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Master Thesis

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AT BIOGEN HILLERØD: ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND NEGOTIATED MEANING

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Biogen

Abstract

The research is conducted from Copenhagen Business School as a thesis for the master program MA in International Business Communication (IBC), in Multicultural Organizations (MCO). The theme of the thesis has to do with cultural diversity at *Biogen (Denmark) Manufacturing ApS, Hillerød*, where corporate culture will be analysed from a perspective of cross-cultural management theory where negotiated meaning systems make up the social interaction among employees toward finding better solutions from resolutions of random cultural conclusions. Both culture and diversity will be addressed like an idea, and de-constructed as a matter of management intent to cultivate the organizational framing of social interaction, shared human knowledge and negotiated order.

International Business Communication (IBC)
In Multicultural Organizations (MCO)

Resume

The research is conducted from Copenhagen Business School as a thesis for the master program MA in International Business Communication (IBC), in multicultural organizations (MCO). The theme of the thesis has to do with cultural diversity at *Biogen (Denmark) Manufacturing ApS, Hillerød*, where corporate culture will be analysed from a perspective of cross-cultural management theory where negotiated meaning systems make up the social interaction among employees toward finding better solutions from resolutions of random cultural conclusions. Both culture and diversity will be addressed like an idea, and de-constructed as a matter management intent to cultivate the organizational framing of social interaction, shared human knowledge and negotiated order. The introduction seek to outline the whole reasoning behind making the research, where it is perspectivated toward a clarity of a research question and questions asked toward Biogen Hillerød's formal appearance on their webpages. From here, the company description will account for the basic understanding of what company is in focus, and its financial and operational performance. The methodology section moves into a deliberation of approach to the social- and business science at work in the thesis, and also, the con's and pro's with using an *interpretivist* approach to analysis. The data and method basically has to do with interviews and how to conduct these with best results, and also, an indepth explanation behind the creation of each question for the participants at Biogen Hillerød. The theory section moves into the theoretical paradigm, which has to do with social constructivism and social interactionism, where thinkers such as Straus and Mead are addressed, and the theoretical deliberation moves from a macro-perspective of a structural and historical account of culture, and how ideologically it is used to maintain order in private corporations, into a micro-perspective, where sense-making is put into account from a discriptively approach, and negotiated meaning systems as a concept within cross-cultural management theory. From here, the analysis, discussion and conclusion dive into the interpretation and results from the interviews conducted at Biogen, and into the formal account of Biogen's values and representation from their webpages and in their Corporate Citizen's Report. Here, the purpose with the analysis is to go in depth with the participants answers and stories, in order to find patterns of espoused values, a culture in practice and CSR in relation to the challenges from Danish culture and Danish language, to sum up a social reality at Biogen, which reveals some aspects that has moved resolution form cultural diversity into a solution, where new meanings are created and maintained through negotiated order, and a pattern of competence through articulation and practition of excellence.

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1. Introduction

This project aims to research the cross-cultural challenges that emerge when having implemented an American corporate culture defined by being globally inclusive, bias-free and embracing the potential of diversity; into a business unit in a host country, specifically, Biogen (Denmark) Manufacturing ApS, Hillerød. The researcher wants to understand how employees working at Biogen find *meaning* from diversity embraced through their formal values, credo and cultural framework presented by Biogen outwards toward shareholders and stakeholders. The thesis will work from the theme of cultural diversity and collective identity, with a theoretical framework of interpretive cross-cultural management of negotiated meaning and sense-making; from a perspective of Biogen as a *context* for multi-cultural normalizations of competence. The negotiated culture approach views culture as something dynamic from interaction, and it is inspired by negotiated order (see Straus, 1978), where the researcher seeks to find practical ways to understand organizational identity through interpreting stories of interaction, reflexivity and meanings;

“Patterns of meaning and agency in the organization arise from the interactions and negotiations of its members” (Brannen & Salk, 2000: 456).

This research seeks to investigate how well Biogen’s formal credo of; “Care deeply, work fearlessly, change life” is incorporated as an integral part of a complexity of negotiated meaning systems, and further into the actual cultural practices at Biogen Hillerød through an interpretive analysis. Biogen claims; “Our culture is what drives us”¹. From a perspective of competitive strategy, stakeholder relations and management theory, it would seem interesting to understand how they manage to create a driving culture within an international work setting; from the challenges of engaging diverse cultural identities and incorporating enacted values, norms and practices within the company. The research question regarding this project goes as following;

¹ Katja Buller, Vice President, Public Affairs –

Found at: http://www.cobc-biogen.com/our_ethical_foundations.aspx?ID=14808 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

“What is cultural diversity and how does Biogen’s credo and values influence negotiated meanings in a system of international resolution toward social solution between employees at Biogen (Denmark) Manufacturing ApS, Hillerød?”

Cross-cultural management research have discovered, that international joint ventures seem to generate negotiated *solutions* whenever they have a strong common denominator of *resolution*. These negotiated solutions take place between organizations, headquarters and subsidiaries, professional groups and individuals. They can touch upon *knowledge or technology transfer*, *strategy and communication*, and *corporate social responsibility (CSR)* (Adapted from Romani et. al., 2011: 9)

On Biogen’s webpage with an undersection of ethical foundations and corporate culture, they state in their credo section that ‘care deeply, work fearlessly, change lives’ is founded in the idea of:

“We are *globally inclusive* and *bias-free*. We embrace the *potential of diversity* and treat everyone with respect and dignity.”²

In what ways does this accurately reflect the organization’s primary purpose? Who does it serve? and what makes it unique? This globally inclusive and bias-free aspect in relation to the credo has an interesting tone to it, calling for an identifying understanding of what ‘globally inclusive, bias-free and potential of diversity’ *actually* means to their espoused collective identity? Also, how the enacted values constituted from Biogen’s management board might differ from the espoused values created through socialization and culture in practice.

It is of interest to understand how socio-political challenges arise in the process of managing cultural diversity among the workforce. This management of social control could be why cultural diversity and diverse opinions are sometimes valued in corporations within the process of identity creation under corporate governance? How are meanings dynamic and sense making transient? In what way is it possible to unravel and understand all the agent’s perspective in the meaning creation? What is a negotiated meaning system, and why is it key to managing a shared reality, the sense making process, and influencing the outcomes of social interaction under social control?

² Found at: http://www.cobc-biogen.com/our_corporate_culture.aspx?ID=14814 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

Biogen claims at their homepage that they have a diverse culture which generates team spirit and integrity, where they bring employees together with a wide variety of backgrounds, skills and cultures. By combining wealth of talents and resources, they explain how they are able to create diverse and dynamic teams that drive excellence.³ They are committed to a workplace where employees feel respected and appreciated, where all employees are treated with dignity and are proud of their credo of “caring deeply, work fearlessly, changing lives”.

Managing corporate culture and corporate governance has been of interest to a large amount of scholars and business managers for several decades, emerging in the 1960's. The term “corporate culture” was developed in the early 1980's and widely known by the 1990's by academics, managers and sociologists to describe the *character* of a company. (Investopedia)⁴

The business perspective toward a homogeneous ‘westernized’ attitude of organizational culture has changed into a nominalization of multicultural *heterogenization*; where companies recruit cross-cultural workforce which generates hybridity or cultural infusion in their host setting. We imagine significant cultural differences and potential clashes due to dissimilar national cultures (based on, for example, Hofstede, 2001) but the clashes are more complex, and transnational regimes exploit cultural diversity by moving *away* from national identity into a corporate identity; whereby, global influences become absorbed and adapted in a host of local setting and a new globalized context for meaning arise. These effects are quite the opposite of *homogenization*, but can be argued as a rather cross-cultural strategy of managing *meaning systems*.

Cultural forms move through time and space where they interact with other cultural forms or settings. Here, they try to make sense of how they influence each other and share knowledge, how it is meaningful to their own story and how to understand their shared experiences in order to produce new forms of inter-changed social realities. When clashes happen, it is important for management to understand the divided opinions and have some knowledge of the *discursive* constructions. In sum, meaning systems are an articulation of meanings; not shared meanings and certainly not a shared opinion (Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011). Cross-cultural management

³ Found at: http://www.cobc-biogen.com/we_work_together_as_a_team.aspx?ID=14824 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

⁴ Found at: <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/corporate-culture.asp> - Last accessed 2016-05-03

seek to move *beyond* clashes from national identities, gender roles, ethnicity, age and religion etc. through fixed meaning systems based on competence and an articulation of a high purpose. Here, rational choice is negotiated from an understanding of incorporated knowledge, correlating to the shared experiences; suggesting a more functional, profitable and sustainable solution to the context for work. Diversity is embraced above mindsets of cultural homogeneity and sameness, based on the idealism of philanthropy and a neo-liberal code toward profit, venture and corporate governance; decorated with ethics of social responsibility - like reducing the impact of operations on the environment, or safer and better work environments for our employees.

As a starting point for this research, it is believed that Biogen must have a good cultural management strategy, which is worth looking into from a theoretical perspective. Today, many different strategies emerge in the context of creating a corporate culture, making the different divisions and business units work together under one corporation. In this way, Biogen has been able to formulate their espoused corporate culture under a strategy of working with *science that truly matters* and focusing on *caring deeply* and *making a difference in patients lives*. Also, they have a strategy toward stakeholders interest in seeing, that they are socially responsible for meeting national and international standards for legal, ethical and economic responsibilities placed on them by stake- and shareholders with their corporate citizenship report⁵. Biogen claims in their corporate citizenship report to strive to make the company ‘*an inclusive place to work and thrive*’, and moreover; that corporate governance is *essential* to sustaining their growth and success as a company and to maintain the trust and confidence of their stake- and shareholders. All Biogen employees must comply with their Code of Business Conduct, Values in Action, which guides decision-making throughout the company.

This research aims to dig into the theoretical field of organizational culture and cross-cultural managing theory to explain and expose some of the collaborative industriousness of Biogen (Denmark) Manufacturing ApS, Hillerød, and explore communicative and cultural strategies that

⁵ To see their corporate citizen report – go to: https://www.biogen.com/content/dam/corporate/en_us/pdfs/corporate-citizenship-report/BiogenCCR2014.pdf - Last accessed 2016-05-03

might explain the imperatives to challenges that arise in relation to managing diverse cultures with multi social identities.

2. Company Description

Biogen is a global biotechnological firm within the pharmaceutical industry. It was founded in 1978, and claims to be one of the oldest independent biotechnological companies in the world. It is a Fortune 500 company with the rank 298, and the third fast growing pharmaceutical company - only surpassed by Celgene and Gilead Sciences. It has a 5 year annual sales growth of 17,3%, and an 2014 annual revenue of \$9.7 billion.⁶ Their headquarter is located in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Biogen has offices in 29 different countries, and a network of collaborators in 70 countries. In total, Biogen employes over 7000 people from all over the world.⁷ Biogen's main purpose is to discover, develop, produce and market biological products to treat neurological and immunological diseases.

Biogen has three manufacturing facilities. Two in USA; North Carolina, Massachusetts and one in Hillerød, Denmark⁸. Here, Biogen Hillerød serves as their European manufacturing site with 620 employees. Biogen claims this manufacturing site to be an important strategic part of Biogen's global supply network; where they pack, label, test and release drugs to patients all over the world. Beside production activities, the facility also house administration and a variety of support functions.⁹

In 2015, they achieved a perfect score of 100 on the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index¹⁰, and are frequently named by influential publications as being among the best places to work¹¹

⁶ Found at: <http://fortune.com/2015/06/20/fortune-500-fastest-growing-pharmaceutical-companies/> - Last accessed 2016-05-03

⁷ Found at: <http://www.biogen.dk/globalt.aspx?ID=8156> - Last accessed 2016-05-03

⁸ Found at: https://www.biogen.com/en_us/about-biogen/our-facilities.html - Last accessed 2016-05-03

⁹ Found at: <http://www.biogen.dk/hiller%C3%B8d.aspx?ID=8091> - Last accessed 2016-05-03

¹⁰ See <http://www.hrc.org/apps/buyersguide/profile.php?orgid=43552#.VwuV7qR942w> - Last accessed 2016-05-03

¹¹ Found at: <https://www.biogen-international.com/en/about-biogen/the-company/our-values.html> - Last accessed 2016-05-03

3. Methodology

This project is a qualitative research based on social constructivism and symbolic interactionism, meaning; it is following an interpretive- interactionist paradigm within social science, where the social reality is co-constructed through social interaction within different and specific symbolic relationships. From here, the methodology is idiographic; where meaning is considered unique and subjective, and it is created both within and outside the organizational boundaries, which means; members of an organization use their cognitive faculties and memories to interpret events of how they experience their social sphere. Behaviors are defined by the process of both *interaction* and *interpreting* their social world. Human nature is based on voluntarism rather than determinism. The research takes on an ontology of nominalism and relativism which presume that reality is constructed and re-constructed all the time by individuals in interaction with each other, and therefore, holds many truths through inter-subjectivity and diversity in cultural normalizations. (Kuada, 2012, p. 72-80)

Furthermore, this subjectivist and transactional epistemology assumes that we as researchers *cannot* separate ourselves from what we know and feel and provides an emic relation to research, as we do the investigation from *inside* a culture in action. Furthermore;

“The investigator and the object of investigation are linked such that who we are and how we understand the world is a central part of how we understand ourselves, others and the world. “ (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006)

Acknowledging this perspective, researching cultural diversity and collective identity within the organization cannot *only* be rationalized into translated syntactical resources of knowledge *for* the organization; but should also be considered as a pragmatic asset of what the individual subject is ‘doing’ tacitly for him- or herself, based on his or her *idiographic* knowledge of individual and prior social experience (adapted from Carlile, 2004). Individual *Knowledge and prior social experience* is a hard thing to articulate, evaluate and investigate as it pertains directly to what is being researched. Critique on knowledge management as a practice, is that it *can* be delusive, and some argue that management and knowledge are actually contradictory concepts (Alvesson &

Kärreman, 2001). (See Stabell & Schultze, 2004, pp. 149+152) But to analyze the tacit nature of humans is to open up to their emotional dimension, and let them talk in an informal and informative way about what they feel is important in relation to questions asked.

The investigator is not invisible in the process of researching, which means the awareness of researching is touching the social setting and the subjects of interest to the researcher. This researcher is investigating cultural diversity and collective identity within a framing where practices, norms and values sum up a reality at Biogen among the employees at work. When embarking upon an analysis of cross-cultural management, it is assumed that the interpretation of data is primarily ideational in character – meaning that they have to do with meanings, understandings, beliefs, knowledge, and other intangibles. The perspective is holistic, intersubjective and emotional in character, rather than being strictly rational and analytical. (Keyton, 2011:169)

3.1. Interpretivist approach to science

Defining the situation and discovering the correlation between subjectivity, emotion and intelligence is crucial for our ability to navigate and make decisions, and it is measured highly in the interpretive approach, as a '*life without feelings holds no meaning*'; quoted by David Servan-Schreiber (2004), a French physician, neuroscientist and author, who was a clinical professor at Psychiatry, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He further explains; that it is feelings of love, courage, trust and happiness that in earnest gives purpose to life. Do we cut off from emotions, we will live amputated lives without any reference point, goal or direction for our actions or choices. (Glavind Bo & Hviid Jakobsen, 2015: 14)

Interpretivists emphasize that culture is created and maintained through communication, and not the other way around, but when using an approach, it is always crucial to be critical, and acknowledge, that there is not just one right way to research, but the different methods often supply each other. It should not be assumed, that qualitative methods are *intrinsically* superior to quantitative research. Indeed, a quantitative approach may sometimes be more appropriate to the researched problem which is of interest, also, in choosing a method; everything depends upon what

you are trying to find out. No method of research, quantitative or qualitative is intrinsically better than any other. (Silverman, 2010: 10)

The variables within social psychology and sociology emerge when identifying group to group variations in the communication process from a distance or within the groups, and therefore, it is acknowledged in social psychology that a phonetic approach has its limitations, as human communication is often more creative than predictable and the reality of the individuals are not only *external*, but also *internally* constructed. That is why, we cannot identify all the variables that affect our communication and *why* some intercultural interactions succeed, while others do not. On the other hand, some scholars claim that the interpretivist approach is too sensitive and researchers may be too close to the phenomena of interest, or the people they are researching, so the actual social world is deviating from how asymmetrical meanings are developed through the interaction between researcher and the researched. Social psychologists use the term ETIC and EMIC to distinguish phonetic social science from interpretive interactionist approaches. But in truth, they are both very important to intercultural communication in context and cross-cultural management.

The advantage of using an interpretive approach is, that the level of analysis is closer to our experienced reality rather than generating prejudices at a distance. It is an investigation method which is accessible to individual managers. At the center of the analysis in interpretive studies is the people embedded in their socio-cultural reality: their experience, their ways of thinking, their sense-making and how they talk about it – that is, their lifeworld. (Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011: 4)

Interpretive researchers do not test a theory or a model with hypotheses that either will or will not be supported. Instead, the definition of the investigated problem, and the relevant constructs and meanings emerge *simultaneously* as the interpretive researchers progressively understand and develop them. The outcome of interpretive works can be seen as *transferable* (Guba and Lincoln, 2005) rather than generalizable. (found in Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011: 5)

In the process of interpreting and transferring subjective knowledge from interviewees to an analytical level, the researcher uses *reflexivity* to investigate how the data (interviews) should be collected and analysed. They are systematically thinking of cause and effect about conditions of their research during the investigation and their choice of theory. In this way, they use both theory and analysis simultaneously. In brief:

“They critically and consciously reflect upon every aspect that is part of their research, which influences their analyses and the conclusions they reach. In order for their conclusions to be accepted as relevant, researchers need to show this reflexivity to the same extent as statisticians need to detail their analyses. Reflexivity is a key aspect in the development of interpretive analysis; It is a necessary condition for validity and reliability. (...) In order for managers to better understand meanings while conversing with their employees in a corporate environment, it is also important to perform this reflexivity”
(Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011:8)

Important to this reflexivity, as to any other scientific method, is to reject arbitrary, self-imposed categories and instead *systematically* pursue knowledge about the topic wherever the data point to, and theoretically impose meaning to the reflection from recognized, acclaimed and viable theoretical terminology and concepts.

3.2. Research question design

This research follows an abductive empirical approach as an academic archetype, where the research focuses on both theory and empirical data. The formalization of abductive reasoning assumes the explanations and observations to be a set of literals, whereby theory is based on analytical proof systems. The explanation of the observations, according to theory, should satisfy two conditions; 1) observation follows from explanation and theory; 2) The explanation is consistent with the theory. The criteria for picking out what represents ‘the best’ explanation include the simplicity, the prior probability, or the explanatory power of the explanation. (adapted from the work of Mayer & Pirri, 1993). The main thinking behind the research question, is a considerate reflection toward addressing an academic question which concerns prior observed

probabilities and challenges from a cross-cultural management perspective; toward managing cultural diversity and collective identity in a corporate setting with contemporary recognized theoretical explanations.

