CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

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Strategic Formulation Processes: An Institutional Perspective.

School of Management

PhD Thesis

CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

PhD

Academic Year 2005

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Strategic Formulation Processes: An Institutional Perspective.

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November 2003

This Thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

ABSTRACT

My research addresses the question of 'how does the institutional context impact on the individual framing of strategic issues?' These early stages of decision making represent an important area of study, setting the foundations for the latter stages of decision-making. I show that although both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures have increased our understanding of these formative stages, neither has adequately addressed how 'institutional forces' impact on the individual framing of strategic issues. My research applies an institutional perspective, drawing on Barley & Tolbert (1997) and their work on 'scripted behaviours' to address this. Institutionalists highlight the institutional context, represented by powerful social and symbolic forces that influence organisations, their practices and behaviours of individual actors through the enactment of scripts.

A naturalistic approach, incorporating the use of semi-structured interviews was applied. Respondents were drawn from two universities: Alpha & Beta, possessing membership of multiple institutions: academia and law, academia and accountancy. So, the research sought to understand the role of multiple institutions on the framing of strategic issues.

It was established that scripts are widely shared within the institutional settings, playing a pivotal role in the framing of strategic issues (representative of top-down institutional processes being at play) but do not operate in isolation. I draw on the work of Bartunek (1984) to further ground the second inter-related concept described in my thesis as 'meanings'. These enable respondents to interpret institutionally defined scripts, indicative of bottom-up institutional processes also being at play. Several contributions are made, firstly to the strategic issue and problem formulation literatures and secondly to the institutional literature by focusing on micro-institutional processes.

Acknowledgements

I owe thanks to many people who have contributed to this research. First and foremost, I would like to show appreciation to my supervisors Gerry Johnson and Julia Balogun for giving me feedback on my work and encouraging me during a long process. This research would not have been possible without the openness I experienced at Cranfield School of Management and the review process that I went through. I would also like to express my gratitude to all those that participated and gave their valuable time so freely. This is a reflection I believe of the culture of the two universities and academia more broadly. I am also grateful for financial support from both Cranfield and the ESRC and the continued support by personnel at Cranfield School of Management in persevering with the development of my thesis. Despite all the support I have received, responsibility for any shortcomings in the thesis is of course mine alone. Finally, Jackie my fiancée and to my father, I cannot express in words how much your continued support has meant to me.

Paul Dudley, July 2005

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Chapter ONE

Introduction and Overview

1.1 Introduction

My research applies an institutional perspective to gain insight into the individual framing of strategic issues. An institutional perspective contains powerful insights that offer the potential to increase our understanding of the formative stages of decision-making and in particular the individual framing of strategic issues. Institutionalists call our attention to the institutional context, represented by prevailing social and symbolic forces, which influence organisations, their practices and the behaviours and actions of actors. Prominent institutionalists have within the last decade called for the conceptual micro-underpinnings to be elaborated upon which has led to a concentrated effort to understand the role of micro-institutional processes and how these shape cognition, behaviour and action. As I note in chapter 2 in providing micro-translation there is also a need to further understand the linking mechanism between micro-individual and macro-institutional arrangements.

This is why I build upon the conceptual work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) to achieve this because they are one of the few to give a compelling account of the linking mechanism between macro and micro-institutional arrangements. Their central argument is that macro-institutional arrangements are reproduced and altered through interaction between actors. Interaction influences and shapes behaviour, which is itself informed by macro-institutional arrangements. However by focusing on behaviour and interaction Barley & Tolbert (1997) acknowledge they sideline interpretation and cognition. I argue that this need not be the case. Barley & Tolbert (1997) correctly observe that for actions to be interpretable, they must conform to taken-for-granted assumptions about how to act and behave. It would seem in order for actions to be 'interpretable' they must be carried in the minds of actors. This raises the question as to what role, if any, the institutional context plays in the shaping of interpretive processes?

This offers a new way to understand decision-making activity in organisations. As I note in chapter 2 prominent strategists have called for a greater understanding of the formative stages of decision-making and in particular the factors that contribute to the individual framing of strategic issues. I demonstrate in chapter 2 that both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures, which form sub sets of the strategy literature, have not adequately addressed the role of institutional forces on the individual framing of strategic issues. A micro-institutional perspective, informed by the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) offers the opportunity to address this. This leads to the research question for which my research addresses:

How does the institutional context impact on the individual framing of the issue?

1.2 Research Approach

The operationalisation of the research is informed by the extant institutional literature and in particular the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997). My research similarly applies the definition of institutions and scripts as described by Barley & Tolbert (1997) but applies a different research strategy. This is because as opposed to studying how institutions develop over time, I study how developed institutions influence what actors do and how they respond. Unlike Barley & Tolbert (1997) I needed to be able to determine whether across multiple respondents belonging to a particular institution(s) there exists some shared institutional influence. I use commonality between respondents as evidence of the existence of institutions that are enacted through scripted behaviours. Given the different focus of my research I applied an exploratory or naturalistic design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) incorporating an interviewing strategy as a means of ascertaining the impact of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues.

The research design employed within the main fieldwork studied the institutional settings of academia, accountancy and law that have been viewed as typical institutional settings, extensively researched within the institutional literature (e.g. Covaleski & Dirsmith, 1988). In addition, all three institutional settings have been subject to considerable change, explored in chapter 4. According to Johnson,

Smith & Codling (2000) these conditions are more likely to result in conscious script processing which in turn can be accessed through research tools including interviewing strategies as applied in my study.

Two research sites were used in this study, Alpha and Beta business schools. Respondents were drawn from the law and accountancy departments within each of the business schools. Selection of respondents was based on possessing membership to multiple institutions: academia and law, academia and accountancy. In doing so the research sought to understand the role of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues.

1.3 Findings

My key findings for the main fieldwork fall into four main areas:

1. In contrast to previous institutional studies my research was directed towards understanding the role of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues. Respondents have affiliations with academia & law and academia & accountancy. I show that there are a number of widely shared scripts within each of the institutional settings. It is also evident that within the academic setting that sub-institutional scripts are present, which are themselves informed by the overarching academic scripts.

2. I show that respondents draw on the scripts identified within the main fieldwork when discussing the institutionally relevant strategic issues I present them with. Consequently I demonstrate that top-down institutional processes are at play and influence issue interpretation.

3. As noted in section 1.2 my research partly distinguishes itself from Barley & Tolbert (1997) by studying the role of multiple institutions and their role in the individual framing of strategic issues. The findings demonstrate that respondents draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously; scripts associated with a particular institution are applied discretely to frame issues relevant only to that institution. So for example law respondents when framing the law issue draw exclusively of law scripts. Conversely when these same respondents frame the academic issue they draw exclusively on academic based

scripts. The same pattern is present for respondents affiliated with accountancy and academia. This challenges recent institutional research which suggests that actors are capable of drawing on opposing and contradictory institutional logics.

The design also included an issue for respondents to frame that cut across institutions. The tension between research and teaching was chosen to explore this since it was thought that respondents from new and old universities, with a potential difference in the emphasis their institutions place on research versus teaching, may see this issue differently. The decision to include this issue was vindicated with respondents recognising and applying scripts specific to academia but also on occasions pulled on what I describe as 'local' academic scripts specific to the working context of their respective universities. It became clear that '*when local and academic scripts align (as for Beta business school with a focus on research) respondents draw predominantly from the general academic scripts; When academic and local scripts do not align, as was the case with respondents based at Alpha business school with a focus on teaching, respondents draw predominantly on local scripts*'. This supports the finding that actors find it hard to draw on multiple institutions unless the scripts align in some way.

4. The research design was primarily set up to identify scripts and their role, if any, on the individual framing of strategic issues. It became evident through the analysis stage of the data that some other factor also appeared to be playing a role in the framing of strategic issues. This factor enables respondents to interpret scripts when framing the strategic issues I present them with, representative of bottom-up institutional processes being present. Drawing on the work of Bartunek (1984) I label these bottom-up processes as 'meanings' when describing the sense-making element of interpretive schemes discussed in chapter 2. Two groups are identified: Those who appear to 'buy into' their institutional scripts, seeing them as legitimate, and who therefore apply bottom-up institutional processes that are in alignment with these scripts; and those respondents who don't see the institutional scripts as legitimate, displaying bottom-up interpretive processes critical of the scripts.

1.4 Contribution

My research makes four contributions to Knowledge. Firstly to the strategic literature that has focused exclusively on individual, group and organisational level factors. I show that institutions, enacted through scripted behaviours, play a pivotal role in the framing of strategic issues. I also extend the work of Dutton *et al.* (1989) by explaining why organisations in the same competitive environment or what I describe as the institutional setting interpret strategic issues differently.

Within the institutional literature I demonstrate that institutional scripts operate at multiple levels which is consistent with the conceptual thoughts of Barley & Tolbert (1997). As noted in section 1.2 the research design was also set up to ascertain the impact of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues. This is important because there has been a distinct lack of empirical work investigating the impact of multiple institutions on actors' behaviour and interpretive processes. I show that scripts (representative of top-down institutional processes) are applied 'discretely' to frame strategic issues. That is actors may draw on multiple institutions and associated scripts but not simultaneously.

My research also lends support to the growing consensus within the institutional literature (see for example Dobbin *et al.* 1993; Edelman, Uggen and Erlanger, 1999; Scott, 2001) that both top-down and bottom-up institutional processes operate in tandem. I add a level of clarity through elaborating on both the nature and role of bottom-up institutional processes. To achieve this I draw on the work of Bartunek (1984) in describing these bottom-up processes as 'meanings' which enable actors to interpret institutionally defined scripts. To further our understanding into micro-institutional processes I argue that it is beneficial to view scripts as the building blocks around which alternative meaning systems, indicative of interpretive schemes are arranged (Bartunek, 1984).

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis comprises six further chapters. In *Chapter One*, I have introduced the literatures leading to the research question and a summary of the findings and contributions. The remainder of the thesis justifies the research question through

the detailed discussion of the literatures (strategic issue diagnosis, problem formulation literatures and institutional literatures respectively), which in turn, informs the choice of research design and method from which findings and conclusions are derived.

Chapter two puts forward an argument that the strategic literature and in particular two sub-sets of this - the problem formulation and strategic diagnosis literatures - have not addressed the role of institutional forces on the individual framing of strategic issues. An argument is developed to show the relevance of an institutional perspective to our understanding of the individual framing of strategic issues. I draw primarily on the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) because they are one of the few to detail the linking mechanism between micro- individual and macro-institutional arrangements. This leads to the identification of the research question, which addresses the role of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues.

Chapter three details the research design, explaining how my research question was operationalised. In doing so I build upon and extend the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997). My research similarly applies the definition of institutions and scripts, but differs from Barley & Tolbert (1997). As opposed to studying how institutions develop over time, my research focuses on how developed institutions influence what actors do and how they respond. I also wanted to gain insight into the role of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues. Given this different focus I develop an interviewing strategy derived from the piloting process undertaken prior to the main fieldwork. I go on to further explain my research strategy, data analysis and how in my research I dealt with the issue of trustworthiness.

Chapter four sets the context for the study. The three institutional settings for my research are academia, law and accountancy. These contexts have been extensively researched within the institutional literature, being viewed as typical institutional settings. The historical developments are examined within each of these institutional settings leading to an analysis of the current structural arrangements.

Chapter five details part one of the findings of the research, illustrating scripts by institutional setting; academia, law and accounting.

Chapter six shows that scripts, representative of top-down institutional processes, play a key role in the framing of strategic issues. It is also shown that scripts are applied discretely to frame strategic issues. Finally I show that bottom-up processes are at play that enables respondents to make sense of scripts. I draw on the work of Bartunek (1984) in describing these bottom-up processes as 'meanings'. Two groups of meanings are identified; those that support the institutionally defined scripts and those that are critical of these same scripts

Chapter seven presents a summary of the research and in doing grounds the findings within the literature discussed in chapter 2. The contributions of the research are summarised alongside a discussion of future research, critical reflections on the PhD and practical implications.

Chapter TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter details the central theoretical argument of the thesis. It begins by demonstrating that institutional theory has a long and established tradition within sociology. However until recently institutionalists have been accused of focusing on conformity and isomorphism between organisations exposed to similar cultural and social influences. This has led to a tendency to aggregate data to the level of the organisational field[1] leaving institutionalists vulnerable to the assertion that institutional theory is not capable of elaborating upon the micro foundations that underpin it. Jepperson (1991) elaborates upon this point by persuasively arguing that "institutionalism, like any set of causal arguments, must be capable of providing micro translation of its propositions, that is, samples of lower level processes embodied in higher-order effects"(1991: 158). These remarks, alongside those made by other prominent institutionalists, have led to a concerted effort to understand the role of micro-institutional processes and how these shape behaviour and action. Nonetheless in providing micro translation there is also a need to further understand the linking mechanism between micro-individual and macro-institutional arrangements.

In order to achieve this, my research builds on the conceptual work of Barley & Tolbert (1997). They are one of the few to develop the micro underpinnings of institutional theory and to provide a compelling account of the linking mechanism between macro and micro-institutional arrangements. Their core argument is that macro-institutional arrangements are reproduced and altered through the interaction between actors. Interaction consequently plays a role in shaping behaviour and action, which is itself they argue informed by macro-institutional arrangements. There is a clear emphasis within the Barley & Tolbert (1997) work

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[1] Institutionalists have adopted the label of organisational field as a means of conceptualising environmental elements and boundaries. Scott (1994) defines an organisational field as "a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside of the field"(Scott, 1994: 207-208)

on interaction and behaviour that results from this. Consequently interpretation and cognition are sidelined by these authors. Nonetheless in developing their argument Barley & Tolbert (1997) rightly note that although actions may vary, to be interpretable, they must conform to taken-for-granted assumptions about the activities and interactions appropriate to actors. Presumably in order for social actions to be 'interpretable' they must be carried in the minds of actors. The question then arises as to what role, if any, the institutional context plays in the shaping of interpretive processes?

This offers a new way to understand decision making activity in organisations. Indeed prominent strategists have called for a greater understanding of the formative stages of decision making and more specifically the factors that contribute to the individual framing of an issue and the nature of this process. Through reviewing both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures, which form sub sets of the strategy literature, it becomes clear that neither have adequately addressed the individual framing of the issue. A micro-institutional perspective, informed in part by the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997), offers the opportunity to address this. This leads to the research question which my work addresses:

Research Question

How does the institutional context impact on the individual framing of the issue?

As noted, Barley & Tolbert (1997) argue that macro-institutional arrangements are reproduced and altered through the interaction between actors. Through interaction, and over time, scripts develop. These have been conceived of in terms of cognitive phenomenon (Schank & Ableson, 1977). However Barley & Tolbert (1997) argue that it is empirically more beneficial to view scripts as behavioural regularities. My research similarly adopts this concept of scripts. According to Barley & Tolbert (1997) institutional principles are encoded as scripts which are enacted, from which 'behaviours' revise or replicate the scripts that informed the actions. The final stage entails objectification of patterns of behaviour.

Barley & Tolbert (1997) draw extensively on the theory of structuration (Giddens, 1979, 1984) to build their model. Through reviewing this 'meta' theory, I contend that by introducing the concept of interpretive schemes (Bartunek, 1984; Greenwood & Hinings, 1988; Ranson *et al.* 1980) it is possible to bring back into the discussion cognition and interpretation. When actors take action and partake in scripted behaviour, they make sense (Weick, 1995) of these actions in terms of their existing interpretive scheme. These schemes are themselves linked with sensemaking processes and in particular, the generation of generic subjectivity from intersubjectivity (Weick, 1995). By extending the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) further insight may be gained into micro-institutional processes, which in turn offers an opportunity to understand the factors that contribute to the individual framing of strategic issues and the nature of this process. This leads to the development of the conceptual framework in section 2.6 of chapter 2.

The following section commences by grounding the research question within the institutional literature. This is achieved by detailing the historical development of the institutional tradition leading to a review of the neo-institutional literature. It becomes clear that until recently, institutionalists have emphasised conformity and isomorphism between organisations exposed to similar institutional forces. This has led to a propensity to aggregate data to the level of the organisational field and in doing so emphasis has been placed on macro-institutional arrangements alongside an institutions capacity to constrain.

2.2 Historical Underpinnings of the Institutional Literature

Institutional theory has a long and established tradition within sociology. Spencer (1910) and Sumner (1906) are attributed with setting the foundations of the institutional tradition, both of whom take an evolutionary perspective to the development of institutional arrangements (Scott, 2001). Sumner (1906) introduced the term '*folkways*'. These describe habitual "usages, manners, customs, mores and morals" (1906, 22) that he believed to be practiced more or less unconsciously in every culture. Spencer (1910) viewed society as an organic system. In deliberating upon the relationship between the organic system and the parts that constitute the system, Spencer (1910) highlights the importance of

language and interaction. According to Spencer (1910) language is the medium that enables societies, though formed of discrete units, to exhibit a permanence of relations between component parts. Sumner (1906) and Spencer (1910) acknowledged interaction but focused on institutions as relatively permanent features of society, constraining behaviour and action.

Cooley (1902) emphasised the interdependence of individuals and institutions. Institutions are developed and preserved through interaction between individual actors. Hughes (1936) further developed this interdependent model, defining institutions as an "establishment of relative permanence of a distinctly social sort" (1936: 180). The essential element underpinning institutions are *mores* or formal rules which are shared amongst a collectivity. Accordingly, Hughes (1936) contends that institutions exist to the extent that standardised forms of behaviour develop between actors within society.

These embryonic ideas form the foundations from which institutional theory developed through the mid to late twentieth century. This may account for why from the mid 1970s and until recently the emphasis has been on understanding how and why organisational structures and processes become taken-for-granted or institutionalised over time (Aldrich, 1999; Hensmans, 2003; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Phillips *et al.* 2000). Institutionalism has consequently been conceived as the process by which social processes take on a rule-like status in social thought and action (Ingram and Clay 2000). This has led to a focus on an institution's capacity to constrain, with emphasis on the deterministic nature of the institutional context in shaping organisational characteristics and behaviours of actors (Barley and Tolbert, 1997; Hensmans, 2003; Scott, 2001).

