informs a number of important studies of workplace discourse from the perspectives of pragmatics and applied linguistics (for example, Angouri & Marra, 2010; Sarangi, 2000; Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). I return to this approach in more detail in Paper 3 where I use activity type analysis to draw out discursive differences between two otherwise very similar operational meetings.

I summarise decisions regarding the principal research goals below.

RESEARCH GOALS (RESEARCH)	**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**	**DATA**	**ANALYTICAL METHODS**
To carry out language-in-use analysis of naturally occurring spoken data	**RQ1** How can close analysis of spoken interaction extend	Linguistic data: Recorded and transcribed workplace conversations - a variety of meeting types	Activity type analysis Interactional sociolinguistics (IS) Conversation analysis (CA)

To identify patterns of spoken interaction in corporate settings which interact with leadership learning	our understanding of leadership work?	Ethnographic data: Shadowing, observation, field notes, research diary, corporate documentation	Case studies Rich descriptions of organisational context and learning challenges

Table 2 Phase 2 research decisions

The activity type analysis yielded 100 specific episodes of interest across the corpus. There were roughly equal numbers of episodes across the five shadowing days (Kate=21, Amaya=25, Nora=20, Gracia=17, Sara=18). The process of choosing these episodes was an iterative one, moving between delineating emerging areas of interest from the transcripts (patterns of authority-in-interaction, the relationship between status and influence, choice of interactional style, reification of patterns of talk and so on) and returning many times to the linguistics literature (e.g. Gordon & Kraut, 2018; Holmes et al., 2011; Koller, 2018; Mullany & Yoong, 2018; Vine, 2018) in order to understand the relationship between these and specific discourse features, such as questions and directives, control of the floor, stance, evaluation, indexicality and so on.

The activity type analysis drew my attention to the dynamics of authority and agency. I returned again to the data in search of interactional exchanges in which these dynamics might be identified and analysed using methods of linguistics. I followed the activity type logic and identified different aspects of the interactional accomplishment of authority some of which appeared static and others more mobile. A data table and related analytic memos can be found in *Appendix IX: Activity type authority analysis (p. 286).* At this point I was still in close contact with my research partners. The idea that authority might not be static, but mobile, appeared to illuminate one of the darker areas of their experiences of power: the unexpected moves by another speaker which leads to the sudden loss of power. With these ideas in mind, a second examination of the entire shadowing data set enabled me to further tease apart issues of individual and collective agency which so dominates the recent leadership studies literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of the thesis. I looked for what I called ‘scripts’ which would index different orientations to authority and the agency required to enact these. This process, the result of which can be found in *Appendix X: Agency and authority scripts* (p. 290), yielded analytical categories such as ‘levelling’ and ‘authority trouble’ which would later give me analytic purchase on the data points I selected for the case studies.

A third avenue of analytical exploration was related to leadership style and the instantaneous process of choice between a range of linguistic options. Style was an important topic of conversation during the English and Power discussions and well as during the shadowing episodes. I hypothesised that style might be understood in the context of very quick linguistic choices related to perceived risks and benefits. Although I started out by looking across the whole data set, in the end I concentrated on the two executives whose learning challenges related most closely to style (the engineers, Sara and Gracia). *Appendix XI: Self-team-task framework (*p. 291) shows the theoretical framework I developed to guide the linguistic analysis and *Appendix XII: Risks and benefits data points* (p. 292) shows fragments of this analysis.

Taken together the episodes form a representative data set for use in answering my overall research question about how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work. Furthermore, an iterative process of connecting the close study of the language in the transcripts, the learning challenges expressed by the five executives (informed also by the engagement phase analysis), critical theories of leadership and my expanding understanding of the field of applied, workplace linguistics led me to formulate my secondary research questions on the relationship between authority and leadership agency, the relationship between binary concepts and actual workplace talk, and challenge of disrupting one’s own patterns of interaction. I saw that my single corpus of linguistic data could also be contained as separate sets of data for analysis related to secondary research questions which could be addressed in each of the three core papers.

I took the decision to focus my analysis on each of the sites of data collection in turn, rather than to look across the whole data set. It was important in the context of the applied objectives implicit in the project to maintain a strong link between the five executives, their learning challenges and 'their' data in order to address the second element of my research question concerning the identification of interventions which might change or improve (their) leadership work. I matched each secondary question with transcribed data from one or two of the shadowing episodes. I carried out a de-naturalised transcription of these data points, that is, the transcription followed oral discourse forms rather than a naturalised written form of discourse (Bucholtz, 2000). I developed transcription conventions in line with the needs of the analysis as well as keeping in mind both the inter-disciplinary context and the practice setting of the research. These conventions can be found in Appendix I. The process of matching transcribed data, my contextual knowledge and particular aspect of the object of research was pragmatic. That is, I made decisions based on what would work best in finding answers to the questions under investigation. These decisions are summarised in Table 3.

RESEARCH GOALS (PAPERS)	**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**	**DATA**	**ANALYTICAL METHODS**
Paper 1: To describe some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are actually performed.	(1) What can be learned about leadership agency from a close study of spoken interaction?	Transcribed recordings of eight SWOT analysis sessions recorded during an away-day at corporate headquarters.	Case study 1: Kate Conversation analysis (CA): Epistemic and deontic stance and status
Paper 2: To observe how leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done.	(2.1) How do the two managers in our study orientate to oppositional discourses in their in-situ interactions? (2.2) How do they utilise these discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done?	Transcribed recordings of 7.5 hours of in situ meetings at the workplaces of Amaya (Barcelona) and Nora (Lisbon). one-to-one management reporting meetings, team briefings, troubleshooting etc.	Case study 2: Amaya and Nora ODA (organisational discourse analysis) IS, CA. For example: Performative role of questions; directives; politeness strategies Floor management etc
Paper 3: To identify what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck	(3.1) What patterns of talk can linguistic analysis help to identify? (3.2) What is keeping these patterns stuck?	Transcribed recordings of 6 hours of spoken interaction via conference calls – operational meetings chaired by Sara and Gracia.	Case study 3: Sara and Gracia Analysis of operational meetings as activity type. Identification of discursive strategies

			and related linguistic features

Table 3 Research decisions related to the papers

3.3.6.3 Analysis of continuity phase data

The second part of my main research question is addressed using data from across the project. I ask:

RQ2. Building on the analysis (of the engagement and shadowing data), which interventions to meaningfully change or improve leadership work can be identified?

The research design I chose in order to be able to answer this question was informed by analytical protocols set out in literature describing pragmatic methods (e.g. Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Maxcy, 2003; Morgan 2014a, 2014b) to follow the five steps outlined below:

1. *Recognising a situation as problematic*: From the initial grounded analysis of the engagement data, I identified a problem in the way in which leadership was conceptualised based on abstract ideas rather than actual practice. Management and leadership learning designs are thus frequently informed by these distanced, and even inaccurate, conceptualisations.

2. *Considering the difference it makes to define the problem one way rather than another*: The three core papers examine different aspects of the problem. The results of these analyses and their subsequent interpretation may serve to develop possible applications based on a more complete picture of how leadership work is accomplished. These results suggest subtle shifts in perspective on management learning practice.

3. *Developing a possible line of action as a response to the problem*: The key findings indicating possible implications for enacting leadership differently were explored with five research partners in a small group-learning setting. This meeting was not recorded but notes were taken during and after the meeting on points that the members of the group found revealing. The linguistic analysis carried out for the three core papers revealed patterns of language use of which the leaders were only subliminally aware. The partners reported that this insight into their own leadership practices provided meaningful learning.

4. *Evaluating potential actions in terms of their likely consequences*: I carried out this step as a theoretical exercise based on a combination of the common threads of meaning revealed by the linguistic analysis, the response from the research partners to this input and judgements based on my professional experience.

5. *Taking actions that are felt to be likely to address the problematic situation*: I suggest possible actions that can be taken by managers in leadership roles and by leadership and management learning practitioners. These can be found in Chapter 5.

Bringing together key findings from the three core papers regarding the invisibility of leadership processes, leaders' experiences of power as 'authority trouble' and the importance of moments of choice in the flow of interaction, important questions regarding the nature of leadership and how best to develop it are raised.

These research decisions are summarised in Table 4

RESEARCH GOALS (CONTINUITY)	**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**	**DATA**	**ANALYTICAL METHODS**
To develop fresh insights into leadership and leadership development in order to make practical suggestions for leadership and management learning practitioners	Building on the principal analysis, which interventions to meaningfully change or improve leadership work can be identified?	Project diaries from both phases of intervention/ data-gathering work Notes on ongoing conversations with research partners Summary of findings shared with research partners in a small group-learning setting and field notes from this event	Organisational learning methods based on enquiry which position concepts and theories (such as applied linguistic insights) as tools to think with in order to 'anticipate and reflect on action and upon ourselves as acting' (Elkjaer, 2009, p.78).

Table 4 Phase 3 research decisions

The choices described above align with my overall research aim to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. I have tried to remain open and reflexive about the research decisions I have taken within the general framework for evaluating good qualitative research suggested by Tracey (2010); there are, nonetheless, inevitable methodological limitations in any research design and I turn to these now.

3.4 Methodological limitations

This section examines the methodological limitations of my research design. In it I outline the trade-offs I made between an ideal design and practical decisions I took in light of constraints, principally around access to good data, and other related concerns such as lack of time, budget constraints, inherent limitations of the methods of analysis I chose and sampling issues. I discuss these methodological limitations and explain first, why they were justifiable given the context for the research, second, how I mitigated the impacts of these to the best degree possible and third, given these constraints, how my study is valuable despite its limitations.

An ideal design aiming to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work, so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions, needs to examine the detail of leadership work through the analytical lens of linguistics, and at the same time develop a broad understanding of leadership learning challenges so that any fresh insights from this close analysis can be examined with their application in mind. Trying to keep both points of analysis in focus is one of the strengths of the study, but it also has its limitations. The necessary breadth of the different analytic focal points means less depth of linguistic analysis than if I had chosen to limit the study to a more restricted research goal and/or data set. I mitigated the possible effects of working across the different types of data generated by adopting a pragmatist approach, that is, making theoretically driven and robust design choices based on real people with their real-world problems who took part in my research.

The principal limitation was gaining access to good interactive data. Leadership does not happen in snapshots. It occurs over time and in unpredictable ways among yet unknown configurations of actors. The decision to limit shadowing to a single day was driven by two practical considerations: first, informed consent was more straightforward to obtain when a single day was chosen in advance, and secondly, multiple visits to corporate sites across Europe would have been unrealistically costly and time-consuming. Naturally occurring spoken data obtained over time (for example, using the participant-led methods associated with the work of Janet Holmes and colleagues in the New Zealand language in the workplace project (Holmes, 1998), and Ruth Wodak's ethnographic studies of the European Parliament (Wodak, 2011) may yield better data to examine leadership interactions over time. However, my study, which is so firmly anchored in the learning conversations of research partners and network members, enables connections to be made between perceptions of a group of women leaders and the actual spoken behaviour of some of their number. This is a valuable perspective in and of itself.

Early in the study I hoped that it would be possible to convene my core group of research partners to engage with preliminary meanings I was making from data collected while shadowing them. I had hoped to test the credibility of my results by triangulating findings from my analyses of both data sets with the real-problem perspectives of my research partners, which would have strengthened not only the multi-vocality of the work but also its openness to member perceptions (Tracey, 2010). Unfortunately, I was unable to secure sufficient funding to guarantee the possibility of hosting a participative research meeting in Lancaster so I was unable to include that feedback loop in the data. Instead, to test the resonance and practical contribution of the findings, several years later, in May 2022, I invited the partners to an informal learning meeting where I presented my analysis and results. Of the seven core research partners (five shadowees plus two facilitator board members), five attended a self-funded meeting in Madrid. Their testimony is that research results resonate with them and may be transferable to their corporate settings in different ways. I discuss the potential applications and avenues for further work in Chapter 5.

Finally, the research design, as well as yielding opportunities to bridge theory and practice, also revealed some inherent tensions. First, using real learning needs with a commitment to give feedback in return for access to data meant that these data could be somewhat compromised by the pressure to present findings in a positive light. I would argue here that I while rejected a critical comparison of the five case studies precisely on these grounds, overall, this did not compromise the criticality with which I approached data nor openness at the point of feedback. Secondly, the combination of leadership studies and linguistic ethnography meant using linguistic methods in ways which would be accessible to scholars unfamiliar with the technicalities of linguistic analysis. It could be argued that techniques and methods used in this way may have made the tools less sharp. However, I would argue that broadening the reach of applied linguistics through organisationally situated linguistic ethnography creates the need for a different sort of precision: one born of trans-disciplinary communication and practicable applicability.

This chapter has described the methods used in my project to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction extends our understanding of leadership work and how, building on this analysis, which interventions to change or improve leadership work can be identified. I summarise the main points made in the chapter in the concluding summary.

3.5 Concluding summary

In this chapter I have presented the conceptual frameworks which underpin the thesis. These comprise a statement to position my work within the theoretical framework of social constructionism, an outline of linguistic ethnography as both epistemology and methodology and an anchor statement about my practice perspective. I followed this with a detailed description of my research design choices, including a pragmatist philosophy, the operational aspects of my linguistic ethnographic research strategy, the research methods I employed, my sampling strategy and data collection methods for the different phases of the project, and finally the tools and methods of analysis of grounded theory and discourse analysis, specifically activity type analysis, conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics. I completed the chapter by examining the methodological limitations of the study and detailing how I mitigated the impact of these.

Before proceeding to the three core papers, I provide a brief overview of the thesis in order to allow the reader to situate the arguments made in each of the papers within the project as a whole. Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the project and made a case for the importance of the research. The principal and secondary research questions addressed in the thesis were also presented in that chapter. Chapter 2 attempted to provide a brief summary of the literature relating to the project, specifically at the intersection of leadership studies and workplace sociolinguistics. The review aimed to establish my familiarity with the perspectives, theories and bodies of work from both disciplines and, in the process, identify gaps exposed by this interdisciplinary juxtaposition. Chapter 3 has provided the rationale and methodological detail for the study with the purpose of presenting the conceptual frameworks which underpin the thesis. Chapter 4 will be dedicated to the three case studies and to answering the secondary research questions laid out in Chapter 1. The papers aim to combine insights about leadership drawn from organisation studies and applied linguistics to address facets of organisational leadership which were identified as a result of data analysis during the engagement phase of the project. Each chapter will be prefaced by brief pen portraits which sketch the managers' concerns and learning objectives. Chapter 5 will summarise and interpret my principal research findings. In it I answer my principal research questions before elaborating on real-world implications and possible applications for management learning practice. Chapter 6 will conclude the study by summarising the key research findings in relation to my research aims and research questions, as well as the value and contribution of the work. It will also review the limitations of the study and propose opportunities for future research. I turn now to Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: The case studies

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the core of the thesis. It comprises three articles which address different aspects of the research problem. Each paper responds to one of the three research objectives:

1. To describe some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are actually performed.
2. To observe how leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done.
3. To identify what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck.

As I described in the previous chapter, to operationalise these objectives, I designed a strategy to collect interactive spoken data which occurs naturally in organisational settings by shadowing five senior managers as they went about their day-to-day work. The three papers are case studies which examine how these research partners accomplish their leadership work.

The first paper explores how differently theorised aspects of leadership agency are manifest in interaction. It is a case study based on Kate's leadership of strategy away-day. Paper 2 paper deals with generating change in organisational settings and identifies some of the tensions and contradictions of trying to establish alternative ways of working. The case study draws out commonalities in the way two leaders, Amaya and Nora, try to influence the way work is accomplished. The third paper applies insights from applied linguistics leadership research to leadership and management learning in the workplace. The case study examines aspects of language use which shed light on leadership learning challenges identified by two managers, Sara and Gracia.

Kate, Amaya, Nora, Sara and Gracia shared their leadership learning challenges with me during the engagement phase of the project. Analysis of the data from this phase shaped the research but is not included as part of the thesis (but see

Murphy, 2017). However, I have tried to hold myself to account through my reflexive research practices. Tusting reminds us of the importance of these practices:

> Researcher reflexivity is often spoken of in an abstract way, so it is important to point out that it is best supported by ongoing *practices* of reflexivity, such as keeping a written research journal on a regular basis and challenging oneself with specific questions about the researcher's role, or having regular discussions with other people. (Tusting, in press)

I have kept a research journal, now running to several volumes, which covers the entire period of the research (2014 ongoing) so that I could revisit my unfolding understanding of the data and their meaning. The diary contains reflections on conversations with partners, notes to myself about moments of struggle and realisation, questions about what stood out to me during the shadowing episodes and thoughts about why that seemed important. In sum, I kept a continuous record of what I was learning about myself and my research problem. Brief pen portraits of the research partners, taken from the diary, precede the paper which examines 'their' data.

I interviewed Kate and Gracia (and some of their colleagues) about their experiences of leadership, language and power; and Sara, Amaya and Nora participated in the English and Power talks and workshops. These conversations were the context for and input to the final research design – but they were so much more than this. The detail and depth of insights that these and other participants shared made me realise how little I had been able, during my career, to create spaces for women (and men) to learn with peers about their experiences of power at work and what that meant to them in practice. The question that became increasingly important to them, and to me, was: What just happened in the flow of conversation that later left them wondering how power had either stuck tightly to them or slipped away? My professional activity, and theirs, is constrained by practices in which power remains implicit and hidden from collective view. This power shapes inequalities. Imagining and experimenting with how leadership might be different is a learning challenge not only for my participants, but also for me. I am part of these data and the ‘what just happened?’ question is one I also ask myself.

4.2 Case study 1: Talking power

The provisional nature of power as an aspect of leadership learning emerged out of the engagement phase of data collection and analysis (Murphy, 2017). It was also a key learning objective for Kate, who is the focus of Paper 1.

> *Also, what kind of women? Which women? Are they really as diverse as you might think? Or are they also competitive and goal-orientated? It is men and women alike. I can feel it in myself – this positioning of power and authority – where am I and where are you? (Kate, 2014)*

The case study examines shifting dynamics of power in spoken interaction and how they relate to differently theorised aspects of leadership.

4.2.1 Kate

At the time of my interview with Kate in 2014, she was on the verge of changing jobs. In the old job, she line managed 30 highly skilled people on site. The new job would bring a considerable shift in focus. She would have no staff on site, instead there would be four people reporting to her from different parts of the world and her role would change from having a clear hierarchical mandate to one based on soft power. At one level, she was looking for what she termed 'tricks or solutions to break the patterns' of virtual (and other) meetings where only the same few people contribute, but as the conversation went on, she reflected more deeply on her leadership. These issues were as part of her and the way she wanted to do things, rather than simply something one takes on as part of day-to-day management. Kate is aware of a tension between doing leadership in her own way by taking care to bring people with her, and the way that this can be read by others, including her own line manager.

> *The feedback that I sometimes get is that, yes okay, I understand the aim, but you take a long time to make your point because you want to have everybody along with you. So because you don't state your vision, your line manager thinks you don't have one. (Kate, 2016)*

For Kate, the bigger issue is how to get the best from diverse teams, but this difficult to realise in practice because it is seen as weakness. And in herself, she recognises two contradictory ideas: on the one hand it is important to involve everyone rather than to take control, but on the other, she is also aware of the relative power position she finds herself in with other colleagues. In other words, she senses subtle - and sometimes not so subtle - manoeuvres within meetings and conversations where she must both involve people but at the same time drive her ideas through to a decision. She wonders if leading isn't always about manipulating others. This question frames the shadowing episode which took place almost two years after the interview in February 2016. The relationship between influence and power, authority (and the lack of it), leadership style, achieving outcomes, being seen and recognised as a good leader, but also a maintaining a sense of authenticity and personal comfort with one's own chosen way of interacting - are important for Kate to understand and learn more about. I pick up these issues in the paper which follows.

4.2.2 Paper 1: Authority dynamics: A discourse analytic study of leadership agency

Abstract

This article explores how aspects of leadership agency are discursively performed. It responds to Schnurr and Schroeder's 2019 call for more systematic and open dialogue between leadership researchers in business and organization science and in applied linguistics and pragmatics (Schnurr and Schroeder, 2019). Working with a two-minute extract of spoken interaction, audio-recorded during a corporate strategy day, and drawing on the tools and methods of linguistic analysis, I suggest that this empirical study of interaction provides a lens through which to explore the realization of leadership agency. More specifically, I show that an analysis of epistemic and deontic rights in spoken interaction illustrates how this is accomplished in-situ. The analysis contributes to our understanding by illustrating how differently theorized aspects of leadership agency (individualized, interactively accomplished and processual) are manifest in interaction. This discourse analytic study contributes to leadership research in two ways: i) by using authority-in-interaction as an analytical lens through which to examine different theoretical orientations to leadership agency; and ii) by describing some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are performed from these different perspectives. The study thereby contributes to critical leadership studies' challenge to hegemonic, individualised notions of leadership by identifying and describing ways in which leadership agency is (discursively) co-produced.

Key words: leadership agency; discourse analysis; authority-in-interaction, applied linguistics

Introduction

In their 2019 paper, Schnurr and Schroeder argue that the analytical tools and methods of applied linguistics and pragmatics can make important contributions to critical leadership scholarship in two ways:

1. By offering tools and methodologies which help to 'address the current lack of empirical evidence needed to support and underpin theoretical assumptions which seek to challenge hegemonic notions of leadership' (Schnurr and Schroeder, 2019: 447);

2. By contributing to debates about 'which terminologies best capture the closely related issues of power and agency' (Schnurr and Schroeder, 2019: 448) and the related invitation to leadership researchers to 're-think these dynamics in much more detail and in much more critical and dialectical ways' (Collinson, 2017: 279).

This paper aims to feed into these debates by using the tools and processes of linguistic analysis to identify and describe some of the discursive processes through which leadership is accomplished. In line with research that challenges person-centred conceptualizations, the paper examines how leadership agency is collaboratively produced in relations and interactions (Clifton and Mueni, 2021; Cunliffe and Erikson, 2011; Fox et al., 2020; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Van De Mieroop et al., 2020). In this article, I analyze empirical data to explore aspects of leadership agency in a corporate strategy meeting. The group, which I describe below in more detail, was temporarily convened to share knowledge and offer strategic input outside the day-to-day organizational hierarchy. This means that apart from minimal encouragement to take up facilitation and note-taking tasks, formal leadership roles and responsibilities are not a priori assigned to specific individuals.

The study follows recent conceptualizations of leadership which make a deliberate attempt to go beyond the individual as the locus of leadership agency (Carroll et al., 2008; Clifton, 2017; Choi and Schnurr, 2014, Gadelshina, 2020; Gram-Hanssen, 2021; Raelin, 2016, Tourish 2014). There is a growing number of theoretical perspectives (see Denis et al., 2012; Crevani et al., 2010; and Ospina and Foldy, 2015 for overviews) and although there may not yet be a consensus on terminology, scholars nevertheless agree that this rich theoretical interest lacks a solid empirical base (Ospina et al., 2017; Simpson et al., 2018). The tools and methodologies of applied linguistics, by focusing on 'specific discursive processes through which leadership is accomplished at the micro level of interaction' (Schnurr and Schroeder, 2019: 446), may reveal aspects of leadership previously obscured from view.

An important part of how people accomplish leadership can be accessed by studying conversation (Fairhurst, 2007; Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien; 2012, Clifton, 2019) using discourse analytic approaches such as conversation analysis (for example, Clifton, 2012, 2017, 2019; Larsson and Lundholm, 2010; Svennevig, 2008) and interactional sociolinguistics (Gordon and Kraut, 2018; Schnurr 2009, 2022; Schnurr and Chan, 2011; Vine et al., 2008) which aims to bring together here-and-now interactions with the broader environment in which actors operate (for a discussion of the affordances of a closer dialogue between the paradigms of conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics see Angouri and Mondana, 2017).

I focus on three kinds of orientation to leadership agency – individualized, interactively accomplished and processual – and show how discourse analytical approaches offer insights from each of these perspectives into how leadership is accomplished. To distinguish between these orientations, I draw on Simpson's (2016) re-examination of agency in leadership theorizing, and to provide an analytical framework for extending understanding of these dynamics I refer to conversation analytic accounts of the interactive realization of epistemic rights (Heritage and Raymond, 2005) and deontic rights (Stevanovic and Peräkylä, 2012). It is important to examine aspects of informal authority in interaction and to identify processes which contribute to agency because the way authority is defined and orientated to influences possible understandings of leadership itself (Heifitz, 2011; Grint, 2010; Raelin, 2016; Tourish, 2014).

The principal question I address is: What can be learnt about leadership agency from a close study of spoken interaction? In answering this question, the study contributes to leadership research in two ways: i) by using authority-in-interaction as an analytical lens through which to examine different theoretical orientations to leadership agency; and ii) by describing some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are performed from these different perspectives. By connecting agency and authority in this way, I demonstrate how empirical studies of interaction can contribute to leadership theory by identifying and describing the ways in which leadership agency is (discursively) co-produced.

Theoretical framework

Organizational activity is partly based on people's ability to recognise each other's orientation to agency and authority as they engage in conversation (Heritage, 2012). In traditional leadership literature, however, agency and authority are mostly conceptualized in individualized terms as agentic intentionality with effects for which authority is both an individual resource and a precondition. In contrast, from a discursive perspective, they are interactive accomplishments. Before turning to the analysis of empirical data which support these ideas, I draw connections between two theories (one from leadership studies, the second from conversation analysis) to approach the empirical analysis of leadership agency. I first refer to Barbara Simpson's (2016) theoretical re-exploration of different orientations to leadership agency before summarising relevant aspects of Stevanovic and Peräkylä's (2014) theoretical framework for understanding epistemic and deontic orders in organizational action. Taken together, these two theoretical frameworks support this analysis which extends our understanding of different orientations to leadership agency.

Leadership Agency

Simpson draws on the work of Pragmatist writers John Dewey and Arthur Bentley (1949 [1960]), in their book 'Knowing and the Known', who distinguish between three categories of action: self-action, inter-action and trans-action (see Simpson, 2016 and Elkjaer, 2018 for a summary of this work). Simpson argues that these categories illuminate different orientations to leadership as object of enquiry. 'Self-action' in Dewey and Bentley's terms refers to 'independent actors', 'selves' or 'forces' which are taken as 'activating events' (Dewey & Bentley, 1949 [1960]: 72, cited in Simpson, 2016: 159–160). Simpson argues that this sort of thinking is 'nowhere more evident than in the leadership literature' (2016: 161) where debates have for so long been dominated by heroic accounts of leadership (for example, Bass & Avolio,1994; MacGregor Burns, 1978). Such individualized leadership agency is conceptualized as being located within an individual and it is usually attributed to inherent personality traits or special skills. Dewey & Bentley define the second category, 'inter-action', as a dyadic form of action in which objects operate on one another. According to Simpson, this thinking underpins more recent literature which defines leadership as shared or distributed between more than one entity (for example, Gronn, 2002; Pearce and Conger, 2003). From this perspective, shared leadership agency temporarily resides in individuals as they inter-act with each other in more participative or collaborative ways. The final category, 'trans-action', is defined by Dewey and Bentley in opposition to seeing the world 'as if it were composed of irreconcilable separates' (1949 [1960]: 69, cited in Simpson 2016: 160), which thus, according to Simpson, reflects an ontological shift towards process and emergence where leadership is conceptualized as relational as opposed to entitative (for example, Cunliffe and Eriksen, 2011; Hosking, 1995; Uhl Bien, 2006). From this perspective, relational leadership agency can be neither isolated nor located in either single or multiple entities.

Related conceptualizations of leadership agency and authority can also be articulated from three perspectives. First, individualized leadership agency can be seen as residing principally in an individual. This assumes that any collective agency is somehow mobilized by and can be attributed to the actions of one of the individuals involved. In effect, leadership occurs when a skilful leader mobilizes his or her followers to pursue goals collectively. Authority viewed in this way is an individual resource which can be drawn upon in certain discursive moves to legitimize a leader's power to shape events. Second, distributed leadership agency can be understood as being shared among agents as an integral part of the conjoint accomplishment of leadership itself (Choi and Schnurr, 2014; Clifton, 2017). In a similar vein, informal authority-in-interaction is seen as a collaborative accomplishment as opposed to an individual resource (Van De Mieroop et al., 2020). Thus, leadership processes – such as the production of direction or the mobilization of collective agency – can be attributed to this collaborative endeavour. Third, relational leadership agency can be seen as separate from the individual entities involved. It holds that what is commonly recognized as 'leadership' is actually the outcome of a collective process (Crevani, 2018). In effect, the processes which contribute to leadership work in specific situations that extend beyond entitative thinking and imply that informal authority in interaction has processual, structural and temporal dimensions (Raelin, 2016; Simpson et al., 2018). These ideas are summarised in Table 5.

Leadership agency	**Individualized leadership agency**	**Distributed leadership agency**	**Relational leadership agency**
Leadership agency identified in the production of direction, the mobilisation of collective agency and changing or setting a course of action e.g. Crevani 2018)	[self-action] Something within a single individual usually attributed to personality traits or skills	[inter-action] Shared or distributed between one or more entities	[trans-action] Can be neither isolated nor located in either single or multiple entities
How is this process understood to occur? Dewey & Bentley, 1949 [1960]; Simpson, 2016: 159–160.	Leadership is primarily seen as the influence of an individual's discursive strategies upon a group Leader mobilizes followers e.g. Bass & Alvolio, 1994; MacGregor Burns, 1978.	Leadership is interactively accomplished A conjoint endeavour, e.g. Choi & Schnurr, 2014; Clifton, 2017; Ospina & Foldy, 2015.	Emphasis on processes which produce leadership (processual, structural and temporal) i.e. Leadership is the outcome of a collaborative process, e.g. Crevani, 2018; Simpson, 2018; Tourish, 2014.
What sort of authority-in-interaction is required to perform the kinds of agency described above?	As an individual resource	As a joint accomplishment	Emergent, embedded in context and changing over time

Table 5 Orientations to leadership agency

To answer my principal research question concerning what can be learnt about leadership agency from a close study of spoken interaction, I turn to a discourse analytic understanding of epistemic and deontic facets of authority.

Authority-in-interaction

According to Benoit-Barné and Cooren (2009), authority is not 'a stable trait belonging to one agent' (p.19) because its sources constantly shift from one agent to another. Thus if, as these authors suggest, 'authority is distributed among agents and collectively achieved' (p.25), the question for the analyst is where to look. In this paper I explore the idea of three orientations to informal leadership authority-in-interaction which align with the dynamics of leadership agency described by Simpson. To identify and describe some of the discursive processes involved in co-constructing what this means in practice, I draw on Stevanovic and Peräkylä's (2014) notion of epistemic and deontic orders (2014: 186). Their approach focuses on the fleeting negotiations at the interface of knowledge and power and shows how participants orientate to each other's agency as direction is produced and courses of action are set or changed.

Discourse analytic studies distinguish between the epistemic and deontic facets of spoken interaction. The epistemic facet pertains to participants' rights and obligations to know relative to co-participants (Heritage and Raymond, 2005; Heritage, 2012), and the deontic facet pertains to a participant's entitlement to impose actions on co-participants (Stevanovic and Peräkylä, 2012). According to Stevanovic and Peräkylä, agency is thus tightly woven together with epistemic and deontic authority. These authors argue that when participants are making decisions about joint future actions, they have to orientate to the epistemic and deontic rights that each participant has (see also Heritage and Raymond, 2005). Participants' orientations towards epistemic and deontic authority can be discerned from a close study of language.

Participants' orientation to rights to know are anchored in the epistemic order. Every time we speak, we indicate what we know and what we think others in the conversation know. As Heritage (2012) notes, we constantly need to monitor who knows what (and better), and to do so we interpret what he calls epistemic status and stance (2012: 4–6). Epistemic status is the relative position a person has in a certain domain of knowledge, shaped also by institutional expectations of who should know what. Epistemic stance refers to public ways of displaying how knowledgeable one is and this is often expressed through different grammatical realisations of the propositional content. Epistemic authority (Heritage and Raymond, 2006; Clifton, 2014) is about the right to know and to display this knowledge.

Participants' orientation to power, control and agency are anchored in the deontic order. At the most fleeting level of encounter, relations that have to do with 'rights and obligations in requesting for, deciding about and performing actions in the world' provide the coordinates for co-orientation (Stevanovic and Peräkylä, 2014: 190). In this context, deontic status refers to the position that a participant has in a certain domain of action relative to his or her co-participants. Deontic stance refers to a speaker's public ways of displaying how powerful they are and is often expressed in the linguistic form of the utterance. Someone's deontic authority is their right to determine another's future actions. Participants use their contextual knowledge to make judgements about their relative authority statuses and use these judgements as resources as they design utterances, and take them into consideration in their interpretation of those of their co-participants.

The interactive formulation of agency and authority provides a lens through which to examine different conceptualisations of leadership agency. Next, I describe my data and methodology before turning to empirical analysis.

Data and methodology

The data analysed in this study are taken from a corpus of 15 hours of audio-recorded meetings collected during five day-long shadowing episodes in different corporate settings. The data set comprises face-to-face and virtual meetings and a range of strategic, operational and managerial meeting objectives. In this article I draw on transcribed data from a corporate strategy day which had been designed to share knowledge and develop a plan regarding a specific strategic challenge. People with knowledge, expertise and authority had been invited to participate in the event which was held at the corporate headquarters. Part of the day included several SWOT[1] analyses and the two-minute extract of interactive

[1] To this business community a SWOT needs no explanation. With its origins in Harvard-based studies of the 1960s, the approach to structuring a strategic conversation invites participants to identify elements in their company s environment which might represent strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

data analysed in this article is taken from one of these. The extract is representative of mid-conversation patterns from across the data set. These ‘middle sections’ of group interaction generally receive less attention in the literature on business meetings than do beginning and endings (Handford, 2010; Angouri and Marra, 2010). They are of interest to me because they make 'the discursive techniques by which leadership is achieved’ (Clifton 2012: 148) more visible and open to analysis.

To collect the data, I placed a small audio-recorder in the middle of the table around which the group of eight participants were seated. I had been introduced at the start of the day as the senior manager's 'shadow', present there to gather ethnographic and linguistic data which would be used to study how leadership actually works. Observations relating to seating arrangements, movements around the room, flip-chart records, gestures and other actions were included in comprehensive field notes taken during and after the shadowing episode. The interaction from which the examples in the paper were selected was transcribed using the transcription conventions listed in the Appendix.

The analysis is informed by linguistic ethnography (Rampton et al., 2004, 2015; Tusting, 2019; Tusting and Maybin, 2007) which derives from both ethnographic and linguistic traditions, a relationship characterised by Rampton et al. as ‘tying ethnography down’ and ‘opening linguistics up’ (2004: 4). While not so narrowly defined as to only be interested in language per se, this approach takes a linguistic point of entry into data analysis using discourse analytic tools which are selected from a range of approaches and methods, applied using well established procedures, described using relatively technical vocabularies. (See Heinrichsmeier, 2019; and Rampton, 2019 for detailed descriptions of the tools used for the micro-analysis of spoken interaction.)

In linguistic ethnography, the close analysis of data begins with the context and the particular constraints on individual and group behaviour imposed by the shared norms and conventions of culturally recognised units of interaction or 'activity types' (Angouri and Marra, 2014; Levinson, 1992; Sarangi and Roberts, 1999). Meeting participants are aways bound by a normative set of expectations, so the approach pays particular attention to features which serve as clues as to how people make sense of what is going on in a particular setting. Linguistic ethnographers often turn to interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz, 1982; Rampton, 2019) to support the analysis of language use in its wider sociocultural context because 'the approach benefits from both contextual information and fine-grained analytic tools to understand how meaning is negotiated between participants in interaction' (Vine et al., 2008: 345). Features under scrutiny include content and topic management, turn-taking, interruptions, hesitations and pauses, discourse markers (well, okay, right etc.), use of pronouns etc., drawn from a wide range of linguistic, paralinguistic, pragmatic and conversational features. For example, Wodak et al. (2011) draw attention to an individual choice of leadership style (either hierarchical authoritarian or interpersonal egalitarian) and the goal-orientated discursive strategies, and related linguistic features, with which these are performed. Such strategies can be identified and described with reference to linguistic features such as soliciting opinions via the use of open questions, supporting existing propositions via repetition, and agreement cues to maintain forward momentum of a conversation (2011: 604). In contrast, Choi and Schnurr (2014) draw attention to the ways in which discursive leadership activities, such as solving disagreements and establishing common ground, are conjointly performed. They describe the ways in which meeting participants work together collaboratively to reach agreement by inviting others to elaborate their concerns, to explore the source of disagreements and ratify each other's suggestions (2014: 19). Van De Mieroop et al. (2020) extend this idea by using multi-modal analysis to show how informal and formal leadership emerge in tension with each other.

From a sociolinguistic-pragmatic perspective, agency is understood as interaction bound by linguistic and contextual constraints. This means that a request made by one participant does not function as such until some form of semiotic acknowledgment, or 'compliance token', displays understanding that the recipient knows the utterance has consequences for them. 'Only when a move has elicited a response can we say communication is taking place' (Gumperz, 1982: 1). Put simply, whether an utterance has its intended effect depends not only on the agentic intention of the speaker, but also on the interpretative frame of the recipient. That people's assumptions about power, status, role and knowledge 'form the very basis for indirect communicative strategies' (Gumperz, 1982: 6-7) means meeting participants are continually engaged in interpreting shifts in the conversational flow to position themselves in relation to others. In conversation, then, agency and authority are inextricably linked, as revealed by the analysis which follows.

Analysis

To identify specific processes through which different aspects of leadership are actually accomplished, I have chosen a representative two-minute extract which I have further divided into three shorter sections for analysis.

Extract 1, lines 1-20: Kate's request

After an introduction to the overall goal for the strategy day, the participants are invited to break into smaller syndicate groups to analyse the problem situation in more depth. This syndicate group of eight members is discussing the current technology available via which the strategic goal might be reached. Just before the extract begins, two of the more vocal participants, Anke and Fred, have been discussing tactics at length. Kate, the event convenor, enters the room midway in the conversation. The extract opens with her first intervention in the meeting. The immediate prior utterance is indicated in line 0.

[0 Fred they will have to review now all the work we've done in the last half year and if necessary they are going to consumer tests to pre-empt]

1	Kate	so what are we saying yeah sorry↑
2	Anke	((*project*)) [is the European team was ((*xxx*))
3	Kate	-/ok the European team/
4	Anke	/was ((*brand*)) was/ a ((*product type*)) yeah↑
5	Kate	yep yeah yeah
6	Anke	because /they have to do yeah/

Fred		/that’s a lot of volume/ the main thing-
Anke		-exactly . that’s the big volume that they had
		/to reduce/
Kate		/so you say/ that it’s positive that it’s gonna
		/help/
Anke		/yes/ so if that is . then I hope this is a
		tick /in the/
Kate		/yeah/
Anke		box for a <u>lo:t of</u> other countries because
Maarten		yeah /yeah yeah yeah yeah/
Kate		yeah . /indeed yeah yeah/
Fred		and if it doesn’t err: and if it doesn’t come
		back positive then the er the game is back
		on <u>our</u> plate /again really/

Highly authoritative speakers need not provide explanations for their demands (Stevanovic and Peräkulä, 2012: 299), and the extract opens in this way with Kate interrupting to request clarification. However, she chooses to use the inclusive pronoun ‘*we*’, rather than asking, 'What are *you* saying?', which would have put some distance between her and Fred. Also, the apology in Kate’s utterance softens its effect and reduces her deontic authority. By complying, Anke orientates to Kate's turn as a request for information and thus launches into a full explanation. She is cut off by Kate at a juncture at which her turn is not yet finished (Sacks et al., 1974). Kate interrupts in line 3 with an information receipt (the discourse marker '*okay*') with which she signals that she understands what Anke is saying and wants her to continue. In line 4, Anke continues to fill in the background information for Kate, tagging a rising '*yeah?*' onto the end of her utterance. This rising intonation implies that a response is required. Anke is possibly fishing for confirmation, which Kate quickly provides in line 5. Anke is set to continue with her explanation. That she considers this explanation necessary indicates that she is positioning herself as having lower deontic status but higher epistemic status than Kate. Kate does not have time to either confirm or disconfirm this relative status before Fred interjects (in line 7), overlapping this explanation and introducing a new topic. With the floor briefly to himself, Fred announces he has important ‘main’ information to add. Fred is making an epistemic claim here, positioning himself in relation to other interactants as the one who knows. By introducing important information, he is indirectly claiming that he too is important.