The research question assumes that there will always be challenges to interaction between members from diverse cultures composed together to function as one workforce, but also, that globalization is valued in many big corporations as a matter of course. How do managers overcome challenges to the culture in practice from informal normative pressures, compared to the strategies of integrating a corporate culture with corporate values and rules? The workforce in cross-cultural organizations include employees of varied social backgrounds, such as, e.g. traditional cultures, subcultures and professional networks. At the same time, the different cultures and identities are continuously produced and reproduced through interaction, team identity and self-representation.

This research seek to discover *self-representations* compared to the *corporate constructed reality* at Biogen. People's method of constructing their understanding of reality in everyday life, and transforming it into knowledge, has an emotional dimension to it, which cannot be avoided by exclusively focusing on logic, if we want to find '*deeper truths about the self*'.

3.3. Data and Method

Partially, the interest in the organization emerges from the corporate board strategy of having a corporate *credo* in managing diversity, and how this dogmatic approach to action can have strategic value for the success of a biotechnological corporation. The researcher conducting this thesis had no previously relationship to- or knowledge about the organization beforehand, but made a connection through a supervisor suggestion and the independent choice of interest. The intention for the research has supposedly only been from a theoretical desire to analyze a presupposition of cultural diversity and collective identity within Biogen in relation to *cross-cultural management theory*, wherefrom, a HR manager at Biogen Hillerød has been the indicative contact within the company. The core interest concerning the interviews, is to observe the *social construction of reality* from the interaction with four different employees at Biogen Hillerød, in order to get an idea of the *actual* social setting and culture in practice; compared to the possible functional institutionalized culture installed by managers. Here, it is acknowledged that meaning

and construction of that material reality is *interdependent* with ideas and interpretation of the employees and managers alike. The strength of evidence can be arguable, due to the limited amount of participants at hand, but the *intent* is to discover *self-representations* compared to the *constructed reality* which might reveal stories of *meaning* created *within* the corporate setting; therefore, the amount of participants fit adequately to a desired insight into the more abstract reality of everyday feelings, meaning creation, assumptions and sense-making process at Biogen Hillerød.

The primary data consist of four qualitative interviews with four employees at biogen. Their names have been removed due to keep them anonymous, as this research does not want to exhibit them in front of their private lives, workplace, business community or CBS academy. The first interview is with a;

- 1) Belgish female, HR (Human Resource) Recruitment Partner;
- 2) Danish female, Manufacturing Associate (supporting manufacturing);
- 3) Brazilian male, Chemical Engineer, working as an EHS&S (Environmental, Health, Safety, and Security) consultant;
- 4) Danish male, Senior Construction Manager (Senior 2 Engineer)

The purpose of this random picking of both gender, nationality, professional background and work position has to do with how the researcher intent to understand how candidates vertically and horizontally find meaning in the values, credo and cultural framework presented by Biogen *outwards* toward shareholders and stakeholders.

The secondary data consist of pictures taken at Biogen Hillerød by the researcher, and documentation from websites, mainly from www.cobc-biogen.com, www.biogen.com and www.biogen.dk, such as Biogen's 2014 Annual Corporate Citizen Report.

3.3.1. Data collection: Techniques and deliberation behind asking the right questions

The main quest or aspiration of the interviewer can be boiled down to one question: ‘By what means can I monitor the participants with ample and relevant information about themselves, and also, make sure that the participants present him- or herself as truly and fully as possible?’ Not only do they have to give the participants enough time and opportunity to talk, that is to provide them with interactional space, they also have to sustain the participant’s *willingness* and *desire* to talk; that is to create a favorable interactional climate. (Adelswärd, 1988: 117)

In creating the interview questions, a strategy of open-ended and semi-structured questions is used. The purpose of each questions is discovery-orientated, meaning that each question asked to all four participants is intended do make them answer in the way *they* understand the question, and it is expected, that each participant will answer the question differently, but in a way where patterns of collective identity and created meanings should be exposed. The open-ended question-method is applied in order to make the interviewees answer the questions in more depth than just ‘yes or no’ answers, in order to interpret abstract notions of sense-making and meaning. It allows the interviewees to talk about what *they* find important and allows the researcher to gather strong subjective information about the employees perspective of the social setting at Biogen Hillerød; in order to make the best interactional space *for* the participants. All of the interviews has been conducted in a familiar environment at Biogen Hillerød. All of the meetings have been planned through email or phone. When the researcher arrived at Biogen, the guest status had to be exposed with a badge signifying to all that he was a visitor. Every interview has been conducted from within a closed meeting room, where small talk have been the initial state of interaction. All the participants offered the interviewer a coffee, which was gladly accepted. In order to build the interview climate, the interviewer and participant engaged in friendly small talking and gestures, such as smiling and humor *before* the interview, to make the situation more calm and concern free. Also, the interviewer chose to present himself as a student from CBS doing his master thesis about cultural diversity, to amplify certainty about purpose, and to exemplify the intent for the interviews. All of them was also told, that they would be anonymouse in the final rapport.

Matarazzo & Wiens (1972) have studied employment interviews and have found that an interviewer can have considerable influence on the participant's utterance length. They claim that there are at least three social reinforcers that can increase the speech output of one's conversational partner: 1) increase in one's own average unit speech duration; 2) nodding one's head; and 3) saying "Mm-hmm, mm-hmm", and also, to give space for pauses to encourage longer turns (Matarazzo & Wiens, 1972: 94) (found in Adelswärd, 1988:120). All these aspects have been actively put into the strategy of conveying strong idiographic and subjective data from all four participants, and can be seen throughout the detailed transcribing of the four interviews, which can be found in appendix 1,2,3 and 4. The level of interactional detail should resemble the spoken language (and language barriers when talking English) as much as possible. Also, the interviewer has used a strategy of reflecting the facial expressions of the participant, to stimulate concern, length and emotional depth of the participants utterances. Signs of confusion or uncertainty has been supported by the interviewer with little guidance and humorous remarks when necessary. Semi-structured questions have been added whenever something truly of interest to the researcher has popped up in the participants talking. In general, it has been important to the interviewer to interrupt with simultaneous talk as *little* as possible, to engage the participant in more self-initiated talking and social reflection in his/her narrative. The interruption has only been to support the participants emotional position, to create certainty, to be experienced as friendly or if something important to the researcher was exposed.

The questions asked consisted of 20 questions, where I will introduce the strategy and reason behind each question and its structure. The first;

1) *Where are you from?*

This question seeks to introduce the interview with their own subjective elaboration and interpretation of the preposition 'from'. There is no intention to make them think of national identity, but more on the location they mostly deliberately identify with as origin or 'home'. From here, the desire to know more about them is introduced as the first thing first. Secondly,

2) *What is your profession, and what is your work position at Biogen?*

From here, the second question seeks to ask about profession, to see if they address a title, maybe from education, or learned competencies through work experience and career, or if they mix it

with their work position at Biogen as one and the same. Moreover; is the position at Biogen contingent with their profession? If not, their might be a pragmatic desire to change the work position and challenge the social order, which could have a socio-political consequence for the culture and its consensus, their openness to the researcher, or the understanding of *their* position in answering the questions in general.

3) *What does integrity mean to you?*

The third question seeks to meet the abstract, in the relation to the self-representations and norms. Not ‘what does integrity mean’, but what it means *specifically* to the participant with the determiner ‘you’. In this way, they have to reflect on their own reality, how they approach an integration process, and how important it is to them. From a theoretical perspective, the negotiated culture presumes some kind of integrity toward meaning systems, which assume, that the integration from something prior to the Biogen culture is *obvious* and that they participate in an integration process *regularly* from new recruits and changing work formations or work places. Moreover, it is one of Biogen’s 5 core values on their homepage; care, courage, integrity, excellence and inclusion.¹²

4) *How do you make sense of caring deeply?*

The fourth question seeks to meet the abstract and the subjective as the earlier question, where this time, it is from Biogen’s credo. How important is the credo in their daily lives? How do they *make sense* of it in relation to their self-representation at work, or maybe beyond? The sense-making process include a constant practice of making sense of our own social role in relation to individual purpose in our environment, in order to decide action with deliberate intent. From the researcher’s point of view, it is assumed, that the idea of caring deeply is many faced, as it is externally represented toward the patient/costumer, where e.g. the treatment of multiple sclerosis disease is at the heart of the scientists in R&D – but how does it influence the other departments? Such as manufacturing and administration? It could also represent a notion of caring deeply about the *task* at hand for each employee, where it is a good manager strategy to combine patient empathy with organizational pathos toward assigned tasks.

¹² To see their corporate citizen report – go to:
http://www.cobc-biogen.com/our_corporate_culture.aspx?ID=14814 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

5) *How do you approach people at Biogen you don't know?*

The fifth question seeks to move a little away from the abstract of *meaning* toward values, and here, it seeks to understand how they make sense of approaching *unfamiliar* colleagues at Biogen. Meeting the corporate *formality*. In what context and in what way does it make sense to approach strangers within the framing of work? How collective or individual are the organization when it comes to approaching each other? With the emphasis on a presupposition of *potential* strangers from the phrase 'people you don't know at Biogen'. Do they feel as strangers when they meet unfamiliar faces within the organization? Or do they have a meaning system where '*competence*' guide the action and uncertainty? Even though they might not know the colleague personally, but only from the understanding of shared experiences within the company; uncertainty can rise from the *prior social experience* parallel to the *prejudices* of the person in front of them. Are they more collective, as in; 'you work at Biogen, I work at Biogen – no need to introduce yourself'?

6) *How do you make sense of working fearlessly?*

The sixth question goes back to one of the three pillars in their credo, and again, it seeks to meet the abstract and the subjective 'sense-making' from the participant. 'Work fearlessly', is it connected to the *internal reality* at Biogen of not fearing mistakes? Again, it could be in relation to the scientist at R&D, who are encouraged to work fearlessly with dangerous chemicals toward pharmaceutical success, but how does the average employee at Biogen actually make sense of working fearlessly? And does the mentioning of working fearlessly ring an emotional bell when addressed?

7) *How do you make sense of changing lives?*

The seventh question is the last pillar in the credo. Like the two other pillars, this question seeks to understand how the abstract and subjective meet with the understanding of changing lives. From the outside, it is easy to assume that it is connected to changing the lives of the patient/costumer. Does every employee take this to heart? Even in manufacturing? Is it a *formality*, or an espoused value to the individual employee; making sense of their everyday work as something that makes a difference in the lives of more than one hundred thousand patients? Or maybe they have their own interpretation or assumption about what it means to them.

8) *In what context do you most often interact with your colleagues?*

This question seeks to understand where the participant most often meets and talks with the colleagues. Again, the earlier questions assumed and framed the focus on potential strangers within the company, where this question connote more familiarity away from an external indicator of ‘people at Biogen’ to a more inclusive idea of ‘*your* colleagues’ - *your* group. Here, the collectivity and individuality is still of interest, and whether the interaction between colleague rests on a formality or *if* it is more casual. There could be a differentiation between *formal* Biogen norms and *informal* team-group norms. Also, whether they address interaction and context relating to work, or also, the context for interaction they have merely for the pleasure, e.g. the canteen or social spaces.

9) *How do you communicate with your colleagues?*

The ninth question uses the same strategy of familiarity toward an inclusive indicator of ‘*your* colleagues’, but is more concerned with *how* they make sense of communication? And if it is through certain mediums or face-to-face interaction, furthermore, whether the language and tone is formal or informal – and what language do they speak?

10) *Do you like your social environment at Biogen?*

This question is very personal and directed at the participant. To understand how meaningful their own *social* environment is to them at Biogen. What *emotions* are connected to the word ‘social’ and ‘Biogen’, and how do they answer the question. Superficially? Or with conviction, uncertainty or denial/resistance?

11) *What does cultural diversity mean to you?*

Up until this point, there has been no mentioning of- or suggestion toward culture and diversity. The researcher is interested to see, if the theme would have been touched *voluntarily* from the participant in the earlier questions, because they knew the theme before the meeting, as it was themed to be an interview about cultural diversity at Biogen. Here, the theme of interest is directly addressed to the participant, and again, the researcher wishes to hear the employees own understanding (maybe with prepared answers) of what cultural diversity means? Does the core value of ‘inclusion’ pop up in the explanation? What is the first thing that pop up in their minds?

In this way, when addressed about what meaning “cultural diversity” holds to the employee, interviewees *will* have to bring cultural differences to the forefront – by either supporting or denying cultural differences. It may also indicate an issue of power that will influence the intercultural interaction.

12) In practice, have you ever avoided a colleague because of his or her gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity or social background?

This question is socio-cultural and even socio-political in nature, and different from the other questions due to its explicit nature, but also, it seeks to meet the employee from a level of basic assumptions about diversity *not* addressed, and their attitude toward it. To what extent do they feel uncomfortable about the content of this question? How do they in practice manage to *behave* toward these controversial aspects of their social reality at Biogen? The researcher takes it for granted, that socio-political implication toward cultural diversity is somehow *deeply* connected - whether it is to the awareness of the individual or not. Also, how would they represent themselves toward the researcher? Most likely all of them will deny to have avoided a colleague, but then maybe, tell about *others* doing it, in order to *justify* themselves. The practice of building a corporate culture cannot happen without some implications from socio-political forces, with representation of negatives, which will be addressed in the theory section.

13) Do you avoid certain topics when you talk with colleagues?

Again, this question addresses the inconvenience of thinking about *undesirable* topics. These topics could emerge from individual *pragmatism* and relation to *power-structures* between superior and subordinate, or simply, to avoid touching open wounds or avoiding disrespectful behavior. Anyways, many avoided topics can also presume a more *formal* organizational context, where the informal organizational context, in general, is more open to sensitive topics. Especially if you move around in a diverse cultural setting, the awareness of sensitive topics might be more *consciously* avoided. Badly composed, or failed meaning systems, with diverse members, will cause the employee to avoid many topics, and the tone would most likely be limited to very superficial communication and interaction strategies, where uncertainty, power-balance and unrest will rule the negotiated order.

14) Does ‘globally inclusive and bias-free’ make any sense to you?

On their webpage with an undersection of ethical foundations and corporate culture, they state in their credo section that ‘Care deeply, work fearlessly, change lives’ is founded in the idea of: ‘we are *globally inclusive* and *bias-free*. We embrace the *potential of diversity* and treat everyone with respect and dignity.’¹³ To be globally inclusive and bias-free is hard to understand without any explanation. Bias-free is a curious terminology; how it is socially constructed in relation to the potential of diversity? So, the agenda at Biogen might have a *talent* preference when they recruit, or it could be in relation to the discourse of biotechnology, that they want the *best* candidates, but have to acknowledge, that this could mean the potential clash with diversity, and this diversity has to be managed and incorporated into Biogen. In order to get some answers, it is relevant to understand how these employees make sense of ‘globally inclusive and bias-free’?

15) When talking about your work, do you prefer addressing it as a global or Danish workplace?

Up until now, the structure of each questions have had a strategy to avoid asking about any ‘Danishness’ to the workplace, as it is of interest to see, if it would be naturally assumed earlier by the participant. The idea of cultural infusion assumes that a business unit will automatically blend with the national culture of the place it is located, depending on how strongly the national identity is built into the local employee, and how many local people are employed in the organization. Does this infusion have interest to the corporate governance? Yes, but they also want to employ local people, and in order to employ local people, they will drag the national identity *into* the company and it will influence the corporate culture. Here, it is of interest to see, how much this national influence has eroded or mixed with the strategic corporate culture and Americanization of enacted values.

16) How do you make sense of excellence?

Again, the sixteenth question seek to meet the abstract, in the relation to the self-representation of talent, skill and *exposure* to diversity of norms. Not ‘what does excellence mean’, but what it means to the participants in their daily work. In this way, they have to reflect on their *own* reality how *they* approach excellence from competence, and how important it is to them. Excellence is

¹³ Found at: http://www.cobc-biogen.com/our_corporate_culture.aspx?ID=14814 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

one of their 5 core values on their homepage; care, courage, integrity, excellence, inclusion.¹⁴ How does excellence contribute to the uniqueness of Biogen as a set of negotiated meaning systems within negotiated order? This is of interest to the researcher. On their webpage, they claim under ‘diversity and inclusion’ that *‘Biogen brings together employees with a wide variety of backgrounds, skills, and cultures. Combining the wealth of talent and resources creates our diverse and dynamic teams that drive excellence.’*¹⁵ So, the sense making of ‘excellence’ as a social construct makes you wonder - does it trigger a value-system where it strongly relates to the other values?

17) What is most important to you - Science education or reducing the impact of operation on the environment?

It can be argued, how important this question is to the understanding of cultural diversity and the development of meaning systems within Biogen Hillerød, but still, it is based on the reflectivity of the researcher, to see how the employee at Biogen match the boards general attitude toward science education (their specific academic field or maybe micro-biology) and its relation to CSR. In their corporate citizenship report, the stake- and shareholder engagement is a mix of these two material issues. The *talent attraction* uses a strategy with an emphasis on *science education*, with the righteous desire to *reduce* the impact of operations on the environment. Thus, the Biogen Foundation’s mission is to improve the quality of people’s lives and *contribute* to the vitality of the communities in which Biogen operates, and seek to ‘*bolstering*’ the scientific ‘*literacy*’ of students today in ‘*nurturing*’ stem education. They claim to be committed to sparking a *passion* for science and discovery, supporting innovative STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) initiatives, and strengthening efforts to make science accessible to diverse populations.¹⁶ Significant opinions toward these two dimensions could give useful insight toward a clearer definition of individual meaning systems, and a more elaborated definition of this strategy for future corporate growth.

¹⁴ To see their corporate citizen report – go to:

https://www.biogen.com/content/dam/corporate/en_us/pdfs/corporate-citizenship-report/BiogenCCR2014.pdf - Last accessed 2016-05-03

¹⁵ Found at: http://www.cobc-biogen.com/we_work_together_as_a_team.aspx?ID=14824 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

¹⁶ Found at: <https://www.biogen-international.com/en/responsibility/biogen-foundation.html> - Last accessed 2016-05-03

18) *What does respect and dignity mean to you?*

Again, this questions goes back to the Values in Action, which is explained on cobc-biogen.com, under the section ‘we work together as a team’ this application is intended for possible *secondary* data for the analysis later on. The applied values consist of 8 pillars, where the third is ‘We work together as a team’ here, it is elaborated, that they are committed to a workplace where employees feel respected and appreciated. They treat their employees with *respect and dignity*.¹⁷ Here, it is of interest to see, how the 4 different participants make sense or adding meaning to the idea of respect and dignity. Also to see if they might address the values in action.