Institutional theory has undergone a period of revival within organisational studies (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Barley and Tolbert, 1997) due in part to rising disenchantment with theories that adopt efficiency as the mainstay of decision-making or that describes variations in organisational structure in terms of rational adaptations to environmental influences (Barley and Tolbert, 1997). Arguably the turning point for contemporary institutional theory was triggered by the seminal paper by Scott (1987) who sought to clarify what had been up to this point a set of theoretically rich yet disjointed collection of readings (Scott, 2001).

The following section explores the key aspects of the various 'faces' of institutional theory as described by Scott (1987).

2.3 The "Faces" of Institutional Theory

As noted by Scott (1987), there are several *faces* of institutional theory, not just one. Scott (1987) elaborates on a number of sociological formulations. The first of which, attributed to Philip Selznick, views institutionalisation as a process "that happens to an organization over time"(Selznick, 1957:256). Indeed "to institutionalize is to infuse with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand" (1957:17). Although this formulation, like the latter ones, argues that institutionalisation constrains organisational rationality, it does so by identifying different constraints (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). Emphasis is given to "the vesting of interests within organizations as a result of political tradeoffs and alliances" (1991: 12). Consequently intra-organisational change and power punctuated this period of the institutional tradition.

The second formulation, attributed to Berger and Luckmann (1966), places emphasis on social order and in particular to a shared social reality which is created by social interaction that "comes into being as individuals take action, interpret that action, and share with others their interpretations"(Scott, 1987: 495). It is "the process by which actions become repeated over time and assigned similar meanings by self and others [which denotes] institutionalization" (1987:495). In this manner the distinction between organisation and the environment is linked to the decision-makers' perception. Scott (1994), arguing along similar lines, contends that in order to understand decision-making behaviour it is necessary to gain an understanding of the perceptions of participants, since only factors that they perceive can enter into their decision-making behaviour. Given this, it is surprising that this formulation and the subsequent formulation discussed next, has largely focused on conformity and the larger units of analysis, such as the organisational field to explain the processes of institutionalisation (Greenwood, Suddaby & Hinings, 2002).

The third formulation, initiated by Meyer and Rowan (1977), builds on Berger & Luckmann's (1966) conception of a "socially constructed reality". Indeed,

Perrow (1986) comments that the strength of this formulation rests on the linking of actors and their environment. As opposed to previous conceptions, "environments....are more subtle in their influence; rather than being co-opted by organizations, they penetrate the organization, creating the lenses though which actors view the world and the very categories of structure, action, and thought" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991:13). Scott (2001), building on work by Bourdieu (1977), echoes this sentiment in contending that, although it is conventional to characterise broader cultural patterns as operating within the organisation's environment, it is important to recognise that these in some form or fashion are carried in the minds of actors.

The third formulation is further distinguished from its processor by emphasising 'conformity' as a consequence of organisations seeking legitimacy. Suchman (1995) contends that although the term legitimacy has been adopted as an "anchor point" within the institutional literature and to a lesser degree within organisation theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990), there has been a lack of attention with regard to defining the term. Rather, "legitimacy is more often invoked than described, and ...is more often described than defined"(1995:573).

The strategy literature as developed by Pfeffer and colleagues[2] has tended to view legitimacy as an operational resource that "organizations extract, often competitively, from their cultural environments and that they employ in pursuit of their goals" (1995:576). As rightly noted by Suchman (1995), institutional theory takes a different stance that can be traced back to the original conceptions of Berger & Luckmann (1966). From this perspective legitimacy is viewed as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions"(1995:574).

It is this definition that is used to denote "legitimacy" which directs behaviour and plays a part in the development of interpretive schemes (Bartunek, 1984; Ranson *et al.* 1980) through socialisation and sensemaking processes (Weick, 1995). Indeed Scott (2001) notes that legitimacy comes from adopting a "common frame of reference or definition of the situation. To adopt an orthodox ...identity [and a

[2]Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; and also Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990

set of behaviours associated with this identity] to relate to a specific situation is to seek legitimacy that comes from cognitive consistency" (Scott, 2001: 61). When actors take action and partake in 'scripted' behaviours they make sense of these in terms of the existing frame or reference, described in my research as interpretive schemes.

In response to the 1987 paper by Scott, and other notable writings (see for example Powell & DiMaggio, 1991) there has been a consolidation of knowledge (Dacin, Goodstein & Scott, 2002; Scott, 2001), which has led to new lines of enquiry, but also resulted in the surfacing of previously ignored fault lines. According to Scott (1987, 2001) many of the "fault lines" within institutional theory can be traced back to the ontological position taken. That is whether reality is external to the individual, imposing itself on individual consciousness or whether reality as a product of individual consciousness (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

Scott (2001) distinguishes between regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive pillars. The regulative pillar emphasises symbolic systems in terms of rules and laws that constrain and regulate behaviour. The normative pillar emphasises values and expectations that introduce a prescriptive, evaluative and obligatory dimension to social life. Whereas the cultural-cognitive pillar (associated predominantly with neo-institutional theory according to Scott, 2001) places emphasis on shared meaning systems which constitute the nature of social reality.

Hirsch (1997) is critical of these distinctions arguing that they accentuate differences as opposed to similarities. Indeed Scott (2001) himself notes, "all scholars underscore the regulative aspects of institutions" (2001:51). Further, institutions are according to Scott (2001), composed of "cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulative elements" (2001: 48).

Berger & Luckmann's (1966) conceptual thinking sowed the seeds of what has been described as the new institutionalism. This represents an important contribution to the institutional literature and in particular to my thesis (cultural-cognitive perspective). Nonetheless, and consistent with the work of Hirsch (1997) and also more recent writings by Scott (2001), my research does not

distance itself from either the regulative or normative schools of thought. Having broadly grounded my research within the institutional literature the following section explores strategic responses to institutional arrangements.

2.3.1 Strategic Responses

As already highlighted institutional theory over the past twenty years has tended to focus predominantly on macro-institutional arrangements alongside an institution's capacity to constrain. Accordingly the process of institutionalisation has tended to be interpreted as a "relatively passive, subtle, and long term phenomenon wherein societal expectations exist and organisations [and actors] conform to them" (Covaleski and Dirsmith, 1988: 562).

A major criticism of institutional theory in the past concerns the lack of consideration given to agency of decision-makers to "construct, change, and enforce" these expectations. (Covaleski and Dirsmith, 1988; DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Oliver, 1988, 1991) So, for example, Jepperson (1991) places emphasis on automatic maintenance and self-restoration of institutional arrangements. This is in contrast to the views of DiMaggio who notes that "institutional work is undertaken by actors with material or ideal interests in the persistence of the institution...: where such interests are not present and influential, deinstitutionalization occurs"(DiMaggio, 1988: 13, extracts from Scott, 1995:49). More recently Scott (2001) has argued neo institutional theory has partly addressed this issue through the ongoing debate within the institutional tradition between top-down and bottom-up processes (see for example Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Seo & Creed 2002).

The controversy concerning the role of agency stems from differing interpretations of industry creation and diffusion. Institutionalists are divided on how institutional forming processes are being transmitted. There are those who favour a top down process, whereby the institutional context determines organisational structures, strategies and behaviours of actors. Conversely, there are those who favour a bottom up process, whereby actors invent, adapt and negotiate structures and strategies.

Those emphasising environmental processes, whether coercive, mimetic or normative[3] or a combination of these, are more likely to view "institutional forming processes as being top down, emanating from [institutional arrangements] already existing at societal or field levels"(Scott, 1995: 140). As a result cultural arrangements are imposed on organisations and actors, which has resulted in a lack of attention being given to active agency and has resulted in a focus on macro-institutional arrangements. This aside, the arguments for institutional forming processes unfolding in this manner are by no means unconvincing. They take account of the similarity in organisational forms and practices within a field. Surely we would see more diversity if the process was bottom-up? Equally " those favouring top-down designs point out the extent to which managers in different situations tend to select the same organisational structures or strategies, suggesting that they are not inventing but borrowing existing [institutionally defined arrangements]"(Scott, 1995:141).

Others emphasise a bottom-up process whereby institutional forms are created and transmitted by participants through a process of invention and negotiation. Scott (2001) cites the established research of Westney (1987) as an example whereby "Japanese officials scouted the world for successful models, but the narrative quickly becomes one of cultural invention, as existing ideas had to be fitted into new contexts" (Scott, 1995: 142).

Scott (2001), who explicitly builds on a structurational model (Giddens, 1984), contends that patterns of behaviour are transmitted though interaction and that "these are carried and reproduced, but also modified and reconstructed, by interpretations and inventions of subordinate actors: individuals, organizations, and fields"(Scott, 1995: 141). He therefore argues for both top-down and bottom-up processes working in tandem.

This is not to suggest that both processes are present to an equal extent. For example, research has shown top-down processes to dominate certain sectors

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[3] DiMaggio & Powell (1983) distinguish between three mechanisms leading to isomorphism (similarity): (1) coercive isomorphism, resulting from "both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectation"(DiMaggio & Powell, 1991:67); (2) mimetic isomorphism, resulting from standard responses to uncertainty and (3) normative isomorphism, associated with professionalisation.

(DiMaggio, 1991-structuration of the U.S. arts field). Conversely, research by Dobbin *et al.* (1993) describes a "complex interactive process between the requirements of institutional agents (state officials), on the one hand, and the response of the personnel managers who, in both individual and collective ways, devised proposals that eventually resulted in negotiated solutions to meeting equal opportunity requirements" (Scott, 1995: 143 discussing Dobbin *et al.* 1993). Edelman *et al.* (1999) substantiate both bottom-up and top-down processes operating in tandem. What is clear from the institutional research is that decision-makers or actors are not as passive as once thought (Scott, 2001).

The continuing dialogue between institutionalists regarding the role of top-down, bottom-up processes has recently led to a focus on how institutional arrangements are negotiated (Dacin, Goodstein, and Scott, 2002) leading to a rekindled interest in qualitative studies examining micro-institutional processes (for example Greenwood, Suddaby, Hinings, 2002). Townley (2002) highlights the role of competing rationalities whilst Kraatz and Moore (2002) discuss the role of introducing leaders with differing backgrounds. This renewed interest in how institutional arrangements are negotiated is promising, leading to the recognition that there is a need to understand micro-institutional processes. My research agrees with the comments of DiMaggio & Powell (1991) who argue that "the macro side of neo institutionalism...is central. Yet any macro sociology rests on a micro sociology" (1991: 16). Recently there has been a concerted effort to understand the role of micro-institutional processes and how these shape behaviour and action at both conceptual and empirical levels (see for example Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Johnson, Smith & Codling, 2000; Johnson *et al.* 2003; Sonpar, Handelman & Dastmalchian, 2003). The longitudinal study of Johnson *et al.* (2003) examines processes of de-institutionalisation and institutional change within the context of the privatisation of 'British Rail'. Their findings show how "cumulative experimentation around the extension, bending and subverting of institutional rules, approximating to game playing, may vary according to the context of institutional change" (2003: 1). Sonpar *et al.* (2003) explore institutional change within a health care setting. The crux of their work is that types of 'trust' vary across sub groups and that differing interpretive schemes (Bartunek, 1984; Greenwood & Hinings, 1988; Ranson *et al.* 1980) account for

this. That is trust itself is socially constructed taking on a unique meaning within differing subgroups.

As acknowledged by Johnson *et al.* (2000) in exploring micro-institutional arrangements there is a need to understand the linking mechanism between micro-individual and macro-institutional arrangements. It is this that is of interest to my research. My research builds on the conceptual work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) who are one of the few to develop the micro-underpinnings of institutional theory. In doing so, they draw on the work of Giddens (1984) as a means of linking micro and macro-institutional arrangements. According to Barley & Tolbert (1997) institutional arrangements are reproduced and altered through the interaction of actors. They contend that 'interaction' plays a role in shaping behaviour and action, which itself is in formed by macro-institutional arrangements (Barley & Tolbert, 1997).

However by focusing on behaviour and action, interpretation and cognition are necessarily sidelined (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). I propose that this need not be the case. Indeed Barley & Tolbert (1997) note that although "social actions may vary in their particulars, but to be interpretable, their contours must conform to taken-for-granted assumptions about the activities and interactions appropriate for different classes of actors" (1997: 97). It would seem that in order for social actions to be 'interpretable' they must be carried in the minds of actors.

This offers a new way to understand decision-making activity in organisations which coincides with calls from prominent strategists to further explore the factors that contribute to the individual framing of an issue and the nature of this process (Nutt, 1998). The following section briefly introduces strategic decision making, before reviewing both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis (SID) literatures that address the formative stages of the decision process.

2.4 Strategic Decision Making

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to summarise the extensive literature on strategic decision-making processes (for a review of strategic decision making see

Rajagopalan, Rasheed & Datta, 1993; Schwenk, 1995), but it is important to establish its nature and how these types of decisions unfold within organisations.

Strategic decisions can be defined as ones that are "important, in terms of the actions taken, the resources committed, or the precedents set"(Mintzberg *et al.* 1976: 246). A critical task of senior management involves the identification and structuring of the most important issues threatening the organisation's ability to survive (Grant, 2003; Lyles & Thomas, 1988). Consequently senior managers' views are seen as important as they interpret issues relevant to the organisation (Daft and Weick, 1984; Papadakis & Barwise, 2002) and are ultimately responsible for implementing strategies (Papadakis *et al.* 1998; Walton, 1986).

Over the past three decades researchers have attempted to identify the types or categories of strategic decisions. As noted by Schwenk (1995) this is not an easy task due to the nature of such decisions. They are seen as "unstructured", "unprogrammed" or just "messy". They impact on the firm's ability to survive and prosper (Lyles & Thomas, 1988; Papadakis & Barwise, 2002). Consequently strategic decisions rarely present themselves in a convenient manner (Mintzberg *et al.* 1976). Rather, problems and opportunities must be discerned from a continuous stream of ambiguous information (Daft and Weick, 1984).

Much of the early literature regarding strategic decision-making has been dominated by a highly normative or rational stance (Mintzberg *et al.* 1976; Papadakis, Liouas & Chambers, 1998). This has led to the development of a "step-by-step" approach with sets of procedures postulated as those which should be included within any framework designed to formulate a total firm strategy (Fredrickson, 1984; Sharfman & Dean, 1997). The research by Mintzberg *et al.* (1976) was one of the first (also see Allison, 1971) to suggest that this normative approach was not sufficient fully to describe and explain the process of strategic decision-making.

The Mintzberg & colleagues' research was one of the first of many to recognise the importance of the formative stages of decision-making (also see for example Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Lyles, 1981). Indeed Mintzberg *et al.* (1976) propose that the framing of the issue is probably the single most important "routine since it

determines in large part, however implicitly, the subsequent course of action"(1976: 274). They acknowledged within their conclusions, their research, like others, barely "scratches the surface" of organisational decision-making. In particular little is known about the diagnosis phase including the framing stage of the process. They go on to argue that future research should address this gap.

Within the strategic decision making field both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures, which focus on the formative stages of decision making, have attempted to address the framing stage of decision making with varying degrees of success. As noted by Dutton *et al.* (1983), although problem formulation is the process that most closely resembles SID, differences do exist. Both are concerned with the formative stages of decision-making, however the problem formulation literature (Cowan, 1986; Lyles, 1981; Lyles & Mitroff, 1980; Lyles & Thomas, 1988; Nutt, 1998; Sagasti & Mitroff, 1973; Volkema, 1995, 1998) focuses solely on problems as opposed to issues which are evoked by stimuli.

As will be demonstrated the SID literature tends to be more concerned with how data and stimuli are interpreted in terms of the relative influence of group dynamics on the process as opposed to the individual level (Dutton *et al.* 1983). This is as opposed to the problem formulation literature that attempts to gain not only an understanding of the interpretation process but also the initial recognition of an issue. Nonetheless, and as will be demonstrated, neither the problem formulation nor strategic issue diagnosis literatures have addressed the role of institutional influences on the individual framing of issues.

2.4.1 Strategic Issue Diagnosis Literature (SID)

Jane Dutton and colleagues have made a significant and sustained contribution to the strategic issue diagnosis literature. Indeed it can be said that within this literature there is a high degree of consensus regarding at least the definition of strategic issues and SID. Taking their lead from Ansoff (1980) and King (1982), Dutton and Duncan (1987) define strategic issues as "developments, events and trends having the potential to impact upon an organisation's strategy."(1987: 103).

As noted by Dutton *et al.* (1983) strategic issues do not appear in pre-packaged form, "rather, decision makers selectively attend to some emerging developments while ignoring others" (Dutton and Jackson, 1987:77). These are interpreted and infused with meanings (Daft and Weick, 1984), which subsequently impact on the latter stages of the decision-making process. As a consequence, the formative stage of decision-making represents a critical stage warranting investigation in its own right (Cyert and March, 1963; Mintzberg *et al.* 1976; Nutt, 1998).

Strategic issue diagnosis is explicitly concerned with the process through which decision-makers translate data and stimuli into focused issues that are subsequently interpreted (Dutton, Fahey, and Narayanan, 1983; Denison, Dutton, Kahn & Hart, 1996). In this manner data, stimuli and perceptions of an issue must be gathered and imbued with meaning (Daft and Weick, 1984). Consequently, diagnosis should be viewed as an attention-organising process, which can best be conceptualised as a "fluid, emergent and dynamic" process (Dutton *et al.* 1983).

Dissecting the original meaning applied to the SID process by Dutton *et al.* (1983) and subsequently refined by Jackson and Dutton (1988) & Dutton (1993) leads to the recognition of two quite distinct processes. The first concerns the initial recognition and framing of the issue by the individual decision-maker within an organisational context exposed to political and cultural forces. The second part of SID, which has received the majority of attention, involves a further refinement by the decision-maker within the arena of the "social and political context in which an individual decision maker exists" (Dutton, 1993: 341). As such, interpretation is not conducted within a vacuum. Instead political forces resulting in negotiation and manoeuvring within the organisation, punctuate this phase (Dutton *et al.* 1983).

Attention has tended to focus on the diagnosis phase whereby stimuli are interpreted and understood within the context of an organisation exposed to political and cultural influences (Dutton *et al.* 1983). The "individual" framing of the issue has been conspicuously missing from this literature alongside research focusing on the influence of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues (Dutton & Jackson, 1987). Therefore although SID is concerned

with the formative stages of decision-making attention is given to the organisational context and how political and social issues impact on the interpretation and understanding of data and stimuli. The strategic issue diagnosis literature, much like the problem formulation literature for which we now turn our attention to, has not addressed institutional influences on the individual framing of issues. Given that this research stream (SID) is in decline this omission offers a new and exciting way of understanding framing.