Anke does not let Fred finish; she interrupts him in line 8 by agreeing emphatically so that she is able to hold on to her turn. She is unable to regain the floor for long though as Kate overlaps to summarise Anke’s position (line 10). This time, with her choice of the second person pronoun ‘*you*’ rather than the previous ‘*we*', Kate decides not to align herself with Anke in this turn. The resulting distance may be a fleeting marker of deontic status, and yet the re-voicing functions as confirmation of Kate's original question (line 1) and serves to hold the space for Anke to continue her turn. Anke confirms Kate’s interpretation in line 12 but goes on to introduce two epistemic markers into her projection. First, with a conditional clause, she makes her statement contingent on the countries' performance, and then further weakens her epistemic claim by adding an element of ‘*hope*’. In lines 16 and 17, Maarten and Kate echo each other's rapidly repeated agreement with Anke’s position. This alignment pattern is repeated several times during the episode; and although unvoiced, the shared orientation to Anke's position is noticed by other participants who lean in and nod in silent agreement (field notes).

Fred takes advantage of the lull created by the jointly voiced agreement to take the floor again in line 18, more emphatically claiming ownership of the topic. Fred, purporting to speak for everyone, claims epistemic rights indirectly from the company. He posits that if not resolved by Anke’s proposal, the problem will end up '*back on <u>our</u> plate*'. Fred claims epistemic authority from his alignment with the group, which is indexed by the ambiguous ‘*our*’. No one asks for clarification of this use of the inclusive pronoun ‘our’, (The group in the room? The company? The division Fred represents?), indicating that either the reference is clear or that no one wants to question it. What is clear to others in the syndicate, however, is that no matter whose plate it is, Fred claims ownership of it.

Extract 2, Lines 20 to 56: Lucas' proposal

In section 1 the principal interlocutors, Anke and Fred, have been discussing the problem situation from their different perspectives. They have some differences of emphasis but there is no overt disagreement. Kate is not a member of the syndicate group but is present to learn about participants' ideas for future action. While she does not intervene either formally or informally as chair, as convenor of the event she carries significant deontic authority, to which other participants orientate. Maarten and Lucas now join the discussion, which continues to focus on finding solutions to the strategic challenge. Section 2 picks up directly from the point of Fred's authority claim at the end of section 1.

20	Fred	on our plate /again really/
21	Maarten	/yeah, yea:uh/
22	Kate	/yeah, indeed/ ye-
23	Lucas	-but for the countries tha-, I was thinking, if
24		the incentives strong enough↑ So they all got
25		the ((*item*)) reduction in their heads but
26		probably it's not obligatory /so so why/
27	Maarten	/the centre/
28		/position/
29	Lucas	/should/ they do it↑
30	Fred	it is obligatory but uh what does obligatory
31		mean eh↑
32	Lucas	yeah . yeah so the country may get stronger
33	Kate	yeah . yeah
34	Lucas	because that would really help
35	Kate	yeah
36	Fred	but it is not connected to technology
37	Maarten	no of course but (1) you're right it could be a

38		solution, that could be a solution↓
39	Fred	that is happening of course . ((xxx)) wants to
40		step this up as well and >/she is hitting/ all
41		the ((*business centres))*< over the head
42	Kate	exactly . yeah
43	Fred	every ((*team leader*)) ( ) closer /and closer/
44	Kate	/yeah yeah/
45	Maarten	and also of course they are probably waiting
46	Anke	/yeah/
47	Kate	/yeah/ yeah
48	Maarten	/waiting to/ delay this moment now and because
49	Kate	yeah exactly . yeah
50	Maarten	because it’s on cost <which you don’t want er> .
51	Fred	In cases where there’s legislation . things
52		move faster
53	Maarten	ah yeah of course
54	Fred	surprise surprise
55		((agreeing laughter by all))
56	Maarten	There could be a solution /there . I agree/

In this section what participants know or believe to be true drives the interactional dynamics. First, Kate and Maarten again echo their alignment which, because no one voices disagreement, functions as the tacit agreement of the whole group. A possible new direction is introduced by Lucas, who begins, in line 23, with an adversative conjunction '*but*' to highlight this different angle, and then immediately reduces his authority claim by introducing personal doubt. He is careful to mitigate what may be read as resistance by positioning his contribution as an unfinished idea-in-progress ('*I was thinking*'). The mental process '*I was thinking*', as well as signalling personal ownership of the move, also mitigates against a possible loss of face (Goffman, 1963) should no one support him.

Despite the measure of doubt signalled by the epistemic modality marker in line 26 (the internal strategic objective is '*probably*' not strong enough to oblige countries to take action), Lucas' structuring question helps to open up a space where different ideas can be aired. There is an indirect proposal contained in Lucas' question about creating more '*incentive*' for countries. Although hesitation suggests a tentativeness and the intervention itself is framed as a question rather than a bold epistemic claim, the content contains a significant challenge to the way the group has been thinking about the problem.

Fred too wastes no time in claiming epistemic authority about this issue. In line 30 he aligns with Lucas' indirect proposal by drawing attention to the flexibility attached to the interpretation of '*obligatory*'. Kate continues to nudge the flow of the conversation, backchanneling phatic responses (yeah) in lines 33 and 35 to keep it going, as Lucas takes an additional couple of turns to finish his point. In Line 36 Fred's turn introduces a potential problem in Lucas' line of thinking. Marking this by his use of the adversarial conjunction *'but*', he points out that Lucas' topic does not align with the explicit task of this syndicate group. Fred's move here claims epistemic and deontic authority: he knows what should be discussed and his view of his own relative deontic status enables him to voice this.

However, in the first instance of explicit deontic incongruence (Stevanovic and Peräkylä, 2012: 309), Maarten rejects Fred's reference to the supposed technological focus of their discussion (line 37), thus questioning not only Fred's right to know but also his right to impose his view on others. There is a notable pause which is followed an ambiguous, modalized reference to the potential solution: Maarten's evaluation of Lucas' proposal, '*you're right*', is followed by the modalized declarative '*it <u>could</u> be a solution*'. This modal treats the projected action as an option, not an obligation. Nonetheless, Maarten's turn boosts the epistemic status of Lucas' contribution. Fred returns in line 39 with a bold epistemic authority claim. He knows what is happening in the company and the external source of this authority is made present or 'presentified' in the ongoing interaction (Benoit-Barne and Cooren, 2009: 10). In effect, Fred evokes the organization in the name of a specific known executive to elevate his deontic status in relation particularly to Lucas as previous speaker.

After Kate has emphatically confirmed this account, lines 43-49 build shared alignment with Fred in a series of rapid repetitions from Kate and Anke, while Maarten continues to build the argument that countries may be delaying the testing of new technology. The low volume of his turn in line 50 gives the impression that he is thinking out loud rather than seeking a response. The two notable pauses and the hesitant ending convey a hint of uncertainty. Fred notices the floor is open and steps in to clarify his position in an unmodalized statement which serves to strengthen his epistemic claim (legislation will cause countries to act faster), which Maarten supports in line 53 ('*ah yeah of course*'). Fred's irony in line 54 ('*surprise, surprise*') provokes laughter from the group, at which point Maarten is able, in line 56, to echo his previous attempt to build agreement. However, his use of the modal '*could'* indicates that either he is not fully committed to the solution (epistemic modality) or he is choosing to publicly acknowledge Fred's superior deontic status. The fact that he no longer emphasises the modal (see lines 37-38) reduces its force and suggests that he may not be willing to resist Fred's authority claims.

Extract 3, Lines 57-79: Fred’s moral authority

In section 2, Lucas offers a novel solution to the problem situation the syndicate is discussing: he suggests that they consider ways of managing the regulatory environment of country operations. It is a suggestion which unsettles the pattern of authority in interaction established in section 1. New possibilities and alliances are made possible, and in particular Maarten plays a crucial role in opening up the conversation so that others can influence the direction it is taking. While at first there is some resistance to Lucas' suggestion, section 2 ends at a point of possibility. Section 3, however, opens with a renewed move from Fred to re-establish his deontic authority claim.

```
57    Fred                                  /ah well yeah but/
58                 we were discussing that in there earlier as well
59                 is that this notion of creating . even . an
60                 external problem to get an inside thing moving
```

	that’s also not good business of course
	that should not be necessary /eh-
Kate	/-exactly/ yeah
Fred	putting your own business at risk in order to
	drive an internal decision making but err
Maarten	*that’s work*
Kate	yeah because the risk is then you get 100%
	er compliance
Anke	/yeah/
Fred	/yeah/
Maarten	*I don’t see that, er*
Anke	/so er/
Fred	/but even/ that they shouldn’t be necessary
	I mean we should as a company be able to
	internally just you know drive this . but it’s
	not easy
Lucas	/no: no: er/
Kate	/it is in fact/ how do we change that mind-set
	then, eh↑ . internally

In line 58, Fred, with his third use of the adversative conjunction '*but*', voices a challenge and immediately signals a potential blockage to the route Maarten is indicating. This challenge pivots the conversation back onto ground where Fred can claim authority. With '*we were discussing that in there earlier*' (line 58), he refers to another group outside the present syndicate, thereby claiming an inside track of knowledge and excluding current participants from its source. Lucas' contribution to the debate is perhaps not so new after all (line 58); Fred was part of a conversation earlier where the controversial notion of creating an external problem to move an internal programme had already been mooted. Fred reinforces his deontic status by drawing on both organisational and moral authority (by confirming his authority over what makes '*good business sense*' in line 61 and by implying he knows what is best for everyone through his use of the modal '*should*' in line 62), to position himself above the need to bend the rules. Kate agrees (line 67), for the first time articulating a position of her own on the risks of compliance rather than simply repeating agreement tokens aimed at moving the conversation along. This may be significant. As the lead convenor of the strategy day, Kate represents considerable, if implicit, deontic authority. Participants need to gauge where each one stands in relation to the position Kate eventually takes as part of the need to monitor who knows what and who knows better (Heritage, 2012).

Maarten is in favour of incentivizing the countries and sees neither the ethics nor the business risk as extraordinary problems ('*that's work*', line 66). Seemingly unnoticed, he quietly disaffiliates himself from the unfolding direction (lines 66 and 71). Fred certainly ignores him. Instead of enquiring into Maarten's position, trying to find out more about why he sees this topic differently and what alternative action he might suggest, Fred goes ahead with what is a likely dispreferred response in which he repeats his deontic stance and uses deontic modal markers ('*it <u>shouldn't</u> be necessary'* because '*we <u>should</u> as a company be able to internally just you know drive this*'). This does not go unnoticed in this group, particularly as he rather backs himself into a corner where, for a moment, it appears nothing can be done (field notes). Fred is unable to act, nor does he unblock the process so others may do so. Earlier in the sequence Fred has shown a tendency to speak for everyone, and he does so again on this occasion. His announcement '*but it's not easy*' (line 75-76) functions as a final evaluation and signals closure, which Lucas confirms. In response to this non-agentic lull in the process, Kate takes the lead. She spots her chance to make a strategic structuring contribution (line 78), which shapes the topic and creates more space for her to pursue her agenda. '*It is in fact*' is a bold, unmodalized epistemic statement about the way the world is. It introduces an inclusive '*we'* which binds the group in a shared space where a conversation about a change of direction might unfold.

Discussion

Leadership agency

Here I argue that using authority-in-interaction as an analytical lens extends our understanding of leadership agency by identifying and describing some of the discursive processes through which it is performed.

Individualized agency

From this perspective, leadership is broadly understood as the ability of an individual to mobilize a group through the strategic use of legitimate (i.e. acquiesced) epistemic or deontic authority. This means that aspects of leadership can be identified and described by analyzing the discursive strategies of individual task or role-based leaders to 'get people on board' (Wodak et al., 2011). This perspective suggests a view of authority as an individual resource. Two examples from section 1 describe this: these are *competing epistemic claims* and *deontic congruence*.

Competing epistemic claims

As described in the analysis, the extract opens with an epistemic tussle between Anke and Fred as they each move to take a lead in the conversation by competing for turns at talk (lines 6-9). Management of rights related to knowledge and information, such as 'what participants can accountably know, how they know it (and) whether they have rights to describe it', determines whose view is more significant (Heritage and Raymond, 2005: 16). Anke makes several knowledge-based moves to boost her epistemic status. She has important knowledge about the team, the brand and the product type. She also has requisite business knowledge about volume, a country-based overview and strategic requirements. That this epistemic status may not be secure is marked by her rapid interruption in line 8. She does not want to relinquish the floor to Fred’s bid to introduce '*the main thing*' in line 7 – i.e. a topic of more importance than the one she has introduced. She quickly quashes Fred’s attempt to take the floor and reasserts her epistemic authority by echoing the business perspective of ‘*big volume*’ that Fred attempted to introduce. Fred bides his time through five short alignment turns where Kate, Anke and Maarten confirm their co-orientation, before making a strong epistemic claim in lines 18-20 by positioning himself as the one who owns the problem. He stakes out ownership by choosing to use the plural possessive pronoun '*our*' which displays a deontic stance: as he is the one who claims knowledge for everyone, he can also claim the right to take charge. However, Kate re-states Anke's key contribution ('*So you say*… ' Line 10), serving to confirm Anke's right to make an epistemic claim.

Deontic congruence

Deontic authority rights can be acquiesced or resisted leading to what Stevanovic and Peräkulä (2012) refer to as deontic congruence, where second speakers align with the deontic rights allocated to them, and incongruence where they resist the way these rights are distributed. In this episode there is only acquiescence and congruence regarding Kate's deontic status and rights. Kate faces no resistance, in fact the reverse. Although Kate does not employ overt strategies to take control of the conversation, for example, by controlling topics and turns, or by determining allowable contributions (see Angouri and Marra, 2010 for a detailed analysis of discursive strategies indexed for chairing formal meetings), her deontic authority is strengthened by the acquiescence of the other participants. For example, Anke in line 2 responds immediately to Kate's question, '*So what are we saying, sorry?*' It is this response which confirms that Kate's status is such that her request cannot be resisted. Similarly in line 10 ('*So you say that it's positive, that it's gonna help*') where Kate summarises the epistemic position of other speakers, her right to do so is not in doubt. This silent confirmation has a settling effect on Kate's deontic authority.

Shared or distributed agency

From this perspective, all leadership is co-produced in the sense that it involves multiple agents and is distributed between them in a process of reciprocal influence. (See Clifton, 2017 for a discursive approach to analysing distributed leadership.) Leadership can therefore never belong to a single person because it is always accomplished interactively. This means that leadership agency can be identified and described in the discursive detail of this conjoint endeavour, for example, by looking at how epistemic and deontic authority are claimed, acquiesced and resisted by different people in a group during a discussion. This orientation to collective leadership rests on a view of authority as joint accomplishment. Two examples from section 2 describe this: these are *levelling* and *co-orientating*.

Levelling

Maarten's utterance in line 37 resists the pattern of interaction by directing a challenge to Fred. He positions himself carefully between Lucas and Fred (line 37, '*no of course not but (1) you're right it* <u>*could*</u> *be a solution*'). Maarten addressing first Fred ('*no of course but*') and then Lucas (*you're right, it* <u>*could*</u> *be a solution*) designs a strategy which levels the ground between Fred, who claims authority at every turn, and others in the group who have important contributions to make. He uses the adversarial conjunction '*but*' in responding to Fred's previous obstacle to signal that other views are possible, and the second person pronoun '*you*' ('*you're right*') to address and include Lucas. This distribution of legitimate authority is important leadership work for building shared agreement and potential for joint action. It is a pivotal moment in the discussion. By displaying his support for Lucas' idea, Maarten shifts the discussion away from the right-or-wrong dynamic and towards an opportunity which can be held between them.

Co-orientating

Co-orientating to fellow participants’ epistemic statuses is an important process for building shared or distributed leadership actions. While it is, of course, individuals who speak with (more or less) intentionality, it is the collective process of tacitly establishing authority rights in the unfolding conversation which steers its course towards particular kinds of outcomes. In line 37, Maarten's triangular levelling exchange also shows that the participants co-orientate to each other's authority stances as they unfold. Maarten's deliberate closing of the topic ('*no of course*'), quickly followed by his use of the adversarial conjunction '*but*', shows that he interprets Fred's previous move in line 36 ('*but it's not connected to technology*') as an authority claim and not simply as a newsworthy comment to which a preferred response might have been agreement and acquiescence. Fred, however, continues to make authority claims for himself by emphasising that he knows things other people do not know and even draws upon the authority of an absent senior executive to bolster his own epistemic status (line 39). Despite this, and by carefully modalizing his contributions ('*that could be a solution*' in lines 38 and 56; '*they are probably waiting*' in line 45), Maarten continues to develop Lucas' idea. Finally, and with irony which elicits laughter, Fred shifts his orientation to affiliate with Maarten. Kate also co-orientates to the emerging direction by keeping her deontic status out of play. She does this by making only phatic agreements in order to keep the conversation going – in effect, by not closing it down.

Relational agency

From this perspective leadership is seen as processual and can be broadly understood as the outcome of collaborative processes (Crevani, 2018). This means that both epistemic and deontic authority are always in the process of being established and re-established, and that collective sensitivity to this process is an important part of producing direction, mobilizing collective agency and setting courses of action. This perspective on leadership agency therefore implies that authority is in flux. In order to identify the processes which produce leadership, it is necessary to attend to patterns of interaction over the course of a conversation. *(Dis)affiliation* and *changes of trajectory* are two examples drawn from section 3.

(Dis)affiliation

Fred and Kate appear to affiliate with each other's stance (lines 64-68). Kate confirms Fred's concerns, and together they ignore Maarten's attempts to express a different point of view. However, without the support of Maarten and Lucas and in the context of minimal agreement from Anke and the watchful silence of four other members of the group, participants' affiliative stances are becoming less clear. Agency is blocked and authority appears more unstable. It may be, in fact, rather than conceptualising authority as a bounded entity, that it is more productively understood as a fluid phenomenon and therefore inherently unstable. For example, Fred's (and indirectly Kate's) authority is challenged by Maarten in disagreement in line 66, '*that's work',* and resistance in line 71, '*I don't see that*'. Maarten does not acquiesce because he does not accept Fred's authority on this matter. By extension, if Maarten does not accept it, Fred does not actually have it (Gumperz, 1982).

Change of trajectory

Section 3 contains a significant moment of leadership which changes the trajectory of the conversation. In lines 78 and 79, Kate makes a bold move by changing the topic and introducing the idea that the internal mindset is at the root of the problem. She draws on the deontic authority her role as convenor bestows on her, and we can infer that there may be consequential obligations flowing from this change of direction. Kate's question encompasses everyone ('*we'*), focuses on a leadership need (change) and a problem that has just been collectively identified. She successfully frames the opportunity for joint action and for channelling collective agency. This 'moment of leadership' (Ramsey, 2016:199) is not brought about by a particular 'leadership skill' that Kate brings to this and other situations, but as a consequence of a collective process that has been unfolding throughout the conversation. Identifying and describing this ebb and flow of agency and authority in interaction helps to account for how leadership work is done. Kate, Anke, Fred, Lucas and Maarten all play their individual parts, but the space is achieved collectively by participants coordinating and adjusting their epistemic and deontic positions as the conversation unfolds. Kate's final (and certainly skilful) structuring utterance in lines 78 and 79 is therefore seen as less to do with her personal ability to mobilize others, and more as an outcome of collaborative interaction which she senses and speaks to. These findings are summarized in Table 6 below.

Individual leadership: Agency seen as the ability of an individual to mobilize a group; authority as an individual resource	
Competing epistemic claims [Who knows best, and more] e.g. lines 6-9	Anke refuses to yield to Fred's attempt to introduce a topic he claims is the 'main thing', reasserting her epistemic authority as she does so.
Deontic congruence [Second speakers align with the deontic rights allocated to them] e.g. lines 1-3	Anke's immediate response to Kate's question, '*So what are we saying, sorry?'* confirms that Kate's status cannot be resisted.
Distributed leadership: Agency seen as a process of reciprocal influence; authority as a joint accomplishment	
Levelling [a strategy which levels the ground between competing claims] e.g. lines 36-38	Maarten addressing first Fred ('*no of course but*') and then Lucas (*you're right, it <u>could</u> be a solution*) designs a strategy which levels the ground between Fred, who claims authority at every turn, and others in the group who have important contributions to make.
Co-orientating [the collective process of tacitly establishing authority rights in the unfolding conversation] e.g. lines 42-47	Kate co-orientates to the emerging direction by keeping her deontic stance out of play. She does this by making only phatic agreements in order to keep the conversation going – in effect, by not closing it down.
Relational leadership: Agency seen as the outcome of a collaborative process; authority as always in flux	
Disaffiliation [Shifting patterns of affiliation and disaffiliation – inherently unstable] e.g. lines 64-71	Fred's authority is challenged by Maarten's disagreement '*that's work'* and resistance '*I don't see that*'. Maarten does not accept Fred's authority on this matter. By extension, if Maarten does not accept it, Fred does not actually have it.
Change of trajectory [a significant moment which changes the trajectory of the conversation] e.g. lines 73-79	Kate skilfully frames the opportunity for joint action and for channelling collective agency. Her structuring utterance is less to do with her personal ability to mobilize others, and more as an outcome of collaborative interaction which she senses and speaks to.

Table 6 Agency, authority and discourse strategies

Conclusion

Leadership agency, and the authority required to enact it, cannot ever be truly stable as it is established and re-established at every turn (Heritage, 2012). Nonetheless, it possible to identify and describe some of the specific processes that are involved in its performance, more specifically, I was able to identify different orientations to authority-in-interaction and describe what these reveal about leadership agency.

Individualized leadership agency is anchored in a view of authority as settled or in the process of being settled. Participants vie for legitimate epistemic authority as if this were a finite resource, for example by competing for the floor, interrupting to hold on to the turn at talk, by claiming ownership of important knowledge and resisting the epistemic status claims of others. Leadership thus conceptualized is seen to rest on an individual leader's ability to mobilize and provide direction to a group of people. A discourse analytical approach can identify some of the specific processes though which this is done. However, it is important to note that while individuals may design their utterances from an understanding that leadership is tied up in their own agency, the analytical lens afforded by linguistic analysis illustrates that such moves, in the sense that they are acquiesced or resisted by interlocutors through, for example, *competing epistemic claims* and *deontic congruence*, are always (discursively) co-produced. Shared or distributed leadership agency rests on a view of authority as mobile or in the process of being mobilized. From this perspective, discursive strategies, such as *levelling* and *co-orientating*, enable legitimate authority to move between agents and at different moments in the conversation, as Fred, Maarten, Lucas and Kate contribute to the performance of leadership. This distribution of legitimate authority is important leadership work for building shared agreement and potential for joint action. A discourse analytic approach can identify and describe specific processes through which this shared agency is realized. Relational leadership agency implies that authority flows across the interactional process as a whole. This is more difficult to identify and describe because it requires an analytical focus on the agency of conversation itself rather than the actors (Ramsey, 2016: 215). Discourse analytical approaches can contribute to this endeavour with tools and methods for identifying patterns of interaction which occur throughout the course of a conversation, such as *affiliation patterns* and *changes in trajectory*.

These observations and interpretations have wider implications for conceptualizations of leadership agency because they help to 'challenge hegemonic perspectives' which 'underestimate the complexity of leadership dynamics' (Collinson, 2011: 181). I suggest that it is possible to identify leadership agency in discursive moves which can be understood as the skilful attribute of a leader (but realized interactively), as discursive practices through which distributed leadership is enacted, and as process that is in flux and best understood over time and in relation to context. This study is exploratory and has been limited to a snippet of a larger conversation. Therefore, further work is needed to establish to what extent these interactively accomplished agency-authority dynamics are recognisable over time and across multiple settings. In this paper I have shown how discourse analytical approaches informed by the work of leadership researchers in applied linguistics and pragmatics are valuable in this endeavour because they reveal some of the complex ways in which leadership agency is co-produced.

Appendix: Transcription conventions

/ /	Overlapping speech
:	sound stretching
CAPITALS	loud speech
<u>Under</u>lining	emphasis
__	speech at especially low volume
(1.0)	Pause in seconds
.	Pause of less than 1 second
( )	indecipherable
((laughs))	transcribers descriptions or comments
((xxx))	redacted for anonymity

–	interruption
> <	quicker than surrounding talk
↑	rising ‘questioning’ intonation
[…]	Words or lines omitted

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4.3 Case study 2: Discursive contradictions

Amaya and Nora, who are the focus of paper 2, have established reputations for leading changes in working arrangements and practices. They ask if the contradictions inherent in managing expectations, influencing change and delivering measurable results can be managed differently. Understanding and managing the experience of tensions which seem constantly to pull in different directions is at the heart of learning to lead. The second case study examines discursive oppositions and their relationship to leadership learning.

4.3.1 Amaya

> *I along with the only other female director hosted a meeting last week just for women. It was the first time. I was really surprised. This is a really young workplace - I am 41 and the second oldest here. So I expected gender to be a bit of a non-issue with the younger people. But I was wrong. They were asking for help so it is an issue. It's about having a voice. (Amaya, 2016)*

Under the umbrella of the PWN network, I made three visits in all to Amaya's office. The first of these was to speak at length with Amaya and also to meet and interview some of her colleagues; the second was to run a workshop and give a talk to the company's women's network; and the third was to spend the day shadowing Amaya. Amaya hoped my research might shed some light on questions she had been considering since she joined her company 2 years previously. The company was fast changing and had made many promotions in order to keep young staff motivated. This had left a dysfunctional, top-heavy management structure. Amaya had successfully seen through recent changes, flattening the structure and exploring different ways of rewarding and motivating staff. She believed that still more changes could be made. An issue at the time was the deteriorating relationship between teams based in the US and those based in Europe and Amaya needed to travel frequently to oversee the overall direction of her teams in both continents. At the time of the shadowing, in May 2016, the issue of creating more flexibility of working patterns, and particularly attitudes, in the US team was coming to a head and colleagues in Europe were frustrated with what they perceived as a gap between collaborative discourse coming from the US head office and actual practice on the ground. Some U.S. colleagues on the other hand, felt excluded from important decisions given that both Amaya and the chief executive of the division were located in the Barcelona office. Amaya was sympathetic to the European teams' perspective but was required to mediate and at the same time make changes so that the teams were able work together better. Official business communications encouraged a less hierarchical structure with a more collaborative approach to joint projects but, in the end, the overall power resided in the United States so initiatives needed to be handled with care.

4.3.2 Nora

> *I made the pitch to the firm about taking a linguistic perspective in the worldwide gender campaign [a business approach involving benchmarking, metrics and accountability]. I can't make them see it. They didn't understand why linguistics and don't seem to be able to get their heads around how to change behaviour if it isn't by first convincing someone to start thinking something new. Maybe we talk about 'changing behaviour' as a shortcut? (Nora, 2016)*

My contact from PWN in Madrid approached the local chair of the Lisbon network which led, in October 2014, to a trip to Lisbon to discuss possibilities for my research. Nora was my point of contact throughout. I started by running a single English and Power workshop with a small group of senior managers from Nora's company – a large multinational financial services operation. The company was a major sponsor of PWN and Nelia herself was country lead for her company's drive to promote women across the firm and across their client base. The English and Power programme was successful: the senior managers involved - all women - were surprised at the extent to which a language-based approach could provide insights into everyday leadership challenges. Later that same day I addressed a large audience of PWN Lisbon members, presenting some issues and creating small group conversations around leadership, power and language. There was a real buzz around the programme and the conversations that began there which ultimately led to a second trip to Lisbon to address the firm's diversity network and to run another workshop based on the English and Power model. All this time, after sessions, over lunch, after work, Nora and I would talk. We discussed our careers, our views about women's leadership, about commonplace professional challenges, about young women (and men) starting out in their careers, and a whole range of issues and interests which we had in common.

When, in 2016, I decided to seek out people prepared to let me shadow them, Nora was one of the first people I contacted. She was open to the idea so we discussed how it might be of interest to her in terms of understanding and learning more about the dynamics of leadership. Nora was ambitious. She wanted to rise in the firm and to be recognised as someone who was able to make a difference in her own field, in particular with the very successful business units she had set up and grown, but also with regard to championing the role of women across the firm in Portugal and globally. At the time of the shadowing in April 2016, Nora had just appeared on national television talking about the firm's diversity and inclusion strategy. She understood that the role could bring visibility and that this would help her career.

4.3.3 Paper 2: Getting work done: A study of oppositional discourses in leaders' everyday workplace talk

Anne Murphy with Robyn Remke, PhD

Abstract

This article discusses the enactment of oppositional discourses in leadership work. We draw on data collected during two shadowing episodes to investigate how the managers we observed mobilize oppositional discourses as they go about trying to influence the way work is done. We take a linguistic ethnographic approach, which uses the analytical methods and tools of linguistics as a resource for ethnography to investigate the ways in which the two managers orientate to oppositional discourses in their everyday talk at work. Our analysis shows that while the managers tend to reproduce 'either or' tensions in the way they think and talk about new ways of working, in their actual interactions with colleagues they use a full range of discursive strategies which cannot be reduced to binary oppositions. We close the article by foregrounding the implications of our study for management and leadership learning and providing directions for further research.

Key words: organisational oppositions, discursive leadership, linguistic ethnography, workplace sociolinguistics

Introduction

Leaders often find themselves in the challenging situation of balancing what feel like competing expectations: on the one hand, they are required to offer a large-scale vision and strategy towards long-term organisational goals; and on the other, to manage day-to-day tasks to ensure that organisational objectives are met. Despite decades of work that question the ways that leaders lead (see the literature on leadership practice), there is little empirical data that demonstrates how leaders actually *get work done.* And yet, when you talk to managers such as those included in this study, they will be the first to remind you that this is precisely how their leadership success is measured.

The research reported in this paper is drawn from a two-and-a-half-year ethnographic study of leadership practice, power and language use that explores the day-to-day leadership interactions of managers and analyses, at the micro-level, via which leadership facilitates organisational productivity, i.e. how (leadership) work gets done (see Murphy, 2017 for an account of this study). Using a linguistic ethnographic framework, this paper highlights the ways in which two managers, Nora and Amaya, utilize oppositional discourses to accomplish their managerial and leadership objectives. The data set analyzed in the article comprises seven and a half hours of in situ interaction recorded while shadowing the two managers. The research context is a European networking platform whose corporate members are concerned with gender-balanced leadership (PWN Global, 2023).

The aim of this research is to investigate how oppositional discourses are enacted in leadership work. Its objectives are twofold. They are first to identify some of the tensions and contradictions of trying to establish alternative ways of doing; and second to identify and describe how the managers we observed mobilize oppositional discourses as they go about trying to influence the way work is done. Drawing on research on oppositions within organisational and leadership studies combined with a theoretical framework and analytical methodology from workplace sociolinguistics, the research asks:

RQ1: How do Nora and Amaya orientate to oppositional discourses in their in-situ interactions?

RQ2: How do they utilize discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done?

We find that Nora and Amaya simultaneously affirm conceptual oppositions about 'old' and 'new' ways of working when they evaluate how colleagues behave, but then fail to recognize their own patterns of interaction that do not fall into these conveniently simplified ways of representing complex practices as crisply definable dualities. Although useful as rhetorical devices to help set direction or establish leadership identities, the kinds of oppositions commonly invoked in written texts about management and leadership – dualities such as individual versus collective approaches to leadership, competitive versus collaborative behaviours, or authoritarian versus democratic leadership styles – fail to hold when we examine the detail of spoken interaction in situ. Studying their actual leadership discourse, we see how Nora and Amaya draw on a range of discursive strategies to *get their work done*. These findings are important because this insight enables scholars to challenge understandings about how alternative ways of working might be accomplished in practice.

Conceptually, we contribute to debates about discursive leadership by (1) reframing discursive oppositions as interactive resources and (2) offering a nuanced understanding of leadership agency centred on making choices about language use. Empirically, our article seeks to make a significant contribution to the management learning literature by providing insights into how the leadership work of bringing about changes in working practices is accomplished. We therefore address Kempster et al.'s (2016) call for a 'stronger commitment to conducting empirical work despite its time-consuming, expensive, and uncertain nature', and not 'yet more conceptual critiques and polemic propositions' (p.258).

We have organized our article in four parts. First, we provide an overview of relevant literature, including previous organisational research on oppositional discourses in leadership work, as well as sociolinguistic research on leadership and influence in interactional studies. We then turn to the methodology, followed by an analysis of our data set. Finally, we draw conclusions and discuss areas future research might address. We turn next to the literature overview.

Overview of relevant literature

The literature overview focuses on oppositional discourses as they are a commonplace occurrence within contemporary workplaces. We highlight how three leadership literature traditions – orthodox leadership studies, applied change research and dialectical frameworks – theorize oppositions. This is complemented by a summary of relevant sociolinguistic research that considers leadership and influence in interactional contexts.

Oppositional discourses in leadership work

Oppositional organizational discourse comprises much of our day-to-day existence and reveals the ongoing 'clashing, push-pull dynamics of organizational life' (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2019, p.918). The irrationality of organizational life is well documented – studies on tensions, contradictions, dialectics and paradoxes are widespread within leadership, organizational communication and discourse studies (see Putnam et al., 2016, and Collinson, 2014, 2020 for overviews). Three important traditions of engaging with oppositional discourses in leadership work are relevant to this study. These are: orthodox leadership studies; organization development and applied change; and theoretical developments based on dialectical thinking.

Orthodox leadership studies

Orthodox leadership studies, typically post-positivist in their epistemological orientation, have traditionally worked within the boundaries established by 'fixed' dichotomies (Collinson, 2014; Cooper, 1983; Tourish and Barge, 2010) and even reify the dualities they are designed to test (Mavin and Yusupova, 2021). Such binary conceptualizations influence practitioner models for developing leaders and leadership (e.g. Johansson et al., 2014; Omilion-Hodges and Wieland, 2016) and these, in turn, shape the ideas professionals have about themselves. The strong legacy of this work continues to influence everyday ideas about how individuals and organizations can bring about changes in working practices (Mease, 2019).

Applied change research

Leadership and change are frequently tied together in applied change research, with leadership serving as a conduit or facilitator of organisational change. Some studies offer prescriptions on how the leadership-change relationship should be accomplished (Karhu and Pitala, 2020; Raisch et al., 2018), while others offer theory-specific insights into planned change processes based on their readings of a range of meso-level theories such as design thinking, systems theory, paradoxical leadership and complexity theory (for example, Leclercq-Vandelannoitte, 2013; Canary, 2010; Lavine, 2014; Lewis, 2000; Lewis and Smith, 2014; Pearce et al., 2019; Smith and Lewis, 2011, 2012; Smith et al., 2017). Work from this tradition often aims to synthesize, bridge or otherwise resolve the tensions that arise from organisational oppositions (for example Abdulla et al., 2011; Gaim and Wählin, 2016; Hampden-Turner, 1981).

Embedded is the assumption that oppositional tensions provide people with the impulse to seek resolution, the effect of which results in some form of change (Engestrom and Sannino, 2011; Langley et al., 2013; Ospina and Saz-Carranza, 2010; Raelin, 2020). Although power itself is rarely addressed explicitly (Fairhurst and Grant, 2010), resolution by its very nature means power relations remain unexamined. For this, more sophisticated theorizing is required (Sheep et al., 2017; Kuhn, 2021).

Theoretical developments based on dialectical thinking

Theoretical developments based on dialectical thinking, evident in the traditions of organisational communication, leadership studies, organization studies and critical management studies, provide an alternative way of reframing leadership power dynamics (Collinson, 2014, 2020; Fairhurst and Connaughton, 2014; Mumby, 2005; Putnam et al., 2016; Tracy, 2004). From this perspective, oppositional forces with their 'ambiguous and potentially contradictory conditions, processes, and consequences' are framed as mutually reinforcing dialectics (Collinson, 2014, p.48). Dualistic distinctions such as leader/follower, leadership/management, and transformational/transactional have become so embedded in how we think about life in organisations that they are almost sacrosanct (Fairhurst, 2001). Collinson (2005, p.1422), building on the work of Fairhurst (2001) and Baxter and Montgomery (1996), calls for 'a more dialectical approach [that] focuses on the simultaneous interdependencies and asymmetries between leaders and followers as well as their ambiguous and potentially contradictory conditions, processes and consequences'.

Despite widespread recognition of the tendency for leadership and management practice to create dilemmas, contradictions and paradoxes for those involved (see, for example, Collinson, 2005, 2014; Fairhurst, 2014; Storey and Salaman, 2009; Mease, 2016; Mintzberg, 2009), there remains a tendency for orthodox leadership research to sidestep this complexity and ambiguity in favour of normative theories and frameworks that suggest a causal link between leadership inputs and outputs. The leadership competency approach is a case in point, regarding leadership and/or management competencies as 'underlying characteristic[s] of an individual that [are] causally related to effective or superior performance in a job' (Boyatzis, 1982: 21). In a competency approach, the aim of leadership theory and research is to eliminate uncertainty through the identification of ‘scientific evidence ’on leadership effectiveness but, in so doing, it silences dissent and assumes a ‘best practice’ approach that leaders and managers are expected to emulate (Bolden and Gosling, 2006). Mintzberg (2009) suggests that, because paradox is an inherent and systemic characteristic of organisations and an inescapable feature of leadership, it should be accommodated rather than eliminated.

The product of these valuable theoretical developments tends towards additional and more sophisticated conceptualizations of leadership and change but, with very few exceptions (e.g. Fairhurst et al., 2002), there is very little empirical focus on what actually happens in interaction in situ. Theorizing, ‘both and’ thinking which, according to Cuhna & Putnam (2019) is becoming mainstream (2019:97) even in traditional business literature (Smith et al., 2016), lacks empirical evidence. This project seeks to address the call that Collinson (2014) and Fairhurst & Connaughton (2014) make for research and scholarship that addresses these in situ accounts of opposition by examining the organisational oppositions that manifest in the leadership practices of the two managers.

Leadership and influence in interactional studies

Traditionally, organisational scholars have paid little attention to actual work interactions, preferring instead to rely on interviews and surveys to collect data about participants' own sense-making of these interactions (Fairhurst, 2008; Fairhurst & Grant, 2010, Larsson and Lundholm, 2010). Larsson (2016) argues that process-orientated perspectives of leadership influence are under-researched in leadership studies where 'organizing processes are rarely demonstrated empirically, and hardly ever from an interactional perspective' (2016: 186). This is intensified by the difficulties in securing access to naturally occurring spoken data in the workplace and the lack of interaction-based analytical resources among the organisational studies community, although applied linguistic studies are becoming more common in leadership studies (for example, Clifton et al., 2020; Meschitti, 2019; Schnurr & Schroeder, 2019).

Workplace sociolinguistic research

Particularly relevant to this study is previous workplace sociolinguistic research on control devices such as the performative role of questions (Aritz et al., 2017; Halvorsen, 2018; Holmes and Chiles, 2009) and directives (Saito and Cook, 2017; Vine, 2001, 2004, 2009), including politeness strategies (Watts, 2003; Holmes and Stubbe, 2015). Earlier research has shown that claiming and holding the floor are directly related to the enactment of (and resistance to) asymmetrical power relationships in the workplace (Angouri and Marra, 2010; Marra and Angouri, 2011). Leadership and power are understood as interactionally achieved (Marra et al., 2006; Vine et al. 2008;), and in more recent work, Angouri (2018) and Kim and Angouri (2019) make the case for the relevance of an interactional sociolinguistic framework to explore issues of power by introducing new evidence of discursive strategies (for example, formulating and resuming) which may be indexed for leadership. Further evidence on the relationship between power relationships and taking a knowing or not knowing stance in interaction has been provided by conversation analytic studies (e.g. Angouri and Mondana (2017); Asmuß and Oshmina, 2012; Haworth, 2006; Herritage, 2012; Mondana, 2013), which show that (leadership) roles, far from being static, 'can be resisted and subverted as individuals renegotiate their epistemic status' (Mondana 2013: 600). Evidence for the situated nature of negotiating responsibility has also been provided by research in clinical settings. Taking a multimodal approach to the analysis of team interactions in the emergency room, Messinioti et al. (2020) illustrate the ways in which leadership in this context is 'claimed, projected and resisted discursively' (2020: 151).