19) *Does corporate citizen mean anything to you?*

Biogen post a Corporate Citizenship Report for CSR, stating; ‘*Biogen’s annual Corporate Citizenship Report presents our citizenship and sustainability achievements, challenges and goals to our employees and outlines our ongoing engagement with patients and other key stakeholders.*’

¹⁸ It is of interest to the researcher to explore what meaning the participants add to this idea, and whether they are even aware of it. Does corporate governance mean anything to them? It is basically an *external* representation of a supposed ‘*governance construction*’, where Biogen is socially responsible for meeting legal, ethical and economic responsibilities placed on them by shareholders and stakeholders. Does it hold internal value for the employees? CCR is a discursive CSR strategy to articulate higher standards of living and quality of life in Denmark where they operate - do the employees in Hillerød know this?

20) *Is there anything about working at Biogen, which you have found to be truly valuable to you as a person.*

The last question is a final question that seeks to make the participant add something they might have felt was ‘left out’ of the whole value and norm exploration, or somehow to add a final statement about how they find value in relation to *their* work at Biogen Hillerød. From here, it is

¹⁷ Found at: http://www.cobc-biogen.com/we_work_together_as_a_team.aspx?ID=14824 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

¹⁸ Found at page 89 in: https://www.biogen.com/content/dam/corporate/en_us/pdfs/corporate-citizenship-report/BiogenCCR2014.pdf - Last accessed 2016-05-03

understood that each experience holds subjective meanings - that is at the core intent with the structure and strategy of the interviews.

4. Theory

As mentioned earlier, the theoretical paradigm for this research follows a social constructivist approach to science where Berger and Luckmann (1966, 1991) might have been two of the major influences to its development within social psychology, as an area of social science, which focuses on social action as an *interrelation* of social structures. Berger and Luckmann (1966, 1991) was very concerned with the nature and construction of knowledge and how it gains significance in society, thus, social constructivism functions as a paradigm which is social in nature and not substantive. Culture is *not* perceived as something static but it is dynamic within a social sphere. Here, it is always in constant change under the construction and re-construction of knowledge, based on its human members who shape and make up that social reality. Social constructivism can best be contrasted with *rational choice*, which is a social theory that offers a *framework* for understanding how actors operate with *conviction* within *fixed rational preferences* that they attempt to maximize under a set of constraints. (adapted from Barnett, 2011:154). In this way, the relativism in social constructivism recognizes knowledge and truth as *created* and not *discovered* by the mind. (Schwandt, 2003) So the curiosity in social constructivism, and in this analysis, is more concerned with *who holds* the legitimacy of knowledge and truth, rather than *what is* the knowledge and truth.

The organization of interest, namely Biogen, works under the social structure of transnationalism and ideological structure of neo-liberal institutionalism, where functional integration works under a strategy of competence employment and CSR. By emphasizing the social construction of reality, we are also questioning what is frequently taken for granted. (Barnett, 2011:155).

This social construction of reality also shapes what is viewed as *legitimate action*, and;

“Actors are not born outside or prior to society, as individualism claims. Instead, actors are produced and created by their cultural environment. Nurture, not nature. (...) Do we choose only the most efficient action? Do the ends justify the means? Or, is certain action just unacceptable?” (ibid)

The world is defined by material and ideational forces. But these ideas are not akin to beliefs or psychological states that reside inside our heads. Instead, these ideas are *social*. Our mental maps are shaped by collectively held ideas such as knowledge, symbols, language, and rules. Idealism does not reject material reality but instead observes that the meaning and construction of that material reality is dependent on ideas and interpretation. (ibid)

The balance of power does not objectively exist out there waiting to be discovered; instead [actors] debate what is the *balance* of power, what is its *meaning*, and how they should *respond*. Hereby, *Social Constructivism* is therefore about *human consciousness* and its role in multi- and inter-social life (adapted from Ruggie 1998: 856) (found in Barnett, 2011:155) and it also accepts some forms of holism and structuralism.

4.1. Perspective on culture: why is culture important to the corporation?

This research wants to thematize culture as an *idea*, which has undergone different forms through out history and gradually become this anthropological and popular 'corporate culture' concept that we understand today. Some of the old meanings that reside in the terminology, which has changed through time, has to do with the perception of cultivating or acting on the intrinsic social spirit of a group of people. The word culture comes from the latin *cultura*, which is derived from a verb (colo), which both holds meanings of nurturing and cultivating/growing something in spirit; to inhabit a place and decorate something, and finally worship, honor and heed rules, gods or men (Translated and adapted from Hastrup, 2007: 17).

Cicero (106-46 BCE), one of the big classical thinkers, talked about *cultura animi*, cultivation of the mind/spirit, and thereby, sowed the seed for the modern culture concept (ibid). From this point of departure, I would argue, that *cultural diversity and inclusion* as an *idea* within management literature is *creative* and *manipulative* in nature. It has a *transient* and *holistic* management tone to it, where it is the *cultivation* of a *constructed social spirit* under a neo-liberal branding terminology; pointing toward an organizational existence based on one or multiple target markets for profit. Here, the reputational quality of the organization, seek to direct a shareholder/stakeholder vitality, by articulating a perspective of the world as being in a state if

globalization; demanding a *broad* inclusions of different types of humans. Identical to all of these neo-liberal affairs, is that they work for profit, have external competitors, build shareholder relations and meet pressure from stakeholders. Here, the negotiated order or negotiated culture approach is compatible with the profit-organization, as it seeks to transact, translate and transfer *tacit* knowledge into syntactical resources with problem solving qualities (see Charlile, Sep-Oct, 2004).

To understand the interesting tone to '*cultural diversity*' as a theme of interest to management literature, the issue of power is not avoidable. In military strategy, '*Dīvide et īmpera*' is latin for divide and rule or divide and conquer. Basically, in politics, it is how to gain power and maintain it by breaking up larger organizations or concentrations of power into pieces, that apart, have less power than the one implementing the strategy. It refers to a strategy of breaking up the existing power structures, and prevent smaller power groups from uniting or linking up by means of causing rivalries and inducing discord among the people.

Culture as a *Eurocentric* or *Anglo-American* concept can be argueable, but it had a push forward in the European Renaissance, when it was realized that humans was the *pearl* in the mythological idea of 'God's creation', and therefore, man had to cultivate this concept and desire toward humanism, in order to realize man's potential to the *fullest* and evolve as a species by mapping everything in the world. How humans have come together and created societies generated expeditions and ventures under national romanticism and patriotism; generating art, architecture and 'volksgeist' (see Hegel, 1801). The patriotism had a holy, monolistic and static reflection to it, as being a kingdom under the king of kings in heaven (Christian mythology of God in the heavens). Each nation-state served as a static reference point for culture, perserved under the rule of law; which in turn, was created from the instrinsic morality and ethics of that national culture, which was founded on christian values. This created a static perception of a *national culture*, as the national constitution was the moral framing of principles for *personal affairs* and development of the *citizen*, and from here, the idea of culture became percieved as being *static* with the only concern of *survival* and *self-help*, as it is percieved in realism (e.g. see Hobbes, 1651). (parts are inspired, translated and adapted from Hastrup, 2007: 20-23)(International Relations Theory) This static concept of culture made the nation-state into a very strategic strong unit that could not be

exposed externally from *Divide et impera*, but survived through the *Raison d'état* (Reason of the State), where each nation-state managed to hold the country together by virtue of the 3 S's; Statism, Survival and Self-help (relating to theory within realism)

But from the interpretivist approach, it is acknowledged, that culture *also* has a dynamic feature to it. Thus, in this renaissance quest for enlightenment, a formation project for cultural identity was constructed and characterized by a systematic knowledge thirst on one hand, and an *articulation* of a national *constitution* for governing people, which aspired to the cultural *principles* of the constitution, on the other hand. Henceforth, by virtue of enlightenment thinkers such as Descartes (1596-1650) a major divide in the world was constructed between the *human condition* and *ways to live life*. These differences were subordinated to a more comprehensive division between the modern man as a rational subject, which by virtue was guided by intellect and reason, where on the other hand, the premodern man was directed by tradition and culture; generating the divide myth between the 'us' and 'them' thinking, which Descartes compared to a dualistic pattern of 'reason' and 'culture' thinking. To Descartes, rationalism was individualistic in nature, as rational thinking was the *starting point* in any individual affair, whereas culture is a collective habit thinking relating to deeper feelings and passions. (Translated and adapted from Hastrup, 2007: 78-79)

Today, rationalism from an international or regional perspective of integration has taken a more neo-functional position to cooperative policies of trade and integration through bodies such as the EU. Profit-organizations use organizational culture literature to find the right lens through which management theory could serve as a practical control device to understand and organize collective identity and habit in the organization, known as *social control*. Simultaneously, it is politically pushed *externally* from regional *spill overs* and growing economic interdependence between neighbouring nations. Some of this regional cooperation is inspired by *strukturalism*, which is criticized for its rigidity and ahistoricism, but has a focus on how everything is complex interrelated systems which has meaning because of the *language system* in which it operates. In turn, this language system is deeply interrelated with specific old and traditional cultures, which are not in spirit that easily to submit under a corporate culture device – such as the Danish national culture.

These external national cultures *pressure* the corporate cultures as a stakeholder; especially through legislation. The outcome of the strategic implementation of managed culture and performance will *mix* with the outcomes and decisions of political matters from international complexities, which the managers or executives *should* and *can* exploit from a neo-liberal point of view. However, challenges arise in the management process where undesired static and national homogeneity or segregation dominate the culture in practice. When only *one* particular socio-political or national way of thinking dominate the discourse against the integral strategy of the organization. When inefficient socio-political outcomes happens in the organization, it often has a management dilemma to it, where the organization, group or team in reality has developed one particular social way of thinking, acting and doing the same wrong things over and over again. It could be cultural *polarization* or *segregation* of different workgroups in separate subcultures, where they will generate a 'us-vs-them' attitude and hinder effective teamwork (Adler, 1997; Hofstede, 1980; Schneider & Barsoux 1997) (Tukiainen, 2011: 29) Also, it could result from undesirable *ethnocentrism*, where people in *one* specific culture or group is in power believe *their* culture to be central or superior to all the others.

As an example, ethnicity as a more conscious selection of *habitual particularities* (rather than just a genetic ethnicity classification) occur *only* where it is social or political relevant. Just like significant cultural differences can be used to communicate ethnic differences, in the same way can sex and gender differences be used for socio-political reasons to define a cultural standard, where only *one* gender or sexual behavior is tolerated, or particular gender codes is more consciously selected to suppress other gender particularities in positions of power. Whenever differences become social or political relevant, it will in turn only result in irrational groupings and polemetic disturbance (*Divide et impera*) rather than a cohesive strategic progression toward a targeted and more functional team-spirit. This is why cultural analysis, discursive constructions and international relations are important in order to *understand* the organizational health in general, and why *cultural diversity* as a *concept* has a unavoidable socio-political and international dimension to it.

"The assumptions and values embedded within and between demographic groups from which an organization pull its employees are likely to be reflected in the organization's culture. As a result of power types, the cultural diversity of an organization may reflect an unequal allocation of power among diverse groups" (Ragins, 1995) (See Keyton, 2011:103)

One of the most distinguishing feature between nations and cultures is *language*. (Keyton, 2011:120) They can have huge implications for the health and management of the corporate culture. Yet, when corporate units move beyond national identity, we see cultural infusion or hybridity occur as new social structures; where organizations are actors or agents in an institutional sector. According to a lot of institutional theory, this means, that the culture of the host country and the institutional sector infiltrate the corporate culture of the company; generating a hybrid culture or simply the institutionalized business unit infuse into the cultural norms of the host country where they partially follow the institutionalized norms in the sector they act. This means, that the institutionalized culture is *exogenous* from the socially or corporate constructed culture *inside* the framework of the organization. Institutional infusion from normative or mimetic pressure is also known as *institutional isomorphism* (Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2010) where the mimetic pressure result primarily from uncertainty, and where the organizational behavior imitates peers that are perceived to be successful or influential in the host country. Or the normative pressures pertain to what is widely considered '*a proper course of action*', or even '*a moral duty*' (Suchman, 1995) (found at (Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2010) This research is not about *institutional legitimacy*, but it is important to include and reflect on the *institutional perspective* in order to understand the external institutionalized *pressures* the corporate culture *meet* in the host country from stakeholders.

Socio-political and structural understandings of power are integrated, built into the day-to-day interactions and open for *discursive manipulation*. The influence of others and the perception of 'the self' in comparison to many other dimensions, such as; colleagues, work division, education, demographic location of workplace and subordinate/superior relations have *huge* importance for the health of the organization. *Why do people do what they do where they do it?* Internal political division can resist the executives based on assumptions or expectations toward national norms, social backgrounds, gender roles, age, ethnicity, wage differences or technological

proWess. This socio-political dimension has to be put into consideration from the managing of teams, and this research argues, that it can be strategically framed into maintaining negotiated meaning system(s).

Talking about discursive constructions, for many managerial scholars, the socio-political implications and formulation of an analytical *diagnosis* is the central idea behind the reason for investigating the organization and its culture(s), and it is central to a lot of management and organization literature, where culture might best be defined as ‘*the way we do things around here*’ but also, a lot of literature points to the idea how it *is* possible to manipulate the culture as a control device toward corporate integration (beyond nationalism) to generate organizational success and having a competitive advantage. Significant to this idea of managing cultural diversity in a business unit, is that when the collective work identity is *certain* among employees, it is easier for members to take concerned action, and it is possible for them to get more things accomplished. (adapted from Pfeffer, 1992: 152)¹⁹ This idea has generated a lot of symbolic leadership literature with the idea of;

Behind every successful leader is a vibrant culture that engages and energizes employees. In almost every case, that culture has been defined, shaped and personified by the leader. The CEO of a company in what is arguably the most competitive industry, financial services, describes the steps that he took, and that other leaders can take, to build a distinctive, dynamic culture. (Kuhlmann, 2010 – Culture driven leadership, Corporate culture)

These articulations of symbolic leadership are maintained through *normative discourses*. *Normative discourses* are hard to criticize, as they articulate the ‘ideal standard’, ‘model’ or ‘truth’. As soon as something is considered normal, saying anything against it or formulating a critique, can be taken personally by those who *subscribe* to this ‘truth’, and the knowledge within. Here, a lot of corporate boards clash with reality in their attempt to cultivate (an almost religious) corporate culture with the articulation of a symbolic leadership archetype, which could be the CEO, or the founder of the company. The same goes with the connotation of symbols, stories, jargon or metaphors within the company. As soon as they have *incentric* symbolic meanings or reasons,

¹⁹ Pfeffer is known for his ‘Resource Dependence Theory’ in relation to power struggles.

they are hard to change and become vehicles for the employees *basic assumptions* (see Schein, 1984)

This kind of organizational culture management is *very* focused on the *strength* of their culture. The advantages from this perspective is that it creates stability within the organization and it differentiates from other organization; it allows employees to *identify* themselves with the organization and facilitates employees in ways desired by management. On the other hand, the disadvantages involves how the culture makes merging with other organizations more difficult. Moreover, it attracts and retains similar kinds of employees, thereby *limiting* the diversity of thought, and also, it can be '*too much of a good thing*' if it creates extreme behaviors among employees; making the adaption to a changing environment more difficult. (adapted from Huczynski & Buchanan, 2013: 131)

Contrasted to the *symbolic leadership* idea to corporate culture management is the social science approaches such as the *differentiation* and *fragmentation* perspectives on organizational culture management. Both perspectives emphasize that the focus on organizational culture is overused, over-inclusive and under-defined. Here, on one side, differentiation perspective regards a single organization as consisting of *many* groups, each with their own sub-cultures. Each of these has their own characteristics which differ from those of their neighbors; inviting the idea of *cultural pluralism* to the framing under one umbrella organization. (Huczynski & Buchanan, 2013: 125) The *fragmentation* perspective on culture assumes the absence of consensus and stresses the inevitability of conflict. Here, it focuses on the complexity and variety of interests, opinion and power differences between different groupings within the cultures. (ibid)

National origin has often served as the point of departure for managers as a *source* of values, norms and beliefs - but it is not determinant with respect to behavior or the outcomes of communication among employees. Every individual *characteristic* of a team member and the issues he or she faces have an emotional relation to *prior social experience*, which shapes the cultural traits that become salient in the social negotiation of meaning *in* their interaction. This is where this research views organizational members from a theoretical framing of being *unique* from creativity. They have the feature of co-creating and re-producing multiply distinct cultures with infinite possible combination of creativity. Here, they come together and are expressed through the rationality of meaning and grow through negotiated order.

4.2. The constant act of sense making and how it is transient and in flux

Before digging deeper into the concept of negotiated meaning systems and how these are uniquely co-created or reproduced, it is also important to understand micro perspective of *sense making* in order to understand culture as a framing of social consciousness. To be human also includes a constant practice of making sense of our *own* social role(s) in relation to individual purpose in our environment, in order to decide action with deliberate intent. The descriptively view on the nature of organized sense making acknowledge it to be transient. Common to the human nature is the transient experience of sense making from circumstantial flux, shared meaning creation, interdependence, and lastly; our own identity formulation. We rarely see things as they are, we see them as *we* are; which can turn out to be a potential direction to both danger or success. Pragmatic goals are kept in sight and they are challenged from our social responsibility to our environment and the people around us. To understand the whole framing of our human experience, we tend to translate uncertainty into assurance through sense making and shared meanings in our social settings. Thus, sense making is a social process; it is *never* solitary. How you make sense internally is contingent in others, not saying it will always *match* the sense making of others, because it is not driven by *accuracy*; it is driven by *plausibility*. If you believe that the meaning created in front of you is *likely* or *acceptable*, then it is real for *you* and you will *act* on that meaning (Keyton, 2011: 47) The intellectual proposition of thesis and the negating antithesis into a synthesis, also require emotional motivation and subjective sense making before we believe it to be true and a moving factor for action and interaction. The relationship between apathy and flow could be explained as a need for *motivation* and *attention* that match the individual's skill level and satisfaction (see Csikszentmihalyi, flow theory, 1991). Motivation and attention require *context* and *meaning*. If we don't understand the value of a concept or a direction, or simply how to apply our role to it, it quickly leaves our mind and become useless.

Sense making demands explanations from what we assume to experience, which are both retrospective, prospective, social and systemic in order for us to presume our role and course for action henceforth.