2.4.2 Problem Formulation Literature

The problem formulation literature is useful to this study in as much as it is explicitly concerned with the formative stages of decision-making. However by using the label of *problem,* proponents of this literature implicitly assume that developments within the environment have achieved the status of a "*decision event*" (Dutton *et al.* 1983). I contend that it is more appropriate to focus on issues more generally when attempting to understand the very early stages of decision-making. This is because decision alternatives that might emerge are still in a process of unfolding and are consequently yet to be categorised or framed.

After a careful examination of the problem formulation literature it soon becomes apparent that the conceptual and empirical studies contained within it can be divided into two groups: those focusing on the individual's influence on problem perception, and those that have focused more on influence of organisational processes. It is noticeable that institutional effects have not been explored, which would appear to be an omission. The table on the following page illustrates this point.

Studies focusing on the individual have been more concerned with characteristics that affect the way in which an individual defines the nature of a problem. For example Newell & Simon (1972) found that individuals structure the nature of the problem in such a way so as to be in agreement with past experiences, whilst Wright (1974) found that, when faced with time constraints, individuals tend to weigh negative information more heavily. Badre (1973, cited in Lyles 1981) argues that decision-makers, when faced with ambiguous situations, are more likely to draw from past information in the evaluation of alternatives.

Problem Formulation Studies

Researcher	Level	Emphasis	methodology
Pounds (1969)	Organisational	Problem finding	Interviews /Questionnaires
Newell & Simon (1972)	Individual	Human information processing	Protocol Analysis
Mintzberg et al (1976)	Organisational	Unstructured decisions	Interviews
Wright(1974)	Individual	Decision making	Lab Expt
Lyles & Mitroff (1980)	Organisational	Problem formulation	Interviews/Survey
Cowan (1986)	Individual	Problem recognition	Conceptual
Lyles (1987)	Organisational	Problem formulation	Questionnaires
Lyles & Thomas (1988)	Organisational	Problem formulation	Conceptual
Smith (1988)	Individual	Problem formulation	Conceptual
Volkema (1995)	Group	Problem formulation	Conceptual
Volkema (1998)	Group	Cognitive-based group composition	Conceptual
Nutt (1998)	Organisational	Framing	Interviews/Survey

Fig 2.1: Adapted and Updated from Lyles (1981)

The conceptual work of Cowan (1986), in attempting to model the problem formulation process, comes closest to providing insights in the individual framing of issues. Indeed Cowan defines the *recognition and framing process* as an individual level phenomenon, whereby actors first become aware of a problem. Cowan discusses recognition and framing in terms of a three stage model: *Gestation/latency* as represented by the period prior to any problem recognition activities. This is followed by the *categorisation stage*, which denotes the point where the individual first becomes aware of a problem. At this stage the individual perceives that "something is wrong" but can not necessarily adequately define the nature of the problem. According to Cowan, this leads to the *diagnosis* stage, whereby information is gathered leading to the classification or "framing" of the problem.

Although this model has, to some extent, highlighted a number of issues that may be involved in the framing process, by taking a holistic approach to understanding the recognition and framing process, detail is lacking regarding the framing of the issue. A similar criticism can be levelled at the research concerned with organisational level problem formulation. For example, Pounds (1969) suggests that problem finding is not usually the result of formal planning systems, but rather as a result of someone else defining or framing the problem for you. This is further developed by Nutt (1998) who sought to understand the role of

"activists", and in particular, the impact of claims by stakeholders on the framing and formulation process. Indeed, Nutt (1998) provides a useful analogy to framing which is consistent with the problem formulation literature. My research concurs with the work of Nutt (1998) and in so doing defines framing as an attention *directing activity*:

> *"Framing provides focus, much like the designers of Chinese gardens who use portals to direct ones view. The portals focus attention on a landscape in which ponds, greenery, structures, and the like are positioned in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Viewing outside the portal would have less appeal."*
>
> (Nutt, 1998: 195)

The work of Goffman (1974), writing from a sociological perspective, further sheds light on the nature of framing and as such is relevant to my research. Goffman (1974) conceives of framing in terms of three interrelated parts. Framing commences according to Goffman (1974) with *keying*, bringing into focus particular aspects of everyday life by reflecting on past interactions or what is described in my research as scripts; *anchoring* involves the rooting of ideas in deeper frames of meaning. *Fabrication* occurs when scripts and meanings are made sense of in relation to one another-representative of the interpretive scheme in use. Consequently Goffman (1974) attempts to understand the relationship between the cognitive and behavioural elements to framing which is particularly salient given Barley & Tolbert's (1997) admonitions regarding the use of scripts in the way in which they define them. Although the problem formulation literature is concerned with the formative stages of decision-making there is a distinct lack of research that has addressed individual framing and in particular the impact of institutional forces on individual framing.

2.5 The Contribution of a Micro Institutional Perspective

Institutional theory is ideally placed to explore and understand the relative influence of the institutional context on the individual framing of issues. This section is directed towards building a framework which links macro and micro-institutional arrangements in an effort to understand the relative impact of institutional forces on the individual framing of strategic issues.

I argued in Section 2.3 that actors seek to be perceived as legitimate (Suchman, 1995) which in turn impacts on behaviour and plays a part in the development of interpretive schemes (Bartunek, 1984; Ranson *et al.* 1980) through socialisation and sensemaking processes (Weick, 1995). My research draws on the conceptual work of Barley & Tolbert (1997). This is because they present one of few institutional accounts to develop the micro-underpinnings of institutional theory and provide a credible linking mechanism between micro and macro-institutional arrangements. By drawing on and extending the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) I argue it is possible to shed light on the research question that my work addresses:

Research Question

How does the institutional context impact on the individual framing of an issue?

My research applies the definition of institutions as developed by Barley & Tolbert (1997) which is consistent with the cultural-cognitive pillar for which my research primarily draws from. Consequently institutions are "shared rules and typifications that identify categories of social actors and their appropriate activities or relationships" (1997: 96). Barley & Tolbert (1997) argue that institutions are reproduced and altered through interaction. Through interaction, and over time, scripted behaviours develop. According to Barley & Tolbert (1997) scripts should be viewed as behavioural regularities. They contend that it is empirically beneficial to view scripts as behavioural regularities as opposed to cognitive phenomenon. However, and as demonstrated, scripts have a long tradition within the psychology literature as cognitive phenomenon as opposed to behavioural.

2.5.1 Script Theory

The term 'script' has been extensively applied within psychology, more specifically within clinical psychology (Berne, 1961) in terms of being something that is 'acted out' (Steiner, 1974) in behaviour. Within mainstream psychology, according to Neisser (1967), scripts can be traced back to Barlett's (1932) use of the term 'schema'. It has widely become accepted (Fiske & Taylor, 1984) that scripts within psychology are a particular form of schema, namely an *event*

schema. Indeed Bennett (1993) notes that scripts are "mental structures which organise information about the sequences of predictable actions, locations, roles and props that constitute events" (in Bennett, 1993: 142). Similarly Gioia & Poole (1984) define a script as "a schematic knowledge structure held in memory that specifies behavior or event sequences that are appropriate for specific situations." (1984: 449). Schank and Ableson (1977), who are considered perhaps, as most associated with the term script, define a script as "a structure that describes appropriate sequences of events in a particular context...Scripts handle stylized everyday situations...Thus a script is a predetermined, stereotyped sequence of actions that defines a well known situation" (1977: 41).

There are a number of common underlying themes that emerges from the forgoing definitions of scripts: They are primarily structures for organising knowledge, learnt through interaction, which indicate appropriate behaviours and actions. They are also specific schemas for action (Fiske & Taylor, 1984) described as *event* schema. Consequently Barley & Tolbert (1997), by defining scripts in terms of behavioural regularities, are using scripts as a physical proxy for schemas.

My research concurs with Barley & Tolbert on this matter, applying the concept of scripts in terms of behavioural regularities. Consequently scripts are defined in my research as "observable, recurrent activities and patterns of interaction characteristic of a particular setting" (Barley & Tolbert, 1997: 98). The contention is that "institutions relevant to a particular setting will manifest themselves in behaviours characteristic of that setting and, hence, will appear as local variants of more general principles"(1997; 98). According to Barley & Tolbert (1997) institutional principles are encoded as scripts which are enacted, from which 'behaviours' revise or replicate the scripts that informed the actions. The final stage entails objectification of patterned behaviours.

Barley & Tolbert (1997) draw extensively on the theory of structuration (Giddens, 1979, 1984) as the linking mechanism between macro and micro-institutional processes. Powell & DiMaggio (1991) note "the link between micro and macro levels of analysis has not received much attention from practitioners of the new institutionalism, most of whom move back and forth among ethnomethodolgy,

phenomenology, and conventional resource dependent arguments" (1991: 25). Subsequently Powell & DiMaggio (1991), alongside Scott (2001) concur with Barley & Tolbert (1997) in citing structuration theory as proposed by Giddens (1984) as an important 'meta' theory for understanding the relationship between macro and micro-institutional arrangements. As such the following section explores in greater detail the principles underpinning structuration theory.

2.5.2 Structuration Theory

Structuration as a 'meta' theory has been applied extensively on a conceptual basis to the bridging of the micro-macro divide, not least the Barley & Tolbert (1997) paper. Fundamentally Giddens reminds us that social structure involves the patterning of social activities and relationships both across space and through time. Subsequently social structures only exist as patterned activities undertaken by actors when rules and resources are mobilised by actors. This led to the coining of the phrase by Giddens the 'duality of structure'.

Within a historical context, structuration is a theory that has been developed by Anthony Giddens (1976, 1979, 1984) in "an effort to reconstruct the basic premises of social analysis" (Giddens, 1991: 205). The substantive focus of social theory is according to Giddens not on individual action, and the experience of the individual actor. Neither is it on broad structures within society. It is rather, social practices which are on an ongoing fashion negotiated, which lie at the root of the construction of both individuals and society.

Structuration rests on the central notion of the duality of structure (Giddens, 1984). Simply put, the ongoing nature of society is a result of human action and the ongoing nature of human action is a result of society (Giddens, 1979). More eloquently put, we see "structure as the medium and outcome of the conduct it recursively organizes; the structural properties of social systems do not exist outside of action but are chronically implicated in its production and reproduction" (Giddens, 1984: 374).

Structure is a process. It develops through time and across space and is defined in terms of "rules and resources, recursively implicated in the reproduction of social systems. Structure exists only as memory traces, the organic basis of human

knowledgeability, and as instantiated in action"(Giddens, 1984: 377). Social practices are accomplished by knowledgeable human agents with 'causal' powers to make a difference. Consequently agents should not be conceived of as cultural dopes (Goffman, 1967), and equally not the product of class forces. Actors therefore have a capacity for self reflection in day to day interaction.

Social practices are not random and voluntaristic, but ordered in as much they are routinised and recursive (Giddens, 1984). Actors, in producing social practices, which manifest themselves in the visible cultural patterns that constitute society, draw upon rules and resources that are themselves institutionalised features of societies mediated by 'modalities'. Consequently structure is both the medium and the outcome of a process of structuration. That is the production and reproduction of practices both across time and space (Giddens, 1979).

The abstract notion of modalities has proved problematic to operationalise (Barley, 1986; Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Sewell, 1992). These consist of three concepts: interpretive schemes, facility (resources) and norms. Giddens describes interpretive schemes as enabling actors to make sense of interactions, and to this extent encapsulates in part how my research defines such schemes (discussed in the following section), but leaves the reader in a state of uncertainty as to exactly what he means by this concept, and how these interact with norms and in particular with facility (resources). For example Giddens (1979) describes resources as being of two types, authoritative and allocative. Authoritative resources are capabilities that generate command over persons while allocative resources are capabilities that generate command over objects or other material phenomena. It is problematic to conceptualise resources, particularly *allocative* resources (material and objective), as mediating between structure and the realm of action (Sewell, 1992).

In response to criticism (Barley, 1986; Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Sewell, 1992), Giddens argues that the 'meta' theory should be used to 'sensitise' the researcher to particular sets of concepts, so for example the relationship between action and structure. This first led Barley (1986), and then Barley & Tolbert (1997) justifiably to substitute the abstract construct of modalities, which bridge structure and agency, for "scripts" or behavioural regularities. I operationalise my research

by drawing on scripts as defined by Barley & Tolbert (1997). Scripts as defined by Barley & Tolbert (1997) are the linking mechanism between structure and the realm of action.

I concur with Barley (1986), Barley & Tolbert (1997) and Sewell (1992) regarding the abstract concept of modalities. It becomes clear however that neo-institutionists have also researched and developed the concept of interpretive schemes (Bartunek, 1984; Greenwood & Hinings, 1988; Ranson *et al.* 1980). By introducing interpretive schemes I contend it is possible bring back into the discussion cognition and interpretation that presumably inform behaviour (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). In order to achieve this, the following section explores interpretive schemes as developed and researched within the neo-institutional literature.

2.5.3 Interpretive Schemes

Bartunek (1984), on discussing the contribution of Ranson *et al.* (1980) notes that interpretive schemes "operate as shared, fundamental (though often implicit) assumptions about *why events happen as they do* and *how people are to act in different situations*" (1984: 355). Consequently interpretive schemes incorporate scripts (how people are to act in different situations) and a sensemaking element (why events happen as they do) which taken together guide behaviour and how actors interpret unfolding events. Nonetheless Bartunek (1984) and Ranson *et al.* (1980) do not adequately describe and delimit the sensemaking element. Bartunek (1984) perhaps gives the clearest indication of the nature of the sensemaking element by noting this enables actors to reflect and attribute meanings to events. I return to this issue in chapter 5 of the findings.

Ranson *et al.* (1980) suggest that an interpretive scheme is structured by action by which members of an organisation (or institution) understand what it is to be a member of that same organisation (or institution). Consequently "shared interpretive schemes are primary ways organization members are drawn together and given a shared sense of belonging"(Bartunek, 1984:355). These shared interpretive schemes are resilient to change. Interpretive schemes according to these authors enable actors to "recognise, interpret, and negotiate even strange and unanticipated situations, and thus continuously to create and re-enact the

sense and meaning of structural forms during the course of interaction"(1980:5). Actors learn this in their socialisation in everyday interaction. This learning is not fixed but continues in their experience and is subject to modification through sensemaking processes (Weick, 1995).

Ranson *et al.* (1980) go on to contend that organisations (and presumably therefore institutions) are composed of multiple interpretive schemes "the resolution of which is determined by dependencies of power and domination" (1980: 4). This is exemplified in the words of Greenwood & Hinings (1993) who argue that "an organization's 'dominant coalition' will seek to remove discordant structures because of risk of challenge to the legitimacy of the status quo"(Greenwood and Hinings, 1993: 1056). As such there is an ongoing battle between this dominant scheme and other less dominant schemes. Nonetheless, and because actors are exposed to the same stimuli within the organisation or institution, which is made sense of at intra and inter subjective levels, we might expect a degree of overlap between interpretive schemes. This would make sense given that as previously noted socialisation is the process through which interpretive schemes are derived.

This raises an interesting question. Given interpretive schemes are shared between a set of actors, how is that these actors can interpret the same issues in quite different ways? One answer to this question may be given by introducing a sensemaking perspective which as previously noted has something in common with interpretive schemes, but also operates at multiple levels, thus linking sensemaking with the internal dynamics of a structurational point of view (Giddens, 1984).

Weick (1995) focuses on the social nature of sensemaking, stating that sensemaking is 'grounded in both individual and social activities'. In doing so Weick (1995) highlights that sensemaking occurs at various levels that are recursively linked. In particular Weick (1995) draws attention to the level of intersubjectivity and generic subjectivity. Intersubjectivity refers to where meaning is transformed from feelings and beliefs and so on of "I" to those of "We". These intersubjective meanings are created through interaction and should be thought of as a shared construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

Indeed Weick (1995), in drawing on the work of Gephart (1993) further describes intersubjective meaning as "the verbal intersubjective process of interpreting actions and events" (1995: 118).

The level above interaction results in a shift from intersubjectively to generic subjectivity. As noted by Weick (1995) generic subjectivity takes many forms including scripts (Barley, 1986). In times of change, old scripts and generic subjectivity may no longer work (Weick, 1995). As such, "intersubjectivity once again becomes the focus of sensemaking as different views of the meaning of the change emerge to await a new synthesis. Generic subjectivity does not completely disappear when people interact to synthesize new meaning. Instead, synthesizing itself may be shaped by scripts that modify earlier understandings" (Weick 1995: 71). This generic subjectivity has many similarities with interpretive schemes that give meaning and enable actors to map their "experience of the world, identifying both its relevant aspects and how we are to understand them" (Bartunek, 1984: 355). The central argument of this chapter is that by applying and extending the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) it is possible to bring back into the discussion cognition and interpretation. Action, behaviour and interpretive schemes are linked through sensemaking processes. This is developed into a conceptual framework, discussed in the following section.

2.6 Development of the Conceptual Framework

The previous section was directed towards exploring the contribution of Barley & Tolbert (1997) to the micro underpinnings of institutional theory. In the process of this, I argued that by introducing interpretive schemes alongside a sensemaking perspective to the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) it is possible to bring cognition and interpretation back into the discussion. By enacting scripts and making sense of these outcomes (action) the interpretive scheme in use is either confirmed or modified.

Ranson *et al.* (1980) argue that interpretive schemes are resistant to change. This is because they operate at a deep-seated level as shared assumptions about the way to approach and proceed in a given situation. Both primary and secondary socialisation plays a significant part prior to, and on an ongoing basis in the development of interpretive schemes. The unique background and experiences of

the actor forms the foundation upon which the interpretive scheme is developed. They become shared through interaction within a given institutional setting. This does not however account for why alternative schemes may develop within the same setting. One explanation is provided by the Ranson *et al.* (1980). They highlight the role of politics and power alongside prior socialisation that lead to choices being made by actors.

The framing of the issue is dependent on the relationship between the enactment of scripts and the reflection upon these through action which are linked with the prevailing interpretive scheme through sensemaking processes (Weick, 1995). This leads to the development of the conceptual framework detailed in fig 2.2.