Interactional analysis

Within the larger conversation about leadership practice in situ, linguistic ethnographic approaches provide evidence of the discursive construction of oppositions in leadership work. In our analysis of the data, we engage with and expand on an organizational discourse analysis perspective (Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien, 2012; Fairhurst and Putnam, 2019) by also drawing on workplace sociolinguistic approaches to analyze in situ data in which leaders orient to and reproduce organisational oppositions. The valuable contribution of the latter has been to illustrate how institutionally legitimized power asymmetries are realized in interaction (Holmes and Stubbe, 2015). This includes work on categories such as leadership and management (for example, Walker and Aritz, 2014), authoritarian and democratic leadership styles (for example, Holmes and Stubbe, 2015; Wodak et al., 2011) and transactional and relational goals (for example, Marra et al., 2006; Holmes et al., 2007). While this is challenged in some studies on leadership interaction (Clifton, 2012, 2017; Mesinioti et al., 2020; Schnurr and Chan, 2011), an overall reliance on dichotomies to describe leadership phenomena tends to reconfirm the binaries that organization scholars aim to challenge.

In summary, oppositions studied from an organisational studies perspective offer theoretically sophisticated conceptualizations of leadership and change but with little empirical evidence based on in situ interactive data. Workplace sociolinguistics, on the other hand, offers fine-tuned, well-developed tools for isolating and analyzing interactive practices, but it does so without fully engaging with the critical treatment of oppositions routinely found in organizational theory. This study aims to contribute to a dialogue between these positions.

Data and methodology

The data analyzed in this study are taken from a corpus comprising seven and a half hours of transcribed voice recordings, recorded interviews, corporate documents and field notes collected prior to and during two full days of shadowing the two research subjects as they went about their daily work. Prior to the shadowing episodes, the first author visited both sites on several occasions during which she was able to explore the managers' aspirations and experiences, as well as being involved in ad hoc conversations with them and with other employees about current ways of working. These observations were recorded in detailed field notes. Interactive data were collected by accompanying the managers to their meetings and by making voice recordings of their interactions which were later transcribed. Transcription conventions can be found in the appendix to the paper.

Nora and Amaya are female executives in comparative positions of seniority in global service-orientated companies. As well as operational responsibilities for work undertaken by their direct reports, both have a reputation in their respective organisations for being successful at establishing new ways of working. They were selected for closer study because they exemplified a strong professional orientation towards bringing about changes in working practices. Speaking overtly about their desire to help create more equitable and fairer workplaces, Nora and Amaya were committed to not only leading strong teams for their organization but demonstrating that leadership can be done differently with success. During the shadowing, Amaya, who directs global brand strategy for an online custom retailer, holds a series of management meetings some of which are physically co-located and others are by high quality video conference. The meetings include routine weekly reviews with direct reports, troubleshooting, planning, strategizing, participating in a board meeting and monitoring the performance of team members. Amaya's change focus was on how to use her power to bring about change in the way her teams interact, especially between the European and US arms of the business. Nora, a senior manager of a business unit in a large global financial services corporation, holds three formal meetings during the shadowing day. These comprise a two-and-a-half-hour weekly team briefing held face-to-face, and two telephone calls – one with her own manager who is located in a different European country, and a second with a newly appointed more junior manager in a sister office with whom Nora's team work closely. Nora's change focus was on working practices which encourage greater diversity of thought, background and culture. as well as seeking to increase the numbers of women in senior executive roles.

Our approach to data collection and analysis is informed by linguistic ethnography (e.g. Copland and Creese, 2015; Rampton et al., 2004; Tusting and Maybin, 2007). Linguistic ethnography makes a methodological commitment to 'always making general claims about macro-level structures and processes *accountable to and tested by* the specific characteristics of the micro-level data in focus' (Tusting 2019, p.7, italics added). In this study, linguistic ethnography was chosen because it provides tested tools and methodologies which work productively with the tension created when an ethnographic sensibility and regard for context is brought into dialogue with analysis of micro-level interactive data. This dual research strategy helps to address the tension inherent in our research questions between the value of understanding the organisational context alongside a detailed examination of language use.

Three methods of data analysis were performed. First, thematic coding inspired by Fairhurst and Putnam's (2019) combination of grounded theory (e.g. Charmaz, 2014) and organisation discourse analysis (Fairhurst & Uhl Bien, 2012); second, the data were analysed for evidence of the speakers' evaluative stance towards the behaviour of team members (e.g. Du Bois, 2007); and third, an interactional analysis which focuses in on the micro, or 'little 'd'' discourses (e.g. Mesinioti et al., 2020), was carried out.

Both authors carried out initial thematic coding using grounded theory techniques to produce first a set of codes (available in *Appendix XIII: Codes and tensions*, p. 300) with which to identify important codes and tensions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Doshi et al., 2020) in order to investigate patterns of oppositional discourses invoked across the data set. For this phase of the analysis we were guided by Fairhurst and Putnam's (2019) integrative analytical approach to analyzing the relationship between micro and macro d/Discourse(s) (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000; Fairhurst and Putnam, 2019; Gee, 2014) associated with alternative ways of organizing. The objective of this phase of the analysis was to identify possible tensions as 'sensitising concepts' (Blumer, 1954; Rampton et al., 2004), which, if made visible in instances of language use, could be subject to linguistic analysis.

In the second phase of analysis, we selected representative samples of the interactive data which instantiate the participants' evaluative stance-taking (Du Bois, 2007). Two meetings were selected for close analysis of language use, specifically to examine the explicit evaluation of different behaviours associated with ways of working identified in the first phase of the analysis. The aim of this step was to identify how the managers *talk about* the desired and undesired behaviours they want to promote or discourage (e.g. Englesbretson, 2007; Martin & White, 2005). Finally, we selected two further extracts for interactional analysis. By combining conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics (e.g. Mesinioti et al., 2020), we examine ways in which the two managers in our study accomplish leadership work. A broad consideration of the context enabled us to compare what our research subjects *talk about doing* (analyses phases 1 and 2) with what they *actually do* when they interact with colleagues (analysis phase 3).

In the analysis section which follows, we refer to examples from the three different phases of data analysis in order to identify and describe how the two leaders get work done.

Analysis

For all our talk about intentionality within leadership practice, the analysis of interactive data in our study tells us that, more often than not, managers do not make linguistic choices that can be consistently indexed as one 'style' of leadership over another. Instead, our participants make full use of all the linguistic options available to them and simultaneously enact both extremes of oppositional interaction. In combination, the three phases of our analysis reveal actual language choices the two managers make as they go about doing the leadership work of influencing change. We begin by examining the key oppositional tensions identified in thematic analysis (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2019), before analysing excerpts of interactive data to identify first, ways in which these oppositions are mobilized through evaluative stance (Du Bois, 2007); and second, actual interactional strategies employed to get leadership work done (Messinioti et al., 2021).

Phase 1 analysis: Oppositional tensions within leadership discourse

Using grounded theory techniques of open and focused analytical coding, we first analysed the transcripts in full. We identified several tensions within the managers' discourse that they normatively position as binary oppositions and which we situated into two key oppositional categories: 'old' and 'new' ways of working which either sustain or challenge (big D) Discourses of organizing. Organizational behaviours that our managers wish to minimise are positioned as 'old' ways of working, and those they wish to promote are classified as 'new' ways of working as shown in Table 7 below.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Open codes</th><th colspan="2">Focused codes</th></tr>
<tr><td>Being open and speaking freely</td><td>Being democratic and participative</td><td rowspan="4">Indicating 'new' more collaborative and open ways of working</td><td rowspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Trusting and being trustworthy</td><td>Facilitating and encouraging</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sharing information</td><td>Acknowledging different perspectives</td></tr>
<tr><td>Working together fluidly</td><td>Being aligned</td><td rowspan="3">Sustaining or challenging alternative (big D) Discourses of organizing</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Being guarded and opaque</td><td>Being stuck</td><td rowspan="4">Evaluating 'old' undesired practices and behaviours</td></tr>
<tr><td>Being suspicious</td><td>Competing with each other</td><td rowspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Behaving badly</td><td>Being dictatorial and authoritarian</td></tr>
<tr><td>Withholding information</td><td>Creating us and them dynamics</td></tr>
</table>

Table 7 Open and focused analytical codes

The focused analytic codes were used to guide the first phase of analysis where both authors read and re-read the transcripts of all the meetings to familiarise themselves with the data.

Repeated codes associated with 'outdated' ways of working included competing, being suspicious, guarded and opaque, and getting sucked into us-and-them dynamics.

> *He shared with me that the problem that he had was Carol . that Carol was completely against (this office) . a negative opinion-maker . she has a friend ; a husband who . that senior one . and she creates issues […] and Ted wants to work with us (2) and I don't see a reason why he was lying about this (Nora telling her team what she knows about Carol)*

Instead, our managers promote ways of working associated with a more positive future. These include cooperating, being trustworthy, open and speaking freely, and working together effectively.

> *…explore, be crazy, you know, let's not be stuck in what we do every day . I need you to think aspirational ambition . you know . beyond what we already do 'cos there's always time to go back to narrow down. (Amaya, in conversation with a North American colleague)*

Hence, despite the participants' explicit claims that they intend to lead differently, the two managers find themselves falling into a rather commonplace workplace tension of simultaneously advocating for more democratic and collective organisational behaviour (new ways of working) but doing so in a rather ‘old way ’ of interacting. Specifically, the two managers establish oppositional positions through their talk about desired and undesired behaviour in line with a well-established workplace tension, i.e. 'old' is undesirable and 'new' is desirable. Therefore, to move beyond merely highlighting oppositional tensions, in the next analytical step we go on to consider the context and mechanisms by which these tensions come into existence.

Phase 2 analysis: Using oppositional tensions to get work done

To investigate the mobilization of oppositional discourses in closer detail, we selected two extracts in which the managers are explicit about their evaluative stances (Du Bois, 2007) . By making linguistic choices which indicate which behaviours are and are not acceptable, a normative map of desired and undesired behaviours is talked into being (Sarangi and Roberts, 1999) through explicit reference to what is judged helpful or unhelpful in shaping proposed changes. The principal discursive strategy employed is the explicit description and evaluation of different behaviours associated with the preferred approach; in other words, how the managers are *talking about* the desired and undesired behaviours they want to promote or discourage (Englesbretson, 2007). The two meetings, a discussion led by Nora of the results of interviews for new team leaders and a routine management meeting between Amaya and one of her direct reports, demonstrate the speakers' evaluative stance-taking. We paid close attention to the language used by the two leaders to identify each leaders’ stance towards sustaining and challenging alternative ways of working. Key aspect of this analysis can be found in *Appendix XIV: Evaluative stance* (p. 301). In the first example, Nora and her team discuss the relative merits of six in-house interviewees (including Tina, Angela and Roberto) who aspire to promotion to a team leadership role. In the second example, Amaya and a direct report, Susan, discuss the latter's experience of different approaches to management. Both extracts involve the explicit evaluation of behaviours.

Example 1: too authoritarian a management style is negatively evaluated.

F1	but they don't understand
Nora	no . and it looks like they're seniors like you are the employees and I'm the boss . and we have some concerns that he will be the boss
M1	he might abuse the power . to be kind of dictatorial in his management approach rather than a cooperative one

Nora believes that one of candidates displays undesired characteristics in his management approach. Two members of her team agree: this candidate, although formal and polite, could be 'dictatorial' rather than 'cooperative'.

Example 2: Not displaying enough authority to exercise leadership is equally negatively evaluated:

M2	it's something about the leadership skills of Tina that erm she can't er you know, bring the team with her and understanding […] Angela was speaking much of the why of things . it's the importance of explaining why it is important . what are the implications
Nora	Angela shows that she's thinking about these things and how to change things it's the same with Roberto . and another way to do things

Tina is negatively evaluated because she has been unable to bring her team with her. This is compared to two other candidates who express their leadership in a manner aligned with the desired change. Angela, for example, is positively evaluated because she understands the importance of giving explanations as opposed to bold, unmitigated directives.

Such evaluations are frequently positioned in opposition. For example, Amaya evaluates participation and openness positively, in direct contrast to her colleague's negative evaluation of controlling, distrustful behaviour.

Example 3: Opposing evaluations

Susan	`I'm just glad those discussions are going on […] yeah, it's a challenge going genuinely global . it does mean certain people need to let go a bit and trust others`
Amaya	`so I think this is a great point Susan and almost we are out of time . why don't we keep talking more about this idea of trust […] you have to build the trust . if it's the right trust you don't even need that because people understand what's the space right? so I I think that's key so let's work on that . let's bring that as a main topic`

Amaya makes explicit that openness and inclusiveness are desirable practices. By elevating the topic of 'trust' itself, she uses the opportunity to define and position it in her own terms.

Phase 3 analysis: Caught in oppositional tensions?

Using interactional analysis (e.g. Angouri and Mondada, 2017; Messinioti et al., 2020), we next selected data points from two one-to-one conversations in which Nora and Amaya aim to influence their interlocutors. This analysis showed that both Nora and Amaya, proponents of doing management differently, also in ways which benefit women, rely on interactional strategies which are indexed for traditional (read: stereotypically masculine) leadership. However, at the same time, there are elements of their discourse that embody feminist values which aim to model alternative ways of ‘doing work’ (See Appendix XV to the thesis (p. 304) for more detailed linguistic interactional analysis of these extracts).

For example, in her conversation with Carol, Nora draws on her own status to give Carol space to manoeuvre. Carol has recently been promoted to a leadership role within a European office where, in the past, staff have engaged in behaviour which Nora views as protective, competitive and unhelpful. Nora, who is several layers above Carol in the organizational hierarchy, has set up a telephone call to set the tone for the new relationship. Extract 1 starts where Carol shares ideas of her own.

Extract 1

1	Carol	I wonder Nora do you think there would be any erm any merit in you know perhaps not monthly . probably not monthly but maybe once a quarter you know getting the two sort of leadership teams together […]
2	Nora	yeah I like that idea . yeah and go ahead with that suggestion I like that idea

Nora could easily have chosen to reject Carol's proposal by closing her down at the first opportunity. In fact, Carol's tentativeness may even signal that she is preparing for such a rejection as heavily mitigated and indirect proposals such as Carol's leave room for rejection without either party losing face (Aßmus, 2011; Holmes and Stubbe, 2015). However, Nora chooses not to do this. Instead, she nudges the dynamics between the rival offices by encouraging Carol to act, but she does not herself enact a different dynamic in *this* conversation. The reverse, in fact; Nora uses her power to establish space for Carol while at the same time reinforcing her own authority.

Extract 2

6	Nora	=yeah I think quarterly is enough for and if we realise that we need more you will do more but I don't like the idea of too many meetings

7 Carol   yeah I agree I already have plenty

8 Nora   and with an agenda […] I think it will be a good way to start because you are sharing information and our concerns and your success (1)

Carol's acquiescence confirms her lower status in this conversation but opens up possibilities for greater agency in others. In this way Nora legitimizes and reinforces her own authority status at the same time as empowering Carol to take a lead on an initiative designed to support a different way of working between the rival offices.

Rival offices are also a topic of interest to Amaya. She and René are based in the European office where business is carried out differently from the way it is done in the sister office in North America. Amaya, who wants to influence the way the two offices interact, marks her status and authority through her language choices by, for example, asking direct questions and issuing unmitigated directives. (Holmes and Chiles, 2009; Saito & Cook, 2017). In Extracts 3 and 4 René is promoting an idea aimed at improving work-flow processes and working relationships across the two sites.

Extract 3

2 Amaya   do you want to do, do you still want to try to do it in (US city)↑ I did sell it to Stan already

3 René   yeah we can do that (1) yeah definitely

4 Amaya   and in May we will be there . the first week of May

Clearing a workable space in which René can turn his idea into a plan relies on Amaya's ability to perform her role in the current competitive organizational climate, while also pointing towards different, in her view better, ways of working. Like Nora, Amaya uses her power to maintain the asymmetrical relationship between her and her subordinate while also empowering him to act.

Extract 4

9 René   but that's going to make our timetable (1) I think of all the projects that are coming up (2)

10 Amaya up to you (1) and if you say it's too soon for NA er or if you want to start with NA↑

11 René maybe I'll see an option . I mean a good thing is Louise is already doing something there (1) I talked to her a bit about it and I explained . I just explained a bit about what I'm planning to do and she was really excited about it but very collaborative and so she said let's work together (   ) et cetera so it's-

12 Amaya -so why don't we start to and talk to Louise and (   )↑

Rather than aligning their discursive strategies with commonly circulating in-company associations about how such behavioural changes should manifest in interaction – for example, influencing, suggesting and encouraging as opposed to dictating, advocating and directing – Nora and Amaya use a wide range of strategies including those which, if challenged, they might advocate that they are trying to change. Our close study of language reveals discourse features indexed for reinforcing power status alongside others which suggest releasing power so that others can take a lead. Similarly, by identifying what is happening in interaction (and how we know this), we have been able to identify discourse features which point to ‘new’ ways of working at the same time as others which suggest and emphasis on getting the work done in the here and now. An illustrative table of what is happening in the interaction, associated discourse features and examples of these in our data has been included in *Appendix XVI: Discourse features* (p.310).

Notwithstanding advice that warns of a trap created when new messages are undermined with old patterns of behaviour (e.g. Hackman and Johnson, 2009), our research participants refuse to be trapped. The fact is, popular literature often fails to recognize that these types of tensions exist and while more theoretically robust dialectical analyses assume that the oppositional elements are conceptually separable (but interdependent), the interactional analysis in this paper indicates that empirical practice is more nuanced and complex than both models imply, as we go on to describe in the next section.

Findings and discussion

The analysis demonstrates how managers bring oppositional tensions into existence through their discursive interaction. We have established that Amaya and Nora, two managers with a reputation for successfully leading change initiatives, spend most of their time getting the job done, as opposed to changing the way the job gets done. In seven and a half hours of recorded and transcribed interaction, there are only 18 minutes and 21 seconds in which speakers refer directly to establishing alternative ways of working. Change itself is rarely the focus of interaction. Instead, our managers are checking whether or not tasks have been done, and if not, why not; troubleshooting; keeping each other updated; solving problems together; allocating tasks; and very occasionally talking about an opportunity for a shift in direction that a subordinate might be encouraged to take. Such opportunities are fleeting and are not separate from current ways of working - they are part of the ongoing flow of getting work done. They may manifest as a slightly longer pause to enable someone to speak, or as a suggestion in place of a directive, or choosing the form of an open question in place of a declarative statement and so on. Such discursive moves go almost unnoticed and yet establishing new ways of working hinges upon them. What makes these two managers an interesting case study is their overt intention to lead differently from ‘old ’ways of traditionally working. Yet, a close study of their language use reveals that, far from affirming disembodied notions of influencing change, their discursive choices affirm and challenge workplace oppositional tensions equally. Thus, their discourse affirms for us that resistance is not all or nothing – you either fully resist all the time or you submit to dominant forms of interaction. Creating change is an ongoing and imperfect endeavour that is never fully accomplished.

Discourse strategies for getting (leadership) work done

Returning to the general research question that explores how leaders *get work done*, our data reveal how the two participants use discourse strategies which may be linguistically indexed for oppositional tensions. But, instead of trying to ignore or resolve this tension, by focusing on what these managers actually do, rather than what they say they do, we are able to identify four discourse strategies the participants use to achieve their objectives (even when their objectives are at odds with each other). These strategies are legitimizing and reinforcing status and power, releasing power so that others can take a lead, pointing out that a different way of working is possible, and getting the job done in the here-and-now.

In general, these strategies reveal the struggle Amaya and Nora experience while navigating the old/new ways of working opposition. Their expressed desire to lead differently makes this tension more palpable as they rely on normative discourses to affirm their authority, while simultaneously encouraging a more democratic and collaborative workplace culture. Importantly, this analysis reveals that the tensions, and even the ability to be both normative and progressive, do not always exist in direct opposition but are co-present and frequently intertwined (see also Fox and Comeau-Vallée, 2020). As the participants work towards promoting more democratic leadership practices, our analysis demonstrates that the process of bringing about changes in working practices is never linear. Roles are neither static nor won once and for all – they are dialogically and intersubjectively constructed in and through interaction. Thus, the space to do things differently is also created together in interaction, and not 'done to' someone.

What follows is a summary of the four main discursive strategies (see Appendices XV and XVI) that the participants utilize in their meetings to simultaneously legitimize their own status and power, while also releasing power so that others can take a lead; and to point out that a different way of working is possible while, at the same time, getting the job done in the here-and-now.

Legitimizing and reinforcing status and power

This discursive strategy demonstrates the pull towards more normative power structures within the workplace dynamic to affirm and reinforce status and power. For example, at one point in the discussion, Nora interrupts her colleagues and asks, *'And the plan is to early June?'* to control and steer the group discussion within her team meeting. Despite formulating the utterance as a question, Nora is able to assert herself as the person in control (Aritz et al., 2017; Halvorsen, 2018; Mesinioti et al., 2020). Amaya similarly affirms her authority using control devices such as control of the agenda and control of the floor (Holmes and Chiles, 2009), even when others are doing the speaking. She is also controlled. In another instance, Nora takes a strong knowing stance in relation to a particular employee by seeking confirmation from her colleagues rather than genuinely requesting their advice (Mesinioti et al., 2020): *'If we have these issues, if we know that Leo doesn't want to stay here, why are we investing in this guy?'* While posed as a question, Nora is not seeking an honest answer from her colleagues; her question is rhetorical and serves to assert her opinion. Finally, and perhaps most expectedly, both Nora and Amaya use unmitigated directives (Vine, 2009) which affirm their authority to enact and enable organisational agency.

Releasing power so that others can take a lead

As noted earlier, both Nora and Amaya stated their desire to engage in leadership practices that modelled 'new ways of working'. While legitimizing and reaffirming their power and status within the group, they both also provide space for others to lead. For example, at one point in Nora's team meeting, she asks her team members: '*Can I say to Mike that this is still a problem?'* before pausing for members of her team to consider their own positions and understanding of the problem before moving ahead with the next agenda item. Intentionally leaving quiet space within a conversation or group discussion promotes more collaborative interaction and validates the voices of others (Schnurr 2009). Similarly, both Nora and Amaya use questions that serve as invitations as well as opportunities for others to share information and voice opinions (Heritage, 2012; Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Wodak et al., 2011). When Amaya asks her direct report, Susan, *'Why don't you bring this up on Monday during our leadership meeting?',* she is encouraging her to take the lead in the next meeting. Importantly, Susan is neither directed nor required to take the lead. She is encouraged, not mandated. Amaya engages René in a similar way when she asks him: *'If you can put some thoughts together and next week we [can] try to finalize it.'* Her use of the conditional 'if' ensures a different and more invitational approach is enacted during the interaction. In similar fashion, Nora provides space for the team members to share insights about interviewees when she asks: *'Who cares more about the issues?'* It is not clear that all opinions or evaluations are equally valued, but space is provided for all to voice their perspectives, an interactional move perhaps designed to create a more collaborative approach to managing workplace engagement.

Pointing out that a different way of working is possible

Beyond releasing power so that others can enact their agency and lead, both participants role-model alternative ways of leading and working reminiscent of the ‘new way of working’ that they desire. Both Amaya and Nora use discourse to promote more collaborative and alternative ways of working, such as recognizing and naming preferred ways of behaving and communicating and providing positive evaluations of the behaviour of colleagues. For example, Amaya calls out poor behaviour such as gate-keeping and agenda-driving and suggests, alternatively, that ‘*There's an opportunity to talk, to trust, to do something else.’ ’* Nora also encourages alternative ways of interacting when she explains her preference for certain interviewees because they better conform to the ‘new way of work’ for which Nora explicitly advocates. She says to her team: *‘But Angela shows that she's thinking about these things and how to change things. the same with Roberto, and another way to do things…*

This modelling also includes explicit talk about doing work differently. When Amaya suggests to her team ‘*Let's build together as we work globally,’* she is acknowledging and acquiescing to the overall company strategy (growing globally) but reminding her team that the way they fulfil strategic objectives is still up to them. They can choose to interact and work in alternative, inclusive ways.

Finally, the participants use humour to critique and condemn poor behaviour – behaviour too that affirms old ways of working. Despite serving in positions of power and authority, both Nora and Amaya are still professional women who face systemic notions of masculinity and femininity. Offerings of critique and criticism, regardless of how legitimate or valid, can often backfire for women leaders. But humour can diffuse any associated negative feedback and reframe the comments so they are more palatable and accessible (Schnurr, 2008). Nora and Amaya seem to be aware of this technique and utilize it to help establish a more inviting and collaborative work culture.

Getting the job done in the here-and-now

As is the case with all managers, Nora and Amaya are aware of their need to demonstrate effective leadership. Of course, success is not measured in specific discursive strategies but by the accomplishment of strategic organisational objectives. In this final discursive strategy, we see elements of both new and old ways of working. For example, both Amaya and Nora are responsible for setting programme agendas and conducting meetings. The data shows them allocating tasks, motivating turn-taking to keep the discussions going, even censoring group members if their contribution is deemed inappropriate or unhelpful. These interactions all contribute to the idea of leadership as accomplishment – Nora and Amaya were able to *get the job done*.

Nora uses an agenda, circulated to the group prior to the start of the meeting, to indicate which topics are a priority and, by default, who is legitimized to speak (Angouri and Marra, 2010). For all of her invitational interaction, Nora also closes opportunities for alternative voices and dissent and controls the interactions amongst her colleagues. Amaya's comment to René to 'hang on a minute' acts in a similar fashion to Nora's agenda-setting: Amaya is in control of the discussion and claims ownership of the interaction so that it is aligned with her/the organisation's objectives (Kim and Angouri, 2019).

A strategy that appears invitational and appreciative, yet still maintains control for the leader, is used by Amaya when she compliments Susan on her comment, but quickly moves on, despite having plenty of time left in the meeting (Gumperz, 1982): *'It's a great point Susan, and almost we're out of time.'* This is an example of opening and closing behaviour – chairing behaviour – that affirms the leader's control of the situation (Angouri and Marra, 2010), but also affords her some latitude and opportunity to engage in more inviting and collaborative communicative interaction. In addition, both Amaya and Nora engage in formulating and resuming behaviour with their teams (Kim and Angouri, 2019) and even interrupt group members to indicate that the topic of discussion is no longer important or valid (Goldberg, 1990): Old and new ways of working, engaged simultaneously.

Conclusion

The managers in our data draw on all available discursive resources to *get work done*. In doing so they both confirm commonly experienced binary oppositions at the level of 'Discourse' *and* challenge them by behaving differently in interaction from the expectations embedded in these ideas. In orientating to particular organizational discourses through their evaluative stance, our research participants actualize some personal values at the expense of others. For example, both Nora and Amaya engage with colleagues in more collaborative ways instead of using typical (or expected) authoritarian leadership practice. However, despite their intention to model an alternative more feminist way of leading (new ways of working), close analysis of their actual workplace interaction reveals their tendencies to revert to more normative and well-known patterns of leading (old ways of working). Their actual embodied in situ interactions remind us that leaders utilize a full range of discursive strategies to accomplish leadership. Through the analysis of our data we identify and describe two examples of how this is manifest in interaction:

1. Ways that our research subjects can be seen to be getting work done under current conditions while at the same time trying to change the way work is done.

2. Ways in which our research subjects display and use power to empower others.

Overall, the complex relationship between organisational oppositions and the ways in which organisational members do or do not utilize them in pursuit of their interactional goals has been shown in the analysis.

These findings contribute to further theoretical, methodological and practical development in the field of management and leadership learning. By going beyond the static theoretical understanding of macro-Discourses (and the micro instantiation of these), and by examining actual in situ conversational behaviour, the analysis reveals surprising detail about what these women actually do in practice. Confirming previous organisational and sociolinguistic research that leadership is something we do together (for example, Ospina and Foldy, 2015; Ilie and Schnurr, 2017), our findings emphasize how leaders choose discourse strategies which enable them to find new ways of doing things together with colleagues, rather than casting them as independent actors who display particular leadership styles.

Organisational members (both leaders and followers) are subtly repositioned with more agency because they make choices – some of which are linguistic. Therefore, we need to pay more attention to language use (more or less conscious linguistic and conversational choices made in the flow of interaction) if we are to see the ways in which these choices shape the co-construction of working practices. Linguistic ethnography provides analytical tools and methods to examine interaction at close quarters and therefore to reveal detail of which speakers themselves are often unaware. If the investigative gaze is elsewhere, for example on cognitive, experiential or biographical processes, a significant portion of detail about what is actually occurring is missed.

This blind spot has practical implications. For example, it is not possible to shoehorn patterns of language use into convenient binary oppositions such as authority-democracy, competition-collaboration, individual-collective or even female-male, black-white or north-south. We can identify these tensions in D/discourse and in lived experience, but the more 'granular' our analysis, the more complex and nuanced the patterns we are able to identify. For example, we can only see collaborative or authoritarian patterns of leadership we look at the discourse strategies of all interactants, and not only those of senior colleagues. And by looking closely at these, we see that leadership processes can in fact be both collaborative and authoritarian at the same time. Therefore, to support practitioners in their pursuit of establishing alternative ways of working, we should acknowledge and understand this complexity and not, as is so often the case, distance ourselves so far from interactive data that we miss the micro-detail of what is happening and therefore go on to base our advice on a partial picture of how leadership work is accomplished.

Implications

To conclude, our study consistently shows that oppositions are an important aspect of leaders' mental maps of how behaviour can be shaped; and by orientating to these in evaluative ways, the interactants reaffirm their status and ensure their continuity in organisational discourse. However, our research subjects are not constrained by these notions in their actual conversational behaviour. Two aspects require further consideration. Firstly, from a sociolinguistic perspective, we focused on the presence of certain linguistic features (for example, questions, directives and control of the floor), but did not pay attention to what interactants are choosing *not* to do. There is scope for looking into discourse features which signal non-intervention, such as minimal response tokens and silences, because these choices also play an important role in enabling alternative ways of working. Secondly, from the perspective of management learning, work around notions of leadership style might be better captured in vocabularies of movement and flow as opposed to entities and binary choices. Therefore, further research is needed from a micro-perspective on the discursive strategies which entwine apparent oppositions. Linguistic ethnography is well suited to analysis in contextually sensitive organisational research because it can help to challenge the taken-for-granted. Our study has attempted to contribute to the dialogue between organisational researchers and workplace sociolinguists, and we hope future studies will continue to build on this agenda.

Appendix : Transcription conventions

/ /	Overlapping speech
(1.0)	Pause in seconds
.	Pause of less than 1 second
( )	indecipherable
–	interruption
↑	rising 'questioning' intonation
[…]	Words or lines omitted

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4.4 Case study 3: Conversations that get stuck

Sara and Gracia, who are the focus of the third case study, are senior executives with considerable international corporate experience. They are interested in their own patterns of interaction and how and why these seem to remain unchanged in spite of their attempts to change them. Paper 3 undertakes a close examination of their language use to identify what might be contributing to this 'stuck-ness'.

4.4.1 Sara

> *I used to think I had to make a lot of noise - to bang a great big drum. But the more I banged the drum, the less I managed to achieve. Now I think if we really want to change business, we talk together and we do it, but quietly… (Sara, 2014)*

Sara was a participant on the first English and Power programme that I ran in Madrid in February 2013 – before I even applied to Lancaster to do the PhD. In fact, it was because of this program that I recognised a way of framing a useful learning experience for small groups of female executives while at the same time collecting interesting, often surprising, data. The objective of trying to understand the dynamics of power (and to refine the way you use it) really appealed to Sara because it is so rarely discussed in corporate life. At the time of the workshop, she had been a C-level executive in a multi-national telecommunications firm for just over a year and was still finding the transition a challenge. In Sara's view the corporate executive level (at least in her company) was extremely political - which you would expect - but also aggressive. Her learning challenges at the time were related to this way colleagues conducted themselves. She wanted to be able to react to what she termed 'nasty aggression' without anger, and to express herself in a way that 'sounds like' senior corporate talk. I returned to Madrid in June 2014, to run two further English and Power programmes, this time to collect data for the PhD. I also interviewed her at this time about her own experiences and reflections. Two years later, almost to the day, I returned to Madrid, this time to shadow Sara in the job she had taken since we last met. A former Quality Executive of Alcatel Lucent, Sara had reached the top 200 before her 40th birthday - one of only a handful of women executives in a male dominated industry. However, she left the company because she wasn't prepared to continue balancing the demands of the job with her other job as mother. The job she had taken in its place was as Executive Director of Customer Relations in a Madrid-based provider of software solutions, operating world-wide but especially in Spanish and Portuguese speaking markets. Relationships at board level were different than in a US-led culture, but still aggressive. Some colleagues were always in battle - an exhausting practice of perpetual doubts and disagreements.

> *It's all very well thinking you'd like to perform your leadership differently - and you think you know how to do it, of course - but then someone says something and 'bang' it hits you at the back of the head and you've spoken before even you have had time to think about it. (Sara, 2016)*

4.4.2 Gracia

> *The inability to get value from a global team is an expensive problem to have and companies have not yet solved it. What is it that keeps these team dynamics stuck?' (Gracia, 2014)*

I met Gracia in 2014, not long after I began the PhD programme. I had gone to Madrid to run an English and Power programme for Sara's two mentoring groups and my PWN contact, introduced me to Gracia. We met in the Circulo de Bellas Artes (a very busy, public location) and discussed my research, the focus of which was still evolving. The core issues, though, of leadership, power and difference – including behaviours and attitudes relating to gender and culture – were unchanged from the start. Gracia described her company – a US-based global 'tech giant' - and her role within it which involved managing a large virtual team made up of people from many cultures. She illustrated her reflections with stories of her experiences working with different people from different countries and cultures. Added to this, for the previous 5 or 6 years her teams had never met face to face because of the cost. In these circumstances it is almost impossible to get participation from some cultures. Participation means different things to different people, of course, and the cultural norms of authority and respect are different in every country. The bottom line is the Anglo members always dominate and it is hard to get this to change.

I returned a few months later and spent the afternoon in a small central-Madrid office used for mainly for meetings. I interviewed Gracia herself and two members of her team – Eva and Lola – to help me build up a picture of the way people in the company worked. They talked about ‘working with the Americans’, mentioning short term-ism, a monolithic model of working and the fact that it is impossible to make the US people hear anything that was in any way different from their own experience. The main message they wanted to get over to me though, was that in their opinion, particularly Eva's, working practices in the team were frequently too focused on creating harmony. 'These are our colleagues' she said, 'not our friends.' Gracia is all too aware of this. She knows that despite years of international management experience, group dynamics in her international teams are not what she would like them to be. In spite of her best efforts, these uneven patterns of participation are difficult to shift, and she wanted to learn how to change the dynamics in established teams. She agreed to allow me to listen in and record their calls for my research. The calls were monthly with 11 people: 4 direct reports, and others, from many different backgrounds. The data used in Paper 3 was collected during one of these calls.

4.4.3 Paper 3: Applying linguistics to management learning: a case study of two executives' leadership styles

Abstract

The paper, which takes a linguistic ethnographic perspective, applies insights from applied linguistics research on leadership to management learning. The study examines the language practices of two corporate executives with a view to identifying insights which can inform their learning. We analyse six hours of naturally occurring spoken data recorded during two operational meetings in different multinational corporate settings. These data were collected during a management learning initiative designed with equal emphasis on research objectives and learning opportunities. We adopted the framework of activity analysis to identify critical episodes for more detailed analysis of discourse strategies. The analysis reveals ways in which unchallenged assumptions about language use can lead to reified patterns of talk which work against explicitly stated learning objectives. These are: first, the influence of binary thinking embedded in normative ideas about leadership styles, and second, the unseen interactive routines that structure participation and thus shape outcomes. These findings will be of interest to applied linguists who have an interest in working critically with managers on changing the ways in which they understand and express their leadership. The study contributes to our understanding of the ways in which leadership styles are shaped by the contexts in which they are performed. Any critical learning agenda must therefore create opportunities for linguistically informed leadership learning to occur in the flow of practice. An implication of this is the possibility that linguistic knowledge can make an important contribution to the theory and practice of management learning.

Key words: Leadership, Management Learning, Linguistic Ethnography

Introduction

This article applies insights from leadership research in applied linguistics to leadership and management learning in the workplace. I argue that as a methodology, linguistic ethnography reveals aspects of language use which contribute to two managers' experiences of being stuck in patterns of interaction which do not deliver the outcomes they seek. Linguistic ethnographic research combines close attention to the managers' language use with an analysis of context and social practice. The paper uses data collected through a shadowing, a process designed to facilitate engagement of corporate executives, which also included sharing findings with the group of participants to further facilitate learning.

Linguistic analysis has made an important contribution to understanding how leadership is indexed in most hierarchically organised workplace contexts (Clifton, 2006, 2012; Darics, 2020a; Schnurr, 2013, 2017; Mesinioti et al., 2020) through language practices such as using a range of control devices (Holmes & Chiles, 2009; Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Lockwood & Forey, 2016; Mullany, 2004; Vine 2001, 2009), such as control of the conversational floor (Angouri, 2018), to construct identities of leadership (Aritz et al., 2017) and reinforce seniority and power. More recently, scholars have called for insights from applied linguistic research to be taken into account by practitioners (for example, Clifton, 2019; Darics, 2020b; Darics & Clifton, 2019; Darics & Koller, 2019; Mautner, 2016, 2017). However, most of this work proposes the acquisition of language related leadership skills and knowledge in formal learning settings such as leadership coaching (Baxter, 2017, Graf, 2019), management education (Darics, 2019; Darics & Koller, 2018, 2019; Walker & Aritz, 2014) and management training (Campbell, 2006; Clifton, 2019; Stokoe, 2014). In contrast to work in management learning (for example, Chia, 2017; Crevani et al., 2010; Pedler & Brook, 2017; Stead & Elliott, 2013; 2018; Trehan, 2014), there have been no detailed applied linguistic studies of how practitioners engage in leadership learning in situ, where learning is understood as a social process 'embedded in practice, as the domain where doing and knowing are one and the same' (Gherardi, 2006, p. xiii). Despite the shared social constructionist orientations of management learning and applied workplace sociolinguistics, few applied linguists engage with managers as learners over time in their actual organisational settings (Baxter, 2010, 2017; Mullany, 2020, 2022), a gap which limits the value of sociolinguistic insights into leadership and management learning. I address this research gap in applied linguistics by analysing data collected during a management learning initiative to examine six hours of interactive data recorded during two operational meetings in different multinational corporate settings.

The two managers identify stereotypes and language myths surrounding gender and culture (Cameron, 2008, 2020; Ilie & Schnurr, 2017; Mullany, 2011, 2022) as part of the problem they want to address. These are therefore important to both research and learning objectives: to analyse and describe the managers' linguistic and conversational practices with a view to identifying insights they can apply to their learning. In relation to these objectives, I pose two questions:

RQ1: What patterns of leadership talk can linguistic ethnographic analysis help identify?
RQ2: What is keeping these patterns stuck?

In my analysis, I identify interactional strategies and interactive routines that index the executives' spoken leadership styles and that can also be seen to perpetuate gender stereotypical and culturally biased patterns of conversational behaviour. The analysis reveals unchallenged assumptions about language use that can lead to reified patterns of talk which work against the executives' explicitly stated learning objectives.

The article is set out in the following way: first I distil insights from applied linguistics literature relevant to leadership and management learning practice, including a consideration of styles of speech and patterns of language use that are relevant to the learning problems the executives identify. I then introduce the data and methodology before I turn to the analysis and discussion of my data set. Finally, I draw conclusions and outline areas that future studies could address.

Literature

Applied linguistics and management learning

Management learning is a sub-discipline of management and organisation studies. It covers all aspects of learning and knowing in management and organisations and encompasses research, theory, methods and practice. In the following, I refer to three applied linguistic articles which explicitly seek to inform aspects of management learning practice before going on to identify how my research responds to them.