“Sense-making involves turning circumstances into a situation that is comprehended explicitly in words and that serves as a springboard into action.” (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005: 409)

According to Weick & Sutcliffe (2005) Sense-making involves an ongoing and retrospective development of plausible images that rationalize what people are doing. Here, it is viewed as an ongoing and significant process of organizing ‘*what is going on*’. Sensemaking unfolds as a *sequence*, in which people concerned with identity in the social context of other actors, engage in ongoing circumstances, from which they extract cues and make plausible sense *retrospectively*, while enacting more or less order into those ongoing circumstances. (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005: 409)

“In this way, sensemaking is a way station on the road to a consensually constructed and coordinated system of action (Taylor & Van Every, 2000: 275)” (found in Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005: 409)

From this metaphor of ‘way station’, they agree that the ongoing retrospective development of *plausible* images imply three important points about the quest for meaning in organizational life; first, the occurrence of sense-making when a flow of organizational circumstances is turned into words and *salient categories* (from language and perspective). Second, when organization is organizing itself embodied in *written and spoken texts* (discursive constructions). Third, is the reading, writing, conversing, and editing as *crucial actions* that serve as the media through which ‘the invisible hand’ of institutions shapes conduct. (Gioia et al. 1994: 365) (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005: 409)

Hence the nature of sensemaking is considered as being ongoing, instrumental, subtle, swift, social and easily taken for granted and linked to *notion*, and therefore, it is transient in nature and hard to control, as every second the individual encounters “*a million things that go on*” and the ongoing potential for “*clusters of things that go wrong*”. So, every person practice the:

“differentiation and simple-location, identification and classification, regularizing and routinization [to translate] the intractable or obdurate into a form that is more amenable to functional deployment” (Chia 2000: 517)(found in Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005: 411)

In this way, we are able to label and categorize our surroundings and circumstances in order to stabilize the streaming of experience and have a way station on the road to a *consensually constructed and coordinated system of action* (adapted from Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005).

4.3. Negotiated Meaning Systems, order as a cultural transaction

“Patterns of meaning and agency in the organization arise from the interactions and negotiations of its members” (Brannen & Salk, 2000: 456)

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological perspective that has been influential in the socio-psychological and anthropological disciplines. Some of the great influences has been from Strauss and Mead. Strauss introduced the concept of negotiated order in 1978 (Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011: 9) and it has been the inspiration behind the concept of a *negotiated culture approach*, which seeks to understand how meaning is created and maintained in the organization between agents or actors *interaction systems*. Mead (1913) is famous for his detailed analysis of how the individual's awareness about 'the self' is only made possible through socialization; thereby, he divided the individual into three categories of the socio-developed 'self', the observing, perceiving and evaluating 'me' and the spontaneous acting 'I'. The *self* emerges through social interaction and the *reflexivity* of a *generalized other*. (see Mead, 1913, 374-380).

From the way station of 'the self', the *generalized other* is the general notion that a person has of the common expectations that others have about actions and thoughts within a particular society, and thus; serves to clarify their relation to the other as a representative member of a shared social system (O'Neill, 1972: 169). Individuals react to the expectations of others, thereby *orienting* themselves to the norms and values of their community or group. In this way, whenever an actor tries to figure out what is expected of them within the shared social system; they are taking on the perspective of the *generalized other* in order to find a *coordinated system for action*. In this way, on the road to a *consensually constructed and coordinated system of action*, there is not just *one* right way to approach negotiated meaning, there are only *effective* and *less effective* approaches, and these vary according to many contextual factors. It posits that '*patterns of meaning and agency in the organization arise from the interactions and negotiations of its members*' (Brannen & Salk, 2000) (found in Romani et al., 2011: 9-10)

The process of social interchange between agents can best be illustrated as the figure below

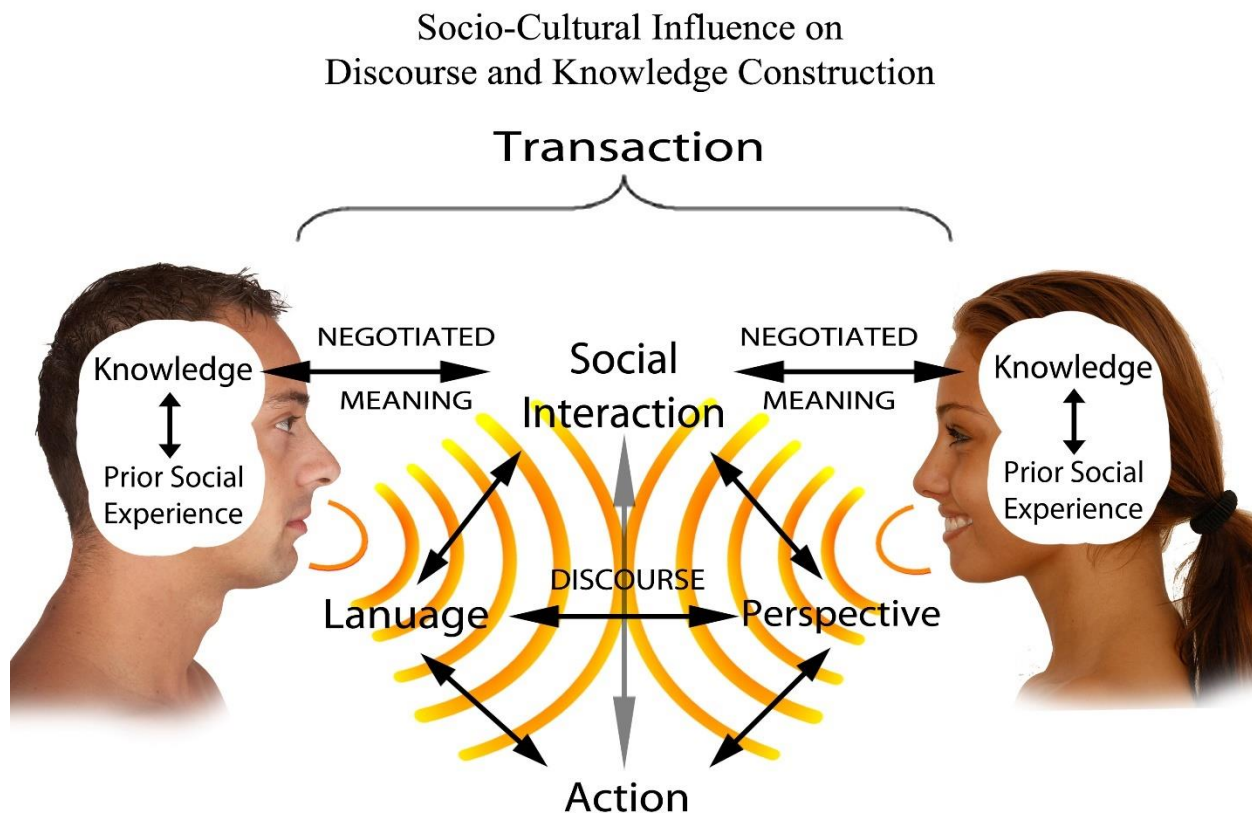


Figure 1: Doolittle, 2001: 509

The diagrammatic representation illustrates how meaning is *negotiated* through a *transaction* in the social interaction, based on individual *knowledge* and *prior social experiences*; generating a contemporary *discourse* framed by language, action and perspective. (Doolittle, 2001: 509). The philosophical and empirical investigations of social constructivism have resulted in many principles regarding the nature of human thought and behavior. (ibid)

Knowledge is where the cultural perspective emerges as it links to human *reflection* and *doing*, which determines what kind of data and information are valid. The *transaction* of negotiated meaning between two or multiple actors are linked to the individual's tacit knowledge which is mirrored in *prior* social experience. According to Levstik and Barton (2001);

“History, too, has its own forms of oral discourse, including expositions, explanations, justifications, narratives, and dialogue. Each of these genres uses historical content and processes as the substance of discourse. Making sense in history, then, is at least partially constructed within (or in opposition to) this discourse, as participants test out ideas, listen to other possibilities, ask questions, and challenge interpretations.” (Levstik & Barton, 2001)

Brannen and Salk (2000) found that issues between German-Japanese joint ventures on various phases of national tradition on the development of production had led to the development of negotiated solutions, and consequently, the development of a specific organizational culture based on negotiated meaning. Hereby, they show that organizational culture development is foremost linked to salient issues and their *resolution* rather than the cultural (national) profile of those (people or organizations) involved in the social interaction. (Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011: 9) This case, among others, illustrate a form of negotiation that led to the emergence of a negotiated culture from intercultural management practices. In this way, international joint ventures seem to generate negotiated *solutions* whenever they have a strong common denominator of *resolution*. These negotiated solutions take place between organizations, headquarters and subsidiaries, professional groups and individuals. (ibid) They can touch upon *knowledge or technology transfer, strategy and communication, and corporate social responsibility (CSR)* (ibid)

With the absense of a negotiated partner, meanings are neither *developed* nor *changed* and become disconnected from reality. Here, *reinterpretation* is important in order to create better meaning and understanding. An example could be, how a westernized company might reproduce a perspective on non-western people that no longer matches the contemporary, complex and multi-directional business reality. (ibid) In this case, it is important to create a context wherein a transaction between partners can form their own social interchange.

Today, interpretive researchers are reluctant to presume or catagorize people's sense-making, meaning and cultural identity as based on their nationality, political ideology or religion. Since fixed rational macro-systems are still very culturally diverse on the *inside* at a micro level. Here, it seems impossible that the people may share same meanings based *mainly* on location, religion, age, social group, political affiliation, ethnic group, family status and so on. In the context of work, interpersonal interactions happens all the time where shared meanings occur *beyond*

national reflection, traditional normalization and ideological intent – social interactions happens *all the time* where the national, traditional or ideological reflections are ill-suited as a relevant reference point for explaining transaction of knowledge, strategy and communication.

Romani et. al. (2011) argue that all meanings are linked with the notion of *competance*: they form a *meaning system* (Romani et. al., 2011: 10) When similar meaning systems are found across professions, industries, and generations within the same country, we can talk about a *(socio)- cultural meaning system*. This meaning system has been acquired and is present in the host country (ibid)

One way this meaning system may be present could be in the way the national education system values competence in relation to epistemological disciplines or faculties. This may be displayed in various novels and theatrical plays in waves of specific domain of culture or entertainmen/news industries. It may be an organizing principle or jargon in professional trainings; it may even be at the centre of deliberative debates in professional organizations and so on. In sum, meaning systems are '*an articulation of meanings: not shared meanings and certainly not shared opinion.*' This stands in clear contrast to previous studies that have defined and investigated culture as shared meanings, inspired by the works of Geertz (1973) or Berger and Luckmann (1955) for example. (Romani et. al., 2011: 11)

But it is essential to understand that meaning system is not the same as culture or rational choice.

"Meaning systems do not have the ambition of explicating a culture, as though culture were something stable and monolithic. Conversely, meaning systems reveal how a group of people use interconnected meanings to make sense of past, present or future situations and how they themselves transform the meaning system they use." (Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011: 11)

The meaning system are only fragments which can reflect a limited cultural aspect, such as a notion or a concept of connectedness. However, these aspects can have important implications in a given environment (ibid). In this way, meaning systems are well matched for the study of interaction as they offer an analysis on the level of interpersonal action and their interchange – meaning is created in our lives by attribution to *situations*, and at the level on which we experience them. As long as this situation demands shared *resolution*, people start a transactional bargain of negotiated meaning

toward *solution* and action, away from uncertainty and frozen action. This theoretical framing of interpersonal action also make way for a concept to show the dynamic features of culture as being in a constant inter-change.

Important to understanding the function of the meaning system, is to understand the power balance between partners, and how meanings are negotiated in action *through* discursive agents. Talking about cultural differences can mean different things to different people. The variety of assumptions could be from: 1) *depiction of experienced differences*, 2) *constructed stories*, 3) *ways to organize or separate employees* or 4) *as excuses for explaining a current situation* (ibid). One familiar way of seeing constructed stories could be the historical narrative of nation-states and their success or failure stories. Or it could be a religious narrative of holy people, conceptualizing social differences or social order as components from a mythological categorization system of ‘*good vs evil*’. Again, it is important to remember that meaning systems are not *fixed*, but they are unavoidable situational negotiations of taking *social control*; with the purpose of reaching the same meaning that all can agree on, and which in turn generate a *consensually constructed* and *coordinated system of action*.

“To put the conclusion more bluntly, all that we take to be the case—our propositional representations of everything from physics to psychology, geography to government—gain their legitimacy not by virtue of their capacities to map or picture the world, but through processes of social interchange [language].” (Gergen, 1995: 24)

Ybema and Byun (2009) (found in (Romani et al., 2011: 12) argue that the actual discussion and definitive attempt to understand the other ‘different’ is actually what renders difference. Especially if they are in another hierarchical position or speak a foreign language. So, the managerial idiosyncrasy of understanding cultural diversity as an intent to manage knowledge as a control device, it has relations to power-imbalance and status. Therefore, it will most often generate some subcultural resistance from more unfortunate actors, which e.g. have not been able to climb the ladder of prestige with age or because of personal characteristics, behavior, placement, language issues, or inadequate social skill. Also, if the *normative discourse* of management ‘separate’ employees in the informative narrative by a focus on *too much* diversity disturbance. This ‘diversity focus’ would in turn only generate collective understandings of power imbalances, uncertainty, victimization and inequality in the ‘diversity narrative’.

An example of this could be the reproduction of ‘organizational demons’ aka. negatives, such as obsolete racial narratives in relation to crime, sexuality in relation to sodomy, or chauvinistic gender roles as means to understand legitimized power positions. Narratives with such differentiating negatives and mythical representation of ‘abnormality’ can often result in the most commonly social errors in the cross-cultural interaction by means of *re-producing* obsolete or oblivious *normative* discourses. This is where the cross-cultural management team should navigate the discourse *away* from these negatives and focus on transferring special *insight knowledge* on how resolute situational negotiations among stakeholders turn out, and thereby, incorporate their stories of success to the framing *in* the normative discourse - both within and outside the corporation, for others to aspire.

"Truth is not to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born between people collectively searching for truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction" (Bakhtin, 1984: 110). Truth, in this case, is a socially constructed and agreed upon truth resulting from "co-participation in cultural practices" (Cobb & Yackel, 1996: 37).

When people subscribe to an opinion, they subscribe to an attitude as well, which Hall (1956) called “self-evident truths” of the trainees – unquestioned, unexamined, taken-for-granted beliefs assumed to be “true” and “common sensical” – arguments such as “these kind of people are the same wherever you go” or “how can you possibly understand what I have experienced?” (inspired from Hall’s work, 1956) (found in Asante, Miike, & Yin, 2008: 12) these are *hard* normative attitudes, and they are difficult to persuade or convince otherwise. They are *normatively* impossible to argue against, as they idiographically resemble a tacit aspect that are inherent to the ‘self’ of the actor’s *prior social experience* and social grouping. It emerged through interaction and the reflexivity of the *generalized other* in their former sozialisation processes. These attitudes could excel through a *re-interpretation* of a resolution toward a formulation of shared goals, where the clashing counterparts are staged together and deliberately striving to formulate a new negotiated solution out of *vitality* or *desire* for developing and improving the self. It should *never* be a management demand, because, these attitudes would in the end only generate a resisting attitude toward even negotiating, and in worst case senario, diplomacy will fail and ‘war’ as the last possible resort will be the meaning creation that will manifest. Here, creating a social interaction where negotiated solution is needed for *both* partners, demands a meaning system,

where re-interpretation have to take place. Where they have to change their attitude and include each other in order to reach some goals that is easiest, or even vital, *only* through an attitude of cooperation. Stubborn members who subscribe to only their *own* truth as a ‘force of nature’, and close the eyes to the deconstruction of their contemporary ‘black and white’ paradigms, has to undergo some inter-change through a framing of social interaction that helps them *discover* new subjective knowledge about their counterparts and experience a new situational resolution toward their social reality. It is important to let *them* discover and open up to a more complex reality which surrounds them. In sum, power imbalance should be addressed *in* the organization to avoid inequality, but not from the point of departure of misery from difference, but from succes through resolutions of new meaning creations.

Moreover, people in dominant positions of power are more likely to develop a certain kind of ethnocentrism, and less likely to revive their position when addressed with ‘cultural differences’, which makes it hard or even impossible for senior management to actually listen to the voices of the ‘undesireable cultures’ that happend to be there in the organizational reality. With the absense of a negotiated partner, meanings are neither *developed* nor *changed* and become disconnected from reality. Here again, *reinterpretation* is important in order to create better meaning, understanding and solution that drives both counterparts toward self-development and *ideographic* succes through sharing *social knowledge* and hope and faith toward future *social experiences*. In this way, it is possible to transform ‘stubborn members’ and enlightend ‘obsolete managers’ by staging a context for negotiation and re-interpreting the situation into a new system where meaning is created by focusing on *solutions* that will somehow profit all sites and interests; and in turn, generate order – negotiated order as a *social control device*.

So, to conclude in short, what *drives* a culture is its knowledge creation and *shared* social experience through a system of meaning, which in turn, is an *articulation* and *agreement* of meanings; not shared meanings and certainly not a shared opinion (Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011). *meaning systems reveal how a group of people use interconnected meanings to make sense of past, present or future situations and how they themselves transform the meaning system they use (ibid).* to find *consensually constructed* and *coordinated system of action*. These negotiated solutions take place between organizations, headquarters and subsidiaries, professional groups and individuals. (ibid) They can touch upon 1) *knowledge or technology*

transfer, 2) *strategy and communication*, and 3) *corporate social responsibility (CSR)*. In order for the negotiated meaning to work, language and perspective has to be alligned to a discourse for action. Moreover, the negotiated meaning *needs* to reflect some amount of *honesty* and *loyalty* towards the resolution created from the negotiated meanings and structured knowledge from all agents included.

4.4. Social barriers to knowledge sharing or technology transfer

A lot of management literature define knowledge as a resource *intrinsic* to the *human* resource. In the process of finding negotiated solutions, the transfer and understanding of knowledge in the interaction has pragmatic barriers to it. Who gets to know *my* knowledge? And even more, who has the right to structure or manage *my* knowledge in relation to other's knowledge? Or who decides what knowledge is more important than other knowledge? Knowledge is linked to power, and there is no doubt about that - no matter what meaning is created in the negotiation. But knowledge is also linked to specific social constructions of discourse, therefore, it is hard to view it *plainly* as a 'transferable' resource *for* the organization, as it cross over to the tacit dimension of human understanding and behavior, but still, in an effort to co-construct a better version where all parties find meaning from the resolution, makes the bargain for *translating* knowledge more *persuasive* from an articulation of meaning and nurturing of future and *prior social experience*. It leaves the discourse more open for manipulation.