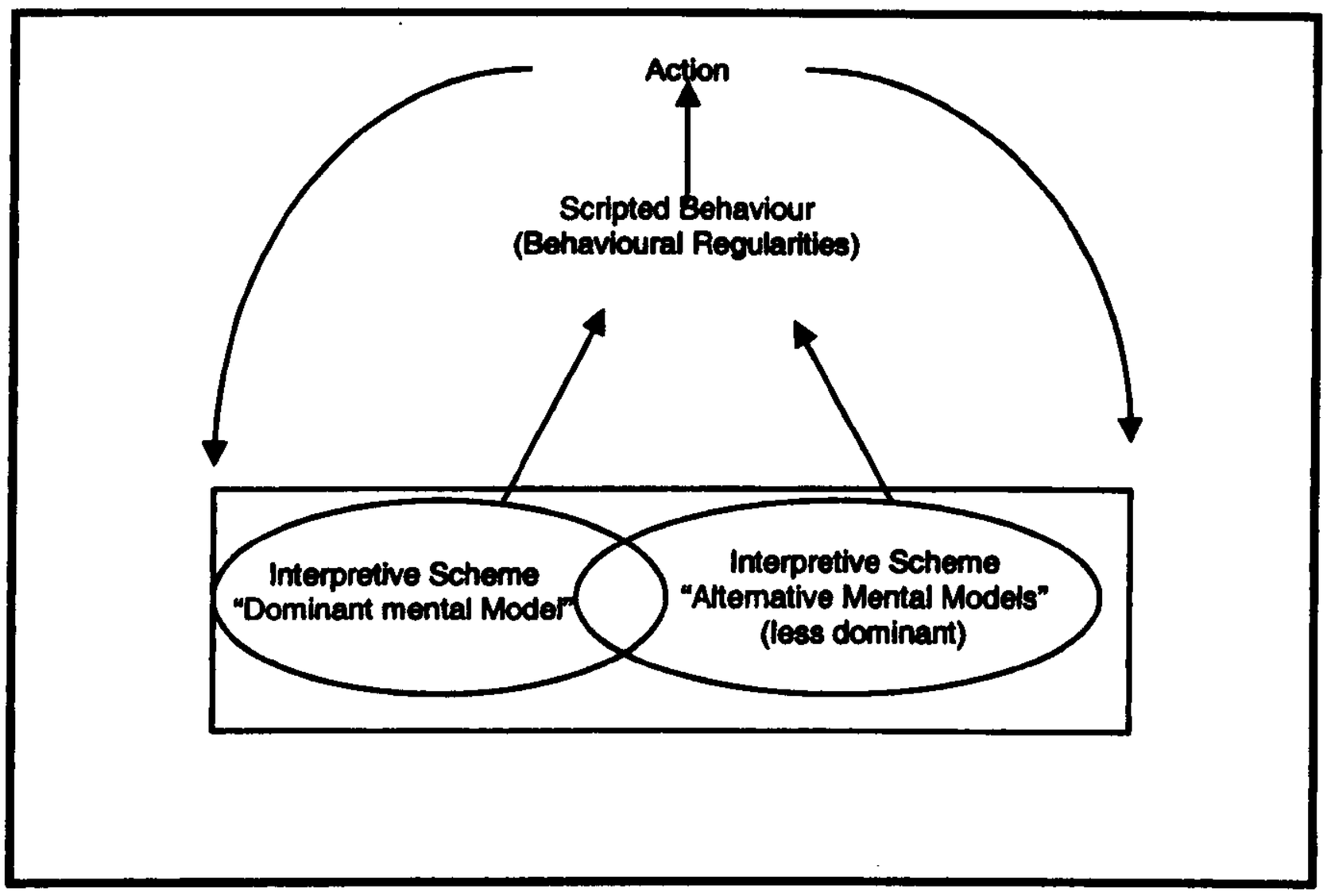


Fig 2.2: Conceptual Framework

Regarding my research question, the conceptual framework outlined depicts the institutional context as being enacted in terms of scripted behaviours. Interpretive schemes are either confirmed or modified when actors partake in scripted behaviour and make sense of their actions. Consequently interpretive schemes reflect cultural and symbolic aspects of the institutional context.

Actors have membership to multiple institutions. However institutional research has not adequately addressed the role of multiple institutional influences. So for example are scripts transposable from one institutional setting to another when framing strategic issues? Given that Ranson *et al.* (1980) suggest that an interpretive scheme is structured by action by which members of the institution

understand what it is to be a member of that same institution we might expect scripts to be enacted only in the institutional settings that they have developed from.

The conceptual framework guides the operationalisation of my research. Chapter 3 carries forward the definition as applied within my research of scripts. The research design and method were constructed to be sensitive to other factors that may be playing a role in the individual framing of strategic issues.

2.7 Summary

This chapter has explained the theoretical argument of my research. In doing so, I build on and extend the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) with the intention of gaining insight into how the institutional context impacts on the individual framing of strategic issues. I achieve this by introducing the concept of interpretive schemes that are either confirmed or modified when actors make sense of their actions. I also explain that alternative interpretive schemes may develop within an institutional setting as a consequence of power dependencies in conjunction with the unique experiences of actors both prior to and whilst working within the institutional setting. The following chapter is directed towards operationalising the research question.

Chapter THREE

Research Design Method & Analysis

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the research design, explaining how the research question was operationalised. In doing so, I build on and extend the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997). They sought to understand how institutions develop over time, adopting a longitudinal observational design, focusing on behaviour and structure. Barley & Tolbert (1997) define institutions as "shared rules and typifications that identify categories of social actors and their appropriate activities or relationships" (1997: 96) and acknowledge that by defining institutions in this way that they allow for individual actors to possess membership to multiple institutions. My research similarly applies this definition of institutions, but differs from Barley & Tolbert (1997).

As opposed to studying how institutions develop over time, I study how developed institutions influence what actors do and how they respond. In particular my research sought to understand the relative impact of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues. Therefore, given the different focus of my study I adopt a different design. This meant that I needed to be able to determine whether across multiple respondents belonging to a particular institution (s) there exists some shared institutional influence. I use commonality between respondents as evidence for the existence of institutions that are enacted in the form of scripted behaviours. Therefore I applied an interviewing strategy, developed through the piloting process, as a means of ascertaining the impact of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues.

The research design and accompanying method was designed to be sensitive to scripted behaviour but also other factors that might be playing a role in the individual framing of strategic issues. This is because it is yet to be established

the extent to which scripts plays a role in the individual framing of strategic issues or whether other mediating factors may be at play, not least interpretive schemes as identified within chapter 2. As such this does not favour *a priori* approaches whereby variables and their relationship to one another are well defined and understood. My research adopts an exploratory design, informed by and linked with existing theory, yet grounded in the data.

I adopt a naturalistic design as a means of *theory development* in order to build upon and extend the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997). The choice of a naturalistic research design (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) was guided by the necessity to understand the role of the institutional context in which respondents frame strategic issues. As noted by Lincoln & Guba (1985) those employing a naturalistic approach elect to carry out research in the natural context because naturalistic ontology would suggest that realities are totalities that may not be understood apart from their contexts.

The way in which I define institutions gives guidance regarding the selection of appropriate research settings. When reviewing the institutional literature it becomes apparent that academia and the professions have been thought of as typical institutions. Indeed academia houses a number of important professions according to institutionalists; not least the legal and accounting professions that have been studied extensively within an institutional tradition.

Over and above this the use of semi-structured interviews as opposed to observational techniques as advocated by Barley & Tolbert (1997) also brought to the forefront the issue as to the extent to which scripts can be reflected upon retrospectively using interviews. I draw on the research of Johnson, Smith & Codling (2000) to add clarity through discussing the 'duality of scripts'. They propose that where actors experience the coming together or 'clashing' of institutional templates, the prevailing rules of one are more likely to become explicit in the light of another. Given this, actors may partake in conscious script processing as they question existing institutional arrangements.

As I show in chapter 4 all three institutional settings were experiencing significant structural change at the time of this investigation, affording an opportunity to

access scripts. So for example there is a high degree of structural change in academia brought about by resourcing issues and increased monitoring of research and teaching quality. Both the legal and accounting professions are also responding to external pressures. The legal profession by opening access to minority groups, whilst the accounting profession is still reverberating from recent corporate collapses (at the time of this study the repercussions of the ENRON scandal were being debated). Consequently academia would appear to be ideally placed as a research setting to study the role of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues.

Given that my research is exploratory in nature, applying a naturalistic design, it makes sense to investigate a small number of sites. My research explores the institutional context relevant to two research sites: Alpha & Beta universities. The sites were chosen on the basis of being comparable to polar types: a traditional university and a new university but also as research sites implementing significant strategic measures to deal with resourcing issues in the UK HE sector. Again these measures are contextualised in chapter 4.

Having established the overall strategy of the research the specific research method is detailed. Barley & Tolbert (1997) favour participant observation as a means of studying changes to scripted behaviour over time. Although participant observation is well matched to this research aim, it does not readily lend itself to studying the relative impact of scripts on the individual framing of strategic issues. Equally the research tool was required to be sensitive to other factors that might also being playing some role in the individual framing of strategic issues. Given that my research is directed towards studying established institutions and their relative influence on the individual framing of strategic issues, other methods may also be relevant. Indeed Barley & Tolbert (1997) argue that other methods need to be applied to further understand micro-institutional processes.

I argue that semi-structured interviews, tested over an extensive piloting process are capable of discerning the relative impact of scripts on the individual framing of strategic issues and detecting other mediating factors. Having detailed the specific research tool, the final section is directed towards explaining how I analysed the data. This involved moving back and forth between theory and data.

The early stages of data analysis applied a manual coding approach that was subsequently replaced by the use of NVivo, an established computer package for analysing qualitative data. Having detailed the analysis of data, I explain why the patterns that emerged are worth paying attention to through discussing the concept of trustworthiness in relation to my data.

The research design and method are derived from the underlying philosophical assumptions of my research. Consequently prior to detailing the research design the following section explains how I conceive of institutions and their enactment in terms of scripted behaviours.

3.2 Institutions and the Environment

Many of the "fault lines" within institutional theory can be traced back to the ontological position taken (Scott, 1995, 2001). Those taking a more objective or realist position are inclined to assume that "actors have interests and capabilities by virtue of their innate nature, that human nature is stable across situations and through time" (Scott, 1995: 137). This consensual, functional perspective portrays the environment as "out there", constraining and empowering organisational activity through normative and regulative demands. Subsequently Meyer & Scott (1983) and those following in this tradition (for example DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Sutton *et al.* 1994) implicitly assume an objective reality leading to a focus on the causes and consequences of conformity and institutional isomorphism.

Despite the focus on symbolic activity in much of the aforementioned work, there is a distinct lack of appreciation of how social order is negotiated. Rather, institutions are treated primarily as exogenous to organisational action. As noted by Barley & Tolbert (1997) this raises a number of concerns. At the forefront of these, institutions are depicted as in some way distinct from those who comply, and indeed from the act of compliance itself (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). This is all the more perplexing, given the emphasis on a social constructionist perspective, which helps distinguish neo-institutional theory from institutional theory.

The social constructionist perspective that I adopt offers the potential to further develop the micro-underpinnings of institutional theory and in doing so offers insight into the formative stages of decision-making. From such a perspective actors collectively invent the world and their environment. However, such "invention is not random and arbitrary, but itself arises out of and is informed and constrained by existing social arrangements"(Scott, 1995: 50). Consequently, actors do not merely adapt to their environment in terms of external constraints and incentives but rather it is this reciprocal relationship between the social actor and existing arrangements that underpins institutional processes (Barley & Tolbert, 1997).

As noted by Berger & Luckmann (1966) "institutionalisation occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualised actions by types of actors. Put differently, "any such typification is an institution" (1966: 72). Subsequently, actors are socially inducted into multiple institutions. With this in mind my research defines institutions as:

"shared rules and typifications that identify categories of social actors and their appropriate activities or relationships".

(Barley & Tolbert, 1997: 96)

Institutions, according to Barley & Tolbert (1997), are enacted as scripted behaviours. Barley & Tolbert (1997) argue that it is empirically more beneficial to view these as behavioural regularities. This is consistent with Berger & Luckmann (1966), writing from a sociology of knowledge perspective who look at the role of interaction in the development of behavioural regularities. To these ends scripts are defined in my research as:

"Observable, recurrent activities and patterns of interaction characteristic of a particular setting".

(Barley & Tolbert, 1997: 98)

As noted by Barley & Tolbert (1997) the definition of institutions applies to multiple levels of analysis. There is a need therefore to be clear regarding which institutions are under investigation. It is this definition of institutions and the

enactment of these in the form of scripted behaviours that underscores the operationalisation of all subsequent research designs including that of the main fieldwork. The following section elaborates and justifies the research design.

3.3 Research Design

The review of the literature in chapter 2 demonstrated that an institutional perspective offers a new way of understanding decision making in organisations. It was also demonstrated that both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures which form subsets of the strategy literature have not adequately addressed the individual framing of strategic issues. My argument throughout has been that by applying and extending the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) further insight may be gained into micro-institutional processes. In turn this offers an opportunity to understand the factors that contribute to the individual framing of strategic issues. This leads to my research question:

How does the institutional context impact on the individual framing of the issue?

The research design and accompanying method were required to be capable of ascertaining the presence of scripted behaviour and its role, if any, on the framing of strategic issues. There was also a need for the design and accompanying method to be sensitive to other factors that might be playing some role in the individual framing of strategic issues.

Given that the research problem is poorly understood by those within the strategy and institutional literatures and novel in nature, an *a priori* approach favouring quantitative techniques were discounted. This is because it is yet to be established whether scripted behaviours play a role in the framing of the issue and whether other mediating factors may also be at play. Therefore, this research adopts a qualitative approach, and in particular is based on the principles of naturalistic inquiry

3.3.1 Naturalistic Inquiry

A naturalist design allows for the understanding of the role of the institutional context in which respondents frame strategic issues. Although the naturalistic paradigm for conducting research is not totally dependent upon qualitative methods, the two are generally complimentary (Patton, 1990). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), several assumptions underpin the implementation of naturalistic inquiry. First, this type of research is defined not at the level of method but at the level of paradigm. 'Axioms' of this paradigm include requirements that the studies be conducted using methods that a) reflect a natural setting since context is so heavily implicated in meaning b) rely heavily on both the researcher and the researched as human instruments c) are sympathetic to the phenomenon under investigation. In the case of my research I applied an interviewing strategy, conducted at the offices of respondents and not participant observation as advocated by Barley & Tolbert (1997). I justify this on the grounds that as opposed to studying how institutions develop over time, my research is directed towards understanding how developed institutions influence what actors do and how they respond.

The aim of naturalistic inquiry is to achieve understanding through providing 'vicarious experience' of a real setting in all of its richness and complexity (Langley, 1999). The goal is "understanding and reconstruction of the constructions of people (including the researcher), initially hold, aiming towards consensus but still open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improve" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994: 113). Naturalistic inquirers seek to understand a set of lived experiences from the inside out, through an interpretive understanding of social constructions of those who are directly involved in those experiences. The focus is therefore on "understanding and not generalization, a focus on the idiographic (i.e. the particulars of the case) rather than the nomothetic (i.e. law like generalizations)" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 42).

Such an approach not only assumes but also takes advantage of the belief that the knower cannot be separated from the known (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Consequently naturalistic inquirers perform as human instruments. The central idea is that "only humans are capable of understanding and interpreting the complex meanings revealed during the course of social interaction" (1985: 39).

As noted by Langley (1999), and because of the need for thick description, this strategy works best with one or a few cases. The advantage of this approach rests "in reproducing in all its subtlety the ambiguity that exists in the situations observed" (Langley, 1999: 4).

3.3.2 Selection of Sites

The way in which my research defines institutions gives guidance to how research sites should be selected. In particular the research context needs to provide a good opportunity to observe differing institutions on the framing of the issue. Two options are immediately apparent; The first involves the study of individuals operating in sectors undergoing structural change, for example the NHS, Railtrack The second option involves the study of organisations with actors from differing institutional backgrounds e.g. Charity Trustees, Universities.

This research adopts the second option with a focus on universities as the research context. This decision was also partly based on pragmatic grounds of ease of access but also the commitments of the PhD in completing in a set time frame. As has been highlighted, universities have been used as research sites within the institutional literature (see for example Covaleski & Dirsmith, 1988). In addition to this, a range of professions are housed or associated with universities, not least accountancy and law which have also been identified as key institutions by neo-institutionalists (Dobbin, Sutton, Meyer & Scott, 1993; Greenwood, Suddaby & Hinings, 2002).

Given the interpretive nature of this research, employing a naturalistic design, with a need to collect data from multiple respondents within each site alongside issues of time and resource it soon becomes apparent that a limited number of sites could and should be studied. Subsequently it made sense to select ones that give the best opportunity of gaining insight into the research question. The choice of "redbrick" and "new" universities, which can be regarded as polar types, allow for similarities and differences to be studied with regard the individual framing of strategic issues.

3.3.3 The Selection of Respondents

Consistent with a naturalist design, a purposive sampling strategy was adopted with twenty four respondents taking part in the main fieldwork: drawn from academia and the professions -law and accountancy within each of the two universities who had agreed to give me access for my research. Fig 3.1 details the design adopted for the main fieldwork.

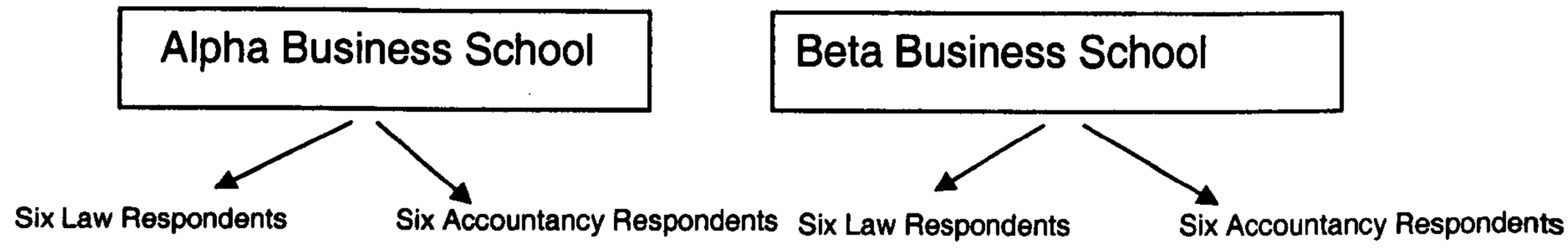


Fig 3.1: Research Design

Respondents were selected on the basis of having knowledge, past or present of their profession and being employed for a minimum of one year within academia. Respondents were required to have as a minimum undertaken training within the profession. These requirements were intended to ensure that respondents have been socialised into academia and the profession and as such likely to have been exposed to scripted behaviours within these institutions.