First, Darics and Clifton (2019) argue that the field of organisational change management has not taken up discourse analytic perspectives and tools. Their article uses positioning theory (Bamberg et al., 2011) to analyse data taken from a corpus of interviews conducted during a corporate communications consulting project. They identify three interrelated levels of storytelling which highlight issues of agency, change, sameness or otherness and evaluation. Drawing on these organisational narratives of change, they propose a model of 'diagnostic listening' for change managers 'to make visible, tangible, and thus actionable, the seen but unnoticed underlying assumptions, unshared information, and patterns of collective thinking about change' (Darics & Clifton, 2019, p. 918). They conclude their article with a call to action for linguists to provide further cases showing how the insights of applied linguistics might be applied to management learning.

Secondly, Sarangi et al. (2019), working from the tradition of applied linguistics and professional practice (for example, Candlin & Sarangi 2011, 2017; Roberts & Sarangi, 2003; Sarangi & Candlin, 2003), argue that 'the linkage between real-world problem-orientation and change in practice can be seen as integral to the interventionist agenda of applied linguistic endeavour' (Sarangi et al., 2019, p. 114). According to these authors, uptake of applied linguistic knowledge is affected by the ability of the language researcher and professional practitioner to understand each other's repertoire (2019, p. 120) and opportunities to develop such understanding through collaborative endeavour are currently quite rare (2019, p. 119-120).

Finally, Jones & Stubbe (2004), working in the tradition of workplace sociolinguistics, reflect on their experiences of working with professional managers to apply insights from the (Victoria University Wellington) Language in the Workplace programme (Holmes, 1998; LWP, 2022). They frame their endeavour from an appreciative organisational learning perspective (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Easterby-Smith et al., 1999; Srivastva & Cooperrider, 1990) in which learning from reflective practice on action and in action (Schön, 1983) is preferred over solutions diagnosed and driven by 'experts'. In their article they describe how they used a version of action learning (Henderson, 1993) to explore the use of sociolinguistic insights in solving real-world problems. The authors conclude that although their participants reported that the learning from involvement in their research programme was inherently meaningful, they themselves lacked the consultancy skills to align their intervention with their clients' expectations (Jones & Stubbe, 2004, p.205). They argue that a sociolinguistically informed action inquiry can only be realized by skills acquired through engaging with an organisational learning orientation.

The research reported on in the present paper responds to the following issues raised by these authors. First, it responds to Darics and Clifton's (2019) call to action by exploring the use of applied linguistics to management learning practice. Second, it aims to balance 'research on' and 'research with' paradigms (Cameron et al., 1992) by working with corporate executives to jointly problematise some of the real-life functions and consequences of language use. This helps to frame the research questions and to test the interpretation of data collaboratively, with the intention of adding an 'act with' dimension to a 'research with' activity (Roberts, 2003, p. 136). Third, the study combines the methods and tools of linguistic ethnography (see Rampton et al., 2015; Copeland & Creese, 2015; Copeland et al., 2015; Tusting, 2019) with an approach to learning and engagement which has been shaped by my many years' professional experience in organisation development (OD).

Applied linguistics and leadership style

Applied linguistic analyses of the discursive performance of leadership traditionally use binary categories to identify and describe leadership styles (for example, Schnurr, 2017; Walker & Aritz, 2014, 2015; Darics & Koller, 2018). In fact, foundational applied linguistic definitions of leadership itself propose that a competent performance entails balancing transactional and relational communicative goals (for example, Holmes, 2005, p.32). Schnurr (2013) puts it this way:

> Leadership can productively be viewed as a discursive
> performance which by influencing others advances the goals of

the organisation (transactional behaviour) while also maintaining harmony within the group (relational behaviour). (2013, p. 162)

This broad definition provides the conceptual cornerstone of many discourse analytical approaches to how interactants ‘do being a leader’ discursively in their contexts (Holmes & Marra, 2004; Mesinioti et al. 2020; Schnurr, 2017, 2022; Vine et al., 2008). Binary representations extend to other aspects of leadership behaviour. Wodak et al. (2011), for example, argue that the discursive strategies associated with egalitarian leadership styles are more successful than those associated with an authoritarian approach. (2011, p. 611). Also, scholars associated with the influential Language in the Workplace project (LWP, 2022) similarly draw attention to authoritative and participatory leadership styles in their analyses (Holmes, 2006, 2007; Holmes & Marra, 2006, Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Schnurr, 2008). Such binary oppositions are also commonplace in traditional approaches to leadership and management learning. For example, cross-cultural studies grounded in the notion of fixed characteristics of culture (Douglas, 2003 [1970]; Hofstede, 1980; House et al., 2004 Trompenaars, 1993) continue to inform ideas about how leadership and culture interact, as do gendered conceptualisations of leadership, be they persistent models about the heroic traits of great men (Carlyle, 1993 [1841]) or the post-heroic ‘female leadership advantage’ (Eagly & Carli, 2003 p. 807; see also Helgesen & Johnson, 2010). The tendency to present leadership style as a series of discursive choices based on dichotomies is commonplace and hence influences practitioners' thinking about their own styles of leadership.

While such stereotypes persist, sociolinguistic research clearly shows that women and men use a whole range of interactional strategies selected in response to the task and the specific interactive context at hand (Holmes, 2017; McDowell, 2021; Mills & Mullany, 2011; Mullany & Schnurr, 2022; Schnurr, 2022, Marra et al., 2006, Schnurr & Omar, 2021). Sociolinguistic research aims to dispel 'damaging stereotypes and myths about how communication allegedly “works” in business and organizational contexts' (Mullany, 2022, p. 205). Furthermore, recent work in both applied linguistic and management learning conceptualises culture as a dynamic process which is continually enacted or performed (Pillar, 2011; Guthey & Jackson, 2011; Handford, 2020; Handford et al., 2019; Holmes, 2018; Ilie & Nakamura, 2017; Schnurr, 2017). Nevertheless, certain behaviours are coded so that ways of speaking associated with them become indices of gender and/or culture (Gordon & Kraut, 2018). For this reason, normatively 'feminine' and normatively 'masculine' ways of talking become the object of sociolinguistic research, thereby adding yet another layer of binary conceptualisations to notions of leadership style.

To sum up, by working with binary conceptualisations of leadership style at the same time as drawing attention to the complexity of actual workplace interactions (Schnurr et al., 2017), linguistic analysis highlights important tensions in the study of leadership practices. For example, as a number of authors point out, task and relationship activities are also associated with gender stereotypes (see Darics & Koller, 2018). This means that by relying on a seemingly dichotomous conceptualisation of discourse goals we, in effect, perpetuate the gender binary rather than disrupt it. Nevertheless, the dominant applied linguistic model of leadership continues to rely on two basic discursive orientations: one towards task and another towards relationships, a combination also frequently presented as dichotomous in mainstream leadership literature (e.g. Bass, 1990; Bass & Alvolio, 1994; Burke et al., 2006; Fielder, 1993). Before I examine what patterns of leadership talk and what potential alternatives can be identified through a linguistic ethnographic lens, I present my data and methods.

Data and methods

This section describes which data were collected, how they were collected and how they will be analysed.

The research was designed with equal emphasis on data collection and learning opportunities. The data were collected in a management learning setting during 2014 and 2015. A group of five corporate executives agreed to be shadowed and for actual data to be recorded, subsequently transcribed and later analysed. The data set is made up of three elements: transcribed voice recordings of meetings with a range of operational and managerial objectives; field notes taken before, during and after the shadowing episodes; a research diary covering the learning-orientated conversations held at the time of the shadowing and later, in 2022, during a learning meeting designed to share findings and explore implications. In this article I draw on transcribed data from two comparable but geographically distanced, face-to-face and voice only international meetings, accounting for a total of six hours interactive data. The interactions from which the examples in the paper were selected was transcribed using the transcription conventions listed in the appendix to this paper.

Sara and Gracia, the two managers who are the focus of the analysis, are executives in comparable global technology corporations. The two are also comparable in a number of other ways: they are both engineers, both run their operations almost entirely remotely and lead large multinational teams; both are non-native speakers of English from the European South and both are female. What is more, they share an aspiration to develop more effective and equitable working practices by influencing how leadership is positioned in their organisations (as more balanced, collaborative, inclusive etc.) and making changes to their own leadership practice.

This study was designed so that linguistic analysis of actual data (as opposed to recalled interactions) could inform the managers' learning. Both executives have clear learning objectives. Sara is aware that she has what she calls a 'masculine style' of leadership. She draws attention to 'getting trapped in a way of behaving' which has brought success in a male dominated business context. However, it has meant she cannot express her leadership with what she describes as a more 'feminine style', which for her means a less confrontational approach. Sara is frustrated at this dominant 'masculine' aggressive leadership style yet also finds herself trapped in it. Gracia knows that in spite of many years' international management experience, group dynamics in her international teams are not what she would like them to be. Teams develop suboptimal interactional habits which do not make use of the talents and resources of all team members. In spite of her efforts to make changes, these uneven patterns of participation remain. She is aware that there may be things that she does unwittingly which undermine her ambitions and she wants to better understand these dynamics.

I analyse the data within a framework of activity analysis (Sarangi, 2012) which starts with a systematic mapping of the features of the interactions onto activity types (Levinson, 1992 [1979]). The latter are defined as culturally recognised, goal-oriented events with specific constraints on participation. The map allowed me to identify critical episodes for a more detailed analysis of interactional strategies (see also Halvorson, 2016), in this case, styles of speech indexed for different ways of 'doing' leadership. Informing the analysis is the recognition that in exercising their leadership, the constraints and allowable contributions the two managers face are shaped by the specific settings in which their interactions occur. (See Levinson [1992] for a full discussion and also Gumperz [1982] on contextualisation cues and conversational inferencing.) The empirical data were analysed in two stages which comprised both meso- and micro-levels of qualitative analysis. First, both meetings were transcribed and analysed within the broader contextual understandings derived from the ethnographic engagement, paying attention to the similarities and differences between Sara and Gracia's meetings. Second, extracts were selected for micro-analysis to substantiate the discourse patterns I observed across the data set as a whole. Here I relied on discourse analytic tools to identity interactional strategies and related linguistic features (e.g. Roberts & Sarangi, 1999; Sarangi, 2012; Wodak et al., 2011).

In line with linguistic ethnographic research, in the analysis I pay attention not only to micro-level practices, but also to their dynamic interconnection with macro-level institutional processes and ideologies (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). The analysis aims to draw a connection between language practices and the broader sociocultural dynamics which shape leadership learning. In other words, I consider how learning is constrained and enabled by conversational routines which pre-structure participation at the level of the activity type (a coaching conversation, a SWOT analysis; a corporate operations meeting, and so on). Being interpreted as professional, a good colleague, part of the team and so on depends on fitting into and learning to master these implicit, learnt routines. I turn to this analysis next.

Analysis

Although they are remarkably similar in many aspects, there are stylistic differences in the two meetings. These derive from combining constraints of the activity-specific interactive routines with choosing interactional strategies and related linguistic features. These are summarised and substantiated with descriptive examples from the data set as a whole.

Comparing Sara and Gabriela's meetings: activity analysis

As Executive Director of Customer Relations, Sara convenes a monthly meeting to discuss operational issues with principal product and process managers. In these meetings, participants update each other on technical problems both solved or ongoing. As Senior Director of Product Solutions, Gracia convenes her operational meeting among her globally distributed team of engineers and customer relations managers to ratify aspects of a roadmap which will inform resource sensitive decisions. The meetings display strong commonalities: both take place by international voice-only conference call and are mediated by shared updatable screens showing relevant data; both might be classified as formal international corporate meetings and both are structured by meeting chairs, a role which is indexed by the most senior manager taking the role of the chair and having overall control over turns, topics and speaking rights. Discourse types (Angouri & Marra, 2010; Sarangi, 2000; 2015) which index chairing, and by extension leadership, are employed by both executives. These include:

1. *Establishing and closing a topic:* In both cases the chair controls the topics, opens discussions to the floor and brings discussions to a close. The chair decides when there has been enough comments on a topic and moves swiftly onto the next point. This is never challenged; both Sara and Gracia have the final word in their respective meetings, and everyone orientates to their authority. The opening and closing patterns (Sara: 'OK so I'll go to the next one'; Gabriela: 'So let's move to the next one”) are consistent with institutionally sanctioned speaking rights that reflect a high degree of institutional power. (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015).

2. *Policing parameters of the call such as purpose and scope (i.e. framing constraints)*: Deontic authority, which is derived from legitimate asymmetrical power, is established and re-established at every utterance/response sequence. This pattern is repeated and predictable and appears impossible to challenge. Epistemic authority however, which is related to expertise and knowledge, is legitimately challenged by

participants of both meetings. From positions of deontic authority, both Sara and Gracia intervene quickly when they judge that participants are not on task.

3. *Monitoring speaking rights (i.e. managing allowable contributions)*: In both cases, while allowable contributions are mainly defined by institutional power relationships, they can also be afforded by knowledge and expertise. In both cases the chair assumes responsibility for the relevance of contributions and manages the overall meeting time, interrupting on occasion to ensure brevity.

4. *Taking decisions for others to operationalise*: Both Sara and Gracia take decisions during their meetings as soon as they have the relevant information to hand. This mandate is a manifestation of their authority, which becomes further consolidated in the public recognition that their decisions mean that others on the call are required to take some form of action.

5. *Mandating action via direct requests*: In both meetings direct requests are made from superiors to subordinates but never the other way round. While both Sara and Gracia issue some directives formulated as questions, Sara tends to choose direct speech acts to perform a request. Others on the calls are able to do this only to their own direct reports on the line. Requests between participants at the same management level or from subordinates to superiors are made in the meetings, but only in the politest formulations which can be easily refused. If either Sara or Gracia uses an indirect speech act to make a request, it functions as an implicit directive which, in these meetings at least, cannot be turned down.

6. *Inviting comment/summarising*: Both executives control the conversational floor. They exercise their right to invite comments from participants on particular items and confirm their higher status when they formulate or summarise contributions for the formal record.

Superficially then, the meetings have much in common. There are nonetheless important differences. A key characteristic of Sara's meeting is the configuration of meeting participants. Although the meeting is attended by up to six people at head office, a further nine join and leave on a rolling basis depending on the information they have to contribute. This dynamic makes phatic pre-meeting talk impossible and as a result, there are no moments in the meeting aimed at maintaining the sense of belonging to a team, nor any episodes of small talk or humour (Schnurr, 2009). The focus of the conversation never veers off task: solving the immediate problem matters far more than social and status needs. Gracia's meeting, by comparison, has a fixed number of contributors who know each other well. All eleven participants are on the call from start to finish - three in head office and eight in offices in different countries - and there are short episodes of humour and off-task talk about football.

The purposes of the two meetings further shape what is deemed an appropriate contribution. In Sara's meeting, discussion is aimed at what needs to be done immediately to solve technical problems, who should take responsibility for doing whatever is decided and by when. Technical problems represent financial risks for customers and must be resolved as quickly as possible with the resources available. Differences of opinion as to how best to solve these problems must be resolved during the meeting, even if this means confrontation between participants. By contrast, Gracia's meeting is more future focused. Participants are required to ratify a roadmap prior to Gracia attending an off-site meeting of directors where resource-related decisions with implications for the team are to be taken. Co-constructing the team is part of that task. This means that the conversation is focused on eliciting relevant information and confirming consensus. Confrontation, therefore, is neither appropriate nor necessary.

There are marked difference in the norms of information exchange and politeness as well. In Sara's meeting there are no small talk or humour, no distractions, no breaks and no challenges to the chair's authority. Efficiency and effectiveness always trump politeness, and strong challenges with face threatening implications are common. In Gracia's meeting by comparison, there is high observance of degrees of tact, approbation and agreement. This accentuated solidarity may be attributable to awareness of the multi-cultural context in which maintaining one's own and others' face is an important interactional goal (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Certainly, the need to maintain rapport in this group is high (Spencer-Oatey, 2008), to the extent that disagreement is almost impossible to spot.

Finally, a comparison of the pragmatic force of contributions made by different participants that is, what they are trying to achieve by what they say (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014), reveals that while some pragmatic acts are common among all speakers, marked differences can be seen between the leaders and other participants, and also between Gracia and Sara as shown in Table 7.

	Both meetings	Gracia's meeting	Sara's meeting
Pragmatic acts employed by all participants	Seeking information Giving information Checking understanding	Assembling shared knowledge Complimenting other team members	Asking direct and potentially face-threatening questions
Pragmatic acts employed by participants but not by Gracia or Sara	Offering an alternative perspective	Evaluating others outside the call	Defending a position
Pragmatic acts employed by Gracia or Sara but not by other participants	Establishing a topic Signalling the end of a topic Defining the parameters of the call (i.e. framing constraints) Monitoring speaking rights (i.e. managing allowable contributions) Formulating	Openly inviting a comment from any participant Summing up a decision agreed by the group	Inviting a specific participant to comment Taking unilateral decisions Issuing unmitigated directives

Table 8 Pragmatic acts performed in Sara's and Gracia's meetings

Sara and Gracia's interactional strategies also differ. Overall, Sara's preferred style is transactional and authoritative where Gabriela prefers a more interpersonal, egalitarian style (Wodak et al., 2011). These differences are the focus of the next stage of the analysis.

Sara's and Gracia's discursive strategies

Sara

Sara and her team discuss their production environment and the status of projects with a number of customers. A serious error occurred overnight. Sara points out to Juan that the problem for the client has arisen because a procedure that his team is responsible for was not followed correctly.

Example 1: The customer must be very upset

Manuel, a specialist engineer, has been invited to the call to explain what should have happened the previous evening and what his own team will now do to rectify the problem. There are eight people on the call at the time of the exchange.

0	Sara	yes . go ahead Manuel
		((followed by Manuel's lengthy technical description))
1	Sara	so Juan uh I guess the customer must be very upset . I would be *in their place*
2	Juan	>no no no<
3	Sara	/((exasperated sigh))/

In example 1, Sara confronts Juan about the problem his team has caused. Although she addresses him by name so that there is no ambiguity as to who should answer for the problem, her challenge is not direct. In turn 1 she mitigates the likely face-threatening nature of her interjection by choosing the first person singular and the verb 'guess' - a hypothetical possibility - and employing the modal verb ‘must ’in an epistemic sense to qualify the deduction about the customer's response (*So, Juan, I guess the customer must be very upset*). She continues to avoid a direct second person affront through the use of the conditional, again in the first person singular (*I would be in their place*). Juan begins his defence in turn 2 by disagreeing with Sara (*no no no*), who cannot contain her overlapping exasperated sigh.

Example 2: because . because .

Juan responds by defending his position:

((turns omitted))

5 Juan until today it wasn't come er: eh: and yesterday er:: we thought we had the problem solv-ed because in the >pre-production environment< er::: was working okay . but >in production environment< . doesn't work

6 Sara (2.5) because . because . because of what er er er= eh↑

7 Juan I don't know=

8 Sara =Manuel has just said .

In hesitant English with marked grammatical errors of grammar, Juan counters in turn 5 with the claim that the problem had been solved but reappeared. This time Sara dispenses with indirectness, ratcheting up the likely face threat with a demand in turn 6 that he explain the cause of the problem (*because . because. because of what er er er= eh*↑). That it becomes clear to everyone in turn 8 that she already knows the answer to her own question (*Manuel has just said*) adds to the impression of a teacher admonishing a child forced to admit in turn 7 that he doesn't (*I don't know*). This move makes Juan's error a matter for public judgement.

Example 3: This was a human error

Sara clarifies her position on the matter:

((detailed explanation of the error from Sara))

12 Sara . so .

13 Juan so you're saying that: we have . the right process now . and we can try it in production↑ /tonight in/↑

14 Sara /and / the right process was already there yesterday↓ . the only problem is that it was not correctly followed . it was a human error . this was a human error

In the previous turn Manuel provides a partial explanation for Juan’s team’s error, perhaps to smooth the rising tension. Sara chooses not to pick up on this possible mitigation but instead regains the confrontational tone of her challenge with the adverb (*so*), implying the unspoken “What are you going to do about it?”. Juan makes a countermove by echoing Sara's ‘so’, shifting the focus of the discussion to a check that the right process is in place and can be used in a client environment. That this utterance is intended as a direct challenge to Sara's authority is made plausible by Juan's questioning intonation in turn 13. Given Sara's unmitigated, direct contradiction in turn 14 (*the right process was already there yesterday*), which both highlights and confirms the line of command, it is likely that Sara interprets it as such. Her judgement (*this is a human error*), while falling short of apportioning blame directly to Juan, is nonetheless a bald, on-record threat to positive face.

Gracia

Gracia steers her team through a long list of items which have been generated by a budgetary planning exercise for the following year. This 'roadmap' of potential activities frames Gracia's pending discussion with other directors at her level in the company. The outcome matters to all participants in the current meeting because funding decisions flow from it. Gracia wants to make sure that the views of her team members are fully and fairly represented and that they are behind the collective view that is established during the meeting.

Example 4: okay . okay

Gracia introduces a new item from the agenda:

1 Gracia =okay okay (2.5) okay . let’s move to the next
one . translation metrics↑ >tracking
translation and changes to supervision< from
new initiatives (1) er:: . you have some
comments Eva here that . I seem to remember a
similar proposal that was waiting to have ABCD↑
operational . er:: (1) we don’t really know

```
            what this is going to be used for . is this for
            a metrics meeting or↑
```

Gracia closes the last item and after waiting over two seconds to make sure no one else wishes to contribute, opens the next topic in turn 1, equivalent to the next item in the roadmap, also with the discourse marker *okay*. She reads the entry, hesitates, notes that Eva (her direct report) has uploaded a comment, reads the comment, hesitates again and, using an inclusive ‘we’, reflects that the team, including her, is not clear about the objective of this particular proposal (*we don't really know what this is going to be used for*). She follows this with a genuine direct open question (*is this for metrics meeting or↑*).

Example 5: we are speculating

Gracia makes space for others to comment:

```
            ((turns omitted))
3 Christine it would be good to get more information about
            /it/
            /it/
4 Eva       /exactly/
5 Zak       yes
6 Christine yeah . we are speculating . yeah
7 Gracia    okay (1) okay (1)
```

Christine, Gracia's other direct report in this team, who takes up the turn and comments, presumably to Gracia, that more information would be useful. That her comment is appreciated by the team is evidenced by the chorus of phatic agreements, to which Christine, in turn 6 and in response to her own comment, notes that the team is speculating. In turn 7, Gracia signalling that she has understood and taken these comments on board, repeats the 'okays' for the third time (*okay (1) okay (1)*) and waits.

Example 6: the only thing is

Just as Gracia is closing the discussion, she introduces an element of doubt:

8	Zak	yeah particularly . particularly at the time . we didn't have the information . ((lines omitted)) it's very good to track all the effort and (1) but I'm not sure as well .
9	Eva (?)	((intake of breath))
10	Gracia	okay (1) okay (1) so Gracia again . so for the next few ones I'm going to skip because we are all aware of what they are . the only thing is we got a message today from Carol asking for the business case for . I think it's for the end of ((xxx)) er: project er: . did we submit that a while ago↑ because that was my er: (1) *was my*

Zak takes up the turn (turn 8) offered in this space in order to add some more background information about the entry, but this eventually tails off into doubt (*but I'm not sure as well*). Gracia interprets Zak's comment as the final contribution on the topic and after signalling in turn 10 that she is allowing time for further contributions (*okay (1) okay (1)*), uses the discourse marker '*so*' to signal that she is about to introduce a new topic. After explaining that she will skip a few entries for reasons known to the team, Gracia, still in turn 10, signals a problem (*the only thing is*) which has arisen because another executive has asked for a particular business case. Gracia's question (*did we submit that a while ago↑*) levels the ground and invites participation to answer on equal terms.

Interpretative summary

In this exchange Sara accentuates the power difference between her and Juan by exercising the right bestowed on her by her executive leadership role to ask difficult questions and to insist on answers, however uncomfortable this becomes. This question-answer sequence is rooted in an asymmetrical power relationship. She is a strong chair who keeps tight control over turns and topics throughout her meeting. Juan tries to challenge her reading of the situation but is unsuccessful, because Sara has already positioned Manuel to counter any claims that Juan might make. Manuel, who may have some sympathy for Juan's predicament, makes no move to challenge Sara's repeated questioning, nor does anyone else. Sara's tone is authoritative and displays marked epistemic certainty. She occasionally hesitates to gain thinking time but never when she gives an opinion or issues orders. She avoids hedging and rarely modalises: in this extract, for example, she introduces some modality to soften her introductory challenge to Juan (s*o Juan I guess*..) but once into the exchange, she reverts to her usual pattern, which is to show no doubt. It is not clear if Juan intends to mount a challenge to Sara's authority, but she takes no chances. At the first sign of authority trouble (Murphy, 2023) she consolidates her power by asking direct questions, interrupting and giving permission. In this extract she takes no chances with Juan's incredulity and instead points the finger of blame at him, albeit indirectly (*this was a human error*). Sara's discussion-decision pattern includes no invitation to contribute. If none of the participants presents a workable solution to a problem, Sara takes a unilateral decision and signals clearly that the topic is closed. This pattern is never challenged. Sara is unafraid of mounting strong challenges herself in which she contradicts the view of others, challenges them to offer an explanation or modifies their ideas. She maintains power by making sure she does not give it away.

The purpose of Gracia's meeting, on the other hand, is to seek agreement, so it is unsurprising that Gracia presents each topic for collective consideration. She reads out each roadmap entry to clarify that a new topic has been introduced and then she opens the floor for comments. Although on a number of occasions she asks the group directly if they agree, more frequently she contributes to an atmosphere of consensus-building. Gracia regularly leaves spaces for participants to make contributions. In turn 1 she leaves marked pauses after a topic has been discussed and before introducing a new one (*okay (2.5))* and reads silence as a sign she can move on (*okay let's move to the next one*). She employs the same mechanism within a topic, both to control the speed of interaction and to make room for others' comments, for example Zak's observation (*yeah particularly . particularly at the time . we didn't have the information)* in turns 7 and 8. Furthermore, by asking questions (*did we submit that a while ago*↑), she invites any team member present to speak. The culture of 'super-solidairty' the team prefers means there are no open disagreements in this meeting, even if differences of opinion do arise. Gracia tends not to intervene in these episodes, preferring instead to let the participants find their own consensus. The choice not to close down differences of opinion signals tolerance. Gabriela's phatic agreement in turn 7 (*okay (1) okay*) further helps the conversation to flow until a new topic is signalled. Gracia signals openness by making it clear that she does not have all the answers, for example when she tries to establish the goal of a particular roadmap entry (*is this for metrics management or*↑ (turn 1). This epistemic humility is realised through the use of questions which genuinely seek information (i.e. the answer is not already known). Gracia has quite a light hand on the controls and this permits some flexibility of turn-taking, topic management and talk-time. Looser control affords opportunities for participation.

Sara's meeting is characterised by the immediate operational goals of an all-male team of engineers for whom a transactional and authoritative interactional style indexes leadership. She chooses this style because she has learnt that in predominantly male engineering contexts a more relational, participative style signals 'not leadership'. Even being female can signal not being 'senior enough'. In an interview, she reflects:

> *Several years ago when I first went to Argentina, I used to answer my own calls until I got so tired of people asking to speak to the boss. In the end I told my secretary to screen all the calls and announce that she was passing the caller to the person in charge. I learnt to speak in a masculine style so that people would know that was me.*

In the learning event and using actual data, participants reflected on discourse features which by indexing hierarchy, authority and task focus also index masculinity. The question of interest was how, with this combination of social and interactional constraints, it is possible to make room in corporate life for different approaches to leadership.

Gracia's chooses a participative interactional style with the aim of achieving more balanced participation in this long-established team. In spite of this, however, some people do all the talking, and some say nothing at all. About one of her direct reports, she reflects:

When I visit his country I see someone who is respected and carries his authority visibly. Even though I don't speak the language I can see that he is very active in his leadership. But there are times on our conference calls that I only realise he's been present when the conferencing system announces that he's left.

Manually performed quantitative analysis shows that Gracia's interactional strategy does not include or get valued by everyone. Measured in terms of floor occupancy, Gracia and her direct report Eva speak for 57.14% of the available time while the bottom two speakers account for just 1.24%.

As I discuss in the section that follows, my analysis reveals patterns which are significant for management learning.

Discussion

The discussion section presents three main findings. First, I discuss what patterns have been revealed in the analysis and how these patterns (re)confirm unhelpful binary thinking about leadership. Next, I show how the speech styles identified are embedded in interactional constraints which contribute to the executives' experiences of "stuck-ness". I round off the discussion by arguing that leadership learning can benefit from linguistic knowledge providing it can made available in the flow of practice. All three require linguistic knowledge and have implications for leadership and management learning.

Interactional strategies and leadership styles

An initial objective of the study was to identify patterns of workplace interaction which shed light on the leadership learning objectives identified by the two managers. The analysis revealed interactional strategies that index different approaches to doing leadership. Although these strategies were not explicit; they nonetheless capture the speakers' discursive 'theories-in-use' (Argyris & Schon, 1974) and therefore make it possible to characterise their predominant leadership styles. As Sara recognised in her reflections about her own language choices, her speech style relies heavily on the stereotypically masculine discourse features (for example, Darics & Koller, 2018; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Holmes, 2009, 2014; Mullany, 2007) of 'command and control' leadership (Deering & Murphy, 1998). Discourse types such as displays of deontic authority, granting permission and issuing orders, index a style in which the speaker is taking a line that is hard to challenge. Although Gracia, in performing her role as chair, also makes use of power-related devices such as questions (Aritz et al., 2017) to direct team members, control the floor, and influence decision making, she softens the effect of these by choosing interactional strategies which index a more egalitarian style of leadership (Wodak et al., 2011). Discourse features such as marked pauses, frequent back channelling and open questions index a style in which the speaker is encouraging participation in group discussion. Sara and Gracia's discursive patterns, possible discourse types and related discourse features along with examples from the data are compared in Table 8.

SARA's discursive pattern: Taking a line that is hard to challenge			GRACIA's discursive pattern: Encouraging participation in group discussion		
Possible discourse types	**Discourse features**	**Examples in the data**	**Possible discourse types**	**Discourse features**	**Examples in the data**
Display power asymmetry	Deontic authority - the right to ask questions and insist on answers	Turn 1: so Juan I guess the customer must be very upset	*Seek group agreement*	Direct questions used to seek group approval regarding topic or agenda management	Turn 1: okay let's move to the next one… you have some comments here Eva↑
Leave no room for challenge	Questioning as interrogation - i.e. rapid repeated questioning which goes unchallenged Strong chairing: tight control over turns and topics	Turn 6: because . because. because . of what er:: eh↑ Turn 8: Manuel has just said	*Make space for contributions*	Marked pauses Open questions	Turn 1: okay (2.5) Turn 10: did we submit that a while ago↑
Show no doubt	Epistemic certainly - no hedges Very rarely modalised	Turn 10: they need to stop them . and they did not stop them Turn 14: this was a human error	*Tolerate differences of opinion*	Phatic agreements/back-channelling Not intervening to close down a discussion in which participants express opposing views	Turn 7: okay (1) okay (1) Turns 3-7: Transition relevant points are not taken up and differences of opinion are allowed to run
Squash any signs of authority trouble	Direct questions Interruptions Granting permission	Turn 12: so ((What are you going to do about it?)) Turn 14: /and/ the right process was already there yesterday Turn 0: yes . go ahead Manuel	*Signal openness*	Ask questions that genuinely seek information (i.e. the answer is not already known)	Turn 1: is this for metrics meeting or↑
Be decisive and in charge	Unilateral decisions - discussion-decision pattern does not include an invitation to contribute Strong challenges - contradicting the view of another participant, asking them to provide an explanation Modifying or contradicting the ideas of others	Turn 17: Juan: sure ↑ Turn 18: Sara: yes ↓ Turn 14: the only problem was this was not correctly followed Turn 14: The right process was there yesterday	*Loosen control*	allow flexibility of turns, topic management and talk-time	Turn 1: Opens the floor without pre-selection

Table 9 Sara's and Gracia's discursive patterns

In this sense, then, the findings of the study are consistent with the applied linguistics literature that draws on more traditional dualisms to conceptualise and study how leadership is accomplished in talk (for example, Baxter, 2008, 2015; Holmes & Stubbe 2015; Schnurr, 2013; Vine et al. 2008; Walker & Aritz, 2014, 2015). This traditional approach describes leadership styles as a series of binary choices between, for example, doing management or leadership, performing a hierarchical or egalitarian style, or orienting one's talk predominantly towards tasks or relationships. However, a note of caution is due here since sociolinguistic studies consistently affirm the 'unscripted, messy and complex' nature of workplace interaction (Mullany, 2022, p.206) and unpack, rather than consolidate, damaging stereotypes rooted in biological determinism (for example, Holmes, 2006; Mullany, 2007) and cultural essentialism (for example, Angouri, 2018; Ilie & Schnurr, 2017; Mullany & Schnurr, 2022; Nickerson & Goby 2017) to show how leaders draw on a wide range of different leadership styles to meet the situational demands (Schnurr 2017). Management learning scholars also take a more nuanced view of leadership and the ways in which a range of dialectics work together to (re)produce discursive patterns which perpetuate inequalities (for example, Elliott & Stead, 2018, Stead et al., 2021). This disjuncture between some applied linguistic leadership literature on the one hand, and critical management learning studies and sociolinguistic studies of gender and culture on the other, offers two important insights about applying linguistic knowledge in a practice setting.

First, the influence of binary thinking so embedded in normative ideas about leadership styles continues to structure the way managers think and speak about leadership (Murphy, 2017; Murphy & Remke, 2023). Discourse features indexed for (perceptions of) gender, culture and leadership style simultaneously index each other and this dichotomised and circular referentiality contributes to a discursive pattern which reinforces binary conceptualisations of leadership. Aided by analyses of actual data of their own spoken interactions, the participants of the learning event spent time examining the relationship between this circularity and the binary traps which perpetuate gender stereotypical and culturally biased patterns of conversational behaviour. The conversation was found to facilitate learning.

Second, applied linguists have long called for linguistic knowledge to inform the study and practice of leadership, particularly with regard to dispelling damaging stereotypes and myths about language use (for example, Mullany, 2022; Darics, 2020b; Darics & Koller, 2019). The findings reported here further support the idea of developing alternative frameworks of effective leadership that question essentialist biological and cultural views about language use (Mullany, 2022; Darics, 2022; Schnurr, 2022). However, not only must these models be informed by linguistic knowledge, they must also disrupt social and linguistic practices which (re)produce binary traps. It is possible that by not challenging traditional binary thinking about leadership, some applied linguistic leadership models risk perpetuating reified patterns of language and conversational behaviour which work against emancipatory learning objectives.

Interactive routines in context

The second research question concerned the executives' experiences of being stuck in patterns of language use which did not bring them the outcomes they sought. Gracia's learning goal is to disrupt patterns of interaction in a long establish team, but she does not so in this meeting. Similarly, Sara's learning goal is to disrupt her own patterns of speech, yet she makes no attempt to do this during the shadowing episode. Changing the way one expresses one's leadership is not only about stereotypes and individual choices - conversations themselves have constraints on contributions (Levinson, 1992 [1979]) and thus on contributors. Robust, recognisable interactional structures that are built into the meeting form itself keep the overall pattern stuck at the level of the activity type, even when individuals employ different discourse strategies in an attempt to modify their interactive approach.

Another important finding was that activity type elements of the interactive context bind managers to discursive patterns that they and their interlocutors recognise as leadership. Hence, the predictably of such routines can make it even more difficult for a leader to signal that a different pattern is acceptable or desirable. This finding is consistent with other applied linguistic research which suggests a strong connection between the activity type structure and participants' ability to influence floor dynamics (Halvorsen, 2016). This study therefore supports previous studies which provide evidence that language choices are not made independently of the context in which they are performed (e.g. Bloomaert, 2005; Gumperz, 1982; Mullany, 2011, 2022; Rampton et al., 2015). The way speech styles index leadership is thus embedded in social and cultural constraints which contribute to the executives' experiences of stuck-ness. In the learning event, participants shared reflections about the way interactive routines such as the distribution of speaking rights, which are 'seen but unnoticed' (Darics & Clifton, 2019 p. 918), place constraints that structure interaction and therefore leadership performance. For the participating managers, reflecting on linguistic choices based on their actual spoken data enabled them to understand how tiny shifts in conversational behaviour and structure can impact outcomes in significant ways. It is important therefore to work with managers to identify interactive processes which might shape interventions aimed at enacting power differently, i.e. getting unstuck. This finding has important implications for designing management learning interventions which take linguistic knowledge into account, because routines like these may only be appreciated, mastered and altered in the flow of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The present study therefore raises the possibility that applied linguistics and management learning might together help shape the co-construction of working practices such as leadership. This could be realized by collaborating with management learning practitioners to develop approaches to leadership learning which pay attention to actual language use (more or less conscious linguistic and conversational choices made in the flow of practice) and its activity-specific constraints.

Leadership learning in the flow of practice

The study challenges conventional management learning ideas which are focused on individuals and not on contexts. Language practices can be subject to conscious change and successful approaches to executive coaching are often based on this premise (e.g. Echeverria, 2011). However, this research clearly shows that it is invisible constraints which undermine stated objectives rather than any lack of individual skill or courage in changing one's own speech or leadership style. This is critical for leadership learning.

One of the issues that emerges from these findings is that unless changes in leadership style are accompanied by critical reflection on the social and contextual constraints surrounding language use, managers are unlikely to break free of socially and institutionally entrenched patterns of interaction. This requires not only that management learning scholars and practitioners recognise the value of linguistic knowledge, but also that applied linguists consider how this knowledge can be made available in the flow of practice. This study therefore extends the applicability of applied linguistics to organisational contexts by opening up new possibilities for joint work between applied linguistic and management learning scholars to co-develop approaches and test these with practitioners through action (Larrea, 2022) or action learning (Coghlan, 2013) approaches to research.

Conclusion

This study has applied insights from a linguistic ethnographic study of workplace interaction to a leadership learning initiative. In the analysis, I identified interactional strategies and interactive routines that index managers'' spoken leadership styles and that can also be seen to perpetuate gender stereotypical and culturally biased patterns of linguistic and conversational behaviour. The analysis reveals ways in which unchallenged assumptions about language use can lead to reified patterns of talk which work against explicitly stated learning objectives. These are: first, the influence of binary thinking embedded in normative ideas about leadership styles, and second, the unseen interactive routines that structure participation and thus shape outcomes. Overall, this study strengthens the idea that insights from sociolinguistic research can support learning which compares managers' ideas about their speech styles and their effectiveness, with analyses of actual in-situ interaction. An implication of this is the possibility that linguistic knowledge can make an important contribution to the theory and practice of management learning.

The findings reported here also shed new light on the influence of mutually reinforcing dynamics between different binary categories commonly used to describe leadership styles. Applied linguistic leadership studies usually rely on binary categories in their definitions of leadership and in their analyses of the language used by managers in leadership roles. This may perpetuate binary traps in thinking about what leaders do and who they are. These findings will be of interest to applied linguists who want to work critically with managers on changing the ways in which they understand and express their leadership. The study contributes to our understanding of the ways in which leadership styles are shaped by the contexts in which they are performed. Any critical learning agenda must therefore create opportunities for linguistically informed leadership learning to occur in the flow of practice.

Since the study was limited to questions about the contribution of linguistic ethnographic analysis to the field of management learning, it was not possible to test the findings in organisational settings. Notwithstanding this limitation, the study suggests that integrating applied linguistic insights into established management learning approaches such as action learning might provide opportunities for critical reflection about why and how patterns of language use contribute to managers' sense of "stuck-ness". This is an important issue for future applied linguistic and management learning research. Hence, this research suggests that successful collaboration requires not only that management learning scholars and practitioners recognise the value of linguistic knowledge, but also that applied linguists consider how this knowledge can be made available in the flow of practice.

A further study with more focus on operationalising these findings is therefore suggested.