"Defining knowledge management research is challenging because a complete and agreed-upon definition of knowledge remains elusive. Typically, knowledge management is defined as the generation, representation, storage, transfer, transformation, application, embedding and protecting of organizational knowledge (adapted from Hedlund, 1994, p. 76)." (Stabell & Schultze, 2004, p. 551)

In order to define knowledge, De Long & Fahey (2000) find it crucial to distinguish between data, information, and knowledge. Knowledge is where the cultural perspective emerges as it links to human *reflection* and *doing*, which determines what kind of data and information are

valid. De Long & Fahey (2000) define '*knowledge within the organization*' as having three different and distinct types of knowledge qualities; Human- Social- and Structured Knowledge.

Human knowledge (Adopted from De Long & Fahey, 2000: 114-115) links to the individual level; what an individual knows and how she or he knows it and does it. It is linked to skill and personal experience of expertise and wisdom, whereas most of it is tacit and encapsulated in the body by a past mastering of skills. In order to transfer this knowledge, teaching is needed or practical demonstrations of sharing through social presentation.

Social knowledge (ibid) links to the group level, and could be a *community or network of practice* (See Brown & Duguid, 2001, p. 204). It has to do with the co-created social reality that human beings live within; here, interaction and relationships between individuals shape the very foundation of knowledge of what is important and what is not. This social foundation is where collaboration shapes the events, meaning-makings, and production of conversations in collaboration; which in turn will become shared group knowledge and beliefs with unique integration and shared stories, containing values, norms, and practices. It is the sum of a *shared collective knowledge within the group*, which might be taken for granted, be normalized or termed obvious. The tacit knowledge would often be hiding in explicit expert terminology *in* the discourses and shared practices; determining assumptions about their reality.

Structured knowledge (ibid) links to the organizational level. It is where knowledge is considered to exist in a system or a setting of its own - explained by routines, processes, codification, tools and formal rules of practice. Here, knowledge is a kind of formal *explicit* normalization or organized information of a function toward rules or manual. In an organization, this could be how everyone accesses databases, how to schedule work and meetings or how to handle technologies. What is notably different with this definition of knowledge, compared to the two others, is the notion of how it can exist *independently* on its own *without* a social or human dimension to it, and therefore seems more manageable – relating to artificial intelligence and software. Also, this kind of knowledge is easy to transfer from human to human, from group to group.

In this way, knowledge exists on several levels and is interrelated with *social interaction*, *prior social experience* and *rational choice* of culture. (Adopted by De Long & Fahey, 2000) Culture can be perceived from a macro and micro perspective. Macro-cultures share a pattern that

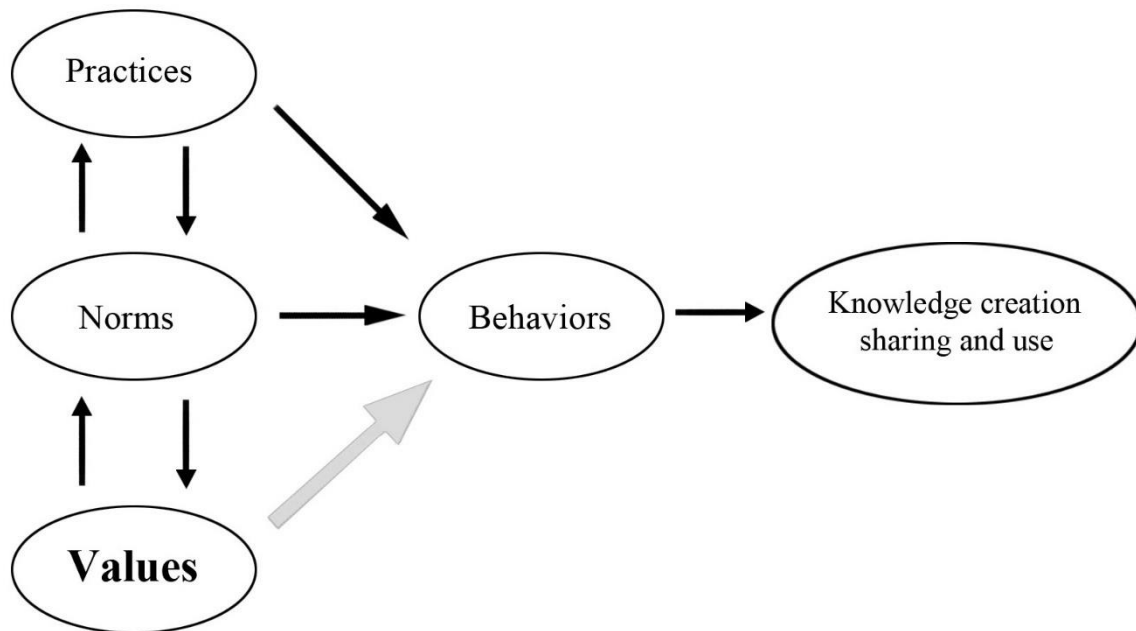
is epistemological and etymological in nature and is therefore encapsulated in e.g. national culture, ideological culture, scientific tradition or corporate culture. On the other hand, subcultures in an organizational setting are often more accessible and open for inter-change through conceptual manipulation *in* the interaction; thereby, subcultures pertain the whole organizational and corporate body.

According to De Long and Fahey (2000) culture is three dimensional; consisting of 1) Practices, which are what people do and has the most visible property of cultural behavior. Here, what people do signify the more subliminal or social reflective part of a culture that is 2) Norms. Here, practices are bridging to the nominative world of assumptions about interaction, events, and articulation; hence how they are to be understood. These two dimensions of culture are open for change, but derives from something deeper which is harder to change, that is; 3) Values. This dimension is somehow tacit within the organization and non-visible for outsiders. It determines the practices and norms through philosophical anchors, principles, strategies or goals (Keyton, 2011: 23) which are considered ideal for the consensus of the organization and business.

The values tell what is important and meaningful for action and work effort; does the manager fail to submerge the organizational values efficiently into employee dynamics - the knowledge sharing and knowledge creation behavior will be dysfunctional and distort the desired norms and practices. Figure 2 below shows how this tree dimensional culture perspective can be conceptualized (De Long & Fahey, 2000, p. 116).

Culture Elements Influence Behaviors

Elements of culture:



Note; The thicker arrow denotes the predominant impact of values on behavior.

Figure 2: De Long & Fahey, 2000: 116

In the same way as *knowledge* is created, shared and used in this manner; *culture* is maintained, nurtured and acted upon in a similar manner. In this way, culture and knowledge are *inextricably* linked in organizations in their social interaction, and of course the legitimization of competence inherent to the legitimization of valid knowledge.

In sum, a culture *striving* for diversity, rather than tolerating it, is linked to knowledge and prior social experience in a way where the organization have managed to create a context for innovation where *knowledge* and a feeling of *shared experience* is transmitted beyond *subcultures* in departments and divisions. Here, the *elements* of culture consist of interrelated practices, norms and values, where shared values have a *predominant* impact on individual and social behavior. The norms are going on in the social interaction between people, where negotiated meaning happens within *discursive constructions of language and perspective*. The strength of the *inter-*

changed behavior toward a thriving corporate culture with diverse member must be based on a feeling of inclusiveness, loyalty, transparency and integrity of leaders and members alike, where the knowledge of- and in other departments is shared with the whole organization. Also, a collective feeling of migration toward shared experience should be inherent to all members of the organization; through an active participation of individual sense-making toward a subscription to an active negotiated meaning system, reflected on their own competence which generates success and correlates with a higher purpose. This way of understanding cultural diversity underlines the framework for a thriving meaning system, and lies in the *articulation of meaning created* and the *interaction between members of the organization*.

5. Analysis

So far, this paper have sought to elaborate on the complexity of *cultural diversity and a collective identity* as a theme, and how culture is an idea, and diversity is so much more than national identity.

The analysis part wants to dig into the interviews and the formal articulations of Biogen, to understand how the employee finds meaning in values such as ‘*excellence*’ or ‘*integrity*’. It’s only two of the 5 core value, but exploring these two values should expose a deeper value system, where they generate behavior as a platform for interaction and knowledge sharing, through one or several negotiated meaning systems. Also, the analysis seeks to find meaning from the credo “*Care deeply, work fearlessly, change life*” . It has its articulation in:

1. *We are committed to excellence in all that we do for patients, caregivers, shareholders, community and colleagues.*
2. *We extend our legacy of transforming scientific discoveries into advances in human healthcare as we discover, develop, manufacture and deliver quality products that improve the practice of medicine and the lives of patients.*
3. *We are dedicated to innovation, growth, transformation, and renewal that is creative, constructive, vital and fun.*
4. *We are honest and truthful in all that we do and we conduct our business with the highest level of integrity and dignity.*
5. *We are furthering science education and reducing the impact of our operations on the environment.*

(Articulation behind Biogen’s credo, found at <http://www.cobc-biogen.com/>)

What is of most interest here, is 1) how they are committed to *excellence*, 2) their focus on *science, human healthcare and medicine*, and 2) conducting business with the *highest level of integrity* and ethics, and lastely, 3) They are *globally inclusive* and bias-free and embrace the *potential of diversity* and treat everyone with respect and dignity. What is this all about? Why is this important to Biogen? How does this work, how is this put together and can it be explained?

These formalities, do they extent to a normalization within the groupings of more informal subcultures and team-structures at Biogen Hillerød, and how does the 'Danishness' og 'Hillerød' clash with the corporate formalities? This analysis will dig deeper into the breathing culture at biogen through the self-representations of the four participants. Are the formalities *integrated* into the *espoused* culture at Biogen (Denmark) Manufacturing ApS, Hillerød. *What actually drives their culture'?*"

The assumption from a researcher perspective is, that Biogen has a good strategy for managing diversity and a healthy corporate culture, but in this management effort to keep social control in a foreign country, it is expected that Biogen Hillerød finds some challenges from the 'Danishness' which might appear quite easy at first, because Danes are good with English, but don't want to talk English only. They tend to slow down formalities into informality, humor and goodwill, but also, that a set of rules have made it possible for diversity to meet *face-to-face* and negotiate meaning into a *system for action*, where even the Danish people might tolerate a higher level of formality, as long as resolution and solution is found. At first, what does excellence mean to the employee at Biogen Hillerød?

5.1. Making sense of excellence as a value

"Values are often difficult to articulate and even more difficult to change. Their impact on (meaning creation) knowledge creation and use, however, which is manifested in behaviors, should never be underestimated." (De Long & Fahey, 2000, p. 115)

Cultural values can be defined as *"a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others"* (Hofstede, 2001, p.5) presenting the view of our reality. (Keyton, 2011, p. 23) What is equal to all values is, that they are the *foundation* for how we *normatively assume our social reality* to be understood. The variety of assumptions could be from depiction of experienced differences,

constructed stories, ways to organize or separate employees or as excuses for explaining a current situation and power-balance. (adopted from Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011: 11)

In Biogen's Code of business conduct²⁰ they explain their corporate culture to be defined by how:

*"We are **committed to excellence** in all that we do for patients, caregivers, shareholders, our community and colleagues and are driven by the key components of the Biogen corporate culture."*

This idea of *commitment to excellence* extends even further to the articulation behind their credo; "Care deeply, work fearlessly, change lives":

*"We are **committed to excellence** in all that we do for patients, caregivers, shareholders, community and colleagues"*

And even more, this excellence extends to their vision which goes as following:

*"Through **excellence in all that we do**, Biogen will become the **most effective and most admired company** in the biopharmaceutical industry, providing meaningful benefits for patients and exceptional value for shareholders"*

Much attention and power is given to the articulation of *pride* from 'excellence' and it is also the fourth core value in their 5 pillared *core value system*. Here, it should be obvious that this value is strongly influencing their norms and practices. How people make sense of Biogen differ from person to person, but same for all is *how* they actually manage to bring it to heart in an individual desire to do a good job, and their certainty about how *others* take it for granted, that everyone around them works with excellence. One of the participants answered as following:

"If you feel like you work with excellence, then you feel more relaxed. If you feel like you work with excellence, then you can relax in it I think. So if you... but it's still goal here in the company to work the best you can, and to do it with excellence... If you have that as a goal, and you can get there, then it can more or less give you a more relaxed feeling. If you don't get that, then it is not relaxed... But I think it's... it's a lot about doing things in the best way... where you... but more for yourself... not so much for getting to hear it from others... it's more excellence for yourself." (Appendix 1: 4)

²⁰ Found at: http://www.cobc-biogen.com/our_corporate_culture.aspx?ID=14814 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

Here, excellence is based on a feeling and norm of how you evaluate your *own* work (pragmatically), and how this evaluation makes you calm and empowered. If you evaluate the work as less than excellent, then you still strive for it as a goal, where you *know* you can get there, if you don't get that, then you will *not* be relaxed and find challenge by the excellence of your surroundings. Because, you know you are reaching your goal if you believe in it, if not, then you will *never* get there. It is *not* so much based on recognition from others, but from a *reflexivity* and an individual evaluation of doing a good job.

This lack of recognition from others, is commonly known to Danish culture as a mean to not inflate the ego of others, as a mean to soften the hierarchical structure of those who strive *too* much for social status, but on the other hand, it can also be a tacit way to hold power over others by exploiting intrinsic knowledge. Commonly, this first idea of not praising others toward high recognition, is also known in Danish culture as Jantelov, which means; 'the law of Jante'. It is a concept which was best exposed in Aksel Sandemose novel from 1933; "*En flygtning krydser sit spor*". It represented a social law of how the working-class made sure that no one would rise above them, no matter your social benefits, or superior knowledge or intelligence. Power-relations is articulated by Sandemose to ten laws, which could be understood as norms, where you should never think yourself *better* or *bigger* than the person next to you.

An example of how recognition is hold back by Danish culture could come from another younger consultant employee. He makes sense of excellence in the opposite way, where recognition from others is important, in order to create a *certainty* about excellence.

I think excellence, making sense of excellence for me, comes from recognition of work.... So... it could be... a recognition of work for me would be... not a (pause) not in a money way, you know.... not in a... in uhm... in uhm... when people appreciate, and they see the things you have done they have value for the others, or for the process, or for... you know, the product or... and, you recognize that one when you hear or when you... yeah, when you receive feedback from people saying 'yeah, that was good – thanks for doing that' or, you know, 'Yeah, that was nice, I think this will make a big difference on our pipeline' you know – what ever, what ever has some kind of recognition... to the... to the employee or the team or... to whatever sense it makes to me... it sounds like... you have achieved something... that... is meaningful; not only for yourself, but for (pause) yeah... more people on the team, right? (R: Mhm)" (Appendix 3:5)

In this way, for this employee, the notion of wanting to achieve something meaningful from more feedback can be difficult. There is a normative pressure of excellent inherent to the individual,

where all members strive for a correlation between their work effort and certainty about whether their competencies or skills live up to a high standard *from* recognition by others. This recognition is based on achieving something that is *meaningful*. So excellence is a value, but also about a feeling; of *being* valued in the social reality, as a mythical representation of ‘real’ self-worth and inclusion.

Yet, a third representation of excellence takes a similar normative fashion, but with another edge to it. Here in *manufacturing*, the notion of excellence is tacit and collective in a fancy manner; not spoken of, but taken for granted. It is only addressed when situations occur, where there is a need to call for a *re-interpreting* of excellence. (‘R’ indicates researcher talking):

“well you... we always... I, I think that it is something everyone does [work with excellence]... we always try to be the best at what we do? So that is what I... think when I think excellence... So it's not just me, doing my best but also my... my department doing our best, my colleagues... I think we... we do that, yeah. (R: but is it a strong feeling you have every day? Or just) [Laughs], well nothing... well it's... of course it's there when I do my job... but it's uhm... maybe not in front... the drive (pause) it's the situations where it's just.... 'We can do better than this... this is... this is stupid or crazy to do it like this or this. We can do it better!' So I do think it's like [with a soft voice:] the thought process here?” (Appendix 2: 4)

All three sense makings of excellence categorize it as something intrinsic to the feeling of calm/certainty and trying to do a good job for yourself and the team; linking it to how the individual practice is acted from social imagination of what is *expected* of them from a normative perspective. So, the manufacturing associate believe it to be a norm, that ‘*we always do the best at what we do*’ whereby, she is quite sure that it is not just her, but also her colleagues and her department, therefore, it doesn’t have to be in front of her all the time as a ‘drive’, because she has already evaluated *her* and others excellence to be normatively recognized, as long as she tries to do her best. It is only when she realizes, that the situational meaning, reflected in the norm, is not upheld; here, she confronts the situation with an attitude of “this is stupid” or “a crazy” course of action.

The amount of everyday reflection of excellence is most likely related to *how long* they have been working at Biogen, where at first, the values might seem as novelty to new recruits – but with years, they merge with normative pressures from the employees, as in how their work-behavior matches the colleague’s practices in the social interaction and in social space. So from *her* perspective; excellence should be understood normatively as the ‘thought process’ at Biogen.

Under Biogen's section of values in action, they claim under their 'we work as a team' section that;

*'Biogen brings together employees with a wide variety of backgrounds, skills, and cultures. Combining the **wealth of talent and resources** creates our **diverse and dynamic teams that drive excellence**.*'²¹

So far, we have found that sense making of 'excellence', *might* trigger a meaning-system with many *different* negotiated practices and norms of 1) taking it for granted, as in 'we do our best' 2) a tool for recognition, as in 'we should give feedback to our team mates', or 3) a certainty about evaluation of your own work 'I relax with my own work – excellence is certain when I do my best'. These norms are based on a system of values inherent to the interaction of the employees - does it relate to the other values? And what about possible diversity in interpreting 'excellence'? A senior construction manager at Biogen explains as following:

"Excellence can be a lot of things (R: mhm) uhm... and I think that uhm... Biogen is doing a great job about that... we have uhm... we have uhm... (pause) the position that I am sitting in, is where some of the excellence is coming out from... and I think we are quite good... in our department... I think it is important, very important... and I think also that uhm... if you don't have that, then uhm... then uhm... it would be... more stressful than what we have today... it is also a system where you can... we can say; 'hey, good job' or 'good work' or... and what else we can put in... (R: but is it more like a personal standard thing, or is it more objectively that you have to follow a certain standard?) I think it is both... both..." (Appendix 4: 6)

Here, he sees it as a system where you *can* recognize each other (not Jantelov) To see excellence as a system where you can appreciate each other's job is an interesting dimension to it, as it indicates a *value system* or *meaning system* where *excellence* is linked to the *construction* of the self through the generalized other, as a notion of self-value and valuing the other as: '*we are doing a good job together but focus mainly on our own tasks at hand*'. He acknowledges, that he as an

²¹ Found at: http://www.cobc-biogen.com/we_work_together_as_a_team.aspx?ID=14824 - Last accessed 2016-05-03

employee and manager in the construction department cannot take credit for *all* the excellence (humility), but *some* of it comes from him. This honest self-evaluation ‘*our department is not at the center of attention, because we deal with medicine*’ is structured throughout the interview with the construction manager, but simultaneously, he finds pride in how no one at Biogen Hillerød is incompetent in *their* specific professional area that contribute to the reality at Biogen Hillerød, and this creates certainty about collective actions when diversity hit the table. From the perspective of the employees at Biogen; excellence works from a *notion* that the employee has some *common expectations* toward what *other* employees have about actions and thoughts within Biogen, and thus, serves to clarify their relation to the other as a representative member of a shared social system (adapted from O'Neill, 1972: 169). As in;

“So I do think it’s like [with a soft voice:] the thought process here?” (Appendix 2: 4)

Individuals react to the tacit expectations of others ‘excellence’, thereby *orienting* themselves to the norms from this value of their group and company. In this way, whenever an actor tries to figure out what is expected of them *within* the shared social system, or when diversity makes the perspective in the discourse more difficult; they are taking on the perspective of *commitment to excellence* in order to find a *coordinated system for action* and avoid uncertainty and misinterpretation of the others excellence and value for the company. As in how it is not the drive, but normatively expected that everyone know the valuesystem.