3.3.4 Piloting Process

In arriving at this methodology, three pilots were undertaken to refine further the research design and accompanying method. The piloting process served two purposes. Firstly it led to the refinement of the semi-structured interview protocol capable of discerning the presence of scripted behaviour and other potential mediating factors. Throughout the piloting process scripted behaviours as defined by Barley & Tolbert (1997) were applied to designing suitable interview questions. So for example, respondents were asked to discuss their experiences of the institutional settings under investigation. These were explored chronologically from their formal training to later work experiences. Through this process scripts were systematically explored. When analysing data the definition of scripts guided coding across cases with scripts identified when shared amongst two or more respondents.

Secondly the piloting process led to the decision to incorporate a range of strategic issues. This is because it was found that scripted behaviours associated with a particular institution were being applied discretely in order to frame issues relevant only to that institution. Stated differently, respondents appeared to draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously. On this basis it was decided to apply a range or 'hierarchy' of issues to the main fieldwork. That is an issue specific to each of the professions, an issue specific to Alpha & Beta business schools and an issue that spans accountancy and law within a university context.

Taken together these two learning points from the piloting process were instrumental in arriving at a interview protocol capable of shedding light on the research question. These learning points were incorporated into the main fieldwork, discussed within the following section.

3.4 Main Fieldwork

The pilot studies revealed the need to develop a hierarchy of strategic issues and a systematic interview protocol, exploring scripted behaviours within each of the institutional settings identified within the previous section. I commence by identifying the strategic issues relevant to the institutional settings within my research. Having elaborated upon the strategic issues I introduce the research tool; semi-structured interviews

3.4.1 Identification of Strategic Issues

Given the findings from the piloting process, the following criteria for issue selection were applied when reviewing the literature and exploratory discussions with faculty from Alpha & beta business schools;

1. *Strategic issue specific to accountancy (for accountants) and law (for lawyers).*
2. *Strategic issue specific to the University*
3. *Strategic issue which spans across accountancy and law within a university context.*

Two strategies were applied in arriving at the chosen strategic issues applied across respondents. Firstly an extensive literature was undertaken in order to familiarise myself with strategic issues facing academia and the professions (law and accountancy). Secondly, exploratory discussions with senior faculty from Law and Accountancy based at & Alpha and Beta business schools. These respondents did not take part in the study. Having carried out the content analysis alongside exploratory discussions the following issues were selected and applied to the main fieldwork which are further discussed in chapter 4;

1. Strategic issue specific to accountancy and law.

   Accountancy-"fragmentation of the profession"

   Law- "Inequality within the profession"

2. Strategic Issue specific to the University

   Alpha business school-Saving of £5 million pounds across the business school

   Beta business school-Forthcoming merger with a local university

3. Strategic issue which span across accountancy and law within a university context.

   Tension between research and teaching

Having detailed the methodology including selection of research context, sites and respondents I next discuss the research tool as applied within my research.

3.4.2 Research Tool

Barley & Tolbert (1997) note in their conclusion that in order to further understand micro-institutional processes there is a need for "the fashioning of a set of methods that are sensitive to and systemic about documenting both cultural and structural dynamics" (1997: 113). What is clear is that although participant observation, as conducted by Barley & Tolbert (1997), enables scripts to be ascertained, this approach does not lend itself to easily exploring scripts and their relationship with the individual framing of strategic issues. Further participant observation does not allow for the study of other potential mediating factors on the individual framing of strategic issues, not least interpretive schemes as identified within chapter 2. There was therefore a need to consider alternative qualitative methods.

The piloting process led to the refinement of a semi-structured interview protocol (see fig 3.2 for the interview protocol). The interview commenced by exploring the background of each respondent. The exploration of major turning points in the respondent's career to date allowed for an initial focal point around which to discuss both professional and academic experiences. Exploration of past and current role(s) and responsibilities was targeted at understanding the nature of the role(s) and associated responsibilities. This is important in as much that it gave insight regarding the individual and consequently guided the discerning of scripts associated with the profession (law / accountancy) and academia.

Scripts were systematically accessed through exploring the past and current role(s) of each respondent. To further refine, exploration of changes within the profession and academia were explored. In this manner scripts associated with the profession and academia were methodically explored. Having explored experiences of the profession and academia, the final part of the interview involved asking the respondents their thoughts on the three strategic issues identified in section 3.4.

The decision to tape-record interviews was taken after some careful thought. The major concern with using an obtrusive device, such as a tape recorder, was the fear that this may significantly influence the behaviour and response of those being interviewed. This is tempered against the richness of data for which tape recording permits alongside the practical reality that this would allow me to observe whilst taking notes resulting in a greater level of attention being paid to responses. So as to minimise the potential impact of recording interviews a concerted effort was made both prior to, and at the beginning of the interview, to create a relaxed, open atmosphere. For example "general conversations" prior to interview appeared to help build a bond or understanding between interviewer and interviewee. This was followed by a brief explanation of the purpose of the interview. In the majority of cases respondents self started the interview prior to recording. The points raised at this stage were noted, and where appropriate, followed up later in the interview protocol. A further strategy of starting the interviews by asking respondents to discuss their career histories also appeared to help engender a relaxed atmosphere.

Part ONE –exploring scripts
I would like to explore key turning points firstly with respect to your professional experience.
Can you describe your experiences of the profession?
What have been the significant changes?
How does it differ from other professions?
Can we know explore key turning points with respect to your academic experience
Can you describe to me what it is like working within a university context?
Can you describe to me what it is like being a member of faculty here?
What have been the significant changes?
How does it differ from other universities?
How would you describe your roles here?

Part TWO-Issue Elicitation
Profession issue
Issue specific to the university
Issue that spans across the professions within an academic context

Fig 3.2: Interview Protocol

3.5 Data Analysis

The interviews were transcribed verbatim[4]. The initial coding of data applied a manual coding approach. This proved useful in familiarising myself with the data but was nonetheless cumbersome. Given the need to understand meanings and interpretations of respondents and how these were similar yet different from other respondents, I decided to apply a more formalised procedure. This involved the use of NVivo. The software was chosen over other packages because it has been extensively developed from its predecessor, NUD.IST and as such recognised within the research community as an instrument capable of manipulating qualitative data. NVivo proved relatively simple to use. So for example as a user I imported my word documents directly in rich text format (RTF). NVivo, unlike manual coding, assists in regard to the decontextualising and recontextualising by allowing any category or 'node' to be placed back into the original context of the transcript that it was coded from at the click of a button. This facility enabled me to detect themes, test their dependability and establish links between themes in a systematic and timely fashion that would be more troublesome using the manual coding approach that I employed. Indeed NVivo enabled me to electronically note down ideas or hunches which could then in due course be acted upon through

[4] The transcribing of the tapes was funded by the ESRC. Once the third parties had transcribed the tapes, I subsequently verified their accuracy, adding additionally notes that were taken by myself during the interviews.

generating memos linked as 'hyperlinks' to parts of the document and modified as patterns emerged.

In terms of coding, I initially used the *attribute browser* to compile preliminary notes on each of the respondents guided in part by the institutional literature but also on the need to gain background data into the unique characteristics of each respondent. These included length of association with the institutional setting; demographic characteristics including age, gender and ethnicity. These attributes were cross checked with emerging patterns leading to new attributes being generated. So for example the attribute of whether the respondent considered they to be part of the institution or outside of it was later included.

In conjunction with this I coded each document separately and line by line, assigning 'free nodes' to tentative themes and patterns, informed in part by the institutional literature. Within the early stages of data analysis I was particularly interested in ascertaining whether evidence of scripts could be observed. Given that scripted behaviours are by definition shared amongst two or more of the respondents, a critical part of the coding involved cross case analysis. When comparing cases I was careful to explore both similarities and differences between nodes, re-categorising where appropriate. Throughout the process of initial coding thirty-four categories (free nodes) emerged from the twenty-four transcripts that I reviewed. Several analytical issues also emerged. These relate to the multiplicity of smaller categories and the obvious need to reduce and consolidate them in order to make some manageable sense of the decontextualised information. Mason (1996) suggests twenty nodes or categories are ample to work with from the start. The other analytical issue that arose is the apparent relationship of one node or category to another. Some nodes seemed very similar to ones that had already emerged and others seemed to be subsets of the larger categories.

It became apparent that some of my categories were not adequate as subsequent transcripts were analysed. This led me to rename them in order that other emerging categories might reflect the identified conceptual linkage. So for example I initially categorised scripts on the basis of being shared by two or more respondents within each of the institutional settings.

Having completed this task I noted that on several occasions' scripts that had been categorised "academic" scripts were specific to either Alpha or Beta business schools. This led to further analysis to ascertain whether themes contained within these 'local' scripts could be further identified and distinguished from the broader academic category. I identified scripts specific to Alpha and Beta business schools arranged around the theme of orientation towards teaching and research. Additionally at Alpha business school local scripts were also identified around the theme of management orientation towards faculty.

Having identified the presence of scripts I sought to further discern whether common underlying themes between scripts were present leading to the development of 'tree nodes'. Even with the assistance of NVivo this proved a lengthy process. So for example the scripts identified within the legal institutional setting appeared to initially be informed by the theme of conservatism with a small 'c'. However through cross checking respondents' accounts of the legal institutional setting it became apparent that 'hierarchy' was more appropriate as a label for the scripts. Fig 3.3 illustrates the finalised coding structure for the law profession illustrating the overarching categories and associated scripts.

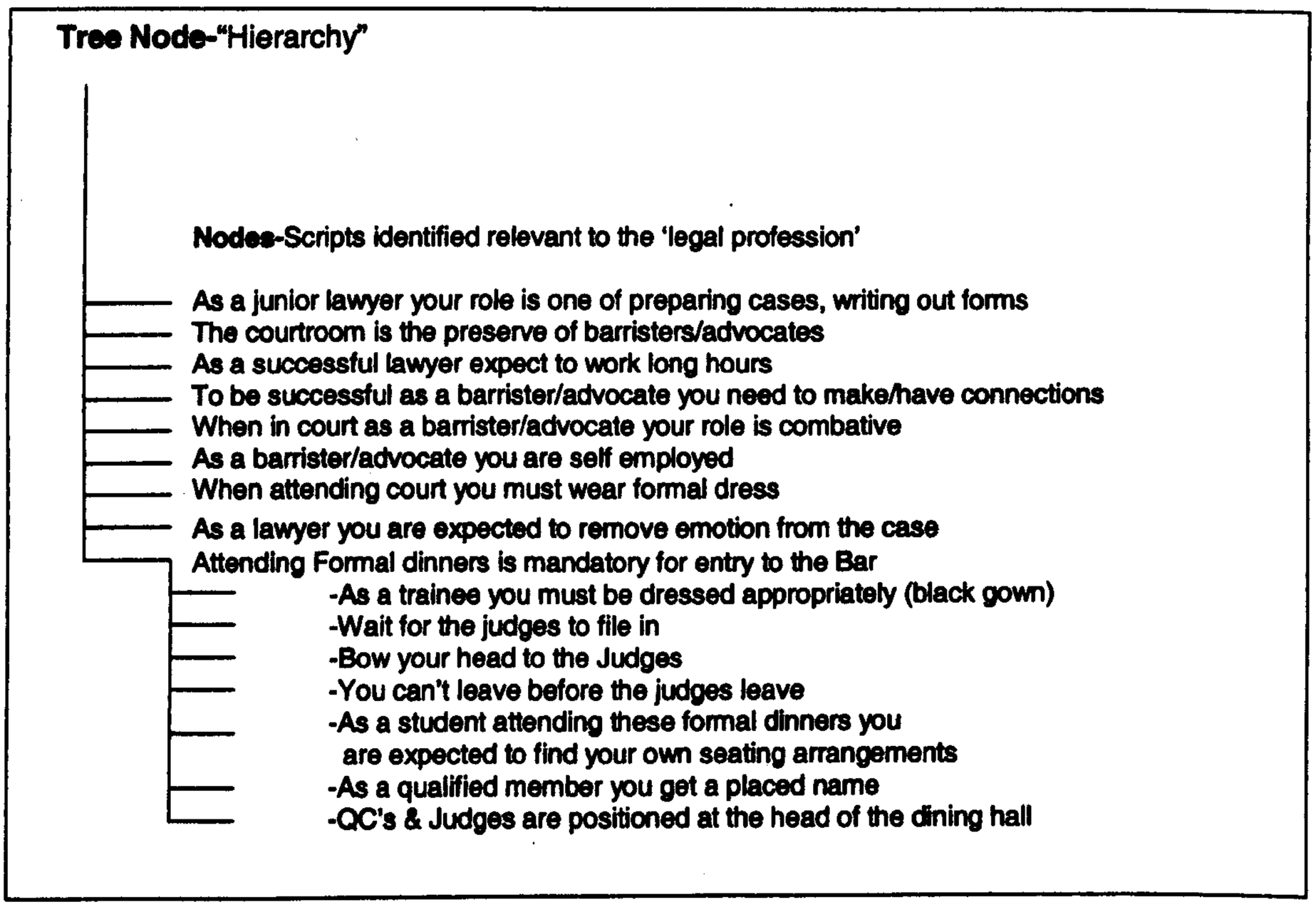


Fig 3.3: Coding structure for the legal profession-Scripts

I applied the same process to the institutional setting of academia and accountancy leading to the development of two further 'tree nodes'; One for academia and one for accountancy. The development of 'tree nodes' allowed for conceptual ideas underpinning scripts within each of the institutional settings to be systematically tested and verified.

3.5.1 Trustworthiness

As noted by Morgan (1983) different paradigms make different claims about how knowledge may be sought resulting in the criteria for what counts as "significant knowledge" varying from paradigm to paradigm. As an interpretist researcher, I seek understanding of the research question based on the findings of my study and the lessons learned from the related literature. It is my responsibility alone to ensure that the conclusions that I draw are well constructed and executed. One way to judge the quality of interpretist research is through trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln & Guba (1985) ask two questions which help to provide clarity to the basic issue of trustworthiness:

How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? What arguments can be mounted, what criteria invoked, what questions asked, that would be persuasive on this issue?

Trustworthiness indicates whether or not the research findings will be credible to others. It can be broken down into four qualities, each of which parallels a traditional goal of research: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility means that the data presented here are considered to be true by the respondents in the study. I discuss how I achieved this below. To ensure the transferability of my research, I have provided information to assist readers in applying research to their own contexts. Again, I discuss this in more detail below. In addition, I established dependability through ensuring that my research process was logical, traceable, and documented. Finally, by ensuring that my interpretations are grounded in the data rather than the inquirer's imagination (Schwandt, 2001), I established confirmability.

I demonstrated credibility primarily through two tactics. First, I participated in prolonged engagement with respondents and data over time, which allowed me to build trust between respondents and myself. A dialogue with respondents was initiated up to two months prior to interviews. This helped build a degree of trust but also enabled me to gain an initial understanding of the career background of respondents. Indeed at an early stage in this process I collected relevant information (CV's) which were used as a basis to direct questions where appropriate within the main fieldwork. Second, I went through a rigorous review process of data and methodology at Cranfield University as part of my PhD supervision. This involved presenting and discussing my work with a panel of 'experts' made up of faculty from the School of Management. I presented to the first panel after I had completed the initial pilot. The discussion lasted for approximately two hours with open and frank discussions of research methodology and data generated from applying this methodology. The second review panel took place after my third pilot and followed a similar format. It was directed towards summarising key learning points from the piloting process and exploring the suitability of the finalised methodology and accompanying method for the main fieldwork.

Additionally, I engaged with my peers in a 'peer debriefing group' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A peer-debriefing group serves as a forum for testing the themes that emerge from the research data (Spall, 1998). In my case, it lent credibility to my work by showing me new ways of looking at my data. My peer-debriefing group for this study consisted of two colleagues who were familiar with institutional theory and interpretist research methodologies. We discussed my work for approximately one hour per week during data collection and early data analysis stage (March to November 2001).

The transferability criterion is intended to ensure that a sufficiently detailed account of the findings is provided, so that the reader can judge how these findings can be transferred to other contexts. The burden of proof for claimed generalisability is on the researcher; The burden of proof for claimed transferability is on the receiver (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The main tactic for establishing transferability is the use of 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973). To facilitate transferability I have provided the readers of this study with thick,

detailed descriptions of the context and my findings so that they may see similarities to their own contexts and thus transfer my findings to their own situations as appropriate (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, the creation of an audit trail can attest to the potential dependability of the research process and the potential confirmability of the study's findings. My audit trail consists of the data collected and generated that is extensively detailed and reflected upon in chapters 5 and 6.

3.6 Summary

This chapter operationalises my research question. My research applies a different research design to that of Barley & Tolbert (1997) because as opposed to studying how institutions develop over time, my research examines how developed institutions influence what actors do and how they respond. I also sought to understand the relative impact of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues. I use commonality between respondents as evidence for the existence of institutions that are enacted in the form of scripted behaviours. As a design requirement there was a need to include multiple respondents possessing membership to predefined institutions so as to determine the existence of shared institutional influence. This led to an interviewing strategy tested through the piloting process. Having established the overall strategy and research tool, I demonstrated how the data was analysed leading to a discussion of trustworthiness. The following chapter explores the context to the institutions selected for this research. This is used as a basis in which to ground the findings that are discussed in chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter FOUR

Institutional Context

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter established the overall research design, method and how the data was analysed. The current chapter is directed towards grounding the data, detailed in chapters 5 & 6, within the institutional contexts of academia, law and accountancy. I first discuss the institutional setting of academia followed by the research sites, Alpha and Beta business schools. I then discuss the institutional settings of accountancy and law – the professional institutional backgrounds from which my academic respondents are drawn. As I explain in the previous chapter, my research design included the identification of a strategic issue relevant to each of the different institutional settings to which my respondents belonged. Therefore, at the end of the discussion of each institutional setting, I describe the strategic issues selected for inclusion in the interview protocol.