Appendix: Transcription conventions

:	sound stretching
/ /	Overlapping speech
Underlining	Emphasis
__	speech in especially low volume
(1.0)	Pause in seconds
.	Pause of less than 1 second
((laughs))	Transcribers descriptions or comments, contextual information
( )	indecipherable
[…]	word or lines omitted
((xxx))	redacted for anonymity
=	latched utterance
> <	quicker than surrounding talk
↑	rising ‘questioning’ intonation
↓	falling intonation

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Chapter 5: Findings and possible applications

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises my principal research findings and interprets these across the project. In it I situate the key findings in terms of my principal research questions and tie them back to previous studies on leadership from an applied linguistics perspective. I elaborate on these findings in terms of their real-world implications, and I suggest possible applications for management learning practice. The purpose of this introduction is to remind the reader of the research problem underpinning my thesis, as well as the basics of the methodology I employed in the study. I also briefly outline the structure of the chapter.

My project was born of a problem I identified within the field of management learning practice, in the setting of a European professional network. The problem as experienced by network members (i.e. how to be a better leader) and a problem I identified among management learning practitioners (i.e. how to better support leadership learning) are part of the same situation that the research seeks to address. I argued in Chapter 2 that learning designs for management and leadership development practice are largely based on distanced understandings of leadership which miss much of the detail of how leadership actually happens. Therefore, in this study, I seek to understand the micro-detail of what is happening in spoken interaction to support practitioners in their pursuit of establishing alternative ways of working. The thesis therefore sets out to combine leadership theory with linguistic ethnography to develop insights that have practical relevance for managers in organisations. In this chapter, I show how the results of this analysis and their subsequent interpretation may serve to develop possible applications based on a more complete picture of how leadership work is accomplished.

The overall aim of the research is to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. Its specific objectives are to:

1. Describe some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are actually performed.

2. Observe how leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done.

3. Identify what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck.

The principal research questions that guide the study are:

RQ 1: How can close analysis of spoken interaction extend our understanding of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other?

RQ 2: Building on this analysis, which interventions to meaningfully change or improve such co-production can be identified?

The project is informed by linguistic ethnography, which combines ethnographic, field-based approaches to research with close attention to language use. My aim in turning to linguistics is to uncover hidden or unnoticed meanings, details and patterns of discursive processes, and to do this in ways that can help leaders and leadership developers.

The thesis is structured around three core papers, each of which presents an aspect of the research problem and related research questions, plus the treatment of these and subsequent findings. This chapter integrates these findings and presents implications for practice. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section begins by briefly reminding the reader of the findings of the three papers, each of which directly addresses one of the aforementioned research objectives. I then trace threads of meaning from across the three papers in order to present three key findings which relate to my overall research aims and the first principal research question, namely, how close analysis of spoken interaction extends our understanding of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other. I discuss the implications of these findings in relation to the core theoretical, empirical and professional commitments of the thesis. Specific ways in which these findings relate to the leadership literature from an applied linguistics perspective are also discussed. I complete this section by interpreting the findings as they relate to the core commitments of the thesis. In the second section of the chapter, I interpret the key findings with a view to answering the second part of my principal research question, namely, which interventions to meaningfully change or improve the co-production of leadership and organisation can be identified. This section discusses the main leadership learning implications of the work, presenting first *what* the findings of the research invite leaders to focus on in their spoken interactions, and second *how* management learning practitioners might go about supporting such a shift in orientation. The final section of the chapter provides a concluding summary.

5.2 Research findings

To remind the reader of the issues addressed in the main body of the thesis, I first briefly summarise the findings presented in the three core papers, each of which deals with one of the three research objectives identified.

Objective 1: Regarding the description of some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are performed, the first case study identified and described the relationship between agency and authority in the discursive performance of leadership. The study, reported in Paper 1, found that different conceptualisations of leadership agency (individual, distributed, processual) rely on different orientations to authority-in-interaction and that the intimate dialectical relationship between these can be analysed in spoken interaction. Prior conversation analytical studies have noted the importance of the realisation of authority in interaction (Benoit-Barné & Cooren, 2009; Heritage, 2012; Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Stevanovic & Peräkylä, 2012, 2014), and this approach is increasingly recognised within the field of critical leadership studies (for example, Clifton, 2014, 2017; Van de Mieroop, 2020). The current study complements these works and at the same time extends our understanding of leadership agency. The analysis, which focuses on epistemic and deontic rights in conversation, revealed that leadership agency, and the authority required to enact it, is fluid and changing as opposed to fixed and settled once and for all. In this way, the analytical lens afforded by linguistic analysis revealed that the different forms of leadership agency, conceptualised by leadership scholars of different theoretical persuasions, interact with different discursive performances of authority. In other words, the analysis makes visible how leadership is actually performed in a given context.

Objective 2. The second case study regards the ways in which leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done, and as such looked into how two managers orientate to oppositional discourses in their everyday talk at work. The study, reported in Paper 2, found that the managers draw on a range of discursive resources to get work done. In doing so they both reconfirm commonly circulating binary oppositions of organisational change *and* challenge them by behaving differently in interaction from the expectations embedded in these ideas. Confirming previous organisational and sociolinguistic research that leadership is something we do together (for example, Ospina and Foldy, 2015; Ilie and Schnurr, 2017), the findings emphasise how leaders choose discourse strategies which enable them to find new (and effective) ways of doing things together with colleagues, rather than casting them as independent actors who display particular leadership styles. These insights also make a conceptual contribution to debates about discursive leadership by offering a nuanced understanding of leadership agency centred on making linguistic and conversational choices.

Objective 3: Regarding the identification of what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck, the third case study looked at how discursive strategies and interactive routines that index executives' leadership styles also perpetuate gender stereotypical and culturally biased patterns of conversational behaviour. The study, reported in Paper 3, found that discourse features indexed for (perceptions of) gender, culture and leadership style simultaneously index each other. This dichotomised and circular referentiality contributes to a discursive pattern which reinforces binary conceptualisations of leadership. This study also found that the robust, recognisable interactional structures that are built into the meeting format itself keep the overall pattern stuck at the level of the activity type, even when individuals employ different discursive strategies in an attempt to modify their interactive approach. By illuminating unseen leadership dynamics in ways which suggest subtle changes in interactive patterns, these findings have important implications for praxis which orientates linguistic-informed learning design towards leadership learning in situ.

5.2.1 Co-production of leadership and organisation

In this section I present common threads from my analysis in order to answer my first research question, namely, how close analysis of spoken interaction extends our understanding of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other. In this project I use Collinson's definition of leadership: 'the simultaneous interplay between leaders, managers, followers and contexts as well as their ambiguous and potentially contradictory conditions, processes and consequences' (2014, p.48). Collinson's definition draws attention to the conditions of co-production of leadership between interactants, between leaders and interactional settings, and between leadership and organisation, all of which are addressed in the thesis.

Overall RQ1: How can close analysis of spoken interaction extend our understanding of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other?

With respect to this first research question, the most obvious finding to emerge from the analysis is that linguistic ethnography allows leadership processes that are normally felt but remain invisible to become visible. Second, the study found that managers' experience of power in interaction points to 'authority trouble', that is, the minutiae of confirmation and resistance to power between interactants. This is a key focus for management learning. Third, it is interesting to note that in all three cases presented in the thesis there is a common thread about the importance of moments of choice in the midst of interaction, rather than a personal style being enacted across contexts. I describe these findings in more detail below.

5.2.2 Making the invisible visible

The study found that linguistic ethnographic analysis allows normally felt but invisible leadership processes to become visible. Examples of such leadership processes that are evidenced in the case studies are:

1. The first case study found that patterns of affiliation and disaffiliation are inherently shifting and unstable. The implication of this is that leadership authority, and the power that flows from it, can be seen to be in flux in discourse rather than being fixed in a person.

2. The second case study found that leader-follower dynamics in actual interaction reveal the moves and counter-moves that enable interactants to (re-)calibrate their relative power on a continuous basis. The implication of this is that leadership influence is co-produced in talk rather than flowing unidirectionally from leader to follower(s).
3. The third case study found a strong relationship between linguistic choices and the conversational settings in which they occur. The implication of this is that preferences for different approaches to the accomplishment of leadership are an integral part of the interactive process as opposed to being a decontextualised choice of style.

5.2.3 Authority trouble

The study found that managers' experience of power in interaction points to 'authority trouble', that is, the minutiae of confirmation and resistance to power between interactants, as a key determining factor in the way they express their leadership. The linguistic ethnographic analysis of the engagement and shadowing data sets has demonstrated the inherently unstable nature of authority. As mentioned in section 5.2.2 above, this is evidenced in the three case studies which have provided linguistic detail of the shifting patterns of affiliation and disaffiliation where the co-production of influence is situated.

The question of authority has been important to the research participants throughout all three phases of the research. Participants in the English and Power programme identified challenges relating to the exercise of authority - for example, 'taking up your authority'. That this authority is often undermined can inferred from these challenges (for example, 'dealing with put downs and status games'). See *Appendix III, English & Power participants' challenges* (p. 267) for a list of learning challenges identified. The same themes, evident and expanded in the initial grounded coding (*Appendix IV Initial English & Power coding* on page 268) have been pulled through to the focused codes which were then used as sensitising concepts in the analysis of the engagement data. Codes such as *(a)* 'using power more effectively', *(b)* 'losing power' by giving it away, being undermined or 'taken by surprise'; and *(e)* 'expressing authority' by positioning, understanding positions of others (*Appendix V English & Power focused codes* on page 273) further refine the focus on authority. These focused codes bridged the analyses of the engagement and shadowing data sets and influenced the way I engaged with the close analysis of language in my data.

In case study one I connected notions of authority with contemporary theorising of leadership agency and showed that close analysis of language use revealed patterned agency-authority relationships of which the participants were not aware. These patterns shed light on the provisional nature of power which to a degree explains why authority can cause so much 'trouble'.

One overall finding of the research has been that experiences of 'authority trouble' determine leadership conversational behaviours. An implication of this finding is that an appreciation of power as multi-directional, fluid and shifting should be recognised as an important facet of leadership learning. That power and authority are important topics for learning has been evident throughout the research. Topics established in the learning challenges and captured in the grounded coding are echoed in the in the introductory ethnographic pen portraits to the case studies. For example, Kate wants to explore the contradictions around authority that she experiences in the exercise of her leadership and Sara wants to better understand if and how she might express a different style of leadership without losing her authority. Therefore, questions relating to authority and the interactional trouble it causes were addressed in the 2022 exploration and feedback meeting with the research participants. Using samples of their own data, participants explored the relationship between power, authority and agency and the implications of these insights for their own leadership.

5.2.4 Moments of choice in interaction

The study also found that the momentary linguistic and conversational choices that managers make in the course of actual interaction are largely unrelated to decontextualised notions of leadership style expressed in popular ideas aimed at shaping change in organisations. During the engagement phase of data collection and analysis, participants regularly talked of fleeting moments where opportunities to influence were missed or lost. Such moments frequently took managers by surprise and had them pay attention to their apparent failure to lead which in turn brought about an acute loss of confidence. Tensions between, for example, being seen and being invisible, talking too much and not talking enough or judging and being judged, implied a choice of conversational move associated with one pole or another of these apparent dichotomies. These tensions and choices are explored in the book chapter 'Talking Power' (Murphy, 2017) a summary of which is included in Appendix II. *Appendix VI Analytic categories and concepts* (p. 274) shows further evidence of this stage of analytic coding. However, close analysis of actual language use in the flow of interaction, particularly in case study two, revealed that apparent oppositions associated with different ways of doing leadership were simultaneously indexed in the same utterance. This meant that for participants of the programme, and for me as a researcher and practitioner, the notion of moments of choice where alternatives are possible was raised as a key analytical – and later practical - category.

Case study three provides evidence that changes in patterns of interaction are extremely rare in spite of the best efforts of enlightened and skilled leaders. I posed the question of how to raise awareness of moments in interaction where something different might have happened at the reflective learning event in 2022. For the event, the question was framed as 'If we want to change the way we do leadership, what do we need to focus on exactly?' Linguistic data of their own in-situ interaction was shared with participants with a view to generating reflection and insight. Participants were invited to study their own interactions (and share these if they wished) and to consider the following questions:

1. What is happening?
2. How do you know?
3. What else could have been done and wasn't?
4. What do you take from this discussion?

The discussion provided powerful learning. For example, one participant explained how shocked she felt on reading the transcript and seeing at just how frequently she said, 'yeah yeah'. She had assumed this was a signal of her lack of leadership but by the end of the shared analysis and reflection she had reframed her understanding. Judging when *not* to close down a conversation was repositioned in her perception as constituting leadership.

Overall, in highlighting the dialectical relationship between ideas aimed at shaping change in organisations and the in-situ interaction of leaders, the case studies have revealed how alternative linguistic choices interconnect in the production of leadership practices.

Bringing the three key findings together, that is, the invisibility of leadership processes (e.g. the provisional nature of power, leader-follower dynamics and the relationship between style and interactional setting), leaders' experiences of power as 'authority trouble' and the importance of moments of choice in interaction, raise important questions regarding the nature of leadership and how best to develop it. I now move on to consider such questions in relation to the core theoretical, empirical and professional commitments of the thesis, and to tie them back to previous studies of leadership, from an applied linguistics perspective.

5.3 Theoretical, empirical and professional implications

In the introductory chapter of the thesis, I explained how my management learning background shaped the core theoretical, empirical and professional commitments of the thesis. Briefly, leadership theory informs the study overall, while linguistic ethnography provides the tools for data analysis and a methodology which supports democratic learning, and my professional commitments steer the project towards practice. I turn now to the overall interpretation of these findings as they relate to these commitments. I highlight relevant findings and I organise these according to related commitments.

5.3.1 Theoretical implications

The first theoretical implication relates to the disjuncture I identified between organisational studies and linguistics in theorising how leadership is accomplished. Generally speaking, organisational studies approaches to leadership bring a theoretically sophisticated perspective which challenges traditional conceptualisations (for example, Collinson, 2011; Grint, 2022; Khan et al., 2021), whereas applied linguistics, in the main, draws on more traditional dualisms to conceptualise and study how leadership is accomplished in talk (for example, Baxter, 2008; Holmes & Stubbe, 2013; Schnurr, 2013; Vine et al., 2008; Walker & Aritz, 2015). My study addresses this inconstancy and thereby contributes to the small but growing number of inter- and trans-disciplinary research projects conducted at the interface between linguistics and management. Across the project, this study confirmed some aspects of leadership theory by providing evidence for i) the importance of tensions and opposition to the experience of power (for example, Collinson, 2011; Putnam et al., 2016; Murphy, 2017), ii) the processual, fluid and contested nature of authority and the power that flows from it (Crevani, 2018, Simpson et al., 2018 – explored in Paper1), and iii) the importance of dialectics in leadership processes (Collinson, 2020; Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014; Muhr, 2011; Stead & Elliott, 2019 – explored in Paper 2). Some applied linguistic work already engages with critical leadership studies, particularly around aspects of discursive leadership (Clifton, 2014, 2017; Larsson et al., 2021; Schnurr, 2017), and the present thesis extends this body of work.

By providing evidence on how leaders bring about change, this study plugs a gap in the theoretical frames between organisation studies and applied linguistics. The findings suggest that the mental maps leaders use to make sense of their leadership experiences, and especially to position themselves and their change efforts, bear little resemblance to the linguistic and conversational choices made in actual interaction. Case studies two and three highlight the complex relationship between ideas aimed at shaping leadership and change in organisations and the in-situ interaction of leaders. The results of this study demonstrate that changes in actual patterns of interaction are extremely rare and difficult to shift. Evidence from the study shows that all five executives involved make linguistic and conversational choices which are largely unrelated to the decontextualised notions of leadership style. All the leaders are clear about how they wish to change the way they and others in their respective organisations exercise leadership, yet they are not free to simply align their conversational behaviour with abstract notions of leadership style. This is because getting work done under current conditions occurs *at the same time* as changing the way work gets done.

A second theoretical implication of the study’s findings relates to the constructive challenge they pose to foundational aspects of leadership theory as approached in applied linguistics. First is the question of how to break unhelpful patterns of binary thinking about leadership. If leadership is more complex and nuanced than mainstream models suggest, then the ways leadership learning is conceptualised and addressed must try to understand and respond to this complexity rather than try to simplify it into binary categories. As mentioned in the literature review, there are several features of leadership upon which applied linguists agree (see Schnurr, 2013, p.164). A comparison of the findings of this research with those of other studies (for example, Baxter, 2010, 2015; Mullany, 2011; Holmes & Stubbe 2015) confirms the role leaders play in shaping and modelling acceptable behaviour through their interactive performance. Another of the study’s findings that is consistent with the applied linguistics leadership literature (for example, Schnur, 2009; McDowell, 2015, 2021; Mesinioti et al., 2020) is that leadership effectiveness depends on the context of operation, such as the longevity of working groups, the urgency of tasks, budget considerations and so on, as well as preferred personal style. The results also corroborate the findings of much of the previous work on the enactment of power in workplace conversations (for example, Lockwood & Forey, 2016; Schnurr 2009; Walker & Aritz, 2014), which highlights the ways in which leaders develop a repertoire of discursive strategies that team members consider appropriate, ways of enacting power, taking decisions, holding meetings and the like. We see evidence of this in the relationship between executives’ learning challenges and their inevitably routinised conversational behaviour in organisational meetings. Of course, over time, all leaders and groups develop a shared repertoire of behavioural and linguistic norms (Baxter, 2015; Schnurr, 2009) and, it can be argued, develop different personal ways of doing leadership (Clifton, 2017; Marra et al., 2006). While my research corroborates these general ideas about leadership behaviour, it does not support how these different behaviours are theorised as a range of dichotomous discursive choices in performing relational and transactional behaviour (Darics, 2020; Vine et al., 2011; Wodak et al., 2011). I critique this position in Paper 3 on the ground that while previous applied linguistic studies have successfully disrupted binary conceptualisations of culture and gender, the notion of leadership continues to be treated, and therefore reproduced, in terms of binary oppositions.

The second question relates to position. Prior applied linguistic studies have used hierarchical position as a lens through which to view leadership (for example, Schnurr, 2017; Darics & Koller, 2018). Findings from this study, however, indicate that authority is more fluid and provisional than a static conceptualisation allows. The findings across the study suggest that positional leaders, that is, managers who are given institutional authority and a mandate to lead by virtue of their position in the organisational hierarchy, orientate to their power and authority as if they were stable – or at least to more stable than their experience suggests. However, from a close analysis of language use and conversational behaviour, we can see small dissenting moves in the minutiae of interaction and the way these trigger countermoves that enable interactants to continuously calibrate their relative power. As such, power cannot ever be truly fixed – the implication of which is that our conceptualisation of leadership itself must be decoupled from fixed ideas about position and style. Most branches of linguistics recognise a provisional view of power that lends support to the social constructionist perspective that power is discursively co-produced (for example, Gadelshina, 2020; Van de Mieroop et al., 2020, Larsson et al., 2021). Despite this, it is notable that prominent applied linguistics leadership work equates leadership with organisational position (for example, Holmes, 2017; Schnurr, 2017; Darics & Koller, 2018). A possible explanation for this disjuncture might be the relative isolation of academic disciplines and the empirical bias of applied linguistics. I turn next to empirical implications.

5.3.2 Empirical implications

Two key empirical implications flow from my findings.

First, identifying aspects of discursive leadership and describing its accomplishment in spoken interaction, for example, in the practice of distributed, post-heroic and relational leadership, extend the empirical contribution of applied linguistics to organisation studies. This is achieved by describing the relationship between individual and collective aspects of leadership agency (Paper 1); extending our understanding of the ways in which leaders influence change in working practices (Paper 2); and identifying why and how some patterns of leadership interaction become stuck (Paper 3). This combination of findings provides some support for the premise that there are elements of leadership practice which can best be studied from an applied linguistics perspective (see Clifton, 2006, 2009; Darics, 2019; Darics & Clifton, 2019; Schnurr, 2022). The current study complements this body of work. The interconnected findings enhance our appreciation of the conversational mechanisms and linguistic features which generate leadership dynamics and reveal subtle complexities and contradictions inherent in the co-production of leadership between leaders, followers and interactional settings.

A second empirical implication lends support to the foundational notion in linguistic ethnography that linguistic data cannot be decontextualised, because the settings themselves are an important part of the data (Blommaert & Dong, 2010; Tusting, 2019), and that language indexes these settings in complex ways (Gumperz, 1999; Schnurr, 2022). In this regard, the current study extends previous interactional sociolinguistic work in the workplace which explores the relationships between specific interactional contexts and language use relating to gender, culture and ethnicity (for example, Holmes, 2017; Holmes et al., 2011; McDowell, 2015, 2021; Schnurr & Mak, 2011). It establishes a link between actual work practices in specific interactional settings such as, for example, Sara's chairing preferences in a male-dominated engineering environment, or Kate's choice to watch and wait in the SWOT discussion rather than try to steer the discussion too firmly. Fluid notions of leadership style that challenge functionalist accounts of leadership behaviour offer leaders more choice. In this regard, this study draws attention to the fact that what co-workers are trying to achieve, both individually and together, the urgency of the task and in which context all this occurs place constraints on what sort of behaviour can be successfully realised as leadership. Such interaction *is* organisation.

5.3.3 Professional implications

The findings of the study constitute a possible first step in making concrete an understanding of leadership learning as a continuous and emergent process which 'starts from the assumption that learning occurs, and knowledge is created, mainly through conversations and interactions between people' (Easterby-Smith et al., 2000, p.787). Specific theoretical insights emerge from this study from which research informed actions can be developed for learning, e.g. that managers are not free from the constraints of their operational contexts to choose this or that leadership style; that who can and cannot speak during a meeting is structured by the distribution of discursive acts such as establishing a topic or summing up a group decision; that followers exercise agency in small conversational acts of resistance; or that the role of followers and settings in co-creating leadership effects is often underplayed. All these insights provide a subtle reframing of what it takes to lead, and therefore also what sort of learning is required. By informing how to improve the design of leadership learning, these findings fill a gap in the leadership research in both organisational studies and applied linguistics, and have implications for practice, *in* practice. I discuss these implications in more depth in Section 2, which focuses explicitly on possible applications. Building on the findings thus far presented, Section 2 goes on to outline ways in which these can inform individual and organisational learning interventions.

5.4 Possible applications

This section addresses the general implications of the findings described above for management and leadership learning. As part of this I also make actionable recommendations for leaders and leadership and organisation developers which I refer to as 'applications', that is, specific approaches to learning in organisational contexts. I looked to linguistics for answers to my professional questions about changing the way leadership is performed and spoken interaction. When I embarked on the endeavour, I was seeking insights that have practical relevance for managers in organisations. Hence, my second principal research question was expressed as:

RQ 2: Building on this analysis, which interventions to meaningfully change or improve such co-production can be identified?

As argued in Chapter 3, and again in my exploration of different conceptualisations of leadership in Paper 1, I draw on Dewey's theory of experience (Dewey & Bently, 1949 [1991]), a concept that also informs the way I think about applications in this section. Dewey's concept of 'experience' relates to the ways in which individuals, or 'subjects', interact with their environments or, in Dewey's terms, 'worlds', to experiment and learn. Dewey's learning theory describes a process of enquiry into problems arising between subject and worlds which are resolved between action and thinking. As succinctly captured by Elkjaer (2008, p.78), for learning to occur we need enquiry, for which we use concepts and theories that "allow us to think about, anticipate and reflect on action and upon ourselves as acting". This idea provides the scaffolding for this section.

The common threads of meaning identified in section 5.2 of this chapter suggest subtle shifts in perspective on management learning practice. One implication is to transform the question about 'what just happened' into material for learning, requires a way of investigating routines as close as possible to the moment of their accomplishment. To make this shift, the application of insights derived from research to management learning practice could aim, as Dewey proposes, to "extract at each present time the full meaning of each present experience" (Dewey, 1938 [1986] p.29). Next, I turn to how leaders and leadership developers might go about putting these ideas into practice.

5.4.1 Moments of choice (what)

Identifying moments where speakers make consequential linguistic choices, which I refer to as 'moments of choice', may provide an opportunity to make two small but radical shifts in the ways leaders make sense of and learn from their leadership actions. First, the research findings suggest that by stepping aside from closed, binary referential loops and looking instead at dialectical elements of discursive choice, leaders may be able to enquire into the interplay between, for example, how they enact power effectively in their context of operation at the same time as they experiment with alternative approaches to leadership. Sara, for example, focuses her learning on her own behaviour and on making more room in corporate life for different approaches to leadership. Sara's learning objective speaks of the interplay between a style which is effective in the often-unforgiving executive power-battles and one which feels right for her. Second, the findings also suggest that by identifying points where leaders might influence the activity type itself, certain cultural patterns might be identified in the constraints of these routines. Gracia, for example, began her shadowing experience with unanswered questions about the dynamics of conversation which seemed to unwittingly undermine her own ambitions. All the research participants have asked why these dynamics are so difficult to shift. I argue that one answer can be found in what I call ‘moments of choice’. For example, during the May 2022 group exploration and feedback session, the participants were confronted with detailed transcripts and analyses of their actual interactions. Together, we discussed the potential for learning by identifying what *else* might be done at any given moment identified as ‘a moment of choice’. These moments, based on the results of the current study, were presented and discussed as assertions about leadership, change and talk.

Assertion 1, Avoiding the binary: The choice to intervene directly in a conversation is not influenced by dichotomous conceptualisations of leadership style.

For example, when Sara and Gracia choose to intervene directly, they do so for a range of reasons that do not fall into easy binary categories. They intervene gently to support, evaluate and encourage, but they also intervene abruptly to interrupt, to interject and even to close people down, or force them to move on. We can see so-called ‘opposite’ poles in these moments but we can also see how notions such as authoritative vs relational, transactional vs participative interact to produce (gendered) leadership in practice. Reflecting on when one chooses to intervene, which is based on actual spoken data, might enable learning about the discursive choices involved in enacting leadership within organisational constraints in ways that transcend dichotomous thinking and help to avoid binary traps.

Assertion 2, Influencing the activity type: The choice not to intervene directly in a conversation is influenced by ideas about leadership which are embedded in conversational structure rather than individual agency.

For example, when Sara and Gracia choose to let a conversation simply run on, they appear to base this decision on their ideas about leadership, by passing responsibilities to their teams, allowing someone else to lead and letting them fail or succeed. In these moments they rely on the meeting structure to secure the right amount of participation for their strategic objectives. By reflecting on what changes can be made to the structure of conversations and how these might affect outcomes (for example, how an agenda is managed, how participation is pre-established, how new information is encouraged and so on), we can identify points where leaders might influence the activity type itself. Reflective consideration of when one chooses not to intervene in a discussion which is based on actual spoken data can enable leadership learning about how otherwise invisible conversational structures shape outcomes.

I turn now to the implications of these ideas for management learning practitioners.

5.4.2 Learning aloud (how)

In individual and organisational development consulting, application is paramount. Applied work requires real settings, real and often intractable problems and serious commitment from people to take action in real time. Classroom-based work inspired by experimental learning in the Deweyan tradition (for example, Kaejergaard & Meier, 2022) structures the ways in which executives use theoretical input to connect experience and experimentation. This is a fruitful classroom-based approach, but it differs from doing leadership learning work in organisational settings in four important ways. First, in organisational work both the setting and the problem are given primacy over ideas. This does not mean that theories or new ideas are unwelcome, only that they do not provide the sole justification for an intervention. Second, timing is driven by real and often pressing organisational needs, rather than university teaching or research timetables. Third, organisational members are seen and treated as experts on their own problems and the knowledge this brings is seen as being of equal value to knowledge from other sources. Finally, enquiry rather than input structures the relationship between consultants, organisational members and problem situations. Communicating with clients about change requires a delicate balance between confirming and challenging their understanding of current problems and possible solutions. Models are often used, not as positivistic representations of current or imagined realities, but as artefacts with which organisational members can make sense of puzzling phenomena together. Such models provide a structure for articulating thoughts and actions, that is, comparing what one thinks is happening in each situation with feedback based on actual interactional data, and by recalibrating one's action as a result. We might think of this process as 'learning aloud'.

To design possible leadership development interventions about changing or improving co-production between leadership and organisation, the first step is to actually see it as co-production; as patterns of action and interaction at different levels and among different actors. I make suggestions at three levels that are common in organisation development consulting. They are:

1. An individual learning focus – for example, in a coaching environment, using real data to examine how one performs one's own leadership interactions.
2. A group focus – for example, in an action learning environment, recognising and acting on tensions, contradictions and complex problems.
3. An organisational or inter-organisational focus – for example, in an organisation development environment, opening a conversation with the people responsible for producing change strategies which become reified in formal and informal documents and images, that I refer to as local texts of leadership and change.

5.4.2.1 Coaching

There are many examples in my data that suggest recollection of meeting dynamics is an unreliable source of data about one's own leadership practice. When a manager's account of a meeting and actual recordings of spoken interaction are compared, there are significant differences. As might be expected, even with a transcript in one's hand, there are many possible answers to the question "What just happened?' By extending understanding of how leadership is accomplished in small discursive moves, the findings reported in this chapter also suggest small shifts in orientation for management learning practitioners. For example, the analysis of epistemic and deontic rights, status and stance, examined in Paper 1, illustrates how aspects of leadership agency are realised in situ. Awareness of the fluidity of authority is important for practitioners because it provides insights into otherwise invisible experiences of having one’s authority either confirmed or resisted. That these are powerful data for coaching conversations was confirmed in the research participants’ 2022 exploration and feedback meeting in which questions raised and discussed included:

1. Which features boost and soften epistemic and deontic authority, and what are their consequences?
2. How exactly do different speakers position themselves in relation to others?
3. How is it that you can sometimes feel a shift in power relations, but you can’t quite put your finger on why?

Examples from the data were used to explore these questions in confidence. For example, the table below takes important ‘moments of choice’ when the leader was conscious of different discursive options and uses these actual data as a basis for discussion about the potential risks and benefits of these different options. The data table used in the workshop is reproduced below, with some amendments made for confidentiality.

POINT OF INTEREST	DATA POINT AND TIME STAMP
Teams are discouraged from debate (concerns, problems etc.) and this discourages learning Closure and moving on – Gracia's repeated patterns. Over time 'okay' uttered in a certain tone means that time is up. But not always – Sara is clipped and business-like most of the time. She doesn't discourage debate, but she puts a boundary around it. If she has sanctioned it, she lets it happen, if not, she closes it down.	[A. 30.46-31.59] Turn 13: Gracia's intonation falls in a particular way when she signals that the conversation is over. In time, her team learn to read this. [B. 04.21 – 05.03] Sara's formula for moving on to a new topic is similar to Gracia's ('okay', evaluation, imperative) but the preamble is different. Gracia's is often very minimal and carried by discourse markers which signal ''continue or stop'. Sara on the other hand tends to mark a moment of transition by a request or demand directed at one of her team.
No room for challenge can mean expertise is lost, lack of shared learning means mistakes are repeated, ignored or hidden Sara's final word is never challenged. What else might she do here? For example,' Who else sees x this way?' These questions can create scary moments of genuine space and openness which either cements respect and authority or loses it completely. Most managers avoid the risk.	[B. 4.44 – 8.50] Throughout the first agenda item Sara is relentless in her questioning, insistence on detail and emphasis on problem-solving. Is she ever challenged?
A loss of control or influence (face) in front of the team could undermine authority, under-reliance on power asymmetry risks loss of face Gracia wants the team to remember the senior person's previous decision, but her team don't remember. This is a moment of possible face loss. There are expressions of disagreement – they are modalised and polite, but clear. A leader might enquire, 'Who sees this differently?'	[A. 24.06 – 25.15] Turns 100-103. Christine is incredulous – I don't remember that we discussed that with her. Did we? [A. 25.15 – 25.58] Turn 106. Monica: I don't quite recall … to tell you the truth.

Table 10 Moments of choice: to intervene or not?

Moments or episodes of challenging a leader's authority – however small and fleeting – were classified as 'authority trouble'. This notion proved powerful for practitioners, who discovered that their perceptions of the interactional fluidity of power were more widely shared than they had imagined. In organisational development consulting it is important that ideas are followed up with an answer to the inevitable question: “So what can I *do*?”. Therefore, ideas for action that were touched on during the meeting included:

1. Reflecting (in action) on when you intervene in the conversation and when you simply let things run
2. Considering what happens if you stand back more and allow a little more conversation to flow before intervening
3. Experimenting with doing less of something that has become a habit (as opposed to doing more of something, or starting to do something you are not currently doing)
4. Using actual data, looking closely at exactly who gets to do what in your meetings
5. Experimenting with which elements of the activity type might be open to change.
6. The participants were drawn to different questions and ideas for action – a learning situation that may be better accommodated by talking an action learning approach as described below.

5.4.2.2 Action learning

The classical model of action learning works with small groups, often referred to as sets, in which participants help each other to tackle their pressing organisational problems and to learn from their attempts to change things. Associated with the pioneering work of Reg Revans (1982, 2011), the approach offers a disciplined structure for action orientated learning focused explicitly on managerial problems. While there are some references to Donald Schön’s 1983 work on the ‘reflective practitioner’ in the applied linguistic literature (for example, Sarangi & Candlin, 2003), it is less common to see a learning orientation which ‘acknowledges learning as situated and emerging from the everyday’ (Stead & Elliott, 2019, p.181), by reflecting in context and in and on action. A real-time, real-problem approach to learning has much to offer in terms of raising awareness about the ‘the shifting, asymmetrical interrelations between leaders, followers and contexts’ (Collinson, 2011, p.181).

Learning in the flow of practice, described by Elkjaer as ‘critical anticipation of and reflection on the relationship between defining and solving a problem’ (Elkjaer, 2008, p.77) requires first, learning opportunities where leaders and managers can share with their peers the results of their attempts to change specific leadership dynamics, and second, tools which structure this reflection so as to challenge leadership stereotypes (see Mullany, 2022), including traditional binary notions of leadership style. The research-based learning event enabled the participants to consider the possibility of rejecting reductionist dichotomies of popular change management in favour of conversations about the simultaneous interdependencies involved in getting the job done at the same time as changing *the way* the job gets done; and in holding onto one’s power while also empowering other people (Murphy & Remke, 2023). Discussing tensions can raise doubts and dilemmas for managers (see Elliott & Stead, 2018 for a discussion of dialectic dynamics in relation to women’s leadership learning), but simple tools like these enable managers to learn more about their own (and each other’s) complex and sometimes contradictory behaviours. The ‘leadership grid’ below can be used to help managers recognise themselves in the flow of their own practice in a range of contextually appropriate, activity-specific styles of speaking.

Leadership learning in the flow of practice: Interactional choices

Changing the way the job gets done	Evaluate desirable and undesirable behaviour in others and don't be afraid of using your authority in unmitigated directives. *Nora is explicit in her call with Carol about what is and is not appropriate leadership behaviour*	Notice when an opportunity to shape future actions presents itself… *Kate times to perfection an intervention in which she poses a question to restructure a conversation which has become stuck*	Make space for others to signal leadership (for example to announce decisions that indicate future actions) by not signalling you are doing that yourself *Amaya encourages Susan to take the lead but does not press her for an answer or take over the task herself*
Getting the job done	Leave no room for your authority to be challenged. Use directives, formulate, control the floor. *Sara not only defends her territory as senior director (deontic authority) and expert engineer (epistemic authority) against any trouble raised by her (male) engineering colleagues, but she also uses unmitigated directives in her interactions with them*	Interrupt and openly re-direct when a conversation veers off-course from the objectives you have set. *Gracia frequently uses the discourse marker 'okay' when she wants to signal that a transition to a new topic is due. When the team veers off course, she utters her 'okay', but leaves no space for comment before moving on*	Recognise and promote the epistemic authority of others – and then get out of their way. *Nora carefully opens the space for Carol to take the lead by clarifying her scope to act independently, then supporting her ideas for improvement once the parameters of seniority are set*
	HOLD YOUR GROUND	**BALANCE POWER**	**EMPOWER OTHERS**

Table 11 Leadership learning in the flow of practice

As an instrument of learning, the grid exposes the often-hidden dynamics of power by making the invisible, more visible, and thus 'making discussible what is usually undiscussible' (Leonard, 2010, p.90). Using six-box grids of this kind (see also Deering & Murphy, 2003) can help participants find new ways to understand their experiences and to solve their leadership problems, i.e. change the way (their) leadership is accomplished.

5.4.2.3 Organisation development consulting

In these paragraphs I focus on my learning as an organisation development (OD) consultant. The focus thus far has been on the participants of my research project, particularly the shadowees. While I aim to give something useful back and to test the applicability of my findings, the practical application of these research findings is not limited to the five executives, or even to action learning, leadership development or coaching. It is a case study of the usefulness of linguistic ethnography to organisational development consulting more generally.

Some of the advice offered to practitioners from the field of applied linguistics has been reviewed in Chapter 2 and in Paper 3. A common concern in this literature is the lack of status awarded to research and knowledge about language among organisational practitioners (for example, Clifton, 2019; Darics & Clifton, 2019; Darics & Koller, 2019; Mautner, 2016, 2017). I have argued that the leadership learning focus of applied linguists has been on teaching or training in the executive classroom (Clifton, 2019; Darics & Koller, 2018, 2019; Stokoe, 2014; Walker & Aritz, 2014), rather than on bi-directional consulting relationships (but see Mullany, 2022). I believe more can be done to elevate the importance of language and the status of applied linguists in organisations and with organisational leaders, but I suggest that a shift of perspective is required from both parties – academics and practitioners. Clients generally want academics to carry out diagnostics (and therefore provide legitimacy for future actions) or evaluations (and therefore provide legitimacy for past actions) – but they want full control over actions taken. This can leave the academics with a legitimacy problem themselves. Academic-led workshops designed to provide research insights to practitioners can be valuable but, from a practitioner perspective, they can also seem disconnected to organisational realities and somewhat distanced in their positioning of the status of the knowledge they offer. From a consulting perspective, change rarely happens in workshops. It is a long-term project that takes months or even years. What is required from applied linguists may be more of a team effort than an exercise in dissemination; one in which close study of language reveals patterns of leadership and organisation that can enable more people to discuss the processes of organising. I have drawn attention to three patterns in particular:

1. Important and otherwise invisible aspects of the co-production of leadership and organisation.
2. Power as multi-directional, fluid and shifting.
3. The importance of understanding moments of choice as they occur in interaction (rather than in the texts of change management).

In my search for a better understanding of the problem situation, my findings extend Darics and Clifton's (2019) work on 'diagnostic listening' for change management practitioners. These authors argue that applied linguistics can reveal "seen but unnoticed underlying assumptions, and shared information and patterns of collective thinking about change" (Darics & Clifton, 2019, p.918). Although I agree that applied linguistics can certainly do this and that this is indeed the principal aim of organisational development consulting, this is what most organisational development consultants think they are already doing (see Schien, 1978). Seen from the point of view of practitioners, it would, of course, be welcome if academics were to develop a system for drawing attention to language in interpreting such patterns, as that would add a powerful new tool to the OD tool kit. However, there is a difference between seeing the patterns oneself and having one's clients see, voice and act on them. My argument is that not only do practitioners need academics to help with this systematisation, but academics also need practitioners to help connect the research and consulting processes and enable the two groups of professionals to work together with clients in real time, thus minimising – or even avoiding altogether – the frustrating rejections experienced by some members of the applied linguistic community who have tried (and failed) to offer research-led insights to practitioners whose linguistic data have been analysed (see Koller, 2019; Jones & Stubbe, 2004; Sarangi et al., 2019).

This project lends a perspective which sits between the domains of applied linguistics and organisation development work (Murphy, 2020). My work as a linguistic ethnographer during this research and my work as an organisational development consultant are similar in that the steps involved in doing both are complementary, and even overlap. The model below uses well-established OD diagnostic models in client work to make this comparison (for example, Schein 1978; Weisbord, 1976), models which are still very much in use today (see Coughlan, 2021). The model lists the phases of my research work which focused first on context (Which discourses of change circulate in the organisation?), second on patterns of language use (What is holding such patterns in place?) and finally on practices (Which conversational routines dominate in an organisation?). These questions feed directly into organisational diagnostics. The potential dialogue between perspectives can been seen in the summary table.