5.1.1. Dealing with mistakes, contrasted to excellence

When asking the senior construction manager about the sense-meaning of the ‘work fearlessly’ (part of the credo) he said it was the same as ‘caring deeply’. It was related to sitting in a global engineer department, which was put together as one, where his superior was at the headquarters in USA. The researcher then further asked about the relation ‘working fearlessly’ had to the notion of unavoidable errors and mistakes that could happen in the pursuit of excellence, where in a way, ‘work fearlessly’ could be toward fear from punishment to do wrong?

“(R: but working fearlessly is it also toward error? Like, it’s human to err... is it some kind of idea of being fearless towards that?) hmm... I think the culture here is uhm... hmm... maybe there is one or two who thinks about it, but normally we are not] ... just working... we are] ... the plan is fantastic

to come into from the outside... because you will see a lot of different people from all around the world... and we have all the same]... we are]... this is not people we are taking from the street, sorry for that picture, but the people here have academic background... all have... and that gives us... a background together that we are academics... and uhm... and we are taking people from... uhm... directly from university, and we take people who have high, high skills from doing micro biology... and uhm.. that means, that we are in another place when we are in front of each other... because we, we know we are here to work great jobs around the medicine for our patients... this is the basics for us”(Appendix 4: 2)

On the road to a *consensually constructed and coordinated system of action*, there is not just *one* right approach to the negotiated meanings, as in ‘*know we are here to work great jobs around the medicine for our patients*’. There are only effective and less effective approaches, and these vary according to many contextual factors. But in this context (Biogen), the meaning system is created around an extraordinary exemplified notion of genius people working with ‘*micro-biology*’, mirroring genius people working ‘*great jobs*’ and caring deeply about ‘*the medicine for patients*’. This is the basic practice for all of them, where all employees want to implement and invest their *specific professional excellence* toward creating value for their main purpose; *medicine*. The shared value of *expertise* from being academic have a *predominant* impact on employee’s behavior, and it posits that patterns of meaning and agency in the organization arise from the interactions and negotiations of its members (Brannen & Salk, 2000)(found in Romani et al., 2011: 9-10) this unique interactional meaning hides in the interpretation when he says;

“that means, that we are in another place when we are in front of each other” (appendix 4:2)

Where ‘another place’ is most likely meant to be compared to being in ‘Denmark’ or ‘Hillerød’ or ‘when people normally interact’. It exposes a specific system of meaning in the interaction of its members. Central to most of the assumptions is how *meaning* arise in the production of medicine as the *purpose* for working at Biogen. In this way, the interviewed senior construction manager has a good angle on how excellence generates different interpretations based on diverse and highly specialized skills, but in the end, it is important to *encourage* people to always do their best; making the context for work *social* in nature

Also, one of the more younger members expressed another notion of *error* when asked to explain what working fearlessly ment to *him*:

“P3: Yeah, this is something I never really quite... really get, you know, but, (R: snickers) but, for me working fearlessly is like... everybody is human, and everybody is able to... or not everybody is able to, but everybody commits mistakes, so, we are all human, and... wow... at some point commit mistakes, and, I think it's, it's okay to commit mistakes, and that is what it means 'work fearlessly' to me, so, even though you commit a mistake, you know, it's not only you or your boss, or you know, the other people sitting on your sides, or other departments... Everybody will at some point commit some mistakes, and, when it says, 'work fearlessly' it means, you can't]... it is okay to make a mistake... because... as an [organization].... Or... we send for the validate... somehow the mistakes that will happen, they can be corrected by the rest of the organization or by yourself, so it means, you shouldn't be afraid of committing a mistake.... (R: So, it's like, 'To err is human'?) Yeah, yeah (R: Laughs) It's human to err, so... I think it's... yeah... then there comes a part like, uhm... I think it's... it goes back to integrity for instance, it's a matter of like, integrity or... characteristic of the person, whether the person says 'Yeah, I committed a mistake, or not', and the person assumes that responsibility or not. But since we have these kind of... core values; 'work fearlessly', I think it's... everybody should just say 'yes, I did a mistake' you know, (R: Yeah) and that is normally what I do... (R: Okay)”(Appendix 3: 2)

Not only does it match a *system of values* (as in how, for him, it goes back to integrity and personal characteristics, which is one of their 5 core values), but also, how to understand mistakes and *dealing* with them in the organization. Mistakes and how they are dealt with are very real and not totally avoidable, but how the management or colleagues *reacts* toward mistakes is rather an important cultural perspective for the social interaction, cultural diversity and sharing of knowledge. The mistakes should be seen as assets of how to *deal* with similar future mistakes, instead of using them for purposes of *humiliation, score keeping or fixed blame* (De Long & Fahey, 2000, p. 122). In other words, it should be to the interest of the whole team and organization, to address mistakes in a *collaborative* process of *knowledge creation*. If one member did something wrong, it should be in all's interest to fix it, hence knowing how these mistakes should be avoided in the future by all members. But still, if errors or mistakes occur, it is still important to feel the recognition from excellence when you do something really good. As in when;

“*they see the things you have done they have value for the others, or for the process, or for... you know, the product.*” (Appendix 3: 5)

De Long & Fahey puts it this way:

“How an organization reacts to mistakes is another norm that shapes the context for social interaction. Mistakes may be covered up, explained away, punished severely, or ignored. Or norms and practices may dictate that mistakes be uncovered and used as a source of learning (...) In either case, the approach used will influence how people interact, and thus will shape the quality of the knowledge created and applied.” (ibid)

The employee at Biogen seems not to be *concerned* about mistakes, because it can be corrected by him/ herself or other members of the organization, because they have a *validation system* (software maybe related to knowledge management?);

“we send for the validate... somehow the mistakes that will happen, they can be corrected by the rest of the organization or by yourself, so it means, you shouldn't be afraid of committing a mistake... (appendix 3: 2)

To conclude, the self-awareness of the organizational *reputational* quality of excellence toward a highly qualified level of competence around *medicine*, demands a normative perspective of global vitality in a broad inclusion of different types of humans, consisting of different cultural backgrounds, with different holds on diverse academic knowledge, skill or competence.

Romani et. al. (2011) argue that all meanings are linked with the notion of *competance*: they form a *meaning system* (Romani et. al., 2011: 10) When similar meaning systems are found across professions, industries, and generations within the same country, we can talk about a (*socio-*) *cultural meaning system*. This meaning system has been acquired and is present in the host country (ibid) Biogen has managed to make their focus upon science, academy and competence a core value, through their emphasis on *excellence*. And in this way, the cross-cultural management at Biogen seeks to move beyond clashes from national identities, gender roles, ethnicity, age and religion etc. through fixed *meaning systems* based on talent, skill and competence through a continuous evaluation and *articulation* of excellence; build into the norms of the employees at work. Here, rational choice to *join* the culture in practice is negotiated from an understanding of the long-term *shared* experiences of doing an *excellent* work together; suggesting a more functional, profitable and sustainable solution to the context for work and profit. The intellectual

proposition to engage into this meaning system of excellence is from the production of medicine. Here, the emotional motivation and subjective sense making of the employees, comes from a belief where it is considered true and a moving factor for action and interaction. The relationship between apathy and flow could be explained as a need for *motivation* and *attention* that match the individual's *excellence* toward employee satisfaction (see Csikszentmihalyi, 1991, to read more about flow theory).

When the Danish Manufacturing Associate was asked, if there was anything about working at Biogen which *she* had found to be truly valuable to *her* as a person, she joyfully responded;

“There is a lot of things! Uhm... I found a place where it's fun to be, its challenging, uhm... it's international! Lots of different people here, in regards to your, uhm... project - lots of different people. So, it's really, really fun to talk to people about what they like or dislike, and how they see the Danes, and how we see them, and... that's... that's really, really fun! (laughs) I really like that a lot! I also like what I do - there is, there is no question about that... and I have tried a lot of stuff I haven't tried before, and I have been given a room to do that, so yeah, I have found a lot of things that has been good for me as a person, because that just makes you grow as a person. (R: yeah exactly) (both laugh)” (Appendix 2: 4)

Motivation and attention require *context* and *meaning*. If we don't understand the value of a concept or a direction, or simply how to apply our role to it, it quickly leaves our mind and become useless. What has been important to *her* role and *her* meaning has been her self-development. This Manufacturing Associate found that Biogen is a place where it is *fun and challenging* to be. The context and meaning is focused around the medicine for the patients, but most likely, the challenge *also* goes back to notion of diversity. To her, ‘we can do better’ is a norm to apply when the discourse of diversity surpasses their understanding of their own and shared ‘excellence’. In this way, when excellence is not just a norm, but a value, it has strategically moved into the self-awareness of something deeply integrated in the self through the generalized other. ‘*this is not people we are taking from the street*’ (Appendix 4:2). Here, the presupposition of shared excellence; defined by high skills and qualification of *academic* competence to solve complicated problems, stands *before* notions of explicit diversity.

5.2. Language in Danish or English?

So, academic competence is very important for the culture, as it shapes their understanding of excellence and meaning from working together across individual or national diversity. Something to have in mind in every context for academy of science, is how it has to do with the competing epistemological and ontological traditions. Also, the etymology behind using English as the medium for language in general as a lingua franca. This issue was told by a Manufacturing Associate within the company in this way:

“I... have.... Once... heard a colleague saying he would like to talk Danish during lunch. Because, here... he... I can't remember if it was during a training session or whatever... or when we had 'fitters' from U... America, working here for three months, nine months, six months... so there was a lot of English... spoke a lot of English all day. And I think he sat down at the lunch and said 'can we please have this in Danish' because he was just tired of the... his English was... is not that great, so, it was harder for him just to talk English all the time... so he would, he would like a lunch in Danish... and we said 'yeah, you just talk Danish if you want' (laughs) So that's fine, I mean, and the fitters as well they just said 'yeah, go ahead, talk Danish' (laughs)” (Appendix 2: 3)

All of the four interviewed agreed to making the interview in English and none expressed any kind of irritation toward being an American company, as the Senior Construction Manager said *‘If you don't like it, then don't work at Biogen’* (Appendix 4: 2) but for those who do not speak the language to perfection, they might have a hard time to match a standard of ‘excellence’ due to etymological or grammatical misunderstandings when trying to speak English. This gives a linguistic advantage to those who are used to speak English as a lingua franca or as their mother tongue, and a disadvantage to those who do not. And as showed earlier in Figure 1, in the interaction process, the language is very important in the discourse of *articulating* a negotiated meaning. Having English at the center of an ‘Americanized’ excellence can have difficulties;

“The growth of English as the main language in much academic publishing means that researchers around the world need to write in English in order for their findings to reach a wide audience. It is not enough for scientists to be able to, for example, communicate via symbols and formulae; They need to be able to indicate the significance of their findings

and how they fit into a bigger picture of research worldwide” (Hewings & Tagg, 2012: 114)

Moreover, EU promotes an idea of individuals using two or more languages in addition to their mother tongue. Such ‘plurilingualism’ is viewed as important for integration within the EU both for economic reasons of *‘the production, transfer, acquisition and application of knowledge, for employment and economic performance’* (Mackiewicz. 2002: 3), and for cultural and political reasons to promote democratic citizenship (Breidbach: 2003) (both found at Hewings & Tagg, 2012) In this way, the negotiated meaning demands an interaction at Biogen Hillerød, where Danish or English can both be the medium of communication. To some, this could be the reason for frustration. Especially if they approve of one of the languages (e.g. English as lingua franca) but not Danish, as the native element of working in Hillerød, Denmark.

The notion of *mobility* introduces English as a vessel for the contemporary reality to move around in social structures. People tend to move around, both in *real* geographical space and in *symbolic* social space. All of these processes of mobility appear to display complex connections with language (Rampton, 1995, 1999), including language attitudes and language planning (Hewings & Tagg, 2012: 42)

The idea of having ‘fitters’ from America could threat some of the danish subcultures at Biogen. Still, the Danes are a majority, and their ethnocentric influence on the business unit could introduce issues with deviant norms and practices when it comes to being informal or eating lunch together. What we see here is how language functions are territorialized, tied to particular local environments apparently constructed as static. (Hewings & Tagg, 2012: 42) disturbing the ecological balance that existed between people, their language and culture, and their environment at Hillerød (ibid)

Another notion of a possible friction toward the ‘Danishness’ of a European site for an American company came from a Belgic recruitment partner;

“The social environment, it is a very international environment... we are now, I think... almost up to 20 nationalities here now on the site (R: Wow) and you can feel that... you can feel it in the canteen... you can feel it on the daily basis... now.... Many of the hiring managers are Danish, so not there... but... but I am involved also in recruitment where many have different international backgrounds, so... I think it is a good combination of being in an international company... having different international people employed, and then also open... the being open; which is certainly something you can feel here at Biogen (Appendix 1: 2-3)

The ethnocentric imagination of ‘tacitly’ working in a Danish company, but ‘explicitly’ articulating the formality of working in an American context seems to be a possible reason for cultural clashes toward feeling global. When asked how ‘globally inclusive and bias-free’ made sense to her, she addressed the notion of Biogen Hillerød’s ‘Danishness’ as a critical thing:

R: Does ‘globally inclusive and bias-free’ make any sense to you? P1: Yeah, I think it is very important... and especially for a company like this which is.... It has a... it has an international image, it is an international company and... uhm... I think we are not enough globally, yet... Not here in Hillerød... and I think it is a problem in Denmark in general... that we are not globally enough... or you are not globally enough... uhm... I still feel like that Denmark is scared of being global. Uhm... and I have been working... before I was working in Denmark, I was attracting people from Europe to work in Denmark, because there is a big need for it... and... in word, all companies are interested in attracting people from abroad, but then, when you get to the recruitment, then suddenly ‘what if and what if he doesn’t speak any Danish, and what if... she... doesn’t have to... if she is not like us. What about the cultural thing’ and... and that I see as a big problem in general in Denmark. And I think here, it is a little bit different, because we... it is an American company, and I think in the US, global diversity is just something else... people are used to work with people with different colors with background, from... Afro to Latino to... so... so... there is.... we are much more used to see all kinds of different people here, but also to involve them much more... uhm... so... I think it makes a lot of sense and... and I don’t think I would be able to work in a... in a company where you don’t have this global feeling.... I have only worked in global positions...

This explanation has nothing to do with being ‘pro America’, but she recognizes the company to be more an “American” company with a global edge to it; compared to the ‘Danishness’ that she lives in every day, and which influences the decision-making in her department of HR and

recruitment. So in a way, she seeks to find an understanding of the cultural perspective of being in a Nation-State in Europe, but she finds the Danish uncertainty about foreign workforce to be a little behind compared to her origin in Belgium and American standards.

One way of understanding the politics of *language mediums* from a British or American perspective as a *suppressive* device for social interaction was put forth by Sutherland (2002) in this way:

“The spread of English is the product of naked linguistic superpower. If anyone anywhere wants to get ahead nowadays, an ability to speak English is obligatory. We take it for granted (...) Should we feel guilty that our way of speaking is obliterating so many other tongues? Is it not a more sinister kind of colonialism than that which we practiced a hundred years ago? Once we just took their raw materials. Now we invade their minds, by changing the primary tool by which they think: ‘their’ language.” (Hewings & Tagg, 2012)

Here, any discussion toward English or Danish as a medium for language in the communication, is referred to what people *think* about the English or Danish language. It relates to their *beliefs* about and *attitudes* towards the language, and to the associations that are made *between the language and other aspects of social life*. A delimiting meaning specifically related to discipline of linguistics (A term which encompasses much of these issues, and that is often examined in the relationship between language and politics, is *ideology*. (Hewings & Tagg, 2012: 14)

One of the common example of a ‘delimiting meaning’ relating *specifically* to Danish language and attitudes, is how Danes seek to explain the concept ‘Hygge’ in social interactions with foreigners when speaking english as the *medium* for communication. The Dane finds it delimitating in it’s *meaning* and *social perspective*, when trying to translate “hygge” into the English word for it “cozy”... This typical ‘error’ in the Danish effort to meet the otherness with integrity, is how they use this word as *an example* of how *‘I do speak English with you, but most of the time I speak Danish, and I am committed to that language and that medium of communicating, because; some Danish words does not mean the same in English or other languages. It protects a certain kind of cultural heritage and integrity of mine, which is linked to my national identity, and understanding of how to express myself in my Danish environments’*. In this way, from the outside, it makes the Danish people seem so concerned about ‘hygge’ that some

foreign perspectives translate it as central idea to the Danish culture, and even sometimes, translate it into something relating to socialism, homogeneity, xenophobia and laziness, when it is just a way to negotiate a meaning of ‘*work cannot be everything in my life, because then you become a greedy philistine (spidsborger). I am also in need of aesthetics in life in order to be happy*’, where Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) might be one of the prolific and major influences in Danish culture when it comes to *aesthetics* as relation to ethics and spiritual health of getting to understand the true social self. Here, aesthetics serves as the true realm of sensory experience and pleasure; often going back to things like family, sexuality, art, architecture and personal enjoyment such as décor in the house, gardenwork, gastronomy, hobbies or sport - meaning; ‘working for profit and a business mission cannot and *should* not be *everything* to life, as it turns you into a philistine, which is only motivated by self-centered greed, egotism and wasteful behavior’ (See Kierkegaard ‘Enten, Eller’ 1843). The Senior Construction Manager have found differences and difficulties by working with Danish employees compared to foreigners, as he calls ‘the multi-cultural people here’. He says;

I think, maybe, we have more problem with... I have... with Danish people... they can be much worse than the multi-cultural people around here... Danish people... we have one way to be... uhm... if I begin to talk how people look into me, then they will say ‘you are Dane, so you are by definition lazy, you are... you talk too much, you are noisy, you are very stressful in front of me, you have a sexual way to look towards people’ so that is how people look into the Dane... I know, because I have talked a lot about it... because uhm... I have all that people on my projects under me in different countries... from another cultures... and, and... if I go in and ask them directly; ‘how do you look into the Danish people?’ they will tell me ‘the Danish people are lazy, they are noisy’... (R: That is interesting) It is, so if you turn that around, then you have quite another way of looking at how we are doing... I am also quite sure that people, if you have some other people from some another country, you could take some from Eastern Europe and middle eastern, and ask them how they observe Danish people, they have quite different histories... (R: so they have different categories for Danishness) yeah, totally... totally... (Appendix 4: 2)

This notion of ‘being lazy’ can be in relation to the deep concern for the Dane to integrate things around them *slowly*, because they also need some dimension of aesthetics, debate and ethics in the evaluation of the new. So a lot of time and emphasis is put on the deliberative forum for communication and debate. Maybe more than is needed for the more *mobile global employees*,

who just view Biogen Hillerød as a recognizable corporate setting for work and career in a highly professional setting. Here, the Danes can be considered ‘lazy’ as in, not just spending all their time on the pragmatic and corporate goals, but have a desire and an interest to have debates about *aspects* to the national culture in relation to Biogen, that seems irrelevant for the *mobile global employee*. The corporate context should make the work effort speed up to a *competitive level* that most Danes would find *too* stressful compared to other aspects of their social life; such as hobbies, friends and family life. The notion of noisy could come from the idea of how Danes want to debate and express a lot of things that Non-Danes find irrelevant for the work at Biogen Hillerød. In some elements of interpersonal communications, when it comes to closing deal, settling disputes, and making team decision, the communication is understood as a setting of having different channels for communication, where the sender-receiver transfer can be disturbed by ‘noise’. That noise has to do with *perceptions*. That is when you and the other negotiator perceive people or things differently. (Adopted from Hames, 2012: 160-161) this idea of communication as a sender-receiver transferring interaction is also known in Information Theory.