Academia has undergone much change in the recent past, and is continuing to undergo structural change as a consequence of pressures on the financial resourcing of Higher Education. These changes started in the Thatcher years and have continued under the Blair government resulting in increased external monitoring, not least through the introduction of the research assessment exercise (RAE) and the quality assessment audit (QAA). As a consequence of this the independence or 'autonomy' of academics is under pressure as universities conform to meet external targets; a form of coercive isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This external pressure is also leading to a tension between research and teaching commitments within universities. From this I identify the strategic issue for the academic institutional context, namely the tension between research and teaching.

As demonstrated when discussing the two research sites, Alpha and Beta business schools have responded in unique ways, indicative of the historical underpinnings of these institutions. Alpha business school was founded at the end of the 19th

century, originally set up as a polytechnic institute offering a range of vocational courses. In the early 1990's the establishment was awarded University status continuing with its ethos of widening access to education, especially from mature students and students from non traditional backgrounds. This is reflected in the mission statement of the university with emphasis given to teaching excellence. Consequently considerable weight is given to QAA scores across the business school with research taking a secondary role.

In contrast to this Beta business school dates back to the end of the 18th century when a professor of the natural sciences left instructions in his will that a university should be opened as "a place of useful learning" combining high academic standards and breadth of knowledge. This is reflected in the success indicators for the business school which include achievement of international standards of research and in conjunction and linked with this, high standards of teaching. As such considerable weight is given to both RAE and QAA scores, staff are expected to both publish high quality research and deliver a range of courses.

Both research sites have been affected by funding pressures but have responded in quite different ways. Alpha business school was merging with another teaching oriented university during the research. In contrast Beta business school has sought to cut back through the saving of £5 million across the university whilst attempting to preserve both research and teaching excellence. This leads to the identification of the strategic issues for Alpha and Beta business schools; namely the merger between Alpha business school and another teaching oriented university and for Beta business school, the saving of £5 million pounds.

Having explored the academic institutional setting, including the two research settings, the institutional setting of law is detailed. The profession has been providing expert advice and advocacy on legal matters in England since the 13th Century and since the 16th century in Scotland. The modern law profession comprises of a 'hierarchy' of roles and responsibilities with differences existing between the English and Scottish legal systems respectively. As will be noted there are subtle differences between English Barristers and their counterparts in Scotland

There exists a hierarchy of roles and responsibilities which is further evident when exploring the distinction between Barristers & Advocates and solicitors, who are governed by the English and Scottish Law Societies. Given the long and established history of the profession it is not surprising that parts of the law profession are steeped in tradition and ritual. This may account for the slow rate of reform of the profession. Indeed gender equality continues to be an issue within segments of the profession, most notably within the higher echelons. This is the focus of the strategic issue for law.

The final section of chapter 4 explores the institutional setting of accounting. It is noted that the accounting profession is a relatively new profession in comparison to law. The accounting profession dates back to the mid 1850s when the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland was formed with the English & Welsh equivalent forming in succession by 1885. Over the last century three further chartered accounting bodies were created, each of which sought to create a particular niche. It becomes clear that 'status' is a significant issue with each of the five accounting bodies seeking to protect its members and expertise. This accounts in part for why although a succession of talks have been held over the past two decades between the accounting bodies with a view to merging, little progress has been made. Consequently the UK accounting profession remains in a state of fragmentation. Proponents of amalgamating the professional bodies into one argue that this makes sense given the standardisation of international accounting practices and the unified voice that would emerge. Therefore, the strategic issue identified for discussion for accountancy is the continued fragmentation of the profession.

4.2 Academia

The UK university sector has and continues to undergo significant structural change brought about by funding changes to this sector ushered in by the Thatcher government and continued under the labour run Blairite government (Halsey, 1995). Prior to 1992 the University grants Committee (UGC) was for much of the 20th century (1919 to 1989) the most significant institution of governance. It operated under the benefaction of the treasury department rather than the education department. In 1992 the UK education system saw the demise

of UGC and with it a rethinking of the idea of university autonomy with central government taking a far more active role regarding policy executed by the funding councils (Trow, 1994). It would be fair to say that these funding council quangos are essentially managerial bodies working within the parameters set by government. In turn universities, although retaining a certain degree of autonomy, need to work within the parameters set by the funding councils (Halsey, 1995).

The emergence of the current funding council model has been gradual. During 1982 the public sector was aligned under the patronage of the National Advisory Body (NAB), with two funding councils replacing NAB and UGC in the 1988 Education Reform Act. This was followed by the merging of these bodies with the introduction of the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act (Trow, 1994).

Although under the Thatcher government student numbers steadily increased, cuts to higher education spending fell. This was consistent with the focus at the time on free market economics with an apparent need to remove inefficiency from the HE sector. By 1992, all English higher education institutions were given the title of research universities. The conservative government, under Thatcher and subsequently John Major, also created a plethora of accountability models focused on research and teaching quality ushering in both the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and Quality Assurance System (QAA).

The Research Assessment Exercise was originally introduced for older universities in the 1980s. The RAE is built on the premise that the quality of research can be determined only by peer review with prominent academics dominating the assessment boards (Elton, 2000). This has led some academics to criticise this exercise for perpetuating a dominant paradigm of research with other research necessarily 'less worthy' of attention (Trow, 1994). These criticisms in part arise because panel members are not chosen by their peers, and in part because the wider constituency of researchers are not included in the overall design of the exercise.

The Quality Assurance System also underlines a change in the relationship between higher education and government with greater central control as the system has expanded. The quality assessment divisions of the three national

funding councils, one each for England, Scotland and Wales, assess the quality of education. Universities are assessed through a range of methods including direct teaching observation, content and organisation, learning and assessment, student support and guidance, progression and achievement and learning resources resulting in a summative judgment and the publishing of the report.

The RAE and QAA as overt measures, within what is becoming an increasingly competitive market place, require universities to respond. This is reflected internally with the expectation that academics, especially newly inducted, should both contribute to high quality teaching and research alongside other administrative activities. The demands of research and teaching are quite different leading to a tension between the two activities. When teaching, an academic is expected to convey ideas and concepts, bringing these alive to their audience-essentially the academic takes on an extrovert role. Conversely research can be characterised as a largely an introvert activity whereby ideas and theories are brought together to create an argument presented in written format. Within the academic community prestige is placed on tangible research output as opposed to teaching excellence. This leads to the academic issue of the 'tension faced by academics between research and teaching'.

The two research sites, Alpha and Beta business schools, have responded quite differently to external demands from the research councils and government. Alpha business school merged with another teaching oriented university whilst Beta University sought to save £5million that directly impacts on the business school. These are subsequently applied as the strategic issues for interviewing respondents from each of the business schools.

4.2.1 Alpha University

Alpha University was founded just over 100 years ago at the end of the 19th century. Originally Alpha was set up as a polytechnic Institute offering courses which ranged from science to vocational subjects such as dressmaking, plumbing and millinery. By the turn of the twentieth century student numbers doubled and as a consequence by 1911 five year evening degrees were available and recognised by an established University.

By the early 1970s the Polytechnic merged with a neighbouring Polytechnic before eventually being awarded University status at the beginning of the nineties. Since then the ethos associated with Alpha business school has been to widen access to education especially from mature students and students from non traditional backgrounds. Such an approach to access has won Alpha University recognition from Her Majesty's Inspectorate.

Today, Alpha is described as a vibrant and multicultural university with over 16,000 students taking a range of postgraduate, degree, diploma and professional qualifications with several courses having received excellent ratings in the QAA. The business school reflects the overall culture of the university. Emphasis is placed on teaching excellence, with research taking a secondary but nonetheless important role. Within the 2001 RAE the business school achieved a 3b with researchers focusing on a range of local and international issues. Teaching accounts for an increasing proportion of income which accounts for why the business school places emphasis on teaching excellence, as evident within the mission statement.

Structural changes within Higher Education have led to resource issues for many if not all UK universities. Alpha business school is not exempt from the repercussions of these structural changes. In March 2001 initially exploratory discussions were held between the Vice Chancellor of Alpha University and the Vice Chancellor of another teaching based London University. Both universities were similar in size, with a comparable mix between research and teaching, sharing a similar view to widening participation. Between March and December 2001 HEFCE was approached for financial support from the restructuring fund. Having secured funding, the two universities agreed to merge. The assimilation of staff and departments commenced in August 2002 with the expectation that it would take five or more years for the merger process to fully work through. This is a significant strategic issue facing alpha business school and the university and as such is incorporated into the main fieldwork as the strategic issue facing the school.

4.2.2 Beta University

The history of Beta University dates back to the end of the 18th century when a professor of the natural sciences left instructions in his will that a university should be opened as "a place of useful learning" whereby access would be would be granted regardless of gender or class. By the late 19th century the aforementioned institution emerged as a major technical college with a significant reputation for both learning and research. Consequently by the early twentieth century due to rapid expansion the college sought new premises, at this time being the largest building in Europe dedicated to technical education.

By the mid twentieth century the college decided to widen its activities and merged with two additional colleges before being granted the Royal Charter in 1964. To date the university teaches over 20,000 students in five faculties. However taking into consideration distance learning, short courses and continuing professional development and evening courses Beta University provides courses for over 50,000 people each year making it the UK's largest provider of postgraduate and professional education. The business school forms an integral part of the university's overall strategy competing for entrants predominantly from twelve other Scottish universities at undergraduate level. The four year Honours courses in part accounts for why recruitment from England, Wales and Northern Ireland is limited. At post graduate level the business school draws from both the indigenous population but also increasingly from international students.

Both the RAE and QAA indicators are perceived as important in order to compete within the UK Higher Education sector. This has the result of placing considerable pressure on academics to both teach and develop internationally recognised research.

Like Alpha University, Beta has been subject to tightening resources within the Higher Education sector. The problem was compounded by a late decision by the government to reduce the funding for teaching training in which the university had invested substantially. Indeed the Dean of Eden Campus pointed out that the funding issue might also lead to individual courses being under threat:

"What is the point in gearing up to take large numbers of additional students only to find out funding is to be eroded? My nightmare scenario is that teachers come to us to say they want to go on an accredited course for their chartered teacher portfolio and we have to tell them that we can not afford to run the courses."

HEFCE Report (2001)

Beta University responded to this crisis alongside the general tightening of resources by making cuts across the university in order to save £5 million pounds within the short term. The Vice Chancellor announced in 2001 that this would be achieved through the restructuring of departments and the shedding of 150 academics across the university on a voluntary redundancy basis. At the time of the main fieldwork this was a significant strategic issue facing the university and as such is incorporated as the strategic issue facing beta business school. Having explored the institutional setting of academia, including the two research sites, the following section explores the institutional setting of the UK legal profession.

4.3 The Law profession

The law profession holds a unique position in UK society having a long and established tradition predating the Middle Ages. As a profession it is therefore not surprising that many of the practices and rituals still persist within the modern profession. The modern day legal profession is split between barristers and solicitors within England and Wales, and Advocates and solicitors within Scotland.

The English legal system can be traced back to the time of Alfred the Great, and its administration. The King's court operated by a writ system in many respects similar to the one operated by the courts today. The position of Lord Chancellor, the most senior legal officer and cleric and thus the "keeper of the King's conscience" dealt with these petitions on the king's behalf. By the end of the 14th century, petitions were addressed direct to the Chancellor rather than to the king.

In this way, two separate court systems grew up - the Common Law court and the Court of Chancery. This system became costly resulting in the Judicature Act 1873 that sought to reduce costs through restructuring the court system.

Within Scotland, the structure of the judiciary began to take form in the 16th century, when the 15 Lords of Council and Session became Senators of the College of Justice who sat together in one court with a wide civil jurisdiction. Moreover, the Faculty of Advocates and the Writers to the Signet evolved and were given the exclusive right to plead in court, as advocates, and to act on the behalf of solicitors. In the late 17th century, Lord Stair, Lord President of the Court of Session published his Institutes of the Law of Scotland. In doing so, he set out the whole of Scots law as a rational, comprehensive and practical set of rules. These rules were deduced from common-sense principles, reported Scottish decisions and statutes, Roman law, canon law or the Romano-Germanic systems.

In 1707, the United Kingdom of Great Britain was created as a result of the Union of the Parliaments of Scotland and England. Gradually, English law began to replace Roman law as the main external source of Scots law, since the majority of Scots students now studied in England. The House of Lords became the final court of appeal for Scots civil cases, and the English principle of judicial precedent came to be more strictly applied. The reform of the Court of Session in the early 19th century further contributed to the move towards adapting English legal methods.

As Scotland's industrial and commercial interests became intertwined with that of England, English law appeared to be a more relevant source of law than Roman law. The influence of English law continued to grow and although Scottish and English courts are not bound by each other's decisions, they consider them persuasive especially if the decisions interpret United Kingdom statutes.

Nonetheless there are differences between the Scottish and the English legal system. The civil law in Scotland is based on more generalised rights and duties than in England and Scots law argues deductively from principles and still holds the distinction between legal process and substantive law. Equally in geographical size the Scottish and English jurisdictions differ markedly, with a greater degree of specialisation possible as a practicing lawyer under the English system.

There is a clear distinction and hierarchy between barristers & advocates and solicitors. This is reflected in each having their own professional governing body. Under the English system barristers have been providing expert advice and advocacy on legal matters in England since the 13th Century. At this time the profession took over the inner and Middle Temples from the Order of Knights Templar. By the 17th century the right to practice as a barrister in the Royal Courts was restricted to members of the Inns of which there are four. Throughout the following centuries such restriction developed further to the extent that the Bar became exclusively a referral profession, whereby 19th century barristers were required to act on behalf of solicitors which is still the case. On a practice level Barristers continue to act as individual autonomous practitioners operating in groups of chambers. Although self-employed there is a requirement that prospective barristers obtain tenure through applying to a set of chambers.

The Scottish Bar is the domain of advocates dating back to the early 16th century. Advocates usually act for Solicitors providing expert advice and prepare cases for court but also may offer specialist advice on legal matters outside the judicial arena. The previous conservative government in attempting to enhance the transparency of the profession created a new role whereby specially trained solicitors could also represent clients in the courts. Nonetheless it is noticeable that the majority of representation is still carried out by advocates. Further, unlike barristers in England, advocates are divided up into stables working out of the Advocates library on a self-employed basis. Consequently having qualified under the Scottish system advocates are permitted to work without applying for tenure, as is the case under the English system.

The Law Society is the representative and regulatory body for Solicitors in England and Wales. The overall strategic direction of the Society and subsequent professional performance of the solicitors is set by the internally elected governing Council of the Society. The Council has a remit to set the overall strategic direction of the Society and in particular to set practice rules, govern regulatory issues and ensure representation for members and participate in Law reform. Operational management of the Society is the responsibility of the Chief Executive who ensures that all strategic decisions and policy reforms set by the

Council are implemented. Performance of the organisation is subsequently reported to and monitored by the Council.

Similar to the system employed in England and Wales, the Law Society of Scotland is the governing body for solicitors. Historically the society dates back to the Legal Aid and Solicitors (Scotland) Act 1949 with the current remit of the society being set out in the more recent Solicitors (Scotland) Act 1980.

The historical heritage of the UK legal profession may in part account for why discrimination against women still pervades parts of the profession. Inroads into this issue have emerged in recent years, especially within relatively new parts of the profession, not least for women choosing to take the solicitor route. Reform to the Bar and court circuit has proved more problematic which reflects the extended history and tradition associated with these parts of the profession. This is not to suggest that the last Lord Chancellor in association with the Bar Councils of England and Scotland have not attempted to change the status quo regarding gender equality. Lord Irvine clearly stated when in power that he was an opponent of both positive and negative discrimination and judicial appointment must be made based on merit. In a speech to the Association of Women Barristers, he acknowledged that many judges are white, Oxbridge-educated men, however this represented the available pool of candidates which existed at the time of appointment. He stated in his speech that:

"It does not mean that the social composition of the judiciary is immutably fixed. For too long barristers were drawn from a narrow social background. As this changes over time, I would expect the composition of the Bench to change too. That is inherent in the merit principle."

(Lord Chancellor, 1998)

These comments indicate how the judiciary are presently acknowledging the need for improvements regarding the representation of their membership. In a report jointly commissioned in 1992 by the Lord Chancellor's Department and the Bar Council, the conclusions stated that "gender discrimination appears to be institutionally present within the Bar and the judiciary" (TMS Management Consultants, 1992). Several factors were identified including the secrecy of the

selection procedure; a lack of confidence; a lack of knowledge regarding the qualities needed for judicial appointment; a lack of female role models; a diminished opportunity to appear in high profile cases; the lengthy selection process; and the possible experience of patronising treatment or discrimination from some male members of the judiciary.

Partly as a consequence of this the then Lord Chancellor announced several initiatives that address these issues as part of his attempt to modernise the judicial appointment process. Some of the changes implemented include advertising judicial positions up to, and including, the High Court; and providing flexible arrangements for part-time sitting to provide for those who may have taken a career break for family reasons. Further Lord Irvine established a team of officials to concentrate on equal opportunity issues, and is working with solicitors and members of the Bar to develop procedures. It is evident that gender equality is an important issue facing the UK legal profession and as such this issue is applied to the main fieldwork.

4.4 Accountancy

The accounting profession dates back to the mid 1850s whenever the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland was formed with the English & Welsh equivalent forming in succession by 1885. At this time accountants operated with a vague body of principles that were not consistent until approximately the 1920s when accounting became a subject taught in universities and supported by a research association that was set up in the 1930s headed by Ronald Edwards.

At the same time accounting theory developed and the profession itself became more regulated, with the professional bodies governing the practice of accountants. This was facilitated by ensuring that membership of the governing bodies was a prerequisite to practice. In addition an associated specific code of conduct for members was employed, who after a form of apprenticeship enjoyed the ritualistic secrets of professional knowledge. Over the last century three further accounting bodies have emerged who have sought to create a particular niche or separate existence through the acquisition of the Chartered badge. Today the accountancy profession in the UK is represented by six accounting bodies:

1. *The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)*
2. *The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS)*
3. *The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (ICAI)*
4. *The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)*
5. *The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)*
6. *The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)*

In the late 1970s large accounting firms which were known at the time as the "Big five" began to expand their traditional scope of practice from accounting to a wide range of services such as management advisory services, mergers and acquisitions and information technology. In particular the establishment of a law firm by a firm of accountants set a president for a number of significant mergers in quick succession globally.