LINGUISTIC ETHNOGRAPHY (LE) IN ORGANISATIONS	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (OD) IN CONSULTING DIAGNOSTICS
Context Which discourses of change circulate in the organisation? What is their origin? Where or how are they shared?	**Environment** Which environmental influences are most present in the minds of managers (availability of skilled workers, price of raw materials, point in the economic cycle and so on)? Which factors might managers have overlooked?
Patterns What patterns of language use can be identified? What is holding these patterns in place? Are they enabling or disabling people regarding what they want to do?	**Purposes, structures, relationships, rewards** Are organisational objectives clear to everyone and do they abide by them? What is the bigger picture of power and formal relationships between functional groups, and how do these connect to goals and responsibilities? How do individuals, groups and functional sections work together? What are the official and unofficial reward and motivation systems?
Practices What meeting and conversation practices dominate in the organisation? Which contextualisation cues are people reading as signs of change (or continuity)? What are the implications for leadership agency?	**Practices** How do managers optimise collaboration between employees to achieve the organisation's goals (defining tasks, managing and monitoring goals, developing people and relationships, identifying problems and so on)? What mechanisms and methods exist that help employees coordinate their activities (information systems, descriptions of organisational approaches, procedures, reports, meetings and so on)?

Table 12 LE research and OD consulting

The practical implication, which needs to be tested in action with real clients, is that having linguistic ethnographic researchers and organisational development practitioners work together would help clients find better solutions to their problems. In this context, linguistic ethnography offers a methodology and some practical tools which may help organisational developers to shift their clients' understanding of the processes of change and bring them more in line with a social constructionist understanding more familiar to academics. This realignment presents difficulties precisely because sharing research insights into the ways in which managers can and want to use them involves two shifts: first, a shift for practitioners away from the belief, commonplace in organisations, that individual subjects are the ultimate source of knowledge and meaning, towards a view that knowing and meaning reside in patterns of practices, including spoken interaction; and second, a shift for academics, regarding the status of managers' experiential knowledge about problems that affect them, towards equality with knowledge produced by academic research. In an organisational or inter-organisational environment, opening a conversation with the people responsible for reproducing local texts of knowledge about leadership and change is often the first goal of organisation development consulting. One of the most important implications of my findings is that linguistic ethnography provides an important first step in this process.

5.5 Concluding summary

This chapter has presented the key findings from my research into leadership practice and the insights that can be gained by analysing the micro-detail of what is happening in spoken interaction in organisational settings. As the thesis also sets out to combine leadership theory with linguistic ethnography in order to support practitioners in their pursuit of establishing alternative ways of working, the practical applications of these findings have also been presented in the chapter. In line with these aims, two principal research questions have guided the study:

RQ 1: How can close analysis of spoken interaction extend our understanding of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other?

RQ 2: Building on this analysis, which interventions to meaningfully change or improve such co-production can be identified?

Ethnographic and linguistic data were gathered in corporate settings to provide answers to these questions. After initial analysis of the data, the questions were further subdivided into three secondary research questions which are addressed in three core papers. This chapter has considered the entire research project to synthesise overall findings and consider their usefulness for managers aiming to bring about change in the workplace.

Research findings from the project clearly demonstrate that important and otherwise invisible aspects of how leadership is accomplished can be identified in talk. In Paper 1, a close study of spoken interaction through the contextualising lens of linguistic ethnography revealed the intimate dialectical relationship between agency and authority through which leadership is performed. Building on the theme of dialectics, Paper 2 drew attention to the role leaders play in both reconfirming commonly circulating oppositional ideas *and* challenging them by not behaving according to the expectations embedded in these ideas. Linguistic analysis in Paper 3 revealed two ways in which unchallenged binary thinking can lead to reified patterns of conversational behaviour which work against explicitly stated objectives. Overall, and taking into account data and analysis from the initial engagement phase, the findings presented in section 5.2 drew special attention to:

1. Making normally invisible (and previously undiscussable) aspects of leadership and organisation visible and thus discussable.

2. The provisional nature of power as multi-directional, fluid and shifting and its implications for management learning.

3. The importance to leadership and change of identifying moments of choice in interaction rather than mainly in abstract notions represented in documents, visual representations, and other texts.

The role of linguistic analysis involves identifying and describing how alternative linguistic choices interconnect in the production of leadership practices.

To sum up, by thinking less in terms of binary choices and more in terms of multiplicity, linguistic ethnography helps to bring the complexity of leadership processes to the surface and to subject them to analysis. In section 5.3 I discussed how this process reveals patterns of which speakers themselves are unaware, which in turn helps to inform individual and organisational learning interventions. In section 5.4 I suggested ways in which reflective consideration of linguistic choices which are based on actual spoken data might enable leadership learning about how both conversational behaviour and structures influence outcomes. I then considered the implications for management learning practitioners in their coaching, action learning and organisation development interventions. I emphasised tools and approaches developed during the project which might be used when working alongside practitioners to reinterpret leadership experiences and thus make progress on real problem situations. I concluded that all parties to an enquiry should be encouraged to share thinking and learn aloud together so they can act in more informed and effective ways.

In the final chapter of the thesis, I will consider the value and contribution of my study to the field of leadership from an applied linguistics perspective. I will also review its limitations and propose opportunities for future research.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

6.1 Opening overview

This chapter will conclude the study by summarising the key research findings in relation to my research aims and research questions, as well as the value and contribution of the work. It will also review the limitations of the study and suggest opportunities for future research. The purpose of the chapter is to present a broader perspective of the research outcomes and how these relate to the research aims. In sum, the chapter outlines what I found, why it is valuable, how it can be applied and what further research can be done.

6.2 Summary of findings

The main goal of the study was to investigate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of leadership work so that leadership development interventions can better support people in leadership positions. The principal question the study asked was in what ways a linguistic perspective can shed light on how leadership and organisation co-produce each other. A second aim was to determine which interventions to meaningfully change or improve such co-production might be identified based on the primary analysis. The specific objectives of the study were threefold. They were first, to describe some of the discursive processes through which aspects of leadership are actually performed; second, to observe how leaders use discursive resources as they go about trying to influence the way work is done; and third, to identify what causes some patterns of leadership interaction to become stuck. These objectives were addressed separately in each of the three papers which make up the core of the thesis.

The first case study revealed an intimate dialectical relationship between agency and authority in the performance of leadership. The study found that differently theorised aspects of leadership agency rely on different orientations to authority-in interaction which can be differentiated in analysis of spoken interaction. The second study found that while leaders reproduce 'either or' tensions in the way they think and talk about new ways of working, in their actual interactions their discursive strategies cannot be reduced to binary oppositions. The third study identified two ways in which unchallenged binary thinking can lead to reified patterns of conversational behaviour which work against explicitly stated objectives. Together these findings extend our understanding by providing close-up detail of how different aspects of leadership work are accomplished. Taken together, the findings clearly demonstrate that important and otherwise invisible aspects of how leadership is accomplished can be identified in talk.

Looking across the entire project, that is, by drawing together threads of meaning from the different data sets and phases of research, three key findings illustrate how close analysis of spoken interaction can extend our understanding of how leadership and organisation co-produce each other [RQ1]. First, the study found that linguistic ethnographic analysis allows normally felt but invisible leadership processes, examples of which are evident in the case studies, to become more tangible, and therefore discussible. This finding can be characterised as *making the invisible visible*. A second overall finding relates to managers' experience of power in interaction as *authority trouble*, that is, the minutiae of confirmation of and resistance to power between interactants. This indicates that an appreciation of power as multi-directional, fluid and shifting is an important facet of leadership learning. The third overall finding is that the moment-to-moment linguistic and conversational choices that managers make in actual interaction are largely unrelated to decontextualised notions of leadership style expressed in written texts on change management. By highlighting the importance of these *moments of choice in interaction rather than text*, the study has revealed how linguistic and conversational choices interconnect in the production of leadership practices.

Taken together, the research findings have important implications for developing learning interventions which examine erstwhile unseen conversational processes, the fluid co-production of power and influence and the moments of choice which can make a difference to outcomes. These findings can be used to shape interventions to meaningfully change or improve the co-production of leadership and organisation [RQ2]. In particular, the findings suggest that by making small but radical shifts in the way leaders make sense of their leadership actions, they may learn to change interactional patterns. First, the shift in perspective regarding how leadership is actually accomplished suggests that by side-stepping normalised binary choices leaders may be able to enact power differently. Second, by re-examining what imposes constraints on conversational routines, leaders may be able to challenge certain cultural patterns of interaction.

The study aimed to examine how a linguistic ethnographic research perspective sheds light on leadership and to use these insights to identify ways in which management learning practitioners can better support people in leadership positions. As they relate to these research aims, the findings show that close study of language practices extends our understanding of how leadership work is actually accomplished. This section has identified a role for linguistic analysis in identifying and describing how linguistic choices produce leadership practices. The following section explains why this is valuable.

6.3 Contribution

This section highlights the key contribution that my study makes to theory and practice in the field of applied linguistic research into organisational leadership. I will present the significance of these findings from three perspectives. First, I will outline how my study solves the research problem I identified in the introduction to the thesis and why that matters. Next, I will explain how the study fills the research gaps evident in the applied linguistics leadership literature. As part of this, I will explain how my research findings relate to existing theory about leadership from an applied linguistics perspective, and also draw attention to the opportunity for such research to contribute to leadership studies more generally. Specifically, and in relation to relevant theories, I will show how the study confirms some existing theories and constructively challenges others. Finally, I will discuss practical applications, specifically, what actions practitioners working in organisations can take based on my findings.

6.4 The research problem

From a research perspective, I show how the findings summarised above help to solve the research problem I identified in the introductory chapter and why this is important. The research problem addressed in this thesis is that leadership development is informed by research which misses the detail of how leadership actually happens in talk. This matters because it leads to learning designs being developed and consulting advice being given which is based on a partial picture of how leadership work is accomplished. The findings reported here shed new light on how alternative linguistic choices interconnect in the production of leadership practices. The study has identified and described routines and patterns of language practice which challenge formulaic conceptualisations of the ways in which leaders 'bring about' change in organisations by performing leadership styles which can in some way be 'chosen' without reference to power, settings and leader-follower relations. Managers in positions of leadership influence in fact use all the discursive resources available to them in ways which are not constrained by conceptualisations based on the seemingly easy binary choices of change management texts. This matters because by revealing the detail of how leadership is accomplished in interaction, felt but invisible processes become visible and thus discussable. Overall, this study strengthens the idea that change, like power, is discursively co-produced in complex ways, including the ways in which interactants – leaders and followers – shape alternative ways of working. Therefore, to support practitioners in their pursuit of establishing alternative ways of working, we should acknowledge and understand the complexity confirmed by these findings and not, as is so often the case, distance ourselves so far from interactive data that we miss what is actually happing in practice.

It should be noted at this point that the research has already delivered outputs which help to solve the problem I identified. These include the engagement blog 'English and Power' (Murphy, 2016), which concerns leadership and language practices, and a book chapter entitled '*Talking Power*' (Murphy, 2017), which was included in an edited volume of the International Leadership Association. Both early research outputs were produced as instruments of knowledge (co-)generation. Aspects of the work-in-progress have also been presented in the disciplinary academic domains of leadership studies (Murphy, 2014, 2018; Gaines & Murphy, 2015; Murphy et al., 2015; Murphy & Parkinson, 2016; Murphy & Remke, 2019), organisation communication (Murphy 2015), discourse studies (Murphy & Koller, 2016) and linguistic ethnography (Murphy, 2020a; 2020b).

6.5 Research gaps

In a theoretical view, I illustrate how my research findings relate to existing theory about leadership from an applied linguistics perspective. In relation to theories relevant to leadership, I show how the study confirms some existing theories while extending others.

Three gaps in the applied linguistics leadership literature were identified in Chapter 2, and each of the three papers which make up the core of the thesis addresses one of these. To summarise, these gaps are: first, in conflating leadership and position, aspects of the practice of leadership, and possibilities for alternative expressions of the same, go unseen. Second, relying on a task-relationship dualism limits the potential of applied linguistics to contribute to theoretical debates in leadership studies. It also has significant material effects on (most) men's and women's different experiences of leadership. Third, research which aims to use insights of applied linguistics to bring about change could be extended and made more relevant to praxis.

Regarding the way leadership and position have traditionally been conflated in applied linguistic leadership studies (Darics & Koller, 2018; Schnurr 2013, 2017), this research has revealed important detail about how power is discursively co-produced in interaction, in specific settings and in the pursuit of specific tasks. The findings of the investigation complement those of earlier discourse analytic studies applied to organisational change processes (for example, Darics & Clifton, 2019; Holmes, 2017). They confirm that it is felt but invisible routines, patterns and language practices that produce leadership processes – and what cannot be seen cannot be discussed. One role of leadership is to open the previously undiscussable to discussion (Leonard, 2010 p.90), and the present findings have significant implications for the understanding of how to do that. By providing deeper insights into the intimate dialectical relationships between agency and authority, confirming and giving away power, and doing and changing work, the notion that leadership resides in either an individual or a position is called into question. Therefore, this study confirms recent empirical applied linguistics leadership scholarship that reveals what 'post-heroic' leadership looks like in practice (for example, Van de Mieroop et al., 2020; Clifton & Mueni, 2021;

Larsson et al., 2021) and extends this work by drawing attention to nuances of the co-production between interactants, between leaders and interactional settings and between leadership and organisation. This matters for practitioners because possibilities for alternative expressions of leadership rely on having a very clear picture of where one's power comes from in the first place. This is also an important complement to both functionalist and process-orientated analyses of leadership in organisation studies, where power often remains unaccounted for and thus largely invisible (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010; Larsson et al., 2021).

I identified a second gap in the applied linguistics literature relating to task-versus-relational dualism. Foundational in so many applied linguistics studies of leadership (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Vine et al., 2008) and rejected by so many organisational leadership scholars (Collinson, 2005, 2014; Fairhurst & Putnam, 2019, Martins et al., 2013; Putnam et al., 2016), the gap that arises between disciplines limits the potential of applied linguistics to contribute to theoretical debates in leadership studies. This study has raised important questions about the reliance in workplace-orientated applied linguistics on the task-relationship dualism to identify, describe and evaluate different styles and leadership approaches (Darics, 2020; Vine et al, 2008; Wodak et al., 2011; Walker & Aritz, 2014). Applied and sociolinguistic work has opened up to scrutiny many false dichotomies and binary traps about gender, ethnicity and culture (Cameron, 2000; Mills & Mullany, 2011; Schnurr et al., 2017), so that the continued presence of a leadership concept so roundly rejected by the (critical) leadership studies community (Collinson, 2020; Elliott & Stead, 2018; Khan et al., 2021, Stead & Elliott, 2019) appears incongruent. Nonetheless, despite recent challenges to the 'leadership styles' canon by prominent applied linguists (Ilie & Schnurr, 2017), the basic notion of task-versus-relationship talk has not shifted much in the 20-odd years that applied linguists have been studying organisational leadership. I argue in the thesis that this trace of the traditional notion of leadership effectiveness (for example, Bass & Alvolio, 1994; Fielder, 1993; MacGregor Burns,1978) contributes to the perpetuation of the dichotomous positioning of task and relationship in the way leadership itself is conceptualised in applied linguistics.

I argued in Chapter 2 that epistemological tensions born of the juxtaposition of realist and relativist research projects preferred by the different disciplines raise practical, and sometimes ideological, barriers to scholarly collaboration, thereby limiting the potential of applied linguistics to engage with and contribute to theoretical debates in leadership studies. This research project aimed to contribute insights from a close study of language, using the tools and methods of linguistic ethnography, to the academic domain of organisation studies. The findings of the research provide insights into language practices which make a conceptual contribution to debates about discursive leadership by (1) reframing discursive oppositions as interactive resources and (2) offering a nuanced understanding of leadership agency centred on making choices, in particular choices about language use and conversational behaviour. Therefore, one contribution of this study has been to engage in theoretical debates in leadership studies from an applied linguistics perspective.

The study also contributes to a dialogue between these disciplinary positions by producing findings that have the potential to contribute to both fields. The theoretical contribution to the applied linguistics leadership literature comprises a challenge to the way a foundational task-versus-relationship conceptualisation of leadership practice shapes analyses. The project does this by fully engaging with the critical treatment of leadership found in organizational theory. The contribution to the organisational studies literature is to address Kempster et al.'s (2016) call for a 'stronger commitment to conducting empirical work despite its time-consuming, expensive, and uncertain nature' (p.258). The empirical findings reported in the study provide a new understanding of the leadership work involved in bringing about changes in working practices. By isolating and analysing interactive practices, the study used fine-tuned, well-developed tools from linguistic analysis to provide insights into how this aspect of leadership work is accomplished.

A third gap relates to how applied linguistics insights might be extended and made more relevant to praxis. A growing number of commentators call for knowledge and insights from applied linguistic research to be considered by practitioners (for example, Clifton, 2019; Darics & Clifton, 2019; Darics & Koller, 2019; Mautner, 2016, 2017). Rarely however, do such insights and advice inform how practitioners do the (learning) work of leadership in practice and in situ. This research aims to apply applied linguistics to the field of management learning practice.

Despite the shared social constructionist orientations of organisational learning and workplace sociolinguistics, only a small number of applied linguists (for example, Baxter, 2017; Mullany, 2022) choose to engage with practitioners as learners in their organisational contexts. This gap limits the value of sociolinguistic insights to organisation development consulting. I have addressed this gap in two ways: first, by engaging organisational leaders in my research, and second, by orientating my findings towards leadership learning in situ. This is important because the findings have significant implications for the understanding of how managers become trapped in patterns of interaction which unwittingly undermine their stated objectives, often by perpetuating (unseen) hegemonic representations of the leadership norm. Confirming previous studies that propose raising practitioners' awareness of discursive process (Clifton, 2019; Darics, 2022; Darics & Clifton, 2019, Darics & Koller, 2019; Mautner, 2016, 2017; Schnurr, 2022) but challenging the site of learning, this thesis has provided deeper insights into the ways in which some binary traps are embedded in in situ language practices. The findings of the research provide insights that management learning practitioners can use to explore the emancipatory potential of their work. I report on findings related to practice next.

6.6 Practical applications

Finally, from a practical viewpoint, the insights gained from the study may be of assistance to managers with leadership roles, and to leadership and organisation development practitioners. For managers, reflective consideration of linguistic choices which are based on actual spoken data might enable them to understand how quite small shifts in conversational behaviour and conversational structures can impact on outcomes in important ways. The study has shown how linguistic ethnographic analysis reveals patterns of which managers themselves are unaware. One implication of this is the possibility that managers can develop better awareness of moments of linguistic or conversational choice in the course of their interactions (for example, whether and when to intervene), and the effects of these in relation to their goals. Similarly, leadership and organisation development practitioners can use the findings to guide a shift in orientation to the design of learning interventions. In particular, the tools and models developed in the course of my linguistic ethnographic project can be used by leadership and organisation developers when working alongside practitioners to (re)interpret their leadership experiences in order to identify new possibilities for action.

In general, therefore, the present study appears to be one of the first attempts to integrate theories about leadership from the fields of organisation studies and linguistics, while also working with empirical data collected in ways which facilitate engagement with real sites of leadership and learning in corporate settings. Taken together, these findings suggest a role for linguistic ethnography in promoting management and organisational learning.

6.7 The value of linguistic ethnography to the study and practice of leadership

A lot of leadership is about judgement. As we have seen, linguistic ethnography offers heightened awareness of the consequences of linguistic and conversational choices and offers insights into leadership behaviour which are coherent with one's goals, purposes and aspirations. All types of leadership must be talked into being. Below we see Kate spots an opportunity to shift both the topic of conversation and the strategic direction.

Paper 1, Extract 3

1	Maarten	*I don’t see that, er*
2	Anke	/so er/
3	Fred	/but even/ that they shouldn’t be necessary I mean we should as a company be able to internally just you know drive this . but it’s not easy
4	Lucas	/no: no: er/
5	Kate	/it is in fact/ how do we change that mind-set then eh? . internally

This short example illustrates the challenge of identifying and describing leadership. Kate, who has joined a SWOT analysis already in progress (see Paper 1), spends most of the meeting silently listening. She utters frequent agreement tokens aimed at moving the conversation along, but she usually keeps her opinions to herself, making no attempt to steer the conversation one way or another. Here, however, in the space of a single utterance, she makes a bold, unmodalised statement (*/It is in fact/ how do we change that mind-set then, eh↑. internally*) which unblocks a cul-de-sac the others have talked themselves into, provides a strategic structuring contribution which shapes the topic, creates more space for her to pursue her own agenda and, with the introduction of an inclusive '*we',* binds the group in a shared space where a conversation about a change of direction might unfold.

The linguistic and conversational choices Kate makes (including the choice to remain silent) *are* her leadership. And yet, they are very small – too small to be noticed when the investigative gaze lies elsewhere, for example on themes, narratives or biographies. This is the value of linguistic ethnography. Linguistic analysis in the papers clearly demonstrates that important and otherwise invisible aspects of how leadership is accomplished can be identified in talk. Identifying and revealing patterns in language and conversation is a critical first step in scoping how and when interventions can be made to meaningfully change the mutually reinforcing practices of leadership and organisation. Unless we look closely at the interactive processes through which this relationship is (re)produced, we miss these small but important details about actual, in situ conversational practices and therefore go on to base our advice and interventions on a partial picture of how leadership work is accomplished.

6.8 Limitations

This section critically reflects on the research limitations of the study. I explain why my methodological decisions were justifiable and, given these constraints, how my study is valuable despite four main limitations.

First, the trans-disciplinary nature of the project is a strength but also a limitation. From the perspective solely of linguistics, a major limitation of the study is the lack of in-depth analysis of linguistic indices of leadership identified by previous studies. Specifically, the use of directives or control acts (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Vine 2001, 2009) and the use of questions to exert interactional control (Holmes & Chiles, 2009) have been indexed for leadership and connected to the construction of leadership identities. (Aritz et al., 2017). This study references these and other linguistic and conversational features such as the realisation of, and resistance to, power enacted through claiming and holding the floor (e.g. Angouri, 2018; Holmes and Stubbe, 2015) and how such moves reinforce seniority and power (Mesinioti et al., 2020) but does not focus directly on these. The breadth of analytic entry points employed in the study – leadership studies, management learning, workplace sociolinguistics and real-world application – has meant more superficial linguistic analysis than if I had chosen to limit the study to a more restricted research goal and/or data set. Furthermore, using linguistic methods in ways which are accessible to scholars unfamiliar with the technicalities of linguistic and conversation analysis may have made these tools less sharp. That said, broadening the reach of applied linguistics through organisationally situated linguistic ethnography is an important goal, and ensuring effective trans-disciplinary communication a justifiable strategy to achieve this goal. Thus, despite its broad nature, this study offers some specific insights into how alternative linguistic and conversational choices interconnect in the production of leadership practices.

Second, the practical decision to limit shadowing to a single day on multiple sites, rather than a single site on multiple days, meant that the study was limited by the absence of longitudinal data. Leadership occurs over time and in unpredictable ways among yet unknown configurations of actors. This means that naturally occurring spoken data obtained over time are needed to fully examine the emergence and development of leadership interactions. In spite of this limitation, the study adds to our understanding of the relationship between perceptions of a group of women leaders and the actual spoken behaviour of some of their number. This is a valuable perspective in and of itself.

Third, it is unfortunate that due to a lack of funding, the study did not include steps in the design where findings from both data sets could be compared with the real-problem perspectives of the research participants as this would have undoubtedly strengthened not only the multi-vocality of the work but also its openness to member perceptions. Notwithstanding this limitation, the fact that five of the seven core research partners attended a self-funded meeting several years later in order to test the credibility and practical contribution of the findings suggests that the research results resonate with them and may be transferable to their corporate settings.

Finally, the research design, as well as yielding opportunities to bridge theory and practice, also limits the scope of the study in terms of a critical focus on applied linguistics. My commitment to give feedback to research participants, as an opening for access to data, restricted lines of enquiry to those which, in my judgement, could inform the real learning needs of the shadowees. Other points of potential research interest were discounted on these grounds. Overall, the most important limitation lies in the trade-off between engagement with organisational practitioners on the one hand and organisational scholars on the other, while at the same time conducting deep and detailed analysis of linguistic data. I measured the possible impact of these trade-offs insofar as they enabled me to keep my core theoretical, empirical and practical commitments of the thesis in equilibrium. Other researchers may choose to privilege a different balance and therefore pursue other research opportunities indicated by this work, a subject I explore in the following section.

6.9 Recommendations for future research

In this section, I outline the opportunities for future research, based on the findings and limitations of my study, that is, how future studies might build and improve on what I have found by overcoming some of the limitations of my research. Specifically, in this section, I refer to the lack of detailed linguistic analysis, the absence of longitudinal data, the limited involvement of research participants and the possible lack of critical distance in the analysis.

This study has produced a number of insights which would benefit from detailed applied linguistic research. Four aspects require further consideration. First, I describe a significant relationship between the notion of discursive style**,** particularly in terms of leadership style, and managers becoming stuck in routines and patterns which undermine their own ambitions. In order to explore this issue further, a study designed to compare leaders' self-reported data about leadership style and feelings of 'stuck-ness' with observations and recordings of their spoken interaction would be useful. Second, as I show in my analysis, interactional sociolinguistic and conversation analytic approaches provide evidence of the discursive construction of oppositions in leadership work and can offer analytical tools capable of illuminating the overlapping issues of control, questions and knowledge/ power. To extend understanding of the ways in which actual organisational leaders utilise their discursive resources to confirm and challenge oppositions as they deal with pressing operational problems, additional studies will have to investigate the relationship between the broad discursive context of managers' working lives and how they give life to these ideas through specific instances of spoken interaction. Third, deeper and more detailed linguistic analysis of problem formulation is needed. Kim and Angouri demonstrate that the formulation of problems is indexed for leadership (Kim & Angouri, 2019), but my findings clearly indicate that subordinates also formulate problems. Further work on leader-follower relationships is therefore needed to address this gap. It would be helpful if this work were informed theoretically by existing work in critical leadership studies. Finally, from a sociolinguistic perspective, I focused my analysis on the presence of particular linguistic and conversational features (for example, questions, directives and control of the floor) but did not pay attention to what interactants were choosing *not* to do. There is scope for looking into discourse features which signal non-intervention, such as minimal response tokens and silences, because these choices also play an important role in enabling alternative ways of working. For example, the managers in this study created space for subordinates to exercise their leadership principally by choosing not to close them down. Critical discursive choices like these can only be seen close-up.

Leadership, and in particular the mutually constituting relationships between leaders, followers, settings and organisations, cannot be fully understood without recourse to longitudinal data. However, for operational reasons I took the decision to base my research design around shadowing different executives over the course of a single day. Several questions therefore remain unanswered. Future research questions could be asked about how particular managers try to influence change in their conversations with their bosses, subordinates, peers and partners in different settings, with different tasks and over time. Therefore, further work is needed to establish to what extent interactively accomplished agency-authority dynamics are recognisable over time and across multiple sites.

To further overcome this methodological limitation, a linguistic ethnographic study focused on individual leaders over time could shed light on the ways in which the interactive dynamics of agency and authority index different approaches to leadership.

Third, regarding the triangulation of data and the involvement of research participants, there is abundant room for further progress in determining real-world implications for managers and management learning practitioners by researching applications in action over time. Participative action research could be undertaken to investigate leadership learning processes in more detail. A further study with more focus on action is therefore suggested. Longer-term engagement of executives and organisations in linguistic ethnographic research depends on establishing mutually beneficial relationships which are steered in partnership. The different timescales governing academic and corporate priorities make such partnerships challenging – but this does not mean that they should not be attempted. This study lays the groundwork for future engaged research which uses leadership and organisational learning as a research partnership strategy. One issue confirmed by my findings is that recall is an unreliable source of data about one's own leadership interactions. This is a topic of interest to managers that could shape coaching and action learning interventions. In addition, to paint a full picture of the additional value that linguistic ethnography can bring to organisation development consulting (and vice versa), additional studies will be needed that have linguistic ethnographers and organisation development practitioners working together on research-diagnostic processes with real clients.

It could be argued that the learning strategy employed in this research achieved engagement success at the expense of criticality. I rejected some issues and questions on the grounds they would be detrimental to my relationships with my research partners. Two in particular could be useful avenues for future research. First, I rejected the idea of comparative analysis between my research subjects on the ground that any normatively framed findings could be read as judgemental. However, a comparative study of discursive strategies which enable a certain 'style' of leadership rather than another in the flow of conversation may be needed to determine what a non-binary approach to analysis might entail. Further studies would be of great help in establishing the usefulness of such a perspective. A second possible avenue for possible future research is a detailed linguistic analysis of the risks and benefits of different discourse strategies to self, team and task. I rejected this avenue on the ground that, when tested informally with managers, the analysis was not seen to be helpful for leadership learning. To paint a full picture of the relationship between linguistic choices made by leaders, and the perceived risks and benefits of these, there is scope for additional studies to ask specific questions in relation to such choices.

6.10 Conclusion

Given the centrality of language to the performance of leadership, the thesis has sought to combine leadership theory with linguistic ethnography in order to develop insights that have practical relevance for managers and organisations. This chapter has concluded the study by highlighting key findings in relation to the research aims and questions. Notably, by revealing erstwhile hidden language routines, patterns and practices, the findings of the thesis have important implications for leadership learning. Shifts in orientation indicated by these findings suggest new possibilities for action by managers in pursuit of alternative ways of working. To this end, learning interventions informed by the findings, specifically, making the invisible visible, increasing awareness of the dynamics of 'authority trouble' and identifying moments of choice in interaction, are identified as actionable recommendations for management learning practitioners. The chapter has concluded with a review of overall limitations, from which future research recommendations flow. The thesis claims that linguistic ethnography is well suited to close-up data analysis in contextually sensitive organisational research and has the potential to add value to organisation development consulting more broadly. By providing analytical tools for making 'the familiar strange and interesting again' (Erickson, 1986, p.121), it can help to challenge what is taken for granted about how leadership is performed. This thesis has attempted to contribute to the dialogue between organisational researchers, applied linguistics and management learning practitioners, and I hope future studies will continue building on this agenda.

Appendix I : Transcription conventions

:	sound stretching
/ /	overlapping speech
Underlining	emphasis
CAPITALS	loud speech
___	speech in especially low volume
(1)	pause in seconds
.	pause of less that 1 second
((laughs))	transcribers descriptions of comments, contextual information
[…]	words or lines omitted
( )	indecipherable
((xxx))	redacted for anonymity
(word)	unsure transcription
=	latched utterance
–	interruption
o-	cut off word
> <	quicker than surrounding talk
<->	markedly slower that surrounding talk
↑	rising intonation
↓	falling intonation
!	animated tone

Appendix II: Talking power executive summary

> *If the situation is with a well-established team, they have established patterns of interaction. They know each other well, and they interact in a way that doesn't invite participation. They are mostly men, and they have certain patterns of talk. It seems as if they have an informal agreement on how to proceed - they know the rules. If you raise your hand to speak everyone looks at you as if to say, it's not your place to speak.* (Amalia, The English and Power programme)

The findings of the engagement phase of my research were presented at the 15th International Studying Leadership conference (Murphy & Parkinson, 2016) and are written up in the form of a chapter for the International Leadership Association volume on gender, communication and the leadership gap (Murphy, 2017). The chapter explores women's perceptions of power and influence in workplace conversations and examines how these dynamics contribute to women's experience of agency in professional settings. Working with data gathered during the series of women-only development programs which dealt explicitly with the expression of power in corporate settings, the chapter provides examples of the data, the analysis, and asks how these insights inform leadership development practices.

In mainstream management literature as in organizational life, women's lives and experiences are largely invisible (Stead & Elliott, 2009). Leadership theory is 'developed for men on male samples based on men's experience of leadership' (Madsen, 2016). Feminist leadership scholars therefore often focus on the hidden processes which (re)produce the underlying structures of power, keeping this privileged norm hidden from view (Simpson & Lewis, 2005, 2007). One hidden area is the way language is used in interaction. Workplace conversations often follow predictable and stable patterns, which conceal the norms and values within them. Such norms can override surface awareness of fairness and inclusivity precisely because these conversational patterns are taken for granted, and because of this, the exclusionary processes and effects remain invisible. Women who express their power in traditional masculine ways, in fact women who want power at all, violate social norms by disrupting the gender and structural hierarchies which protect the invisible norm (Mavin et al., 2014). Thus, gender conformity and structural invisibility combine to naturalise the rules of who gets to gain and use power. To resist these rules women have to be the same and different; to fit in and stand out. In other words, women have to learn use their power in ways which both conform to and resist the norm. This complexity of gendered power relations, including 'how women may be simultaneously marginalised while being afforded gender capital' (Elliott & Stead, 2018, p.21), suggests the need to develop learning interventions that examine and move away from easy dualisms.

The chapter addresses these issues from an organisation studies perspective while also drawing on feminist linguistics. Organisation and communication scholars routinely question dualistic analyses, drawing attention to forms of inquiry which go beyond oppositional binaries to explore dialectic tensions (Fairhurst, 2001; Mumby, 2005; Collinson, 2005; Putnam, 2015) and which explore the effects of these binaries on the identification of women as leaders (Ibarra et al., 2013; Kelan, 2013; Mavin & Grandy, 2012, 201; Muhr, 2011). Feminist scholars therefore, frequently focus on the hidden processes which (re)produce the underlying structures of power, keeping this privileged norm hidden from view (Lewis & Simpson, 2012). A close study of situated language use can provide a window into the way these practices are enacted. The linguistic choices made by women and men in everyday interactions shape views about gender differences and ultimately reinforce female disadvantage. Feminist linguistics is interested in “identifying, demystifying and resisting the ways in which language is used to create and sustain gender inequalities” (Litosseliti, 2006, p.24). Linguistically informed approaches to studying situated talk assume power is made visible, and thus can be analysed, in conversational moves (Thornborrow, 2002) as a shared conversational resource that is dynamically and collaboratively constructed (Holmes & Stubbe, 2003). Combining this dual perspective of feminist organisation studies and discourse studies, the research asks how women experience power in workplace conversations, and which linguistic features shape the dynamics of power in these settings.

The data were gathered in the course of individual and small-group coaching exercises aimed at raising awareness of the relationship between conversational behaviour and power in multi-national corporate settings. These data are first analysed inductively taking a grounded approach (Charmaz, 2014), then, informed by feminist post-structural discourse analysis (Baxter, 2003) a detailed analysis is performed to account for why certain speakers are judged, and judge themselves, as more or less effective. Oppositional binaries and dialectic tensions evident in the accounts - being present (or not), heard (or not), powerful (or not) - reveal an opaque and uneasy relationship with power. For these leaders and managers, specific conversations, and specific conversational behaviours constitute important sites for the experience of power asymmetries.

Three related areas of interest are identified in the chapter:

First, **what** are the women saying about their experience of power and how this is reflected in conversational behaviour?

Second, **where** does this take place? Where do they experience this absence and presence most keenly? What are the sites of inclusion and exclusion?

And third, **how** does this happen? What are some of the specific discourse features through which these elements of experience are realised?

Overall, the chapter adds linguistic detail to understandings of the dynamics of power in workplace conversations and the ways in which these contribute to women's experience of agency in professional settings. The analysis reveals parallel inner commentaries which refer superficially to a sense of passivity but which, by examining the dialectic tension of experiences of power in conversation, are also testament to a powerful sense of agency.

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Appendix III: English & Power participant challenges

Being a powerful chair without being bossy

Talking to older (Anglo Saxon) men

Taking up your authority

Boosting your presence in meetings

Being seen and getting heard at meetings

Gaining respect

Dealing with difficult moments in meetings

Asking and deflecting powerful questions

Dealing with hostile questions and comments

Being direct and to the point

Delivering a clear message

Showing you are listening

Engaging on an equal footing

Selling yourself

Controlling a conference call

Justifying the contents of a report

Political manoeuvring

Feeling more powerful

Engaging in small talk without losing ground

Not missing opportunities to influence

Getting heard on conference calls

Dealing with put-downs and status games

Being gracious, respectful *and* in charge

Interrupting against the flow of a discussion

Saying difficult things which will be unpopular

Being evaluated formally and informally

Appendix IV: Initial English & Power coding (an example from Madrid 1)

[N.B. Repetitions are included in this list]

Feeling angry, let down and disappointed.

Noticing who spoke and who was silent.

Understanding what's really going on.

Getting angry at the verbal behaviour of colleagues.

Noticing how others speak and interact.

Feeling powerless to influence outcomes.

Assessing who has the power to decide.

Assessing how power works in conversation.

Recognising different styles across cultures.

Feeling powerless, without influence.

Choosing quality of life over promotion.

Understanding how negotiations work.

Interacting with senior managers.

Presenting ideas to senior managers.

Creating the right impression.

Not being a native speaker

Feeling constrained when speaking English

Raising your game

Creating the right impression.

Having impact

Being persuasive.

Feeling powerful (enough).

Not focusing on gender.

Noticing the difference – finding some cultures easier.

Grasping the moment to speak up in a meeting.

Knowing when and how to interrupt.

Being very aware what's at stake in meetings.

Seeing your career on the other side of the desk.

Giving the right impression.

Being aware of time and opportunity.

Being self-aware.

Being aware of the impressions you give.

Feeling powerless.

Feeling insecure

Sensing the reaction of others.

Being aware of gender.

Feeling like an unwanted outsider.

Being aware of who is speaking.

Being very aware of expertise.

Keeping quiet, not speaking.

Keeping quiet because speaking is too risky.

Being a powerless (and silent) expert.

Comparing self and others.

Being different – wanting to be and not wanting to be.

Holding back from speaking.

Being hyper cautious.

Feeling insecure

Feeling confused about lack of confidence.

Feeling the need to get on with people.

Being aware of the impression you give.

Being aware of being a woman.

Wanting to be aware of being a woman.

Ignoring being a woman.

Being aware of oneself in conversation.

Worrying about being too quiet.

Noticing being treated differently.

Being the only woman.

Being aware of oneself, one's impact - or the lack of it.

Remembering a time when I behaved differently.

Getting negative feedback.

Reflecting on being aggressive.

Reflecting on being cautious.

Being too cautious.

Being seen, watched.

Having enough English

Knowing who is speaking, and who is not

Interacting with native speakers.

Grasping the opportunity to speak.

Not making the best of the opportunity to speak.

Focusing on speaking and forgetting to listen.

Missing something important.

Being aware of time and opportunity.

Understanding what is said.

Getting people to repeat what they have said.

Not missing important questions

Promoting visibility - the right kind.

Giving the right impression.

Boosting profile

Making senior managers aware of me.

Reading status and influence.

Being aware of impact.

Sensing competition and being aware of that.

Being focused on interactions.

Breaking into a conversation.

Getting my voice heard.

Missing the moment.

Timing, being aware of time and opportunity?

Being understood.

Controlling your peers in language.

Giving the right impression.

Creating impact.

Making a valuable contribution.

Not being taken seriously

Undermining impact and influence through style of interaction.

Being aware of interaction in the moment.

Not achieving my goals.

Interacting with non-native speakers.

Interacting with powerful people.

Getting more power in an exchange.

Gaining ground.

Using resources to broker power.

Being watched, being judged.

Not being chair, not having power.

Being aware of interaction.

Competing with peers for the conversational floor.

Being seen and heard by the right people.

Missing opportunities to speak, and to lead.

Not having/not finding the space to speak.

Staying quiet.

Being aware of not speaking.

Creating an impact, giving the right impression.

Profiling, promoting oneself and one's team.

Remembering a time when I was more confident.

Bing direct and of oneself.

Losing confidence.

Getting negative feedback.

Being criticised behind my back.

Accepting an element of truth in criticism.

Remembering a time when I was more confident.

Being direct unsure of oneself.

Interacting in a foreign language

Feeling powerless in English.

Improving every interaction.

Not being taken for granted.

Being aware of learning.

Making progress with issues.

Raising visibility and profile.

Interacting with institutionally powerful people.

Strategising future career possibilities.

Undermining one's own impact.

Speaking too fast, talking too much.

Not knowing how best to respond to disagreement.

Feeling insecure

Being undermined by your boss' behaviour.

Being, aware of discursive strategies.

Wanting to be able to interact, to speak, to interact – but not doing so.

Being aware of power in interaction.

Being heard

Being powerful.

Being more visible.

Being successful.