5. 2. Biogen’s Social Responsibility

Text are anything but neutral or disinterested, they always serve something and someone. The same goes for CSR. They introduce their Citizenship and Sustainability section with;

“Our commitment to corporate citizenship and environmental sustainability reflects the best interests of our patients, our stakeholders and the communities we serve. It is a commitment that is built into our culture of excellence and part of what we do each and every day.” (Appendix 5: 1)

The compliance is also reflected in their masking of being philanthropic as in;

“As a company dedicated to improving lives, Biogen and many of its stakeholder’s view community philanthropic and volunteer activities as a core component of our business. Not only is it the right thing to do as a good corporate citizen, but it is essential to the long-term viability of our business and industry as it engages our employees, strengthens our communities and helps nurture the science and technology leaders of the future. (appendix 5: 3)

The lack of interest in the philanthropic dimension to *some* of the Danish employees can be challenging. As an example; when it came to finding meaning in Biogen, as in having a corporate responsibility for her governing, the Danish Associate Manager expresses this with a notion of how she loves her work, but at the end of the day, it is just a job:

“R: Does corporate citizen mean anything to you? P2: Nah, I don’t know (R: koncern borger) Koncern borger? Huh? I don’t even know what it is in Danish? (both laugh) nope, I actually don’t know what that is... do you have an explanation, maybe, or...? (R: Just like you are a citizen of Denmark, do you feel like connected to be a citizen of a company, you can say? Like they take care of you?) Aah, no. (R: no?) (both laugh) nah, at the end of the day, it is just a job... ‘at the end of the day’. (R: yeah) (both laugh) So, so... I guess that means little... to me, yeah.” (Appendix 1: 5)

In the *meaning creation* process of her not knowing about being a “corporate citizen”, even the communication between researcher and applicant fail to a degree, as corporate citizen might seem to make no sense, compared to Danish translation, and to relating it to ‘Danish Citizenship’. But the idea of Corporate Citizenship is *reflected* in the inherent National Citizenship of the Danish Associate Manager. And to real Capitalists, this is a future dream that employees would move more or less *beyond* their nations, and adhere to their corporate world, where nations *only* purpose, is to act as *referees* and protect the international order of business affairs. Like a soccer referee (Nation-state) when football teams (Corporations) compete for goals (profit).

In Denmark, the national government is a *powerful* stakeholder to *any* corporation or private institution. It is very present and influential as a social *protector of welfare (together with the labor unions)*, compared to e.g. if the corporate reality touched South-east Asian nation-states. In South-east Asian countries, a formulation of Corporate Social Responsibility for the employees might seem *very* powerful and important toward how they could adhere to the corporate integration strategy for a production site, and also, how to accept direction toward shareholders and their ethics of investing in businesses. The CCR strategy is a *moderate investment strategy* (Investopedia²³), but what is a Corporate Citizen strategy actually? Investopedia explains it as following;

“Corporate citizenship is the extent to which businesses are socially responsible for meeting legal, ethical and economic responsibilities placed on them by shareholders. The aim is for businesses to create higher standards of living and quality of life in the

communities in which they operate, while still preserving profitability for stakeholders.”
(Investopedia²²)

In Denmark, labor unions serve as powerful stakeholders to any company, so this notion of how important the Corporate Citizens Report is to each employee differ. The Danish members which was interviewed for the research showed little interest, while the Belgic HR recruit partner had a totally different reaction toward the sense-making of this annual articulation of CSR:

“R: Does corporate citizenship mean anything to you? P1: Yeah! Responsibility, uhm... (pause) for sure... I have been trying to do a lot about it here, on that level... uhm... on the other side, it's difficult to do it in everything – so you need to choose where you want to do CSR... that is what I think about it... uhm... like for example... my topic has been a lot since last year to involve more students into Biogen, which I see as a corporate citizen responsibility, with my focus on education also, so... how people involve them during their internships and... uhm... Now, job centers are pushing at my door... can we get unemployed people having internships? So, it's about choosing because we are not so big, so, but I think it is very important... because if not, you have all these groups standing outside, and... and how can we get them into the social life if they are just standing around there, so... I think it is very important...” (Appendix 1: 5)

She is interested in making Biogen Hillerød more interested in the whole CSR dimension of its corporate responsibility, also, because she had been working *priory* in NGO's where this level of responsibility where of hugely valued. It could be assumed, that Biogen Hillerød does not value CSR as much as their other sites. Also, because the National social responsibility as the main *source* of welfare is just more important to the Dane, compared to any corporation's investment strategy. But *in* the social responsibility articulation, the corporation have to show stakeholder interest toward upholding the *law* in the host country. So in a way, when the Danish care little about this, it could mean, that they have a good strategy to *conform/comply* to the current National values and norms of Danish society. The investment strategy of Social Responsibility can be explained this way, where Sethi (1975) have made threefold typology. One of them is Social Responsibility:

²² Found at: <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/corporatecitizenship.asp> - Last accessed 2016-05-03

“This type of organization tries to go beyond the requirements prescribed by law and instead seeks to conform to the current values and norms of society. The organisation will, therefore, accept responsibility for solving current environmental problems and will attempt to maintain current standards of both the social and physical environment. In order to achieve this the organization must be accountable to a range of stakeholders and this assumes that profit, although the dominant motive, is not the only one.” (Patton, 2013: 453)

Again, this strategy has an ideological presupposition of neo-liberalism. The neo-liberal agenda comply to the societal idealism and *tradition* in their host country, but seeks to influence with neo-liberal ideals of *philanthropy* under a mission of profit.

5.3 Does integrity as a value count only in formal interactions?

“It’s human to err, so... I think it’s... yeah... then there comes a part like, uhm... I think it’s]... it goes back to integrity for instance, it’s a matter of like, integrity or... characteristic of the person, whether the person says ‘Yeah, I committed a mistake, or not’, and the person assumes that responsibility or not.” (Appendix 3: 2)

Trying to formulate what integrity means to a person is actually not that easy... It has something to do with exposing a strategy for how you expose yourself to influence and your social affiliations. Integrity to a formal institution has to reflect our own *conviction* about a good social settings, and I believe this is what the employee in the sentence above seeks to express in relation to idea of ‘work fearlessly’ and committing mistakes. But what is important is how this affiliation match a *value-system* that goes back to less informal interactions at Biogen Hillerød, and how it makes sense of working at a biotechnological company. The Senior Construction Manager goes as following;

R: What does integrity mean to you? P4: A lot... uhm... I think it’s better to tell you... what I have done from my last project, the biggest project here ever in Hillerød... I have been construction manager on that project, and we have people coming here from all around the world, and we have people from east Europe, some few from Russia, a lot from Italy, we have a lot from United States, some from England and people from Sweden, Norway, Finland and Germany... and uhm... and uhm... if you... don’t have integrity then you cannot have a plan where you have so many cultures, and uhm, and uhm, we have worked a lot around that, to ensure that everybody have their right

information and the right learning and uhm... how we are reacting in front of other cultures and uhm... also... religions and colored skin etc. so uhm... it is a lot for me... (Appendix 4: 1)

According to Sylvie Chevrier (2011) The difference in conceptions of ‘the right way’ to work together is more or less clear for the actors. As they get to know one another, they empirically note differences and make endeavors to cope with them or even make the most out of them. Here, it is important to see the difference between front stage and back stage in the social interaction, as in the official negotiations; nothing is really negotiated - it is done before or afterwards. On the official meetings, it is just a set of language. (Chevrier, 2011: 48) To the Belgic HR recruitment partner, integrity meant a connection to something more *formal* but intrinsic in the morality of action - like holding the ethical standards, and to make an environment where everyone have a form of respect for each other. In this way, she makes it a formality, compared to the Danish Manufacturing Associate, she believes integrity means to *express* what you stand for. It doesn’t demand that much thinking, because it thrives in a constant attitude - connecting it to her habitus;

P2: integrity mean... to me it means I stand for what I say. If I say something, then I mean it.... So... (R: And is it important as well that people around you have integrity as well?) Yes, it is... I don’t like people like... [shows a formal strict attitude] (laughing) or not stand by what they are saying. So, so for me, yeah, it, it is important and... luckily I feel like people around me are working like that.

Obviously, compared to the Belgic HR recruitment partner, she wants the company to open more up for a global mindset, where the formality is important for the interaction where integrity works as a front stage for social interaction. On the other hand, the Danish Manufacturing Associate wants the integrity to lie in the informal habitus of where people come from and what they do and say, that they mean it. Same goes for the Brazilian Chemical Engineer, working as an EHS&S (Environmental, Health, Safety, and Security) consultant. He finds integrity to be a strong word, connected to person, process and company at its core. He makes it *explicit* that integrity is based on something intrinsic to the person:

P3: Uhm.... I think... Integrity it’s like, it’s a very strong word, but for me, it means what values that a person, or, you know, a process or... a company has as its core... values. So integrity means, like for instance, if you have like a person who is very honest, you can say that the core... behavior or characteristic for this person it’s, it’s, it’s uhm, being honest, so, this is... you show like this

person's integrity is based on, this person is honest... so integrity is something that is intrinsic to the person or to, you know, something you stand for, and something that you actually show what you are. yeah... That is how I understand it at least.

To have 'integrity' as a value is smart, because everyone has some kind of integrity from *prior social realities*, where the *prior social experiences* makes up for that *knowledge* (e.g. see figure 1). It has to do with adherence to ethical principles and to a moral way of behavior. It's about formulating moral character and honesty. It has to do with being whole. It is *very* connected to ethics, culture and socialization, and even in Danish discourse for immigration; integrity toward a *Danish* culture is used as a demand and value for having foreign people living here. Where does the integrity direct at? The Danish society, or the Corporate Mission of Biogen? This split and confusion of foreign workforce in Denmark, or employee of Biogen on foreign soil, seems to be the *biggest* challenge toward articulating the Integrity part of Biogen Members. Again, the notion of excellence could seem as a common denominator for certainty.

5.3.1 Meaning systems as an attribution to a situation with a set of rules for intent.

The context for interaction functions as the platform from where certainty is created forehanded in the *planning* for that meeting. How the employees engage in meetings tells you about the normative expectations they have *when* they enter a social interaction in the organization. This was openly and deliberately explained by the Senior Construction Manager at Biogen, who commented as following about the meeting with the researcher (R):

"When I saw you first time (R: yeah) I had some impressions... 'blue shirt' (R: yeah, yeah!) 'some beard', 'nice hair' and 'not as old as I expected' (R: yeah, laughs) so I look, all this takes a spec of seconds... and I saw you and knew exactly, you were Michael (R: yeah) and that is the picture I have... and then my first impression is uhm... 'how open do I need to be?' (R: mhm) and now I have promised that I would be open today (both laughs) and thereby, we have already made some rules (R: mhm, mhm) so we made some rules about this communication today, so we have already made some card rules about it – I am open, and I will try to answer your questions in the right way, (R: yeah) and be honest and open for that... and that is... uhm... because we have played the cards before we come... (R: so it is also about certainty) always! (R: to be certain about the... reason and, and purpose?) always, that is the keyword for it!" (Appendix 4: 8)

Here, he explains a strong desire to make the interaction controlled under a set of rules, by placing the cards at the table before entering the meeting (knowing whether any power is in the balance). He is very concerned about how the negotiation in the conversation should follow a pattern of certainty as a *keyword* for interaction. The meaning system are only fragments which can reflect a limited cultural aspect, such as a notion or a concept of connectedness. However, these aspects can have important implications in a given environment. (Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011: 11) In this way, meaning systems are well matched for the study of interaction as they offer an analysis on the level of interpersonal action and their *interchange* – meaning is created in our lives by attribution to situations, and at the level on which we experience them.

Important to understanding the function of the meaning system is to understand the power balance between partners, and how meanings are negotiated in action *through* discursive agents. Talking about cultural differences can mean different things to different people. The variety of assumptions could be from: 1) *depiction of experienced differences*, 2) *constructed stories*, 3) *ways to organize or separate employees* or 4) *as excuses for explaining a current situation*. (Romani, Sackmann, & Primecz, 2011: 11)

He continues like;

“we have some rules here, we make rules to be here... and we have rules about how we communicate and how we... respect each other and so on... we have those rules here... it takes 10 hours to learn it, and you need to sit and look into a computer for 10 hours before you can it... and, and you will learn it... that is how we play cards together, and if we do play cards together, how they are ultimately built, then we will never come in trouble... then we can take the next step, and see that some the person we stand in front is actually a good friend... (R: mhm) and that gives us a lot of color, because then we begin to... to... give each other... uhm... some stuff from, from... my culture and you give some from your culture, and lessons learned from your family or whatever you are doing, and then I can say ‘wow, that was actually smart what you are doing’ and then I can change a little... here (Danmark), we have a totally black and white culture outside... (R: yeah) I couldn’t change it... (R: so it is important to, like you said before, that diversity, cultural diversity, it’s like art, it is colorful?) it is colorful (R: so it is colorful for you as a person) mhm (pause) (or for your work?) both! Because, because every time we are starting, every time I talk with a new guy or, of course, a new lady... then, then uhm... there will come some human, with some new things I can... I can... ‘think about it’ I see... fantastic, or... or... ‘okay... that is fine... but... that’s, that’s enough’... (R: laughs, yeah) ‘that is enough...next step!’ and

this is uhm... and that is to be... respectful, but also to be open and honest about it... so, the people are... in a different way in front of me... and I need to be open, because, maybe there could come something good out of that... (R: exactly) so, so... we have big, talk a lot about it here when we see new people... the first thing they say, then I place them... this is coming automatically... (R: yeah, we have some assumptions)” (Appendix 4: 7-8)

The Senior Construction Manager find a high meaning in how *he* can be influenced positively by another culture, and how *he* can influence the person in front of him positively with *his* culture (inter-change), and in this way, maybe end up as friends or good co-workers, and grow as a person into a normatively ideal of being *colorful*. The constant reinterpretation away from uncertainty in the conversation creates better *meaning* and *understanding* and *a solution* that drives both counterparts toward *self-development*. The rule in this interaction toward *inter-change* is to have a set of rules that allows both parties to be *open*. This openness is easy in informal matters, but very hard, when it comes to more formal situation, where influencing the social order comes through making impressions toward formal structures of hard competition. The social construction manager explained how he met some of his challenges to cultural difference in relation to the social order this way:

“the most learning I have had here the last few years have been to work with all these different cultures, that has nothing to do with the... plan here... that means, that uhm... that uhm... when we are... 20... different countries here in Biogen. Here, we have the same platform, that we are doing medicine... (R: mhm) but my last project, where I have uhm... 1500 different people, from... maybe... 15 countries (R: mhm)... and uhm... different countries, not what we have here today at Biogen, but coming more from Eastern Europe...

Here he addresses the issue of some people who are *different* from the other *differences*, which is actually interesting. The *platform* he had learned here at Biogen, and the familiar cultural patterns that he had with Danish people, which he was used to *prior* to Biogen, does not work with the Easter Europeans... he had to *reinterpret* a meaning system to find a coordinated course for action - *reinterpretation* is important in order to create better meaning and understanding and a solution that drives *both* counterparts toward self-development and *ideographic* succes through sharing *social knowledge* and *social experience*. He continues:

“that was a lesson learned for me, that the culture is the... languages, not the most important for me anymore... we have people that couldn't understand English, but maybe only Polish or Russian... or whatever we have from East Europe, and the culture that have of or the culture around of how they were working was quite different from what we expected... because, uhm... they have a foreman (construction supervisor) every time they have a small group, there was a foreman... and the foreman was their guard... (R: mhm)

He again, he came to this conclusion through a reinterpretation of meaning. What at first seems as a disobedient subordinate, turned out to work under a total different framework of manager power-relations. As he says onwards:

I thought I was the most important on board here as the construction manager, but, but the problem here was that... he was more important than I am... because he was the guy that hired them in... that means, he was the one who could say: ‘Go home, I will not see you anymore, here’ (R: okay) and that impact for the personal people here from East Europe is, that if he loses the job, his family loses the job... that is an impact on his children, but also for his grandparents, and their parents... So, when he can get a... a... daily... basic.... higher paying than he had in 10 or 15 persons at home, that is living for that... and that guy, that could tell if he could stay, or could not stay was more valuable for him... that I was as a customer... (R: that is interesting) yeah, and that was strange for me...

It was strange for him, because he expected a different agenda, but was confronted by a situation where he thought he had some power over the individual worker, but found it *much* easier to only have the *foreman* as a contact and communication channel.

“and I could go down and tell them that ‘I need it that way’ and had a translator on it... and everything... and they know exactly what position I was in... but, but... if the foreman tells them another story, then they will follow the foreman, and not me... (R: wow) and that, that... tells me a little about culture... (R: mhm, indeed) and that learning was...that... instead of taking care about the individual... I was to take care of the group instead... that means that... If I have something changed for the group, then I need to have one person changed, and that person change the whole group... and that was... different from how I use to work around... because if I see a guy in Danish here, doing something wrong, then I have to go to him directly and say ‘hey, it is better if you do it this way’ (R: mhm) but here, there was no reaction for that... I had to go to the foreman that could change the whole group (R: yeah) instead of... and that was a strange position for me to stand in... that was uhm... very very learning for me...