What has become clear since the Enron and other notable scandals is that the issue of a conflict of interests is a reality. The fragmentation of the profession, as represented by five recognised accounting bodies, has in part led to a lack of clear leadership and set of guidelines. By the late 1960s, however, the leaders of each body had agreed proposals for a merger of the then non-chartered bodies into the chartered institutes. In 1970, however, members of the ICAEW voted to reject the proposal. Following the ICAEW vote, a proposal from the ICAEW to pursue some other form of co-operation between the bodies was rejected. In 1973, however, the proposal was revised by ICAS. By 1974, the 'Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies' was formed 'to develop joint representation on matters of common concern'. However with six accounting bodies represented, each protecting their own niche and membership, agreeing on common concerns has proved problematic, not least how to react to the rise of multidisciplinary practices.

The issue of 'status' between the accounting bodies has tended to be jealously guarded which in turn may account for why there continues to be little progress regarding the merging of the accounting bodies. This is also reflected in policies and practices of each of the bodies. For example regarding training, to become a qualified accountant for the two most established bodies, ICAS and ACAEW, trainees must possess a 2:1 or above as a basis of eligibility. The remainder of

accounting bodies make no such stipulations. Indeed ACCA has a reputation for recruiting mature and overseas students without a first degree.

Post Enron and other scandals the CCAB has issued new guidelines and continues to develop best practice. Nonetheless there have been no further discussions regarding merging the accounting bodies with each body protecting its expertise and members interests. The continued fragmentation of the profession in the context of the internationalisation of accounting standards is a significant strategic issue facing the profession and is taken forward as such within the main fieldwork of my research.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has sought to contextualise the three institutional settings examined in my research. These are represented by academia, law and accountancy. I have also illustrated the chosen strategic issues facing each of these settings. The following chapter is directed towards providing a detailed account of the fieldwork and the analysis of respondent accounts drawn from the institutional settings of academia, law and accountancy.

Chapter FIVE

Scripts

5.1 Introduction

I argued in chapter 2 that institutional theory is ideally placed to explore the relative influence of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues. Until recently institutionalists have been accused of focusing on conformity and isomorphism between organisations exposed to similar cultural and social influences leading to a tendency to aggregate data to the level of the organisational field. More recently there has been a concerted effort to understand the role of micro-institutional processes and how these shape behaviour and action. In providing micro translation there is also a need to further understand the linking mechanism between micro-individual and macro-institutional arrangements.

My research draws on the conceptual work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) who are one of the few to develop the micro underpinnings of institutional theory, providing a plausible account of the linking mechanism between macro and micro-institutional arrangements. They argue that macro-institutional arrangements are reproduced and altered through the interaction between actors. Barley & Tolbert (1997) also note that for actions to be interpretable, they must conform to taken-for-granted assumptions about the activities and interactions appropriate to actors. This is why in chapter 2 I argued that in order for social actions to be 'interpretable' they must presumably be carried in the minds of actors and therefore the question arose as to what role, if any, the institutional context plays in the shaping of interpretive processes?

It was noted that the formative stages of the decision-making process and in particular the framing of the issue has been under-researched. Yet these early stages of the decision making process form the foundations for the latter stages, and as such represent an important area for research. I argued in chapter 2 that a

micro-institutional perspective, informed in part by the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997), offers the opportunity to address this. This led to my research question:

Research Question

How does the institutional context impact on the individual framing of the issue?

To operationalise the link between macro and micro-institutional arrangements Barley & Tolbert (1997) apply the concept of scripts. I also draw on the concept of scripts to identify institutional influences on the interpretation of strategic issues. Although scripts have been conceived of in terms of cognitive phenomenon, Barley & Tolbert (1997) argue on the basis of confirmability, that it is empirically more beneficial to view scripts as behavioural regularities. My research similarly adopts this definition of scripts as defined by these authors and as such directs how I operationalise the concept.

Barley & Tolbert (1997) also state that by focusing on behaviour they necessarily sideline cognition and interpretation. Through reviewing the 'meta' theory of structuration which Barley and Tolbert (1997) draw on, I argued in chapter 2 that by introducing the concept of interpretive schemes and a sensemaking perspective (Weick, 1995) it is possible to bring back into the discussion cognition and interpretation. This led to the development of the conceptual framework in chapter 2.

The conceptual framework describes how my research builds upon but yet differentiates itself from that of Barley & Tolbert (1997). As I noted in chapter 3, instead of studying how institutions develop over time my research examines how developed institutions influence what actors do and how they respond. I also wanted to understand the role of multiple institutions on the framing of strategic issues. Actors with knowledge and affiliations, past or present, with academia and either the law or accountancy professions, took part in the study. The interview protocol incorporated a "hierarchy" of issues to which the respondents responded. This is because the piloting process indicated that respondents were applying scripts to the framing of issues in a discrete manner. So, for example, within the pilots undertaken at Alpha and Beta business schools (conducted in the

spring and summer of 2001), scripts associated with a particular institution were applied discretely to frame issues relevant only to that institution. Stated differently actors were drawing from multiple institutions but not simultaneously.

My findings for the main fieldwork fall into four main areas. The following describes these key findings and explains how chapters 5 and 6 are structured to illustrate them. The institutional settings within this research are academia, law and accountancy.

1. Unlike previous institutional studies my research set out to gain insight into the role of 'multiple institutions' and how these influence the individual framing of strategic issues. Respondents have affiliations with academia & law and academia and accountancy. From my findings it is clear that there are a number of scripts that are widely shared within each of the institutional settings.

2. As I note in chapter 2 both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures respectively have not explored the role of institutional processes on the individual framing of strategic issues. My research makes an empirical contribution by demonstrating that institutions, enacted through scripts, play a pivotal role in the framing of strategic issues. I show that respondents draw on the scripts identified in one above when discussing the institutionally relevant strategic issues I present them with. Scripts influence how respondents construct their realities, shaping their interpretive processes. Consequently I show top-down institutional processes to play a role in strategic issue diagnosis.

3. As I note in chapter 3 the research design was set up to ascertain the impact of multiple institutions on the framing of the issue, employing a "hierarchy" of issues to which the respondents responded. There has been a distinct lack of empirical work investigating the impact of multiple institutions on actors' behaviour and interpretive processes. My work addresses this, representing a second empirical contribution. The findings demonstrate that respondents draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously; scripts associated with a particular institution are applied discretely to frame issues relevant only to that institution.

The design also included an issue for respondents to frame that cut across institutions. The tension between research and teaching was chosen to explore this since it was thought that respondents from new and old universities, with a potential difference in the emphasis their institutions place on research versus teaching, may see this issue differently. As expected this issue did expose a division between Alpha and Beta respondents. All respondents recognised and applied scripts specific to academia but also on occasions pulled on scripts specific to the working context of their respective universities. I label these university level scripts as local academic scripts. Under closer observation it is clear that when local and academic scripts align (as for Beta business school with a focus on research) respondents draw predominantly from the general academic scripts; When academic and local scripts do not align, as was the case with respondents based at Alpha business school with a focus on teaching, respondents draw predominantly on local scripts. This supports the finding that individuals find it hard to draw on multiple institutions unless the scripts align in some way.

4. Finally, institutionalists are divided on how institutional forming processes are transmitted. As I note in chapter 2 there are those that favour top-down processes, whereby the institutional context determines organisational structures, strategies and behaviours of actors (Westney, 1987). As noted above my research demonstrates the presence of top-down institutional processes. I also identify bottom-up institutional processes that enable respondents to make sense of scripts and therefore impact on issue interpretation. I describe these bottom-up processes as 'meanings' in line with the work of Bartunek (1984) when describing the sensemaking element of interpretive schemes as described in chapter 2. This final finding therefore provides an empirical contribution by adding a level of clarity by elaborating on both the nature and role of bottom-up institutional processes.

The current chapter has three further sections. Section 5.1 explores examples from the two research sites of scripts specific to the legal institutional setting. Sections 5.3 and 5.4 then explore examples of scripts relevant to accountancy and academia respectively. In detailing examples of scripts relevant to academia it is evident that a subset of scripts are present, specific to Alpha and Beta business schools, described in my research as local academic scripts. The appendix to

chapter 5 shows the remainder of scripts that were not able to be discussed in the current chapter.

Chapter 6 has three further sections. Section 6.2 commences by demonstrating that scripts play a pivotal role in the framing of strategic issues. Then section 6.3 shows that scripts specific to a given institution are applied to frame the strategic issue relevant to that institution only. The final section (6.4) is directed towards showing that scripts are not mindlessly enacted. I introduce the concept of meanings, noting that there are two groups; those that perceive scripts to be legitimate and those that don't.

5.2 Legal Institutional Setting

Three overarching areas of the life of a lawyer are described within this section. I commence by detailing induction into the profession through both formal training and the requirement of attending formal dinners. Next, I discuss the lived experiences within the courtroom, leading to the experiences of lawyers outside of the courtroom. In exploring these three areas of life of a lawyer common themes emerge indicative of scripts as defined by Barley & Tolbert (1997) that are enacted in the course of working as a lawyer. I allocate codes to underlined passages, which are subsequently presented in tabular form at the end of the section as examples of scripts at play within the legal institutional setting.

5.2.1 Lived Experiences –'Induction into the profession'

As I note in chapter 4, the law profession has a long and established tradition within the United Kingdom dating back to the 13th and 16th centuries in England and Scotland respectively. Early in the history of the English legal system practitioners and prospective practitioners started the custom of meeting over dinner. This had the practical worth of enabling those associated with the law to discuss and exchange ideas and experiences. Over time the custom has become institutionalised to the extent that it is now a requirement for trainees to attend formal dinners to be called to the bar.

Modern day trainees have alternative opportunities, in the form of formal training, to learn what it is to be a barrister. Training itself has changed in the recent past from being exam to vocationally based, in an attempt to broaden the intake of barristers and advocates from non traditional backgrounds. Ben raises a number of activities and behaviours associated with attending formal dinners. So for example 'trainees dine separately from qualified members' and 'qualified members receive reserved seating arrangements whilst trainees must find their own seating arrangements'. It is evident that Ben is not simply reciting activities and associated behaviours but is also making sense of these. In this case Ben contends that attending formal dinners has become a ritual, losing much of its original worth because you 'no longer get much mixing between trainees and qualified members'. It would appear that this custom has taken on a symbolic role and institutionalised into the fabric of legal profession to the extent that attending formal dinners has become infused with value "beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand" (Selznick, 1957:17):

"There was a mix of people. It was the old bar finals, [Ben 1] I mean attendance wasn't so necessary as it is today because you've got to go through exercises now like videoing and drafting and so forth so you might only have a small group of people. [Ben 2] We would dine together at the formal dinners. That's the only memory I have really, eating those dinners. It was a bit of a ritual. I think, historically, originally, the bar didn't have any formal training at all so it was thought it was best just hanging around practitioners and they ritualised that into a requirement that there should be a number of dinners, but it's lost much of its original worth because [Ben 3]students dine separately from barristers and barristers dine separately yet again from the judges, top QCs. You don't get much mixing, there was no seating arrangements for students so you just piled in and sat where you wanted to, [Ben 4] but as a qualified member you usually get a placed name. You get told where to sit."

Ben notes within the above quotation that students dine separately from barristers and barristers dining separately yet again from the judges, top QCs embodying the distinction between roles. Conversely students 'pile in' and sit where they want, whereas members were given place names. There is a sense of hierarchy embodied within the enactment of legal scripts. So for example members have

earned their right to a place name as part of the legal system, whereas trainees are required to earn this right through conforming to the established customs.

Jackie elaborates on the requirement of attending formal dinners as a trainee barrister. At the beginning of the evening trainees are expected to 'stand and bow their head every time a judge walks in'. Trainees are additionally required to wear a common uniform in the form of a 'plain black gown'. At the end of the evening trainees are expected to 'wait for the judges to leave before they themselves can leave'. The dress code and expected behaviours are indicative of the hierarchical nature of the profession. Unlike Ben, Jackie is critical of the custom and expected behaviours stating that she found the affair 'silly' and 'ridiculous':

"[Jackie 1] You have to, in order to become a barrister, you have to …go and have dinner at an Inn of Court, one of the four. You can't be a barrister unless you do. You'll never get called. [Jackie 2] I used to find it very silly having to stand and bow your head every time a judge walked in, when you were dining, especially after a couple of glasses of sherry. I just used to think it was absolutely ridiculous. Everyone used to stand there and nod their head quite seriously. I used to find it very difficult. [Jackie 3] So wearing a gown and having to dress in black I just thought it was a bit excessive. I mean the whole dining thing I just found it difficult to take terribly seriously. The food was actually disgusting unless it was a guest night. It actually was pretty awful. You know, much as you would expect, public school dinners to be actually. Mushy pea soup and all this kind of stuff. And you literally were on long tables like schoolboys in the public school. [Jackie 4] We would sit in messes of four with people I knew. Very similar to, I haven't seen Harry Potter, but you know the clip where they show the dining, very similar to that actually. And it just seemed ridiculous that young adults should be being made to actually go through this process. [Jackie 5] At the end of the evening you have to wait for the judges to leave before you yourself can leave. So you can't leave before the judges leave. So it is very much public school and also you cannot become a barrister unless you go through this."

Melanie further sheds light on the ritual of attending formal dinners. Unlike Ben and Jackie, Melanie was in 'awe' of the ritual, trying as she described it to 'fit in'

with the occasion. The dress code is highlighted by Melanie along with the etiquette embodied in the hierarchy of the profession of 'waiting for judges to file in' who are 'positioned at the head of the room' gazing down on the trainees. Melanie only felt comfortable once the 'important people' had left: The important people referring to the judges. Towards the latter part of the quotation Melanie reflects upon her experiences of attending formal dinners noting that she felt it necessary to conform and 'not upset the apple cart':

"The dinners that I attended as a prospective barrister were something that I will always remember. [Melanie 1] As a requirement to being accepted at the bar you must attend a set number of formal dinners. [Melanie 2]You have to a black robe, not what I would describe as normal dress. The noise of excitement before the important people walk in is something I remember. [Melanie 3] A hush would then descend over the room the judges filed in. I was in ore of the occasion, making small talk about matters of law with my friends trying to look terribly serious to blend in. [Melanie 4]The important people all sat at the head of the room gazing down on us. At the end of the evening [Melanie 5] we would wait until these important people had left before I felt comfortable enough to talk freely. Looking back on this I realise it was about conforming to the requirements of the profession so as not to upset the apple cart. Being left wing I never really felt comfortable or fitted in."

Alongside attending formal dinners, prospective barristers are expected to 'undertake vocational training' as previously highlighted by Ben. Jackie gives an example of one of the exercises, involving 'mitigation' which is a standard activity for barristers. The sense of hierarchy is present when Jackie recounts her experience of the exercise with the judge making explicit the behaviour expected within his courtroom. For example you 'must not stick your hands in your pockets' or 'talk too much'. The dress code is also evident including 'waistcoats, shoes and wigs'. There is a strong sense for need to conform and not 'stand out', to know your place as a junior barrister:

"There were things like, for example, when one of the, we had to do these [Jackie 6] a practical exercises which were about basically training you to be a barrister, and one of them is what they call a mitigation which is where you have to basically try to reduce and mitigate someone's sentence..... The judge that we had taking us, and they video'd us, basically said 'now chaps what you must not do is you must not ever stick your hands in your pocket when you are talking to a judge. If you stick your hands in your pockets with me you will lose your case'. I just, it was like walking into another world. It was really was like walking into a time warp and I just thought it was just incredible that that exists and still does exist in the centre of London. The boys would be talking about whether they should wear brogues with holes in or not, too many holes the judges would take a disliking to you because they are too fancy and [Jackie 7] proper barrister dress, things like that and there's the thing about wearing wigs and you have got to wear court dress and all this. I mean it has changed a little bit I think, but it is very, very steeped in tradition, incredibly so."

It is evident through exploring themes associated with induction into the profession that activities and common behaviours can be identified described in my research as scripts. As a trainee you are expected to conform, which is implicit in the ritual of attending formal dinners alongside the experiences of trainees when undertaking vocational training. The sense of hierarchy is further re-enforced for lawyers when discussing their experiences of the profession as practitioners within the courtroom setting.

5.2.2 Lived Experiences -"The courtroom"

The previous Conservative government introduced new legislation designed to reform roles within the legal profession. Prior to this legislation, barristers in England & Wales and their counterparts in Scotland, advocates, were the only groups allowed to represent their clients in the High Court. In reforming this practice the Conservative government created new roles for which solicitors could apply and then represent their clients on a level footing with barristers & advocates. Jackie notes, like Ben previously, a change in the training that is now 'vocational based', noting this change is a 'move forward' in widening the pool of barristers from non-traditional backgrounds. Jackie is however pessimistic about

major reform to the profession. For example Jackie notes that there is still a separation between the roles of solicitors and barristers even though solicitors are now able to apply to represent clients in the high court. There is still a stigma according to Jackie that advocacy is the preserve of barristers underpinned by the 'tradition' of the profession:

"I think there is also a change of style in which the Bar school operates in order to have a higher pass rate. I mean, when I was there the pass rate was actually abysmal and it was very much styled to be successful for those people who had been to Oxbridge to be successful. If you'd come from elsewhere then it was difficult for you to get what was going on and the style of teaching and things like that. [Jackie 8] It's more like multiple choice questions and vocationally orientated. So I think that is a positive thing. The advocacy training is now part of the course itself. We had to pass it but it was outside it in those days. So I think that is a positive thing...in widening participation from non traditional backgrounds. In terms of the way the profession is generally going I haven't seen an awful lot of change. [Jackie 9] There is still this separation between solicitors and barristers. There is supposed to be an idea now that solicitors can apply to appear in the High Court but it doesn't seem to be happening very much. There is still a stigma from an advocacy point of view that if you are not a barrister that you shouldn't really be doing it. Again I think this comes down to tradition which results in change being problematic."

Advocates and barristers are perceived by James to be specialists with solicitors seeking their advice on points of law. He also notes the reform to the law with solicitors able as 'solicitor advocates' to represent their clients in the high court. The distinction between criminal and civil law is raised with the majority of 'solicitor advocates' operating within the criminal legal system. The change instigated by the Conservative government of opening up the high court to specialist solicitors has not been successful according to James. He notes this as not being 'totally surprising'. Unlike Jackie, James explains that this reform will happen with it being a matter of time before change is fully worked through:

"Advocates provide highly specialised advice because they are, to some extent, if you're holding yourself out as an advocate, even if you're a generalist solicitor,

even if it's for insurance purposes in terms of giving advice to clients, they would seek an advocate's opinion to reinforce their advice and the other thing which [James 1] advocates can do like barristers in England, they have no overall monopoly on the rights of audiences in the highest courts but they largely undertake hearings and pleadings and so on in the higher courts. There are solicitors who are qualified as solicitor advocates largely in the criminal sphere, but not that many of them do civil work so that the advocates are legal specialists, they're specialist pleaders, they don't have to administer an office like solicitors and such like and they're not so directly involved with clients."