Being undermined by my boss (and others)

Being interrupted by my boss.
My boss behaving in a way which cuts me out.
Being put down, cut out, excluded.
Being more aware of turns at talk.
Speaking and not speaking.
Understanding the meaning.
Interrupting successfully.
Staying in the conversation.
Showing more confidence.
Being more aware of discursive strategies.
Being more aware of interactive dynamics.
Controlling interactions.
Feeling or being in control.
Feeling more powerful.
Being more confident and more powerful.
Feeling good about myself.
Being put down.
Not giving up on the theme or a topic.
Staying with it.
Excluding myself.
Being the only non-native speaker.
Being the only woman.
Being different.
Not sounding knowledgeable.
Not sounding senior enough.
Coming over as to direct or too strong.
Not being in control of the language nuances and subtleties.
Preparing for interactions and presentations.
Being afraid.
Interacting with senior people.
Appearing less knowledgeable.
Seeming less senior, less powerful.
It's not about being a woman.
Sounding senior.
Being aware of lack of language skills.
Feeling stupid.
Being treated differently
Being different.
Feeling powerless to change or calibrate your tone.
Understanding nuances and indirectness
Searching for words.
Forgetting keywords.
Being seen as senior.
Being afraid of what others are thinking.
Showing power.
Feeling more powerful.
Feeling more comfortable with feeling more powerful.
Recognising some situations as frustrating.
Being unable to follow the conversation.
Not achieving my communication goals.
Being a woman
Being different.
Raising my voice or not
Being heard, being listened to.
Not speaking my native language.
Being in a non-native speaker.
Creating a good impression.
Getting the right balance between strong and soft.
Sounding soft fails.
Interacting with senior people.
Discussing issues with international colleagues.
Preparing for interaction, such as a meeting or a call.
Finding the right moment to speak.
Searching for the right words.
Missing an opportunity to speak.
Not speaking.
Interacting with non-native speakers.
Feeling stupid.
Being unable to grasp the moment.
Learning and improving.
Speaking out even with mistakes.
Speaking and not speaking.
Feeling afraid.
Interacting with Indians.
Being unable to follow the conversation.
Worrying about participating.
Worrying about looking and sounding right.
Giving the right impression.
Worrying about asking questions.
Worrying about standing out for the wrong reasons.
Worrying about getting everyone's attention and

then getting it wrong and looking stupid.

Being aware of time.

Grasping the opportunity.

Missing an opportunity.

Not speaking

noticing men being unafraid of their English.

Watching others just speak out.

Watching and being watched.

Noticing men, and afraid of failing, or being judged – or seem so.

Being afraid.

Watching others interact.

Being a feeling unable to participate.

Not being involved or included.

Not speaking.

Being aware of being or not being polite.

Judging women as a group.

Being afraid.

Speaking out and looking silly.

Missing opportunities.

Being watched and judged.

Being there at the table because you're a woman.

Getting the attention of others.

Not sounding senior enough.

Giving the right impression.

Sounding powerful.

Being aware of the effect of what has been said.

Reading other peoples' reactions.

Noticing differences between men and women.

Feeling judged.

Working with other women and finding that easier than working with men.

Presenting work to powerful stakeholders.

Getting agreements.

Seeing gender?

Talking about interacting and talking.

Describing patterns of interaction.

Being in control of the interaction.

Not knowing the meaning of silence.

Speaking and not speaking.

Feeling unsure of one's performance.

Feeling insecure – is it me?

Feeling that you're an anxious, under confident.

Not knowing what others are thinking and imagining the worst.

Having doubts - are they listening to when I'm speaking?

Presenting to stakeholders in a competitive environment.

Being judged.

Being a non-native speaker.

Feeling insecure about the impact I'm having.

Wanting more impact.

Working in a different culture

Being different

Being in control.

Wondering how things have landed.

Feeling confident and knowledgeable and powerful.

Reading the conversation.

Sensing conversational success.

Interacting with senior people.

Being conscious of the power dynamics.

Wanting to perform differently.

Preparing to handle disagreements.

Expecting and managing an aggressive response.

Wanting to answer back aggressively.

Keeping my own behaviour in check – holding back.

Wanting not to concede any ground.

Reflecting on how others respond to my power.

Bringing people with you.

Being patient.

Rehearsing discursive options when someone disagrees.

Wanting to make others feel good and important.

Noticing aggressive behaviour of others.

Recognising a different conversational style – faster, and more to the point.

Noticing and reading impatience in others.

Revealing thoughts and feelings about a difficult colleague.

Anticipating a difficult conversation.

Anticipating resistance.

Feeling blocked, unable to respond, to react.

Feeling angry about colleagues' behaviour.

Talking about talking.

Mimicking a colleagues' aggressive behaviour.

Feeling embarrassed on behalf of my boss

Judging men.

Describing aggressive, verbal behaviour of men.

Countering aggressive, verbal behaviour.

Controlling or trying to control the interaction.

Losing control of the interaction.

Watching a power game and fold

Being depicted as a weak.

Witnessing bad behaviour of executives.

Reclaiming ground

Displaying power.

Recognising an important conversation in the moment.

Interacting with senior colleagues.

Drawing attention to oneself.

Getting the entrance just right

Not losing them once you have their attention.

Not giving power away.

Mastering the executive language.

Feeling comparatively powerless, junior.

Feeling shocked at the behaviour of senior colleagues.

Understanding and learning the new rules of the game.

Learning a new language.

Not understanding what is meant.

Noticing extremes in the verbal behaviour in both politeness and aggression.

What are the protocols?

Witnessing locker room behaviour.

Being silenced.

Being outnumbered.

Being taken by surprise.

Feeling watched and hunted.

Knowing that I have to say the right thing.

Getting the pace just right.

Giving away power unintentionally.

Watching as someone takes power from you.

Staying in control of the interaction.

Staying in control of oneself.

Sounding senior.

Appendix V: English & Power focused codes

a. Using power more effectively (power, status, influence)
b. Losing power, giving it away, being undermined, taken by surprise
c. Missing things, losing things - moments, opportunities
d. Being more visible, but also watched and judged
e. Expressing authority - positioning and understanding positions of others
f. Designing yourself - managing identity and appearances (i.e. being me - not someone else - someone unfamiliar)
g. Exercising leadership - being seen as a leader who makes things happen
h. Feeling stupid, being one step behind, losing confidence
i. Not having enough space
j. Showing no weakness

Tensions and dialectics emerged as a focus of analysis:

i. Wanting attention and not wanting it
ii. Judging and being judged
iii. Watching and being watched
iv. Talking too much and not talking enough
v. Being seen and being invisible
vi. Being excluded and excluding myself
vii. Getting work done/ changing how work gets done

Appendix VI: Analytic categories and concepts

- **Sites of interaction** (ethnography)
  - Virtual settings such as conference calls - a focus on native speaker power in particular
  - Meetings - leading such meetings and also being excluded from important moments of decision, micro-sites of exclusion and inclusion
  - The self - identity as a leadership canvas, designing oneself, managing tensions between what is required and the way one would prefer to behave
- **Experiences of power** (organisation and leadership studies)
  - Being seen - positive and negative aspects of being visible and invisible, managing appearances, position self and others
  - Being heard - using silence, being silenced, having one's opinions taken seriously
  - Being powerful - and comfortable, and also losing and lacking power
- **Discourse features** (linguistics)
  - The floor - turn, topic, talk time, participation etc
  - Directness and indirectness - issues around being perceived as 'softer 'assertive'
  - Politeness and impoliteness

The categories suggest a theoretical and methodological approach which connects ethnography, leadership studies and linguistics.

Appendix VII: Sample analytic memo, May 7th 2015

Typed from original hand-written notes

Two issues strike me in particular. First the tensions between being seen and being invisible, being heard and silent, included and excluded and so on, and how these are generally framed in binary rather than dialectic ways. Second, I am drawn to the invisibility of the norm and forms of hidden, gendered power. However, the participants don't speak openly about gender, even if they do recognise some of the ways that they find themselves disappearing into the norm. They simply need to fit in; to stop being different. I need to think more about (in)visibility, (not)speaking and powerful(less)ness.

Where does the focus of this research really need to be?

I've been reading Deborah Cameron's 'Myth of Mars and Venus' and sent one to Araceli so we could think about our English & Power workshop differently. Cameron discusses the challenge of standing out from our own gender as a competent leader and manager (p.54) which reminds me of Sharon Mavin's work - 'Doing gender well and differently'.

There's a danger here of seeing this as an individual problem. But that's a trap. Their 'only answer' is to copy the conversational behaviour of people in power but that is yet another way of becoming invisible and ensuring you don't stand out. The ideological opposition between femininity and power leaves very little room to manoeuvre, and if we don't talk about it, it sinks below the surface again - and means we have no agency. But to mention feminism, or women's liberation, or structural inequalities or patriarchy in the corporate space looses you credibility. You are then saying nothing, nothing at all.

So which 'differences' are we choosing to emphasise? How do we *diffract* the concepts so people can talk about their experiences of power without getting trapped or trapping themselves?

It was helpful for me to think out loud with Araceli about issues around power and difference. I produced a grid (interaction and reflection v being present and absent) so we could think through some coaching interventions together. It made me very aware of the status of all the English & Power data which is to add depth *so that people can learn*. It strikes me that gender is not the main issue for the participants after all - it's actually more about having legitimate power.

Appendix VIII: Activity type analyses (a) to (f)

AT analytic categories	AT SWOT Kate (a)
WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS AND WHAT IS THE SETTING?	26 people from different parts of the business have been convened by a senior research manager to address an issue of strategic importance to the company. The strategy day is held at head offices in a large, naturally lit meeting space with moveable furniture (sofas, tables, chairs), large balcony, well stocked kitchen area and several smaller break out rooms each with flip chart and pens
WHAT SOCIAL ROLES ARE ACTIVATED?	All invitees to the event have knowledge about the topic, and some have influence. About 50% are located at these headquarters, the rest have flown in to join the meeting. They have each been invited because he or she has knowledge important to the task at hand and not because of their formal position in the organisational hierarchy. Some are senior, others less so. Participants are extremely well briefed and prepared. They have read a confidential brief (not made available for the study).
WHAT ARE THE GOVERNING GOALS/PURPOSES?	The goal is to share knowledge from their different professional perspectives on the challenges and opportunities facing the business with regard to the specific strategic issue in order to present a strategy and action plan to two interested vice-presidents (executive board members). The interactive goal of the event is to reach consensus about which direction to take, and which action proposals have enough support to generate collective action
WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL PARAMETERS?	A senior manager has organized and convened the meeting, selecting participants, briefing them so they know what to expect and come well prepared, compiling and distributing confidential documentation and so on. With the process management of the overall day she has had the help of a small team. The services of an external consultant have been commissioned to help design and run the event. In addition 12 others have been identified to play a leading role in the syndicate groups - two per group. These are 'syndicate owner' and 'note taker'. There are no direct reporting relationships or established teams. People have been invited 'on their own merit' (field notes)
ARE THERE PARTICULAR NORMS OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE, POLITENESS OR INTERPRETATION?	The register is English as a Lingua Franca. Most participants are non-native speakers. Of the 26 participants, only 5 are native English speakers High observance of degrees of tact, approbation and agreement (cf Leech's Politeness Principle,1983) perhaps due to heightened awareness of cross-cultural differences. Maintaining face (own and others) (Brown and Levinson, 1987) may be an important interaction goal among a group of people who do not normally work together. Conversational maxims (Grice 1989) are strictly observed when dealing with pre-designated syndicate topics. Prior preparation by all participants is designed to ensure informativeness (quantity) and truthfulness (quality) of contributions. Syndicate owners assume responsibility for relevance of contributions (relation). They also manage brevity (manner), some very strictly, others less so.
WHICH DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES ARE EMPLOYED? (eg WODAK) POSSIBLE DISCOURSE TYPES (SARANGI)	Legitimising: expressing a logic or rationale using arguments or supporting the validity of others' ideas; Challenging: contradicting a view of others to provide explanation or modifying of ideas (WODAK); Encouraging: stimulating participation of other speakers in explaining new ideas; Directing: moving a discussion towards resolution by filtering the range of options; Modulating: regulating the perception of external environmental threats or institutional imperatives to act (KWON).

WHAT IS THE SEQUENTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONVERSATION?	Prior to the event participants know they will be working in pre-selected syndicates. Syndicate conversations have been explicitly structured into four phases with suggested timings (10 minutes introduction by the syndicate owner, 20 minutes to do a SWOT analysis, 30 minutes to develop and action plan, 15 minutes preparing a flip chart for reporting to the whole group about the results of the SWOT and the action plan). The 'action plan' is further structured via three questions which should be answered by the syndicates: 1. What are the main challenges? 2. What are the main hurdles? 3. What is the approach? Syndicate groups are facilitated and kept (quite loosely) to task by the 'syndicate owner'. Participants exchange views and contribute ideas orientating their contributions to the ongoing production of a flip chart which is divided into quadrants for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The discussion is time limited and this produces a sense of urgency. Phase analysis of the six SWOTs observed reveals that conversations are phased as follows: 1. Clarifying the task: the syndicate owner checks understanding of the task and this is discussed until agreement is reached that the focus of the discussion is clear; 2. Eliciting and exploring SWOT ideas - a cyclical process. Differences of perception and understanding are explored. Participants are focused on the implicit the question, "What do we see?". Agreement that the phase is complete is explicitly sought; 3. Eliciting possible actions and discussing implications - a cyclical process. Participants are focused on the implicit the question, "What can we do?" Explicit agreement that the phase is complete is sought.
WHAT CONSTRAINTS ARE THERE ON PARTICIPANTS AND MODES OF PARTICIPATION?	The conversational context of a strategy day is less formally bound by hierarchy than normal day-to-day business. Participants are expected to contribute their ideas irrespective of status. Only those with positive contributions to make are invited. Day-to-day business meeting turn taking rules which control access to the floor for the most senior representatives are explicitly suspended. To signal a change in arrangements for turn taking, the first conversation is held in plenary with all participants sitting in a large circle. The event convenor introduces the strategic goal and each participants speaks briefly to their connection to the task. Participants expect (of themselves and others) to keep to this task. The eight syndicate group discussions are very different from each other. Vocal contributors dominate proceedings and participation is often uneven. of a group of eight, four or five tend to control most of the turns and topics. The facilitation skills of syndicate owners play an important role in shaping direction. These vary a lot. Some are very skilled in bringing people in, some are more focused on getting the task done in time and others are silent. Groups practice inclusion and exclusion differently. The material presence of the SWOT plays a coordinating role in and of itself via its representation in quadrants on a flip chart,. Conversations are channelled through this structure. Only items the group sanctions as relevant are included on the chart. No conversation outside these parameters is allowed. Side talk is rare.

AT analytic categories	AT BRIEFING Amaya (b)
WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS AND WHAT IS THE SETTING?	A one-to-one or group meeting where a manager gives specific information in order that an individual or team is able to carry out a pre-defined task that the manager wants completed. The data set holds two examples: a one-to-one briefing of an extraordinary task, and a team meeting where a newly promoted manager briefs her team for the first time.
WHAT SOCIAL ROLES ARE ACTIVATED?	Manager and subordinate/s
WHAT ARE THE GOVERNING GOALS/PURPOSES?	That the subordinate/s is/are able to carry out pre-defined tasks within the parameters set out by the manager in an independent manner.
WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL PARAMETERS?	One-to-one setting: A certain amount of freedom to act and decide independently are being negotiated either explicitly or tacitly. An air of complicity is created whereby the subordinate is able to receive and activate authority granted by the manager. The conversation implicitly established how much authority, how much freedom and how far the decision mandate goes. Team setting: The newly promoted manager uses the briefing to establish her authority Authority is not challenged - it is carefully distributed and monitored. Who gets to request, suggest and decide is at the heart of this process.
ARE THERE PARTICULAR NORMS OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE, POLITENESS OR INTERPRETATION?	Gricean maxims observed. Time limits are strictly observed and tangential topics curtailed Speakers aim to minimise cross-cultural misinterpretations by establishing this as an explicit possibility
WHICH DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES ARE EMPLOYED? (eg WODAK) POSSIBLE DISCOURSE TYPES (SARANGI)	Establishing the boundaries of the mandate Establishing a topic (opening) Signalling the end of a topic (closing) Defining parameters of the call such as purpose and scope (framing constraints) Monitoring speaking rights (managing allowable contributions) Testing out the parameters of autonomous action and decision
WHAT IS THE SEQUENTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONVERSATION?	The manager opens the discussion and controls the floor throughout. The purpose of the briefing is summarised along with any key parameters and success criteria. The task is explained and the subordinate/s is/are invited to comment. In the one-to-one meeting the subordinate is given the opportunity to explore the practical and political implications of taking on a special mission. The manager wants to make sure that the subordinate is comfortable to carry out the task. This is the point of maximum authority transfer. The team meeting is more tightly controlled. The manager sets out the agenda and controls the turns at talk. She resists questions which seem to indicate authority trouble
WHAT CONSTRAINTS ARE THERE ON PARTICIPANTS AND MODES OF PARTICIPATION?	Participants are ultimately controlled by organisational hierarchy but there is considerable flexibility in this activity type for the manager to shape and share authority. This might be to create a lot of freedom to work in whatever way the subordinate believes to be best; or the reverse, to establish tight guidelines.

AT analytic categories	AT TROUBLESHOOTING Amaya (c)
WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS AND WHAT IS THE SETTING?	One-to-one conversations between manager and another employee of the company. There are two examples in the data set. One involves two executives: The European manager and her North American counterpart, and the other involves a senior manager and a member of a parallel team in a different country who is two (or three?) levels below her. Neither concerns simple direct reports. The conversation channels involve technology - either video or telephone.
WHAT SOCIAL ROLES ARE ACTIVATED?	Manager, peer, subordinate
WHAT ARE THE GOVERNING GOALS/PURPOSES?	To solve a problem before it escalates [becomes public, involves more people and ultimately damages the business] One of the interactants has requested the call.
WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL PARAMETERS?	The lack of direct reporting structure means that the social roles are explicitly named by the interactants. Where they are at the same hierarchical level, the subject of authority is addressed head on: one speaker feels he has been undermined by the actions of the other and the order has to be re-set. Where there is a big gap in hierarchal levels the interactants continually re-establish the relative weight of there authority
ARE THERE PARTICULAR NORMS OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE, POLITENESS OR INTERPRETATION?	Much care is taken not to threaten face [the executives take pains to clarify the intentions of earlier actions, and that these intentions were true and honest - no manipulation or undermining was intended. Emotional and hierarchical distance are connected [the subordinates attempts at establishing a closer relationship are repeatedly resisted by the manager] Apologies mark transgressions of authority and are used to signal that a speaker did not intend to overplay their hand
WHICH DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES ARE EMPLOYED? (eg WODAK) POSSIBLE DISCOURSE TYPES (SARANGI)	Return if relevant
WHAT IS THE SEQUENTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONVERSATION?	Both conversations begin very tentatively as the interactants work out their relative positions - a sign that care is being taken not to threaten or damage face The person who has called the meeting establishes reason for the call and its main topic There is no formal agenda and the development of the conversational trajectory is more fluid
WHAT CONSTRAINTS ARE THERE ON PARTICIPANTS AND MODES OF PARTICIPATION?	Time is the main constraint. A specific slot is allotted, in these examples 30 minutes The conversations are constrained by the explicit agenda. One of the calls was 'to put the relationship on a good footing' the other was 'to clear up what happened xxx'. However, in both cases the explicit agenda does not capture everything that is going on in the conversations. Participants gauge the intentions of the other speaker (inferencing) and carefully test out that their domain of authority is in tact. The conversation is less constrained by formulaic business meeting protocol. The conversation is actually about power - but no one can admit this and so there is a surface polite respectability about the topic (indirectness)

AT analytic categories	AT WEEKLY MANAGEMENT MEETINGS (x5) Nora (d)
WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS AND WHAT IS THE SETTING?	A line manager holds a flexible reporting/planning conversation with one or more of his or her direct reports. Of the five examples in the data set, two are one-to-one, face-to-face meetings; one is a one-to-one video-link meeting (A); one is a group meeting with four direct reports, and one is an upward reporting relationship taking place by phone (N). All take place in office settings, and in the case of the technology enabled conversations participants are in different countries.
WHAT SOCIAL ROLES ARE ACTIVATED?	Line manager and subordinate are the principal social roles activated, although both of these are sometimes renamed as 'leader' rather than 'manager', and 'direct report' or 'team member' rather than subordinate.
WHAT ARE THE GOVERNING GOALS/PURPOSES?	The overarching goal is to exchange information relevant to the role and work focus of the subordinate. Other agenda items are added depending on tasks in hand (for example, resources, staffing, training and so on). Problems identified are allocated time in a separate meeting.
WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL PARAMETERS?	Authority lies ultimately with the manager whose right to propose and decide marks the conversational boundaries. This authority can be delegated to the subordinate for particular tasks but is not universally taken up by them. When the subordinate refers to his or her own subordinates (team or direct reports), the authority then shifts to the subordinate.
ARE THERE PARTICULAR NORMS OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE, POLITENESS OR INTERPRETATION?	One-to-one conversations include past review of recent events, planning for the week ahead and in some cases, questions of personal development (including new challenges, learning requirements, well-being and so on). By comparison, the team weekly management meeting was focused principally on planning. Troubleshooting and problem solving are not included as an integral part of weekly management meetings in this data set. Separate meetings are scheduled to address thorny or difficult issues, perhaps because different patterns of interaction are required. It may not be the four of the meeting that delineates its boundaries but the pattern of interaction and norms of information exchange. Transitioning between activity types in a single conversation appears to be very hard to pull off
WHICH DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES ARE EMPLOYED? (eg WODAK) POSSIBLE DISCOURSE TYPES (SARANGI)	(Wodak et al.) Justifying/legitimizing: expressing a logic or rationale using arguments or supporting validity of others' ideas- particularly in the team setting Challenging: contradicting a view of 'others' to provoke explanation or modifying of ideas - team setting Mobilizing: moving from general understanding towards specific action - to enact, operationalize or implement a decision - team setting (Kwon et al) Encouraging: stimulating participation of other speakers in exploring new ideas - one-to-one setting (in the team setting in the data set, little encouragement was needed - participants were vocal and active Directing: moving a discussion towards closure and resolution by filtering the range of options - only available to the hierarchical superior - in fact, this right to propose and decide marks out the hierarchical difference between participants Participants do not request justifications - they mainly provide them offering an alternative perspective
WHAT IS THE SEQUENTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONVERSATION?	In the one-to-one setting, each participant has a list of items they wish to raise. The subordinate covers the items on his or her list one by one with the manager asking questions of clarification. The pattern is repeated for the manager's 'list'. Finishing with the manager's list reinforces its status in the hierarchical order. The subordinate is tasked by the manager with regard to issues or problems arising. If the manager takes it upon herself to do something in response to an item arising, then she announces this. The subordinate does not task the manager. In the team management meeting (only one in the data set) there is a pre-circulated agenda which has been agreed in advance. The conversation is structured around this agenda and chaired by the manager. The agenda allows the manager to steer
WHAT CONSTRAINTS ARE THERE ON PARTICIPANTS AND MODES OF PARTICIPATION?	Organizationally pre-determined hierarchical reporting lines shape understanding of allowable contributions. One-to-one conversations and multi-participant meetings are differently constrained - the former is shaped by question and answer sequences, the latter by a question or introduction of a topic followed by information sharing and some decision making.

AT analytic categories	AT OPERATIONS (International conference call) Sara (e)
WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS AND WHAT IS THE SETTING?	Participants are the principal product or process managers of an international software company. They are based in Europe and the Americas. They meet monthly to discuss operational issues (updating each other on technical problems solved or ongoing) The meeting is convened by the Executive Director of Customer Relations (S). The meeting takes place by international conference call mediated by a shared updatable spreadsheet screen showing all ongoing technical issues ('tickets') along with action and risk statuses. The meeting lasts over three hours but participants join and leave on a rolling basis depending on the information they are able to contribute. In total there are 16 participants, on average 7 on the call at any one time.
WHAT SOCIAL ROLES ARE ACTIVATED?	The role of meeting chair is significant (Angouri & Marra, 2010). When the participants are discussing projects in Europe and North America, the role is taken up by the Executive Director; when the focus is on projects in Latin America the regional director takes the chair. All participants are senior managers. Most report directly to the Executive Director.
WHAT ARE THE GOVERNING GOALS/PURPOSES?	This an operational problem solving meeting where the latest information about live technical problems is shared. Discussion is aimed at deciding what needs to be done, who should take responsibility for doing whatever is decided and by when. Technical problems represent financial risks for customers of the firm and must be resolved as quickly as possible with the resources available.
WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL PARAMETERS?	The company has a stronger presence in South America and Southern Europe than it does in North America and Northern Europe (although it operates in this regions also) and hence most of the managers in this meeting are native speakers of Spanish or Portuguese. Most of the participants are male. A female HR advisor is involved in part of the call, otherwise the only woman is the Executive Director.
ARE THERE PARTICULAR NORMS OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE, POLITENESS OR INTERPRETATION?	English is the Lingua Franca. Process or product owners know in advance that they need to provide the latest update and come prepared to speak to data they have uploaded onto the shared spreadsheet view. Participants are expected to ensure informativeness (quantity), truthfulness (quality), and relevance (relation) (Grice, 1989). The chair manages overall time, interrupting at times to ensure brevity (manner). She intervenes very quickly when she judges that participants are getting distracted from the main tasks (relation). There is no small talk or humour and there are no distractions from problem solving mode, no breaks and no challenges to the chair's managerial (deontic) authority. Efficiency and effectiveness trump politeness and there are several occasions where (epistemic) authority claimed by one participant is challenged boldly and with face threatening implications by another. The chair's tone is consistently authoritative. She displays no doubt, never hedges, and rarely modalises. When a decision needs to be taken (and none of the participants has presented a workable solution) she takes the decision unilaterally and signals clearly that the topic is closed. This pattern is never challenged.
WHICH DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES ARE EMPLOYED? POSSIBLE DISCOURSE TYPES (SARANGI, 2000)	The discursive pattern of S's interaction could be classified as 'taking a line which is difficult to challenge'. The pattern is made up of 5 repeated discourse strategies expressed here as maxims: • Display power asymmetry [deontic authority: the right to ask questions and insist on answers] • Leave no room for challenge [interrogation: rapid repeated questioning which goes unchallenged; strong chairing: tight control over turns and topics] • Show no doubt [epistemic certainty: no hedges, no hesitation, rarely modalised] • Squash any signs of authority trouble (Paper 1) [maintaining power (Paper2): direct questions, interruption, giving permission] • Be decisive and in charge [unilateral decisions: discussion-decision pattern does not include an invitation to contribute; strong challenges: contradicting a view of others to provide explanation or modifying of ideas] S's preferred style is transactional and authoritative. She does not use participative discourse strategies such as 'bonding' (Kwon) et al., 2014 by for example, offering support to promote (or undermine) cohesive group identity around an issue. The meeting is not meant to be a participative sharing of ideas for the future. The focus is on the current engineering problems and their immediate resolution. Establishing and closing a topic Policing parameters of the call such as purpose and scope (framing constraints) Monitoring speaking rights (managing allowable contributions) Taking decisions for others to operationalize

	Mandating action via direct requests
WHAT IS THE SEQUENTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONVERSATION?	The conversation is structured by the sequence of technical issues (open tickets) which are dealt with in turn. S invites the update, the problem owner provides the latest information and his views on the status of the problem at hand. Others ask questions of clarification. S ensures she understands the business implications and passes judgement on any issues which are left without closure. S signals the topic is closed. Her authority is never challenged. It is further consolidated when participants seek permission to move on to a new topic When the participants become unruly, S mediates and judges. She has the final word and everyone orientates to her authority.
WHAT CONSTRAINTS ARE THERE ON PARTICIPANTS AND MODES OF PARTICIPATION?	The tone is one of a strong hand on the controls. Deontic authority is established and re-established at every utterance/response sequence. It seems unchallengeable. Status and stance converge. Epistemic authority can be legitimately challenged among participants of the meeting, including S. Solving the problem matters more than relative positioning and status needs. These are engineers - status comes from problems solved, not ideas about how to solve them.

AT analytic categories	AT ROADMAP RATIFICATION (international conference call) Gracia (f)
WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS AND WHAT IS THE SETTING?	Ten participants are in different offices, in different countries and are connected by voice only telephone. They are looking at the same data on their computer screens. [NB. researcher did not have access to the data screen]
WHAT SOCIAL ROLES ARE ACTIVATED?	The participant with the most senior institutional role (G) takes the chair, with control over turn, topics and speaking rights. Two of G's direct reports (E and C) are on the call along with the team members who report directly to them While allowable contributions are mainly defined by institutional power relationships, they can also be afforded by knowledge and expertise.
WHAT ARE THE GOVERNING GOALS/PURPOSES?	The main purpose of the call is to ratify a roadmap document prior to G's attendance at an off-site meeting scheduled to take place the following week. Resource-related decisions which have implications for the team are to be taken at this meeting. Participants are required only to comment on the previously circulated document and not to add new content.
WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL PARAMETERS?	Asymmetric power relations - the director and two managers posses institutional power which overrides any intrinsic knowledge-based power possessed by other participants. This is a mature team. They meet face-to-face only once a year.
ARE THERE PARTICULAR NORMS OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE, POLITENESS OR INTERPRETATION?	English is the Lingua Franca. A degree of inclusivity is realised in the call through the distribution of speaking rights. Institutional power is not challenged, but it is complemented by the intrinsic power of knowledge and expertise around which it is possible to build an alternative hierarchy. G opens the floor without pre-selection and there are long episodes where G moves into the background and speakers self select, building topics together. So while inclusion and exclusion are principally produced by the exercise of institutional power realised in interactional structures such as turn taking and topic control, they are on occasion collaboratively developed and produced. The team are very accustomed to the peculiarities of the voice-only conference call (no verbal clues, no eye contact, being in company but at the same time alone, and so on) the interactional consequences of which appear limited to the emphasis on preparation and pre-agreed meeting structure. Conversational maxims (Grice 1989) are strictly observed. Prior preparation by all participants is designed to ensure informativeness (quantity) and truthfulness (quality) of contributions. The chair manages brevity (manner) and assumes responsibility for relevance of contributions (relation). Politeness: high observance of degrees of tact, approbation and agreement (Leech, 1983) perhaps due to heightened awareness of multi-cultural context. Maintaining face (own and others) (Brown & Levinson, 1987) may be an important interaction goal in a virtual team (Halbe, 2012). The need to maintain rapport (Spencer-Oatey, 2008) is high. Participants collaborate, or even collude, to maintain social harmony and reduce the risk of confrontation. When offering their points of view, participants very skilfully avoid making any comment which could be read as face threatening to anyone else on the call. Whose face is being protected is not always clear, it could be either the speaker or hearer. It is possible that such a marked use of tentative language is related to the conference call setting however, such apparent lack of certainty is not displayed when participants speak from their own expertise. It seems likely therefore, that the strategy has a dual purpose: to avoid excluding others and to avoid excluding oneself. In other words, inclusion and exclusion are aspects of politeness and are managed collaboratively.
WHICH DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES ARE EMPLOYED? POSSIBLE DISCOURSE TYPES (SARANGI)	The discursive pattern of G's interaction could be classified as 'encouraging participation in group discussion'. The pattern is made up of 5 repeated discourse strategies expressed here as maxims: • Seek group agreement ('If that's okay?') • Make space for contributions (marked pauses) • Tolerate differences of opinion (phatic agreements) • Signal openness (ask questions to which the answer is not known) • Loosen control (allow flexibility in the control of turns, topic management and talk time) *Possible discourse types*: Chair: establishing a topic/closing a topic/framing/inviting comment/summarising. Participants: giving information/seeking information/checking understanding/assembling shared knowledge Disagreement is almost impossible to spot. G opens the discussion to the floor on many occasions, however in the main these are requests for comments. Qualitatively different are the moments in the call where G initiates a topic by asking a genuinely open question, lowering social distance and thus prompting conversational behaviour which can be described as "assembling shared knowledge". Such questions have marked interactional consequences. Participants collaborate in piecing together their individual knowledge into a shared whole, and it is in these episodes where we are able to observe shorter turns, more seeking information of each other and a higher number of contributors.

WHAT IS THE SEQUENTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONVERSATION?	The chair takes the longest turns, the most turns, controls the topics, opens discussion to the floor and brings discussion to an end. Other participants mainly self select. The chair decides when there has been enough comment on a topic and moves swiftly on to the next point. This is never challenged. Throughout the call we see G exercising strong topic control. The call has been meticulously prepared. The roadmap document has been placed on a shared space and team members' comments have been uploaded so they are visible to all. G opens each topic by reading the roadmap entry and closes, often quite abruptly, when the topic is judged to have been discussed enough for purpose.
THE SEQUENTIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONVERSATION CONTINUED	This pattern of opening ("So let's move to the next one") and closing ("Okay, Okay") never changes, nor is it challenged by any of the other speakers. The pattern is consistent with institutionally sanctioned speaking rights which reflect a high degree of institutional power. (Holmes & Stubbe, 2003). If institutional power equates with speaking rights, as far as the right to open and close topics then, everyone but G is excluded.
WHAT CONSTRAINTS ARE THERE ON PARTICIPANTS AND MODES OF PARTICIPATION?	Conference calls are constrained by their virtual nature, a setting which encourages strict observance of interactional norms in service of organisational efficacy. Patterns of inclusion and exclusion are intrinsically tied into these norms. The virtual nature of the conversation requires strictly observed interactional norms order to compensate for the vacuum of non-verbal cues. Interactional constraints, constituted to a large degree by the medium, are reinforced by institutional power relations. Experimental conversation structure aimed, for example, at shifting the contribution patterns, risks compromising efficiency and effectiveness and is thus avoided. The predictably of such conversational routines can make it even more difficult for the chair to signal that a different pattern is acceptable or desirable. G aims for increased inclusion of all team members but does not achieve this. There are 11 participants. The top 2 speakers occupy 57.14% of the floor; the bottom 2 just 1.24%. [The top 4 = 81.34% versus the bottom 4 = 3.81%] However, this is not the only story: qualitative analysis also reveals moments of inclusion and exclusion which, while constraining the interactants, also afford opportunities for change. Inclusion and exclusion from this perspective can be understood as features of a dynamically and collaboratively constructed context shaped by intrinsic power to which more participants have access

Appendix IX: Activity type authority analysis

CONCEPT - AUTHORITY SCRIPTS	SETTLED AUTHORITY	
CONCEPT - AUTHORITY SCRIPTS + (THE FORMAL AND) NOTIONAL CHAIR	DATA: OPERATIONS and STRATEGY Cf operations meeting [Sara] which is very tightly controlled with little or no room for leaving the script of an operations meeting and the strategy meeting [Kate] where leaving the script behind is in part the objective of the gathering. DATA: INTERNATIONAL ROADMAP CONCALL The international planning conference call with Gracia	
Patterns authority are written into the AT	CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES	LINGUISTIC FEATURES
	The role of the formal or notional chair. Control of turns. topics and speaking rights	

CONCEPT - AUTHORITY BOUNDARIES	SETTLED AUTHORITY	
Pragmatic acts of authority The importance of establishing and policing the parameters of purpose These are the manager's prerogative to set	DATA: WEEKLY MEETINGS Sara, Amaya and Nora in their one-to-one calls and various weekly meetings	
	CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES	LINGUISTIC FEATURES
	Boundaries - the right to request, propose, decide	

CONCEPT - REPORTING LINES	SETTLED AUTHORITY	
Reporting lines shape shared understanding of allowable contributions	DATA: ENGINEERS ASK PERMISSION TO SPEAK Sara's reports seek permission to close a topic and open another at various points during the operations meeting	
	CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES	LINGUISTIC FEATURES

CONCEPT - (RE)ESTABLISHING AUTHORITY	(APPARENTLY) SETTLED AUTHORITY	
Authority appears settled but in fact it is established and re-established at every turn; We read authority not only because of status but also because participants orientate to it in a variety of ways; In this sense, authority is not external to interactants; It becomes 'settled' because participants acquiesce.	DATA: SHOW NO DOUBT Show no doubt! Sara's iron grasp on the ops meeting proceedings Kate and other actors in the SWOT meetings	
	CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES	LINGUISTIC FEATURES

<table>
<tr><th>CONCEPT - RESISTANCE</th><th colspan="2">(APPARENTLY) SETTLED AUTHORITY</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">When does this happen? And why does this happen?

Where does the right to challenge comes from?</td><td colspan="2">DATA: A HAND ON THE CONVERSATIONAL CONTROLS
• Gracia has a firm hand on the controls when it comes to her deontic status (and stance). This is never challenged. However, when it comes to epistemic authority she lets go - she both makes space and also allows others to assume an authoritative stance
• Sara, by comparison, appears to have the epistemic last word</td></tr>
<tr><td>CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES</td><td>LINGUISTIC FEATURES</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>CONCEPT - DESIGNED IN</th><th colspan="2">MOBILE AUTHORITY</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Fluidity can also be designed in to the AT

Sometimes the source of authority is mobile - it moves around among participants</td><td colspan="2">DATA: THE STRATEGY DAY AS GENRE
Kate and her design team gave serious consideration to the rules of engagement by designing in egalitarian participation norms and drawing on a the genre of future focused design-led thinking</td></tr>
<tr><td>CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES</td><td>LINGUISTIC FEATURES</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>NB. Connected to 'Authority Scripts)</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>CONCEPT - SETTLING AUTHORITY</th><th colspan="2">MOBILE AUTHORITY</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">When normal authority rules are not operative for a range of different (usually political) reasons, then authority is elevated out of the shadows and addressed explicitly;

Great care is taken not to threaten face in these fluid situations - they end with face and a sense of agency in tact</td><td colspan="2">DATA: TROUBLESHOOTING MEETINGS
• Both Nora and Sara hold conversations where deontic and epistemic orders are not settled;
• Amaya with the north American peer;
• Nora and the Northern Irish troublemaker.</td></tr>
<tr><td>CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES</td><td>LINGUISTIC FEATURES</td></tr>
<tr><td>Jostling for the hand on the control panel;
Interactants need to establish the social and interactional orders (deontic, epistemic and emotional) in order to position themselves;</td><td>This leads to faltering, tentative starts</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>CONCEPT - THE RIGHT TO DECIDE</th><th colspan="2">INDIVIDUAL AGENCY</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Overlap with authority all the time. For example the point about transfer of authority (when and how to do that) is all about agency - about self-direction and self-determinacy)</td><td colspan="2">DATA: RESPONSIBILITY RESISTED
• Amaya wants to encourage her direct reports to take on roles where they would have more authority, more 'leadership' (and the responsibility and accountability that goes with that) - but this is frequently resisted
• Gracia tried to get different voices into her team meetings by encouraging the quieter people to speak out. But they prefer to stay silent.</td></tr>
<tr><td>CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES</td><td>LINGUISTIC FEATURES</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>In weekly meetings the manager frequently tasks the subordinate but this never happens the other way round.