The new meaning rose for the Senior Construction Manager when he *knew* how to create new meaning out from this disobedience of individual workers. And the new knowledge opened up for a negotiated meaning that was actually even *better* for him as a Manager.

(R: so there was a big difference in the individuality and collectivity) right (R: in a way...very strongly?) very, very, very strongly, yeah... that was a learning for us... or for me especially... (R: yeah) because people here said that the language would be your biggest trouble (R: and it wasn't) I can always tell people to take your glasses off, and you will always see that you need a hard hand... (R: yeah) you always need to close (find a solution)... that is international... (R: yeah) go that way, or stay here... it is very easy (R: to follow orders, you can say?) you can always communicate with your hands and your body language and so on... but... but uhm... but if you don't have the right cable, the right way, then nobody changes... that was strange for me (R: yeah, that was actually interesting) mhm, and if we talk about... all the different culture we have here, and the difference between what we are doing inside (R: mhm) the walls, compared to what happens outside the walls is a world in difference... because we have this thing called 'medicine' (R: yeah, yeah) and we have the... we are not... the people here have a highly academic education... so they have already learned how you take a book or what you have in the paper, and read it and do it the right way..." (appendix 4: 7)

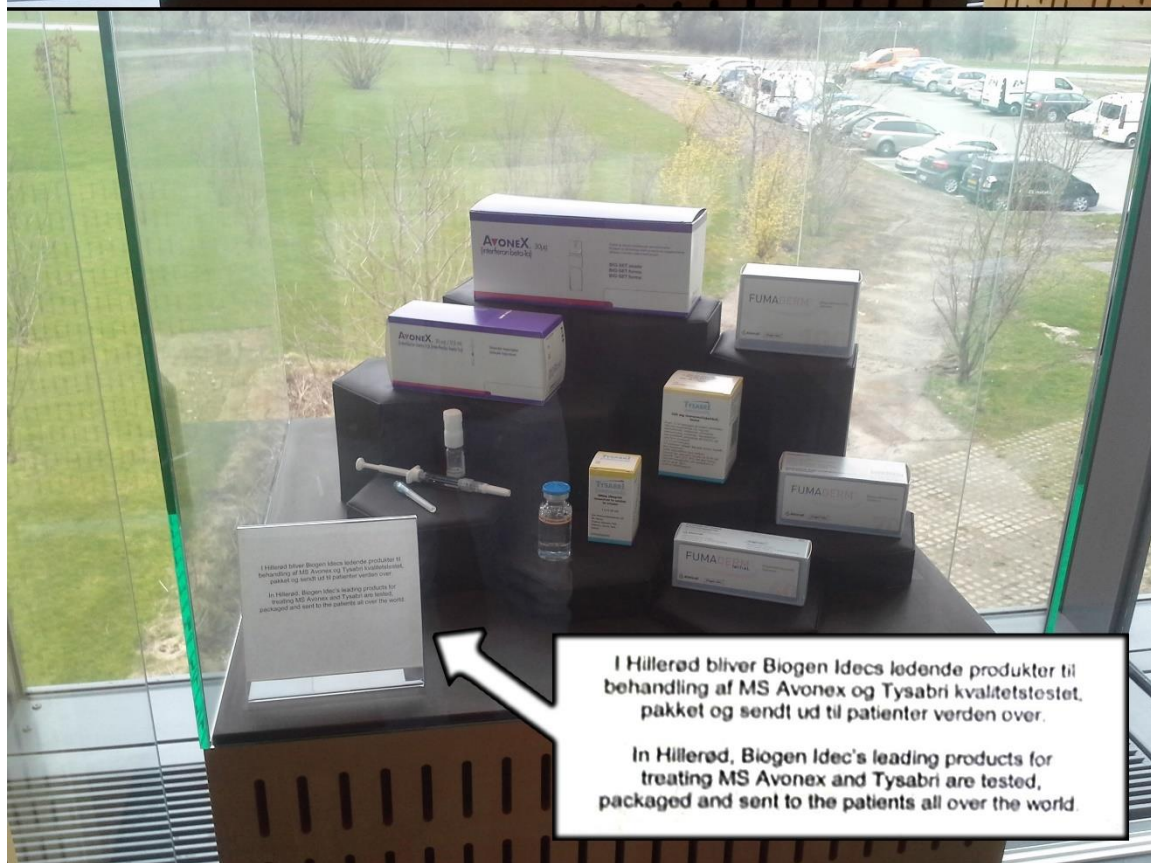
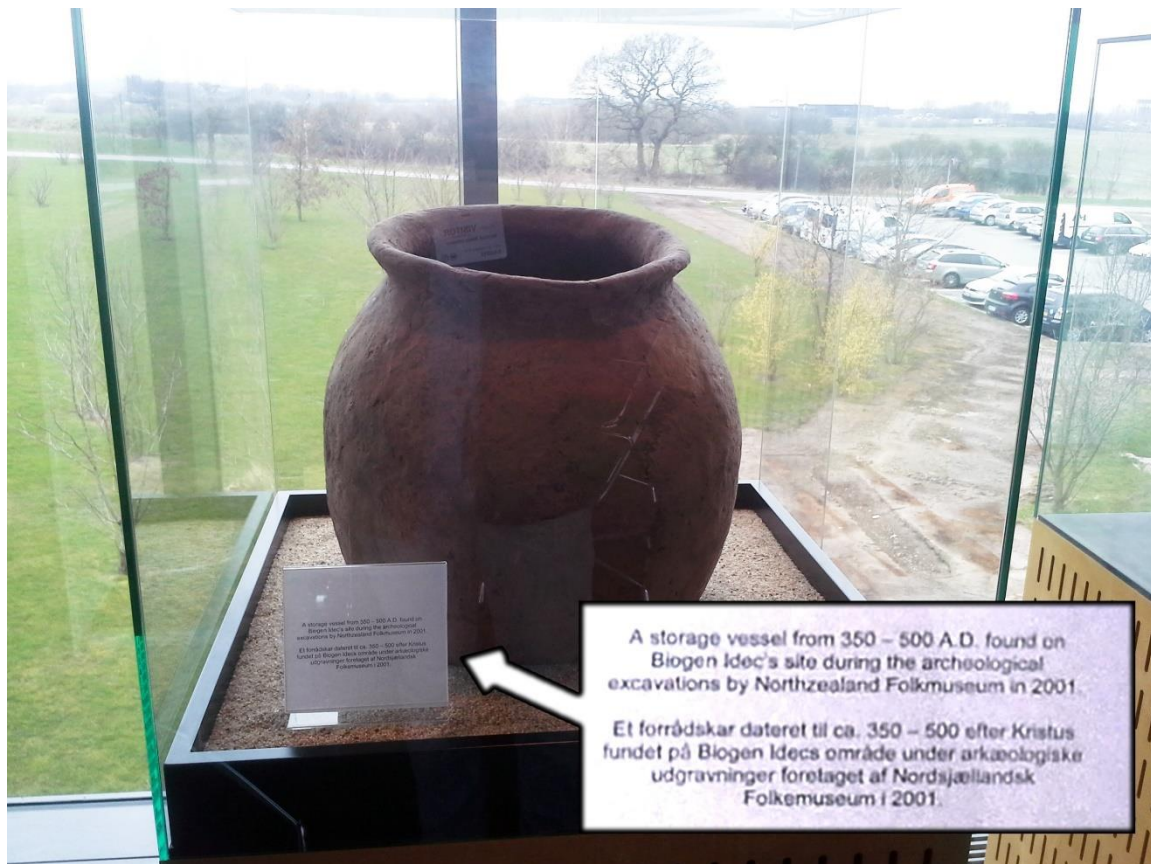
He puts an emphasis on what they have... something called 'medicine' and that indicates a tacit meaning system that is a medium for *certainty* and *excellence* hence a *value system* where all the cards are placed on the table before the communication begins, because everyone understands the *purpose* of formal interaction. It is about caring deeply (about the patients and each other), and working fearlessly (away from fear of error) and changing lives (Both as an employee through self-development, in a way where you become colorful, but also in how you change the life of the patients through science and medicine). He also puts an emphasis on 'you always need to close', which can be interpreted as the *solution* to the negotiated meaning. Here, he '*can always tell people to take your glasses off, and you will always see that you need a hard hand*', which can be interpreted as *his* perspective to the negotiated meaning, which goes back to a *consensually constructed and coordinated system for action* at Biogen.

It was put well into words by the Manufacturing Associate when she was asked about caring deeply;

P2: (pause) caring deeply is a big part of Biogen, I think. Uhm... it's what we do when we go to work every day... it's uhm... our product (pause) it's in our product... it's what we do on manufacturing floor, it's not... it's always... it's not like... (sigh) it's not obviously, but it is something, at least in the back of my mind always, that you have to think of what you do, because what you do ends up in other people (patients/customers) – you have to care about what you do. So you have to care about people, actually, in order to work here. So, caring deeply is a big part of working here, and it's in the back of our heads... at least in mine.

This notion of how the medicine is interrelated with something that ends up in other people, calls for some kind of employee responsibility, that is actually *very* different from other manufacturing sites. The emphasis on caring deeply in this regard, shows how the *product* is valued very highly.

Another notion of this, is in the reception of the company, how their products stands in a glass exhibition, just next to an old archeological artifact found when they excavated for the whole manufacturing plant. The relation between the two 'representations of value' holds strong semiotic depth in the connotation. Both, in respect to the history of the local area, but also toward value of science and the products as a *scientific* artifact. (see Schein, 1989, to learn more about artifact in relation to corporate culture,) The vessel in the picture below is a storage vessel from 350-500 A.D. and they write about it in both Danish and English as seen inside the exhibition. Also note the information inside the exhibition, how it goes from English to Danish, then on the other glass display, it starts with Danish, and end up with English.



6. Discussion

“Working effectively in such an increasingly multinational and multicultural business world on a global scale requires knowledge about these cultural differences as well as knowledge and skills about how to effectively deal with them not only in situations of business negotiations but also during everyday work processes.” (Sackmann, Romani, & Primecz, 2011: 139)

As mentioned earlier, this research wants to thematize culture as an *idea*, which has undergone different forms through out history and gradually become this antropological and popular ‘*culture*’ concept that we understand today. Diversity on the other hand is relataing to some notion of challenge from an uncertainty, rising in a liquidity of ‘otherness’ in the social reality, which seems very difficult to comprehend. As soon as you start to understand a specific challenging diversity of nature, it might have evolved into something else, or died out. It is most easily characterized by transience, but sometimes it is very resilient, can last for a long time, and can be hard to change. Diversity is linked to different identities, which hold infinite combinations of attitudes, interests and opinion from human creativity in the social interaction. It happens, changes and die out all the time in a pattern of inter-change, solitude and interdependence, which is difficult to map out. It is easier to unravel conflict, by making the two parties understand each other in a forum where the two parties can find a *resoluton* under some kind of supervision and debate toward finding a *solution*. This is the way of politics and business, and there is no easy way around that. But hopefully, the participation in the debate, might reveal a pattarn of similarity *between* the two parties, and call for something very human within. A need to work together in order to find a higher purpose. Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) believed that most people want a life that is familiar, safe, uncomplicated and in many respects *unchanging*. But such a life is ultimately constricting with reality: it forecloses the possibility of learning and evolving, and thus, of developing a “wider and higher consciousness.” (Jung, ed. By Cambell, 1976) which in general tounge is called ‘wisdom’

Some of the old ‘meanings’ that reside in the culture terminology, which has changed through time, has to do with the perception of cultivating or enacting the intrinsic social spirit of a group of people. This also means the commitment to change through a process of learning, also about other people. Culture and change can be quite intangible, and how they interact and influenes

each other is very difficult to frame, but the idea of negotiated meaning systems *between* clashing agents, serves as a tool to understand what *shapes* cultures in practice. Individuals react to the expectations of others, thereby *orienting* themselves towards *plausible* action and toward the norms and values of their community or group. In this way, whenever an actor tries to figure out what is expected of them within the shared social system *without* articulation; they are taking on the perspective of the *generalized other* (See Mead) and projecting their thought and interpret their action and behavior. In order to find a *coordinated system for action*. In this way, on the road to a *consensually constructed* and *coordinated system of action*, there is not just *one* right way to approach or reach negotiated meaning and solutions, there are only effective and less effective approaches, and these vary according to many contextual factors. It is arguable, but this way of thinking posits that '*patterns of meaning and agency in the organization arise from the interactions and negotiations of its members*' (Brannen & Salk, 2000)(found in Romani et al., 2011: 9-10)

Meaning is *negotiated* through a *transaction* in the social interaction, based on individual *knowledge* and *prior social experiences*; generating a contemporary discourse framed by language, action and perspective. (see Figure 1 by Doolittle, 2001: 509). The philosophical and empirical investigations of social constructivism have resulted in many principles regarding the nature of human thought and behavior. (ibid)

Knowledge is where the cultural perspective emerges as it links to human *reflection*, *reflexivity* and *doing*, which determines what kind of data and information are *valid*, and what is rubbish. It is in this dimension of *consciousness* and *awareness* where most meaning is found, challenged, opposed, re-evaluated, inter-changed and created. When people move beyond their diversities, come together in a system for interaction which *demand*s resolution toward a solution - we are actively watching the shaping of cultures through *articulation* and *re-interpretation*. This is *practical* in nature. It is difficult to change opinions and attitudes. It is *not* presumed, that this task is easy. Many interactions fail to even reach the state of resolution. Here, it is through *external* diplomats that it is possible to extract or translate stories of success or successful meaning systems through deliberation, which could serve as a resourceful knowledge bank, when dealing with similar conflicts prospectively or in other contexts. The interpretivist approach to cross-cultural management seeks to move beyond stereotypical representations of national behavior, but it is hard to deny certain stereotypical characteristics which are maintained by *some* individuals. These

stereotypical attitudes are often more based on a *role play* and *generalizations* than actual meanings, self-representations and cultures in action.

When people interact with each other, they always have one (or multiple) national reference point(s) from prior social experience. According to Sackmann et. al. (2011), new contexts of global, multinational or international organizations serve as the platforms for new social experience, where, at least two issues may become critical for the manager;

- *The first one is that what we think is obvious, visible and explicitly stated may not be that relevant or important to the people involved and for their actions.*
- *Second, organizational members act and interact with each other day in and day out, thus creating cultural dynamics with evolving meanings that do not necessarily fit well-known, static dimensions or textbook recommendations.*

(Sackmann, Romani, & Primecz, 2011: 141)

What is important here, is to understand that the produced and transmitted procedures from management toward different divisions and departments *in* other national settings, such as Denmark compared to USA, demands another *articulation* in the discourse, which has to be tested and re-interpreted and re-articulated over time until it fits the desired behavior. Here, it is significant to remember, that all members do not make sense of formal articulations in the same way. Sackman et. al. (2011) discussed in in this way:

“International, multinational and globally acting firms create their products and services, mission and values statements, corporate and leadership guidelines, codes of conduct and practices and so on. One of the intentions underlying these statements and guidelines is to align their employees; actions with the company’s overarching goals and intentions. Even though these codes of conduct and guidelines are well intended and usually communicated; or rather transmitted throughout the company, this rarely leads to a common understanding or even aligned actions. Since their content tends to be rather broad, it leaves room for local interpretations that may differ from the intended meanings; even if well intended.”
(Sackmann, Romani, & Primecz, 2011: 141-142)

Going back to how the Senior Construction Manager explained the rules for interaction to the researcher, he explicitly elaborated how new employees must go through 10 hours to learn it, and

you need to sit and look into a computer for 10 hours before you understand it, and then you will (might) learn it. That is how they play ‘cards’ together, and if they do play ‘cards’ together, how they are ultimately built (then he believes) they will never come in trouble. (Appendix 4:7) This stability of ‘understanding’ and ‘learning’ has to do with a negotiation of meaning, and voluntarily participation into a *negotiated order*.

7. Conclusion

The conclusion will be short, but will seek to frame the findings toward answering *how Biogen's credo and values influence negotiated meanings in a system of international resolution toward social solution between employees at Biogen (Denmark) Manufacturing ApS, Hillerød?*

One of the major findings was how the Senior Construction Manager actually discovered a reinterpretation of what he saw as a rise to cultural conflict and disobedience, actually was (as with language) a misunderstanding of *articulation* toward constructive behavior and management of subordinates. Construction workers in East European have another agenda toward construction, which was *very* unfamiliar toward how he ‘normally’ managed workers at Biogen, but through negotiating a better meaning in his work situation, he had to make a re-interpretation of these construction workers from East Europe through dialogue with the foreman. The contact to the ‘middleman’ the ‘foreman’ was vital for both senior management and construction worker, as it was the foreman who employed the construction workers from East Europe, and also, he was their link and reference point toward sustainable work ethics which could ensure the social security of their families back home. The Senior Manager accepted *his* role as the ‘costumer’ and would rather be in contact with the foreman, than actually interact with the construction workers *without* the foreman’s knowledge.

A second finding was how the Danishness and the Danish language could be reason for frustration for some of the more career oriented *mobile global employees*, who was used to another agenda in similar transnational or multicultural settings, and also, for some of the local Danish employees, who demanded the freedom to speak their native tongue in their native land. This dilemma seems soft at Biogen Hillerød, as shown in the glass exhibitions of their ‘artifacts’, where *both* English and Danish seems to make up the language at Biogen in reality. The longer the employee work at

Biogen Hillerød, the more the mobile global employees have found respect for the local, and find pleasure in engaging to an extent in the Danish culture, but also, the Danish Employee found meaning from working in a global/American setting, where (As the Senior Manager articulated) makes them more ‘colorful’ (through self-development in the inter-change) and more mobile toward the great world outside the Danish borders. Here, integrity could seem like a coin with two sides. On one side, Biogen and the transnational global reality, on the other side, Denmark and the local people’s cultural heritage.

Lastly, there was a significant dimension toward the credo, that was connected to a self-ensuring and social-reliance on *excellence*. The *intended* meaning creation and sense-making *from* enacted corporate values, which was directed by Biogen’s board in USA, has been animated into a Danish translation and solution, which works within the framing of Biogen Hillerøds walls, and open up for a context of professionalism from academic backgrounds from a reflection on purpose; namely, to care deeply and change the lives of patients. Also, to work fearlessly toward a desire of reaching and developing *deeper* aspects of individual and collective excellence; mirrored in the excellence behind their unique products *and* the science of micro-biology, which generates external and internal expectations toward higher excellence in a complex value-system.

8. References

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