If the manager is going to do something as a result of the conversation, she will 'task herself' rather than allow herself to be tasked;

The core of this overlap is the right to decide about one's own actions (which is related to the legitimacy of others to constrain them)</td><td>MAIN ITEMS
Individual agency is quite mobile
The right to decide about one's own actions
The legitimacy of another to constrain one's activity</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Individual: Am I still free? The fluid middle: Where do I fit? What is my place? My space? Collective: What can we do together?</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>CONCEPT - AGENCY SCRIPTS</th><th colspan="2">COLLECTIVE (and individual) AGENCY</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">AT is a constraint
The constraints to collective agency are built in - ie the affordances of the particular interactional rules;

Affordances of the type;</td><td colspan="2">DATA: TACITLY AGREED PATTERNS
There are some very different patterns - but the fact that they are agreed makes them collective. Agency is tied to these patterns. Actions must be comprehensible in a given context. Examples:
Sara - very controlled
Nora - seemingly chaotic
Gracia - super-solidarity
These patterns, which are agreed among interactants, are not agreed explicitly. Tacit agreement comes out of the riles remaining unchallenged. In part, the relative authority of different speakers is not challenges, but more than that I think it is because the AT is untouchable - almost sacrosanct</td></tr>
<tr><td>CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES</td><td>LINGUISTIC FEATURES</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>CONCEPTS
FACE, POLITENESS AND GETTING WORK DONE
CREATING/CLEARING SPACE</th><th>COLLECTIVE AGENCY</th></tr>
<tr><td>Face - how is agency tempered by face?
There seem to be tacitly agreed (and therefore collective) patterns of conversational behaviour
For example, the space to shape and share authority enables collective (leadership) agency/work
Or - collective (leadership) agency depends upon the creation of space in which to shape and share authority
Collective agency most visible in the SWOT where the future is uncertain and collective agency is required to move on</td><td>DATA: EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS TRUMP POLITENESS
• Sara's team certainly pull no punches. Her style is also very clipped and flat. Do we read this as masculine? Do they?
DATA: SUPER-SOLIDARITY
• The super-solidarity of Gracia's team is striking - until Gracia wants to get stuff done. There's a fuzziness between inclusivity and indirectness
• Is this because they are predominantly male or female? Or are they enacting a local culture that has become collectively accepted as gendered?
DATA: AMERICAN FACILITATOR GETS IGNORED
• Facilitator forges ahead with her 'leadership' style and is resisted (either ignored or indulged) by the Dutch women (extract and analysis in L1)
• Do we speak out when we are not done? How do these women build momentum to resist the facilitation style and the AT. They won't play ball.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr>
<td rowspan="2">Whether this agency is authoritarian or egalitarian (command and control or collaborative) matters not - it's still collective agency (both types require authority to be shared and enacted)
One can always resist, but there are costs
What are the fleeting signals of fluidity amidst these invisible but oh so strong constraints?
When do we dare speak out? Is this collective in some way?</td>
<td>CONVERSATIONAL FEATURES

MAIN ITEMS
The space to shape and share authority
Signals of fluidity (where authority might be moved around)
Affordances of the AT
Tacitly agreed patterns</td>
<td>LINGUISTIC FEATURES</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="3">The collective is more settled because it is collective - but at the same time, change has to be collectively enabled. Collective agency seems more static. This surprised me. The 'collective leadership' talk is all about the positive power of the collective to bring about change, but it terms of the conversational constraints, this would appear not to be the case. Somewhat of a conundrum</td>
</tr>
</table>

Appendix X: Agency and authority scripts

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4" align="center">AGENCY SCRIPTS
Constraints of the Activity Type</td></tr>
<tr><td>12. GETTING WORK DONE
Making the space
Face and politeness</td><td colspan="2" align="center">The space to shape and share authority
= collective leadership</td><td>11. THE RIGHT TO DECIDE
Self-determination</td></tr>
<tr><td>What can we do?</td><td colspan="2" align="center">What is my role? What is my place? Where is my space?</td><td>Am I still free?</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>COLLECTIVE AGENCY</td><td>INDIVIDUAL AGENCY</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>SETTLED AUTHORITY</td><td>MOBILE AUTHORITY</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>1. AUTHORITY SCRIPTS, including NOTIONAL CHAIR</td><td>Patterns written into the AT</td><td>Part of the strategy day</td><td>6. DESIGNED-IN</td></tr>
<tr><td>2. BOUNDARIES</td><td>Parameters of purpose</td><td>Signs of threat</td><td>7. AUTHORITY TROUBLE</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. REPORTING LINES</td><td>Pragmatic acts of authority</td><td>Intentional on the part of the carrier</td><td>8. LEVELLING</td></tr>
<tr><td>4. RE-ESTABLISHING</td><td>Allowable contributions</td><td>Moving around to others</td><td>9. SHIFTS</td></tr>
<tr><td>5. RESISTANCE</td><td>At every turn - acquiescence
Moving towards fluidity</td><td>When normal rules are missing
Moving towards being settled</td><td>10. SETTLING</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>The right to challenge?</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2" align="center">A fluid middle place</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Appendix XI: Self-team-task analytical framework

	Transactional, authoritative + masculine index each other		Relational, participative + feminine index each other	
	Associated risks	Possible benefits	Associated risks	Possible benefits
SELF	Over-reliance on displays of power asymmetry: Leaders may not hear problems or see them coming.	Confirms legitimate power and reaffirms who's boss. Constantly re-establishes deontic authority thus avoiding authority trouble	Being unable to enact one's authority means not being seen to behave like a manager: Loss of Influence (face) in front of the team can undermine authority. Even a hint of dissent can spell authority trouble	Supports a leadership identity which is in line with aspirations to value diversity and listen to different perspectives.
	The gendered consequences of taking a strong position (eg. a reputation for stubbornness)	Enacts appropriate and/or effective leadership behaviour in a predominantly male environment by nurturing a leadership identity as knowledgeable, decisive and in charge	Suggestions which take the team or the task in a different direction can expose lack of leadership resolve and a reputation for weakness is career limiting	Can create a career enhancing reputation for building cohesive teams where people feel valued and want to contribute
TEAM	Teams are discouraged from debate (concerns, problems etc) and this discourages learning	Clarity. Everyone knows his or her role and the contribution that is required of them	Cultural norms mean participation in international team meetings is almost always uneven. Looser meeting structure can exacerbate misunderstandings	Improves working relationships and enhances morale/working atmosphere. Increases trust because people feel seen and heard
	People can feel silenced and this can lead to disengagement	Can create a sense of urgency, shared mission and direction. Maintains institutional hierarchies and discipline	Seen as none mission-critical and therefore as wasting valuable time	Builds solidarity/openness thus avoiding the hidden costs of silence Creates the space to encourage and empower others
TASK	No room for challenge can mean expertise is lost	No room for challenge can mean expertise is lost	Efficiency and/or effectiveness can be compromised by meandering participation.	Diversity of thought enables innovation and creativity. Improves problem solving for complex problems and situations
	Lack of shared learning means mistakes are repeated, ignored or hidden	Lack of shared learning means mistakes are repeated, ignored or hidden	Focus on the business can be compromised in favour of focus on the group. Super-solidarity can distract from the task in hand	Facilitates shared accountability

Appendix XII: Risks and benefits data points

The table below shows example data points drawn from two of the executives shadowed – Sara in green, Gracia in blue, researcher comments in black.

MORE AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP			
RISKS	EXAMPLE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
SELF			
Over-reliance on displays of power asymmetry: Leaders may not hear problems or see them coming. M- S The gendered consequences of taking a strong position (eg. a reputation for stubbornness) M-S	Epistemic authority/certainty Sara's epistemic certainly '- No hedges 'show no doubt' etc. In interview she reflects on how impossible it is to be softer and 'more feminine' because you are punished for it organisationally. Clearly a tension for her	00.00 - 02.35 08.50 - 10.06	1. A very spiky episode between Sara and J where she really pins him to the floor [because, because, because of what, er? [09.18]. [09.10] J: 'the same issue…. [10.00] Sara: This was a human error. **2.** Sara tends to narrow down the wriggle room for her colleagues for example J and N at the very start of the recording. There is nowhere for them to escape to. The benefits are clear - she is in charge - but what are the risks? Are they telling her everything they really know, or just what they think she wants to hear?
TEAM			
Teams discouraged from debate (concerns, problems etc) and this discourages learning Let it run or not - both	Closure and moving on - repeated patterns - so over time 'okay' in a certain <u>tone</u> means time's up. But not always so - Sara is clipped and business-like most of the time. She doesn't discourage debate - but she puts a boundary round it. Only certain kinds and amounts of debate are considered legitimate. If she's sanctioned it, she <u>lets it happen</u>, if not, she <u>closes it down</u>.	[30.46-31.59] Turn 132 [04.21 - 05.03] [21.45 - 23.46] [46.46 - 48.27]]	**3.** Gracia's intonation falls in particular way when she signals that the conversation is over. In time, her team will learn to read this. **4.**The formula for moving on to a new topic is similar to Gracia's (Okay, evaluation, imperative) but the preamble is different. Gracia's is often very minimal and carried by discourse markers which signal 'continue or stop', Sara on the other hand tends to mark a moment of transition by a request or demand directed at one of her team. **5.** <u>Lets it happen</u>: Mid-problem solving mode Sara [21.45] says, 'Okay so let's do the following' but doesn't finish. Julio brings in a new point and she

	What's the effect of genuine open **questions** (seeking information) versus closed questions - and questions used to mark power differentials? (e.g. Teacherly Q+A sequences, questions to which the speaker knows the answer and so on…)		gives him space to continue his train of thought - seemingly agreeing that he *may* have a point. [23.46] 'ok' **6.** Closes it down: [47.56] Sara: 'Ok well I think we don't need to get into the details here…'
People can feel silenced and this can lead to disengagement I-G	Example of Jee being seemingly ignored Cultural signals, social distance and solidarity across cultures differs Context, relationship, task How do participants judge the meaning of, say, an interruption or a 'passing over'?	[27.59 - 29.12] Turns 114 to 119	**7.** Gracia's response does not seem to relate to Jee's comment. Is Gloria responding to a previous turn prior to Jeewan's? Jee - only speaks once and does not appear to be addressed directly or encouraged to speak again. [1 turn in a total of 485]
TASK			
No room for challenge can mean expertise is lost Lack of shared learning means mistakes are repeated, ignored or hidden M-S	Sara's final word is never challenged - it's absolutely final. How do we know this? Decisiveness and the heroic leadership trope? is there any evidence of either of our managers seeking different views (or not)? Does either of them ever ask 'what else-who else' type questions? For example, 'Does anyone see this differently?' Who else x this way?' and so on. These questions can create scary moments of genuine space and openness which either cements respect and authority or looses it completely. Most managers are risk averse.	[4.44 - 8.50]	**8.** Throughout the first agenda item (with J) she is relentless in her questioning, insistence on detail and emphasis on problem solving. Is she ever challenged?

MORE AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP			
BENEFITS	**EXAMPLE**	**TIME**	**DESCRIPTION**
SELF			
Confirms legitimate power and reaffirms who's boss M-S	Sara does a lot of 'doing the boss' at the start of the first extract [from 00.00] Both do chair - turn and topic management and display their right to move on	[12.53 - 14.25]	**9.** [12.53] Sara: 'exactly, so very clear. M - number one…' to [14.25] Sara: 'yes' She is the anchor for these interactions - every move goes via her. This is traditional, strong 'chairing' (N.B. Jo Angouri's IS analysis of chairing as an activity type)
Enacts appropriate/effective leadership behaviour in a predominantly male environment M-S	Again Sara - show no doubt. Lack of modalisation, very few stereotypically feminine hedges - absolute certainty about everything She always has the final word	[20.06 - 21.11]	**10.** One example of many… [20.06] Sara: 'Have they reverted it back?….[21.11] Sara: 'I would never allow R&D guys to do that on our systems'
Constantly re-establishes deontic authority thus avoiding authority trouble M-S	Neither of our managers has much of a problem with 'authority trouble' You get a sense with Sara in the LA meeting that she has to work hard to keep order and re-establish that she is the boss (again and again) but she's never in any real danger. *How do we know this?* Gracia's team seem to accept her authority - but that doesn't mean they can't challenge or have a different opinion	[02.09 - 04.55] [28.36 - 31.04] Turns 119-132	**11a** Sara constantly keeping them on their toes - particularly J **11b** Gracia speaks for senior management
Nurtures a leadership identity as knowledgable, decisive and in charge M-S	Taking decisions - Sara has crafted this space for herself - she reserves the right to decide [I think there's also an example somewhere of where no one seems to want to take a decision, she asks, no one says anything so she just decides - because she has constructed the right to do so]	[1.16.34 - 1.17.56]	**12.** Sara and M discuss a pending update. He appears in charge, but she asks for a discussion first. [1.17.47] Sara: 'Ok M when you have the date….' to [1.17.56] 'okay so once you have to confirmation let's discuss'

TEAM			
Clarity. Everyone knows his or her role and the contribution that is required of them I-G	Relies on preparation and routine Sara - the agenda follows people's areas of responsibility. Sara just calls out the name Gracia's agenda follows the roadmap entries. Everyone in the room knows who is responsible for what so those for whom an item comes into their fields of competence, simply speaks out	1.07.24 - 1.08.03 [52.24 - 52.32] Turn 227	**13** Sara brings in the participants when she needs them **14** Gracia asks an open question - they know who should answer
Can create a sense of urgency, shared mission and direction (heroic/military leadership trope) Maintains institutional hierarchies and discipline Letting it run or not	Sara in problem solving mode - come on guys! Overall direction is not questioned	[27.49 - 32.04]	**15.** A longish extract where she interrupts, interjects and pushes the guys to be specific - she's in engineer problem solving mode
TASK			
Speed and accuracy. The team is kept on task Letting it run or not	Example of going off track and being brought back. Gracia - so I have enough (gently closes the discussion down and moves on)	[30.45 - 31.16] Turns 131 to 132	**16.** After a fairly long and open discussion, Ma begins to introduce a new thought [30.45] which Gracia takes as a cue to close the discussion down and move to the next point (31.12]
Efficiency/effectiveness - Getting stuff done on time, to plan, to budget etc Let it run or not - both	Pointing to the clock - Both Gracia and Sara do this to keep on time	[1.30.48 - 1.31.13] [1.22.18 - 1.22.35] turn 450	**17a** we only have five minutes left so **17b** ok so a couple of things before we close

MORE PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP			
RISKS	EXAMPLE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
SELF			
A loss of control or influence (face) in front of the team could	Gracia wants the team to remember the senior person's previous decision, but her team don't remember.	[24.06 - 25.15] Turns 100-103	**18.** C is incredulous - I don't remember that we discussed that with M. Did we?

undermine authority Under-reliance on power asymmetry (loss of face) I-G	Expressions of disagreement - modalised and polite, but expressed Questions - or tone of questions which imply uncertainty and signal 'not being in charge'	[25.15 - 25.58] Turn 106	**19.** Mi 'I don't quite recall…to tell you the truth'
Suggestions which take the team or the task in a different direction can expose lack of leadership resolve I-G	Gracia handles this balance well. She gives space, but stops discussion abruptly when she thinks she has enough	[30.11 - 31.13] Turns 124-132	**20.** The end of the discussion on particular agenda item where Gracia leaves a pause of silence to see if anyone else would like to contribute before she moves on.
A reputation for weakness is career limiting M-S	Sara and her male colleagues - the show no doubt theme. Ethnographic evidence that Sara believes 'feminine' conversational behaviour to be a problem at work - but also that she thinks it shouldn't be.	[25.07 - 25.44]	**21.** So ok er then M… he can not have the whole day the system losing recordings'. After the first 'er' - absolute certainty about her position
Even a hint of dissent can spell authority trouble Being unable to enact one's authority means not being seen to behave like a manager M-S	Sara's interview - some difficult characters - usually those who challenge her authority (not actually present on the day) Are there examples of where Sara's authority really grows? Asymmetric power in action?	LA [16.16- 18.14]	**21b** D is in the chair - but Sara doesn't take any risks
TEAM			
Cultural norms mean participation in international team meetings is almost always uneven I-G	Looser control over turns and topic makes this more visible eg Jee, J, H Jee only speaks once (turn 115 - see 24c)	[1.17.02 - 1.17.48] 1.14.42 - 1.14.52] [31.53 - 33.12]	**22a.** J only speaks when he is spoken to **22b.** ditto **22.c** ditto
Seen as none mission-critical and therefore as wasting valuable time let it run or not - both	Interruption - take it off line (Sonia)	003 [1.51.55 - 1.52.58]]	**23**. ok very well clarify it off line

Misunderstandings about what is expected Sending mixed messages M-S I-G	Theory espoused and in use?	LA 004 [10.30 - 10.40] LA [22.24 _ 23.16] [28.00 - 29.10] Turn 115	**24a** D asks permission to move on when Sara has already given him the lead **24b** Still with D in the chair, Sara signals she's the one who's really in charge **24c** Is Jee ignored (if so Gracia is not actually challenging patterns of participation on this occasion) or is the 'mm' enough to signal approval/agreement - and does this elicit Gracias response, or is she responding to a previous speaker?
TASK			
Efficiency and/or effectiveness can be compromised by meandering participation I-G	Gracia often closes down discussion in order to move on and get through the agenda	[36.50 - 39.26] Turn 148 - 155	**25** Gracia moves the discussion on twice in one short exchange
Focus on the business can be compromised in favour of focus on the group Super-solidarity can distract from the task in hand I-G	When collaborative conduct becomes the goal and not the means Eva - interview data backs this up (they aren't our friends, they are our colleagues)	[08.51 - 09.32] Turns 27-29 [14.23 - 16.02] Turns 57-59 [50.10 - 50.41] Turns 209+210	**26.** 'Super-solidarity behaviour ' - ironic play? **26a.** Mi - they did such a detailed job **26b.** it appears tricky to introduce a disagreement **26c.** Shared jokes and amusement
Multiple views can lead to grid-lock	No examples in our data		see 27b

MORE PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP			
BENEFITS	EXAMPLE	TIME	DESCRIPTION
SELF			
Supports a leadership identity which is in line with aspirations to value diversity and listen to different perspectives I-G	listening to different perspectives - question types	[1.13.45 - 1.13.20]] Turn 382 [35.10 - 36.15] Turns 141-147	**27a.** Gracia - 'If that's okay with everybody?' **27b.** Not grid lock, but Gracia lets different views coincide and run a while (more benefits than risks at this point). For this group, it seem far more important to signal agreement and alignment (solidarity) than push on different perceptions and perspectives.
Can create a career enhancing reputation for building cohesive teams	About being inclusive - how? Any actual evidence? What would linguistic evidence look like? Ethnographic data?		Could 'letting things run' be an example of this? (i.e. when exactly do you choose to intervene? - Lots of examples in the data
TEAM			
Improves working relationships and enhances morale/working atmosphere relational - both	collegiality - a number of examples of humour No humour in Sara's meetings - all about getting the job done and the problem solved - Engineers - Don't waste time on frivolities…	[1.16.43 - 1.17.10] Turns 417-424 003 [1.06.56 - 1.08.10]	**28.** for example - D 'We need more dashboards' **29.** Sara's approach to building team solidarity may be more about proving (and allowing others to prove) engineering expertise and that she is really on top of the detail [1.06.56] Ml: 'Ok, so I understand so this was a defect right?' to [1.08.10] J: 'No, not from my side, thank you very much'
Increases trust because people feel seen and heard I-G	Gracia's meeting at time sounds almost conversational. Most people are comfortable with expressing opinions. **You can't see trust - but you can hear suspicion -** guarded, heavily modalised, hedging, not declaring a clear position, holding on to the wriggle room - is there any of this anywhere?	[1.13.39 - 1.16.40] Turns 390 - 415	**30.** They try to work out some details together in preparation for Gracia's meeting. Short turns, lots of talk-over, very informal - this almost sounds like a f2f meeting.

People fee valued and want to contribute Builds solidarity/openness thus avoiding the hidden costs of silence I-G	Signals of openness - what are they? What discursive signals show that a speaker has been heard? Do our managers use these? People make unsolicited contributions (Z?) cf names and topics doing the work of deciding who can speak	[33.05] [33.13] [33.31] Turns 136, 138, and 141-147 [32.38 - 33.17] 35.12 - 36.12]	**31.** A number of examples of Gracia's discourse markers which simply lubricate the conversation - she just wants people to continue if they have something else to add. They are crucial signals of openness 31a. re automatic recall 31b. automation and taca data Pronouns for example…I/we
Creates the space to encourage and empower others I-G	Compare structural and interactional spaces	[51.44 - 52.02] Turn 221	**32.** A marked pause to invite comment
TASK			
Diversity of thought enables innovation and creativity Improves problem solving for complex problems and situations I-G	Is there any evidence at all of seeking different views - pushing the boundaries of 'what else?'. In fact, are there any 'what else' questions at all in the entire four hours? I doubt it Although there are certainly a number of episodes in Gracia's meeting where differences of opinion are explored (C and Mi)	[13.15 - 13.55] Turns 142- 147 **for example Turns 50 - 55**	**33a** C and d Mi disagree **33b** Gracia asks genuinely open questions
Facilitates shared accountability Letting it run	This is the 'letting it run' stuff where they could intervene but don't.	[27.13 - 33.15] Turns 112 - 139	**34**. Gracia: 'Two things on this one…okay, okay'

Appendix XIII: Codes and tensions (paper 2)

CODES		OPPOSITIONS	TENSIONS
Being open and speaking freely	competing	local-global	(New) leadership
Being trustworthy	cooperating	us and them	(Old) leadership
Trusting	managerial efficiency/effectiveness	here and there	Competition
Being guarded and opaque	collaboration (as a solution)	like us-not like us	Co-operation
behaving badly	diversity	freedom-control	
sharing information	inclusion [exclusion]		
withholding information	partnership	**MANAGERIAL DISCOURSES OF**	
balance	cultural differences	'New' leadership	
difference	alignment	Efficiency and effectiveness	
Being stuck	Facilitating/developing people	Partnership/collaboration	
Flowing	Complicated personalities		
Friction	Suspicion		

'New' leadership is…	Old' leadership is…	Competition means…	Cooperation means…
more democratic, collaborative	more hierarchical, authoritarian	us and them dynamics	working together
hearts and minds	command and control	being stuck	fluidity
listening, negotiating, influencing	speaking, commanding, directing	being suspicious	being trusting and trustworthy
facilitating, encouraging	advocating, dictating	being guarded and opaque	being open and speaking freely

Appendix XIV: Evaluative stance (paper 2)

Examples in our data of *talking about* desired and undesired behaviours		How these behaviours are evaluated
Negative evaluation of too authoritarian a management style		
Nora (47.55) F1 Nora M2	and the concern is that with young people it will be even worse because we know that Leo's formal. he's polite (.) it's okay but they don't understand no (.) and it looks like they're seniors like you are the employees and I'm the boss (.) and we have some concerns that he will be the boss he might abuse the power (.) to be kind of dictatorial in his management approach rather than a cooperative one	Nora believes that one of the team leader candidates tends to display undesired characteristics in his management approach. Two members of her team agree: this candidate although formal and polite, could be 'dictatorial' rather than 'cooperative'
Positive evaluation of good team communication		
M2 (51.31) Nora (52.08)	it's something about the leadership skills of Tina that erm she can't er you know, bring the team with her and understanding. There was one of them, it was Angela (0.5) Angela was speaking much of the why of things, (.) it's the importance of explaining why it is important, what are the implications, rather than just er rather than do it because it's the numbers (1) it's getting into the why but Angela shows that she's thinking about these things and how to change things it's the same with Roberto and another way to do things and Roberto said exactly, it was not the same words but Roberto said that with my team it will not happen that people in the last day of the target and the deadlines they are here until midnight whatever and the rest of the month no engagement (.) and he was calling it out and saying that (.) he didn't say Tina but he was saying that in my case this will never happen	Tina is negatively evaluated because she has been unable to bring her team with her. This is compared to two other candidates for the new team leader roles who express their leadership in a manner aligned with the desired change. Angela is positively evaluated because she understands the importance of giving explanations as opposed to bold, unmitigated directives. A second candidate, Roberto, is linked to the desired leadership behaviour by Nora who judges that his implied position on treating his team with respect is evidence of his leadership skills
Negative evaluation of inability to display enough authority to exercise leadership		

Nora (54.00) M2 Nora	[…] it looks like Rachel is not able (.) she's good but she's not able to change nothing (0.5) that was the comment from Roberto yeah Rachel is seen almost like a peer yeah she's not positioned herself as a team leader so she can be good (.) people like her but she's not doing the change	Another candidate is deemed unsuitable as team leader because she has been unable to take up a position of authority and has thus been unable to execute the desired change.

Comments in the course of a routine management reporting meeting		
Examples in our data of *talking about* desired and undesired behaviours		**How these behaviours are evaluated**
Negative evaluation of too directive a management style; positive evaluation of talking openly		
Susan (27.00) Amaya (27.58)	[…] it's just, yes, we can try our best but I feel like in terms of openness (.) I hope (1) they can try and be genuinely open as well and I don't really get that feeling even just erm I don't know (.) they're just very prescriptive and very directional (0.5) like I think Kay sees herself as a director in every sense […] there's part of me that feels like you know I don't feel like I should (0.5) we should have to compete with each other /internally and that's the way it feels/ /no, but no (1) yeah (0.5) you know/ what you said in terms of her being less directive (0.5) I know this is an area you know (.) it doesn't only come from us (.) it's feedback she's getting from other areas so I think it's a good moment to be able to also discuss this because like I said it's been two years (0.5) it's been the same type of conversations	Susan describes what she sees as domineering style of some of the North American managers. Amaya acknowledges there is a problem. The exchange confirms that the 'prescriptive and very directional' management style is not wanted.
Positive evaluation of participation and openness; negative evaluation of controlling, distrustful behaviour		
Amaya (38.53) Susan Amaya Susan	but I think, you know, when (1) it's not about what we can or can't (.) I mean, we define what we can or can not do (.) it's about well (.) we found you know that this can really change things in a positive way so let's bring that to the table to discussion […] let's discuss about this (.) let's look at you know (1) why (.) let's involve them because at the end they're the ones that are finding that= =well I think it sounds like they already know and have said 'yeah' but maybe it's understanding their reasons and bringing /them back to the discussion/ /of course, that makes sense/	Amaya makes explicit that openness and inclusiveness are desirable practices. She furthermore maintains a positive focus on bringing parties to the table. Susan agrees but then resumes her negative evaluation of 'certain people' who do not behave in a way which is congruent with these ideas. Amaya ratifies this issue as a genuine organizational problem which requires

Amaya (40.18)	but I'm just glad those discussions are going on…yeah, it's a challenge going genuinely global, it does mean certain people need to let go a bit and trust others so I think this is a great point Susan and almost we are out of time (.) why don't we keep talking more about this idea of trust […] you have to build the trust (.) if it's the right trust you don't even need that because people understand what's the space right? so I I think that's key so let's work on that, let's bring that as a main topic	discussion in an elevated forum so that that action can be taken. Amaya also elevates the topic of 'trust' itself and uses the opportunity to define and position it on her own terms.

Appendix XV: Interactional analysis (paper 2)

Extract 1: Nora ratifies Carol's idea

Carol has been promoted to a leadership role within a European office where employees have historically engaged in behaviour which Nora views as competitive and unhelpful. Nora, who is several layers above Carol in the organizational hierarchy, has set up a telephone call to set the tone for the new relationship. The extract starts where Carol shares ideas of her own.

1 Carol I wonder Nora do you think there would be any erm any merit in you know perhaps not monthly . probably not monthly but maybe once a quarter you know getting the two sort of leadership teams together so probably myself and […] I wonder would it be worth just you know even if they how they are getting on if there are any good ideas↑

2 Nora yeah I like that idea . yeah and go ahead with that suggestion I like that idea […]only my suggestion is that we try to do video conference through video conference at least and I think you have that possibility ↑ So I think it would be easy if you have the-

3 Carol -it doesn't work sometimes but we do have it ((laughs))

4 Nora we have tried with some of the countries and I think it is beginning people are a little bit shy but after they really enjoy and it's working much better to have the meetings like that […]

5 Carol […] just to try as you say to get the faces out there so that people erm know who you are . but

		yeah definitely definitely okay I'll maybe set that up for I think quarterly is enough=
6	Nora	=yeah I think quarterly is enough for and if we realise that we need more you will do more but I don't like the idea of too many meetings
7	Carol	yeah I agree I already have plenty
8	Nora	and with an agenda […] I think it will be a good way to start because you are sharing information and our concerns and your success (1) it's a suggestion . you don't need to do it that way (1.5)
		/but could be a/
9	Carol	/no I think that's/ (1) I think that would be really helpful

Carol makes a tentative suggestion that senior teams from the two offices get together. She opens with a softened direct question (*I wonder, Nora, do you think…*), mitigates the force of this with hesitation markers (*erm, you know*) and goes on to further reduce the certainty of her utterance, and thus also her idea, by introducing a series of modal adverbs (*perhaps, probably, maybe*) which soften the impact of a move which could be read by Nora as an inappropriately lacking in deference (Holmes and Stubbe, 2015; Watts, 2003). By reducing her epistemic stance she positions Nora as having higher status and more power (Harris, 2003, 2007). Nora consolidates this asymmetry by evaluating Carol's suggestion (*yeah I like that idea)* and granting her permission to pursue it (*go ahead with that*). It is interesting to note that Nora's evaluation is phrased subjectively. This can be interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, it lessens the epistemic force (it is just her opinion) but on the other, it foregrounds the importance of her personal approval. The latter is the most likely interpretation given Nora's frequent use of the pronoun 'I' which acts as a personal stamp of approval. This move legitimises Nora's superior status and affirms her right to take decisions about another's agency. While she positions herself as a leader who considers the ideas of others (*I'm pretty open to leadership work together*), she does so with absolute authority. The issue of status now settled, in turns 3 to 7 Nora and Carol exchange views on the merits and challenges of virtual meetings without overt displays of their asymmetrical power relationship. This may serve to allow Carol time to return to her suggestion now that it has been ratified by Nora. Nevertheless, when Carol in turn 5 picks up the lead that Nora has offered (*yeah definitely definitely okay*), still she weakens its force with a modal adverb (*I'll maybe set that up*) (Vine, 2009). Together they co-construct their relative positions of power and status. Carol is given space to follow up on her suggestion but with some clarity that Nora will be present if only to evaluate the activity (*and if we realize we need more you will do more*). The juxtaposition of third and second person pronouns here suggest that Nora includes herself in the evaluation but excludes herself from the execution. In turn 8 Nora confirms her degree of influence over Carol's actions with the repeated use of 'I think' followed by some action Carol will perform ('*I think you like to do a follow up'; 'I think you will identify projects'; I think if you start these meetings'; 'I think it will be a good way to start'*). Again, the use of this pronoun can be interpreted in two ways: as a mitigation device or as foregrounding the importance of Nora's opinion. Given Carol's subsequent acquiescence, the most likely interpretation is that Nora's opinion is critical. Nora, faced with the paradox that she has the power to absolve Carol from doing as she says, then takes a step back from the strength of this position by clarifying that her comments should be read by Carol as suggestions as opposed to directives (*It's a suggestion (.) you don't need to do it that way*). Carol takes up Nora's suggestions perhaps to signal that, as she takes a lead in the project, she is willing to be steered by Nora (*no I think that's, I think that would be really helpful)*.

Extract 2: Amaya supports René's plan

In this extract Amaya’s junior colleague, René, is promoting an idea for improving work-flow processes across the European and North American sites. Amaya wants to influence the way the two offices interact while at the same time encouraging her junior colleague to develop his ideas and broaden his experiences.

1	René	no we don't have to discuss . I'm just saying like I looked at this I think you know somewhere in may will be the first opportunity […](1) so I want to do it in a week where people will not have on top that like a you know global meeting whatever
2	Amaya	do you want to do, do you still want to try to do it in (US city)↑ I did sell it to Stan already
3	René	yeah we can do that (1) yeah definitely
4	Amaya	and in May we will be there . the first week of May
5	René	yeah that's why I wanted to ask you if I have to start planning my trip
6	Amaya	yeah let me have something
7	René	it's the first week for sure yeah↑
8	Amaya	yes cause I have to be there for some . […] I need to just need to put together the plans so we can ( ) the people first of May. (1) what I'm think is if we do that we probably want to do the European version first (2) it doesn't matter
9	René	but that's going to make our timetable (1) I think of all the projects that are coming up (2)
10	Amaya	up to you (1) and if you say it's too soon for NA er or if you want to start with NA↑

11	René	maybe I'll see an option . I mean a good thing is Louise is already doing something there (1) I talked to her a bit about it and I explained . […] and she was really excited about it but very collaborative and so she said let's work together ( ) etcetera so it's-
12	Amaya	-so why don't we start to and talk to Louise and ( )↑
13	René	we use them as a test market ((both laugh)) see how it works and then revise the session
14	Amaya	but hang on . let me talk to Stan first because there is (1) there is a situation there and I think it's important (1) it's good to involve Louise but it's important we give Stan his space as leader of the team so let me see . let me see how /the ( )
15	René	/politics/ ((directed to the researcher in a whisper))
16	Amaya	feels/ about this (1) it's a little bit more than that but-
17	René	-I think I know what you're talking about (0.5) I heard some of the rumours

René transitions from a previous topic into his proposal for a workshop. His use of the colloquialism '*I'm just saying like*' lends informality to his utterance and at the same time reduces the risk of the suggestion being interpreted as too bold. (Aßmus and Oshina, 2012) while at the same time making it possible for Amaya to accept the topic. In the same vein, he mitigates the strength of his volition to carry out the workshop during a relatively quiet time through the frequent use of discourse markers (*like a you know global meeting whatever*). René thus positions his idea for a workshop as an indirect request for permission. Amaya is direct in her response. Her direct question (d*o you still want to do it in xxx?)* confirms the relationship of authority between them. There follow a few quick fire turns in which the momentum for René's workshop is built. We cannot be sure what both their uses of the pronoun '*we*' index in turns 12 and 13 - René's team, Amaya's division or the entire European management team - but the effect is to create a sense of inclusion and alignment which are important markers of preferred behaviour in this company (field notes). René continues to tread carefully. His request in turn 5, (*that's why I wanted to ask you if I have to start planning my trip*) could have been more directly expressed as 'Can I start to plan?'. Use of the past tense (*I wanted to ask)* in this context makes his utterance more polite and thus more deferential (Vine, 2009). Amaya need not consider politeness strategies in this way. Her response which takes the form of a bold, unmitigated directive (*let me have something*) is likely to be understood not as face-threatening, but as having the right to command. In the next two turns (8 and 9), in which the two of them begin to plan their strategy, Amaya clears space for René to take his own decision about where best to start (*up to you (.) and if you say it's too soon for NA or you want to start with NA?*). This is an important turning point in the conversation in which the focus moves from proposal to plan. During this sequence (turns 8 to 11) both speakers soften the force of their utterances with the use of the adverb 'just' (Amaya: *so let me just put together*; René: *I just explained a bit about what I'm planning*') reducing the social distance between them (Holmes and Stubbe, 2015; Watts, 2003). This is further evidenced by the overlapping talk and shared laughter in turn 13. With another unmitigated directive, Amaya holds René back a little (*but hang on let me talk to Stan first*) in order to prepare the ground for René's initiative. By sharing the political background openly with René she invites him in to her sphere of influence. René's hushed aside (*politics*), uttered directly to the researcher, elicits some caution from Amaya (*it's a little bit more than that but*) but also enables René to also share his inside knowledge (*I think I know what you're talking about (0.5) I heard some of the rumours*) which further reduces the social/power difference between them (Aßmus, 2011).

Appendix XVI: Discourse features (paper 2)

What is happening and how do we know?	Discourse features	Examples in our data
Legitimising and reinforcing status and power (i.e. 'maintain position') For example: questions and directives	*Use of questions to control the situation (Aritz et al., 2017; Halvorsen, 2018; Mesinioti et al., 2020)*	*'And the plan is to early June?'* Nora interrupts her colleagues to control and steer the discussion about recruitment in her team meeting
	Use of control devices such as control of the agenda and control of the floor (Holmes and Chiles, 2009)	*And there's one more for you (Amaya)'* In the board meeting Amaya attends, Barbara the CEO, indicates precisely whom she wants to speak next - and no one speaks out of turn
	Takes a knowing stance e.g. seeking confirmation rather than requesting advice (Mesinioti et al. 2020)	*'if we have these issues, if we know that Leo doesn't want to stay here, why are we investing in this guy?* Nora takes a strong knowing stance in relation to a particular employee.
	Use of unmitigated directives (Vine, 2009)	*'...go ahead with that suggestion...'* Nora issues an unmitigated directive that functions granting permission to Carol to follow up her idea with actions
Releasing power so that others can take a lead (i.e. 'empower') For example: controlling the floor and making space	Intentionally leaving the floor open e.g. waiting - simply leaving space (Schnurr 2009)	*Can I say to Mike that this is still a problem?'* Nora waits for members of her team to explore their positions and versions of the problem and allows a notable pause before offering to take the issue to her own line manager, Mike, who is not present.
	Use of questions as invitations (Wodak et al. 2011)	*'Why don't you bring this up on Monday during our leadership meeting?'* Amaya encourages Susan to take a lead but does not press her for an answer.
	Use of questions for information seeking (Heritage, 2012)	*'Who cares more about the issues?'* Nora requests this information from members of her team about two of the interviewees. The intervention opens up the space for everyone to share their perspectives.
	Taking a not-knowing stance (Mondana, 2013)	N.B. Although examples exist in the data set, there is no clear instance of a speaker's attenuation of epistemic authority present in the extracts included in this paper

	Making suggestions rather than issuing directives (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015)	*'If you can put some thoughts together and next week we try to finalize it'* Using an if-conditional, Amaya suggests that René put his thoughts down on paper rather than directing him to make a proposal in writing.
Pointing out that a different way of working is possible (more collaborative, open etc) For example: Stance/evaluati on	Indicating and naming of particularly ways of behaving	*'There's an opportunity to talk, to trust, to do something else."* Amaya agrees that certain individuals are behaving badly by keeping information hidden, forcing their own agendas and by displaying suspicious behaviour while others are collaborative, open and trustworthy
	Positive evaluation of desired behaviours - often conversational behaviours	*"But Angela shows that she's thinking about these things and how to change things. the same with Roberto, and another way to do things…"* Nora explains why certain interviews are preferred insofar as they conform to (participatory and democratic) changing norms of work
	Negative evaluation of people who do not display the desired behaviours	*"He thinks he's the best guy in the world'.* Using irony, Nora evaluates one of the interviewees for team leader position normatively and in line with desired alternative ways of working
	Talking *about* working differently	'*Let's build together as we work globally'*. Amaya acknowledges both company policy and local team dynamics by pointing to a different way of working
Getting the job done in the here-and -now For example; Using some of the negatively evaluated conversational behaviours in order to get work done	Allocating tasks, turns and setting the topical agenda (Angouri and Marra, 2010)	*"So recruitment"* In her team meeting, Nora uses the pre-circulated agenda to indicate who should speak and about what topic
	Claiming ownership of decisions in line with desired direction (Kim and Angouri, 2019)	*"hang on a minute.."* Amaya reins René in by reminding him of the bigger picture (and at the same time, that she has the authority to decide)
	Using falling intonation to indicate running out of time and to bringing things to a close (Gumperz, 1982)	*'it's a great point Susan, and almost we're out of time'.* Amaya makes use of this 'we're running out of time here' device on a number of occasions in order to indicate that the topic is closed for the time being in this particular conversation. On this occasion there is actually 30 minutes of the meeting left to run.

	Opening and closing i.e. 'charing' behaviour (Angouri and Marra, 2010)	*"Ok, so I don't have an agenda, Carol.'* "*you have to dial in to er let's see ( ), got that? I'll give you a minute. See you* Both Amaya and Nora open and close conversations with their subordinates but not with superiors
	Formulating and resuming (Kim and Angouri, 2019)	*"Why don't you bring this up on Monday during our leadership meeting?"* *"…but for Monday, let's see how the others react…I mean we could start like that and then start the discussion from there."* Amaya formulates problems and opportunities early in her conversations with both Susan and René, allows space for alternative input in the middle part of the conversations before resuming her formulation towards the end.
	interrupting - indicating a conversational topic is over (Goldberg, 1990)	*yeah, like, it was interesting speaking to-'* Just as she seems to be about to articulate a new idea, Susan gets interrupted by Amaya at this point. Susan acquiesces and does not return to this topic.

Abbreviations

PWN	Professional Women's Network
LE	Linguistic ethnography
IS	Interactional sociolinguistics
CA	Conversation analysis
OD	Organisation development
OL	Organisational learning

Note

Papers 1 and 2 have been prepared for submission to Sage journals. They therefore use the Sage Harvard referencing system and z-spellings of words such as 'organization', analyze' etc. In the remainder of the thesis, I use APA referencing and choose the traditional UK English s-spellings of these same words.

Word count declaration

As required by MARP 2022-23, Appendix 2, section 3: I declare that the main text of the thesis does not exceed the permitted maximum (68, 075) plus revisions.

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But in a complicated and perverse world, action which is not informed with vision, imagination and reflection, is more likely to increase confusion and conflict than to straighten things out.

(Dewey, 1917 [1980] p.46)