Question: What do you think the major changes have been regarding the law profession?

The Conservative government certainly tried to open up the legal profession to follow up more competition both internally and that led to the introduction of solicitor advocates. Advocates no longer had a monopoly of rights of audience in the higher courts. They also tried to open it up to external competition from people who were qualified to do something like conveyancing but not anything else, that's not been very successful. This really has not been successful in the short term but then again this is not totally surprising. It is going to take time before the changes work their way through the judiciary and are tangible to the general public because the profession is methodical and cautious when contemplating important changes."

Ben highlights the conservative reforms designed to enable specialist solicitors to represent their clients' interests in the high court. The uptake has been admittedly slow according to Ben because of the expertise and experience of barristers. It is a matter of time before the reforms work through:

"There have been a number of initiatives targeted at reforming practices within the profession which have not fully worked through as of yet. [Ben 5] Solicitors are now, able to having undertaken specialist training to represent their clients within the high court is a case in point. The uptake from solicitors has been admittedly slow. I don't see this as unusual because barristers have a substantial amount of expertise and experience of representing their clients. I think the

situation will change but this will be slow and may take generations to fully work through."

Further insight into the nature of the legal profession is provided by Jackie. There is a need as a lawyer to 'detach emotion' from the situation which is instilled in lawyers through the induction process. For Jackie this brings out a 'twisted way' of thinking, resulting from the nature of law itself, which according to Jackie refers to its 'rigidity, its technicality, its logic':

"I don't know, lawyers are just, it's the way they, I guess it could happen in any profession, like accountants have a certain style to them, or whatever you want to call it, culture to it. It is a culture to the professions I think and law has its own culture. And I think that what makes it like that is the nature of the law itself. Its rigidity, its technicality, its logic. I think it brings out a twisted way of thinking."

Question: In what way?

"I'm probably just as guilty of this. I don't think lawyers see the world through the same way that everybody else does. Probably lawyers that haven't, aren't actually lawyers in the sense that people like in a business school, who teach in a business school have slightly moved away from that but it is still there. [Jackie 10]There is this, I suppose it's the ability to divorce emotion from a situation and just look at what the law is that makes them like that. Everybody else in the world can't escape from their emotion in what they thought of as justice and things like that, whereas a lawyer will immediately look to see whether it is correct law as opposed to justice and divorce emotion from it. And it makes them cold, I think, appear to be cold fish, or indeed are cold fish."

James elaborates upon the requirement of removing emotion when tendering advice to clients. He notes that rights lawyers are particularly faced with the problem of detaching emotion to a greater extent than lawyers within other parts of the profession. James notes that rights lawyers 'want to make a point' which may compromise the reading of the law:

"I have a lot of admiration for a lot of rights type lawyers, this is where I think they sometimes have problems because they often have their own agendas which, you know, the client comes in and there's a kind of melding of the agenda and you perhaps don't necessarily give the client the best advice because rather than negotiating with local authorities about, say, housing issues, you take them to court because you're trying to make a point and I mean that's inappropriate for a lawyer to do that [James 2] So I think you need to detach your emotions as much as possible from your client's interest, sorry, in advising the client you have to detach your emotions as much as possible and present them with the options and your advice as to what is the option that is both lawful and serves their interests best. This is hard."

The setting of the courtroom gives rise to a range of common behaviours and associated activities indicative of scripts being enacted as described by Barley & Tolbert (1997). So for example although the previous conservative government introduced legislation targeted at opening up the high court to solicitors the uptake has been slow. It would still appear the case that the high court is largely the domain of barristers and advocates. The training and subsequent working practices of barristers and advocates also give rise to common behaviours and activities. In particular there is a need to remove emotion when representing clients. Having explored the lived experiences within the courtroom I next explore their experiences outside of the courtroom.

5.2.3 Lived Experiences –'Outside the courtroom'

The life of lawyers outside of the courtroom gives rise to the next theme discussed in this section, namely the need to 'make or have connections' within the profession. Andrew, who has connections with the Scottish legal system, elaborates upon his experiences whilst undertaking his doctorate. He infers that many of the top judges have connections with Oxford and that in undertaking his doctorate at Oxford this gave him privileged access to these people:

"I undertook my doctorate at Oxford. [Richard 1]The research approach was unusual because it involved interviews with judges, which had not been done

successfully on a large scale, certainly not with judges at the top and it succeeded, nothing to do with me, but to do with the fact that I was at Oxford. I used a snowballing technique whereby you've got one person who got somebody else, who knew somebody else, and then once you'd got a sufficient number, you would then just approach them direct and say I've spoken to all these people but I'd like to get a balanced picture, can I speak to you? and by and large most people, most of them, were willing to be interviewed."

According to Melanie the bar has a 'narrow intake' of barristers who are predominantly white, male and upper middle class. This is changing but is still nonetheless a significant issue. Potential barristers are expected to undertake a one year on the job training divided into two periods of six months called 'pupillage' in England and Wales and 'devilling' in Scotland. For the first six months barristers and advocates are closely supervised. For the second six months, barristers and advocates work on their own cases. Melanie notes that when applying for tenancy, a permanent post, those interviewing from a set of chambers are interested in what work you can bring to the chambers. According to Melanie this favours those with a traditional background who already have family within the profession:

"I think it is perhaps more of an obvious problem I mean it has changed a lot at the bar, even since I was there. It's predominantly been a very narrow intake to the Bar which has been predominantly white, male, upper middle class .... [Melanie 6]You do 12 months pupillage which is training, a sort of apprenticeship, and the first six months you spend with a pupil master or pupil mistress working on their cases, you are not actually allowed to stand up in court. The second six months you present your own cases so what, it depends on the area of law and things, but what tends to happen, certainly what happened to me, is obviously mostly doing my own work, going to court most days, although still with a pupil mistress. So from your second six months of training onwards, one of the things that they're interested in is your bringing in work. And one of the subtle ways that tends to work especially when applying for tendency is to be asked 'can you bring in any work?' Well this is a very junior barrister. Unless you are very exceptional and probably with a specialised area of law as well, the only way you

can really bring work in is [Melanie 7] if you have good contacts, for example with solicitors, which tends to mean people who come from that kind of background and perhaps have family friends and so on are more likely to be offered tenancy. So in subtler ways like that, there is still a bias towards people from the same traditional background as those within chambers."

Ben, a non practicing barrister who funded his own way through his training, advises students to actively seek out connections with solicitor firms over the summer period. This according to Ben increases the chances of obtaining tenancy and securing an income as a barrister. Securing an income is an important activity because as noted by Melanie you are essentially 'self employed' as a barrister:

"There's always been a high wastage rate when you compare it with other professions. I don't know what the percentages are for the bar currently but it's pretty startling, the wastage rate. And that's been caused by the difficulty in getting pupillage and then getting a tenancy after pupillage. In fact, you probably have to get income from other sources. [Ben 6] So for example working for a solicitor's practice in the summer is probably one way of making links with solicitors because if you go to a set of chambers and you tell them you've got a link with solicitors, then they are far more likely to be interested in you because that's a contact you can bring with you, so that's one thing you can do. That's what I advise students nowadays. If they are thinking of going to the bar, they should think of working for a solicitor's firm first, not only to get the experience but as a possible source of future income and make as many contacts as they can."

The importance associated with having/making connections would appear to be linked with the structure of the profession. As a barrister or advocate you are essentially 'self employed' which necessitates the need to 'make or have connections'. Melanie highlights this when comparing solicitors to barristers, noting that barristers are faced with a different set of constraints:

"Having been at the Bar [Melanie 8]you're quite strong because you're self re employed really and it's very different, there's not the same sort of time-recorded

pressures, there's not the same billing pressures certainly. I mean you earn what you, the time you do, you get paid for that and that's what you earn in effect although obviously there's still the pressure to earn a living, it's not quite the same as someone giving you a target and so on. You are self employed, you tend, obviously you're on your own in court.....As a barrister you act within the frameworks that you have which are partly the Bar codes of conduct, partly the rules, the procedural rules of court, partly the substantive laws."

Barry continues the theme of being 'self employed' as a barrister or advocate for which he perceives to disadvantage those from a non-traditional background. This is compounded by the low potential of earnings when undertaking the year of pupillage. His comments are based around his experiences as somebody with a non-traditional background, himself emigrating from Guyana, and the experiences of his students drawn from a 'new' university:

"You could see yourself working for the Crown Prosecution Service or working in the Magistrates' Court, you could see yourself at that level and that's about it. Now if you worked for those professions really, in the Magistrates' and the Crown Court you'd probably get about £30,000. This is after completing a 3 year degree, 1 year for your vocation and 2 years pupillage. That's 6 years of solid study, it's full-time we're talking about, to go out and work for £30,000. You're not saying anything really! [Barry 1]When undertaking pupillage you work for almost nothing and yet you can't guarantee that you're going to be getting that money anyway because now you're self employed and you have to wait for the cases to filter through. So the whole thing impacts right the way round down really. You certainly feel that really you haven't been able to do it."

Apart from being self-employed, which as noted by Barry & Melanie presents its own issues for barristers and advocates, it is clear that to be successful as a barrister or advocate you must show a high degree of dedication. Dedication in this sense referring to not simply to productivity, but the expectation that barristers/ advocates will devote their time freely to the profession. That is there exists 'a work all hours mentality' which is highlighted by Andrew, a non-practicing advocate. Towards the latter part of the quotation Andrew raises the

common behaviour regarding the 'combative nature of representing clients in the High court'. It is expected that as a barrister or advocate you should argue your case forcefully whilst at the same time reducing the credibility of the opponent in the dock:

"I think I was right not to go on being a practising advocate. [Andrew 1] It is a very, very demanding life being a successful civil law advocate and basically you work seven days a week. I am not making it up and it is the case. If you enjoy it, it is very stimulating doing it, but that is the way of life. [Andrew 2] It is also highly combative. Your job as a advocate is to argue forcefully your case and reduce the credibility of your opponent."

The expectation placed on successful barristers/ advocates of 'working all hours' is repeated by Barry. He notes he never felt comfortable with the split between work and home expected of successful lawyers:

"[Barry 2] As a successful barrister you don't get much time to spend with your family. There is always work to be done, much of it has to be completed to tight deadlines. It becomes self fulfilling for successful lawyers and therefore a way of life. So what you find is that yes these kinds of people are extremely successful financially but at the cost of life outside of the profession. I never felt comfortable with that split between work and home."

5.2.4 Summary

This section has been directed towards illustrating themes associated with induction, courtroom protocol and life outside of the courtroom for lawyers. The themes identified are indicative of activities and common behaviours expected of lawyers described in my research as scripts. My work defines scripts in line with the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) as "recurrent activities and patterns of interaction characteristic of a particular setting" (1997: 98). It is evident that scripts associated with induction are the first stage of socialising lawyers into the way of life that are subsequently continued through expected behaviours and activities both inside and outside of the courtroom. A complete list of scripts is given in figure 5.1 detailed below. As I note in chapter 3 scripts are defined by their commonality. They must be shared by at least two respondents to count as a

script. The codes underlined represent scripts relating to passages used for illustrative purposes within this chapter. The non-underlined codes are for other law respondents not drawn on in this chapter, but who also identified the same scripts. I draw on the list in figure 5.1 within chapter 6 to ascertain whether respondents are applying scripts to the framing of strategic issues.

Law

Code	Script	Example
Induction		
Ben 1, Jackie 6, 9, Andrew, Sam	Trainees are expected to undertake vocational based training	'It's more like multiple choice questions and vocationally orientated. ….. The advocacy training is now part of the course itself'
Jackie 1, Melanie 1, Ben 2, Andrew, Craig, John	Attending Formal dinners is mandatory for entry to the Bar	'You have to, in order to become a barrister, you have to go and have dinner at an Inn of Court, one of the four. You can't be a barrister unless you do'
Melanie 2, Jackie 3, Ben, Sam	As a trainee you must be dressed appropriately (e.g. black gown)	'We were required to wear a uniform…. We were all dressed from head to toe in these black gowns'
Melanie 3, Andrew, Ben	When attending the formal dinners as a trainee you must Wait for the judges to file in	'We would stand until the judges and other important people had filed in'
Jackie 2, Ben, Craig	When attending the formal dinners as a trainee you must bow your head to the judges	'I used to find it very silly having to stand and bow your head every time a judge walked in'
Jackie 5, Melanie 5, Craig, Ben	When attending the formal dinners as a trainee you can't leave before the judges leave	'At the end of the evening we would wait for the judges to leave. We were not allowed to leave before the judges had filed out'
Jackie 4, Ben 3,	As a student attending these formal dinners you are expected to find your own seating arrangements sitting in 'messes' of four	'There was no seating arrangements for students so you just piled in and sat where you wanted to'
Ben 4, John	As a qualified member you get a placed name when attending the formal dinners	'As a qualified member you usually get a placed name. You get told where to sit' 'Students dine separately from barristers and barristers dine separately yet again from the judges, top QCs. You don't get much mixing, 'I used to find it very silly having to stand and bow your head every time a judge walked in'

Code	Script	Example
Melanie 4, Richard, Ben	QC's & Judges are positioned at the head of the dining hall at the formal dinners	'The important people all sat at the head of the room gazing down on us'
The Courtroom		
James 1, Ben 5, Jackie 9 Richard, Barry, Sam	The courtroom is the preserve of barristers/advocates	'Solicitors are now, able to having undertaken specialist training to represent their clients within the high court is a case in point. The uptake from solicitors has been admittedly slow'
Andrew 2, Melanie, Ben, Mat	When in court as a barrister/advocate your role is combative	'It's an Incredibly demanding life being a successful civil law advocate and basically you work seven days a week'
Jackie 7, Jo, Craig, Barry, John	When attending court you must wear formal dress	'And there's the thing about wearing wigs and you have got to wear court dress which is very formal and traditional'
Outside the Courtroom		
Jackie 8, Craig, Richard	As a junior barrister/advocate a significant amount of your time is spent in preparing cases	'Things like preparation of casework and what have you, incredibly monotonous. Because only the top lawyers get to do just the talking. If you are down at the bottom you have got to do all the case preparation, writing out the forms and things like that'
Andrew 1, Barry 2, Craig, Richard	As a successful lawyer expect to work long hours	'It is a very, very demanding life being a successful civil law advocate and basically you work seven days a week'
Richard 1, Ben 6, Melanie 6, 7,	To be successful as a barrister/advocate you need to make/have connections	'A traditional background, such as contacts already within the profession, gives you a head start over the competition'
Barry 1, Melanie 8, John, James	As a barrister/advocate you are self employed	'I think having been at the Bar you're quite strong because you're self employed'
James 2, Jackie 10, Andrew, John	As a lawyer you are expected to remove emotion from the case	'There is this, I suppose it's the ability to divorce emotion from a situation and just look at what the law is that makes them like that'

Table 5.1: Legal Institutional Scripts

5.3 Accountancy Institutional Setting

The accounting profession in the UK houses numerous differing roles and activities with five chartered accounting bodies attending to these interests. Allied to these accounting bodies, the large multidisciplinary practices also wield significant influence. The profession is divided between the big firms and medium and small practices. The prestigious jobs are associated with working for one of the big firms according to respondents who took part in this study. Respondents who took part in this study are currently employed or have worked with the big firms, practicing ostensibly as auditors.

I commence by discussing one of the most significant changes within the profession, namely the move from a non-graduate to a graduate orientated profession. Respondents perceive this move to have increased the legitimacy of the profession as a whole but have also resulted in internal divisions between accounting bodies. So for example the most established bodies for Scotland (ICAS) and England & Wales (ICAEW) expect their members having a degree as well as undertaking professional qualifications. Other bodies, most notably ACCA, recruit graduates as well as mature and overseas students.

5.3.1 Lived Experiences-'Induction into the Profession'

Helen, a professor of accounting at Beta business school, explains the move towards a graduate profession. She notes that up to the early 1970s accounting, as a career was seen as being at the bottom of the pile as someone graduating from Oxford. With the restructuring of careers, brought about by the civil service recruiting significantly less staff, accounting suddenly became a credible profession. The Scottish chartered institute (ICAS) is unique amongst the UK professional bodies in making explicit the requirement that 'you must have a degree' to be eligible to qualify as a member:

"In Oxford when I graduated in 1970, the top job was the diplomatic service, the second was the home civil service - very big recruiter there - and after that you looked at the law, you looked at professions; you looked at medicine, that kind

of thing. You've done a medical degree, and if all else failed the careers office would say in despair 'have you thought of teaching?' And there was management training obviously, that kind of general management training, as well as teaching. 'Oh,' she said, 'no, I can't bear the thought of teaching.' They'd say, 'have you thought of accountancy?' This is the kind of bottom of the list as something awful. It was not a graduate profession in 1970. It changed in Scotland in 1974 as the result of an investigation. [Helen 1] So from 1974 onwards, accountancy in Scotland is entirely graduate orientated. About the same time, the teaching profession cut back on recruitment and the same was true for the home civil service. So suddenly the avenues that have been there for graduates, traditional graduates, weren't there. And accountancy suddenly came up to take their place."

Prior to the move to a graduate profession the prestigious or 'big' firm's recruited students with good 'A' level results or equivalent. This is still reflected in the practices of the big firms. The practice still remains of recruiting on the basis of 'A' level points or equivalent. Keith, a member of ICEAW, gives an example of a student who obtained a 1st class honours degree but was not accepted because her 'A' level grades were not quite good enough:

"For the big firms, if you apply with 1st class honours degree, they are not interested. [Keith 1] They say how many A-level points have you got. They are not interested in classes of degrees. They want 24 A-level points and one of our students spoke to them. She's got 18 A-level points and she is hoping to get a 1st class degree. They said well 'once you've got your degree why don't you take another A-level and then we will consider you'. So a 23 year old student who might have a 1st class honours degree in accounting and finance, can't apply until she goes and does another A-level. It's totally bizarre."

Margaret, a member of ICAS, highlights a similar practice under the Scottish system of Highers. The example is given of one of the big firms approaching Beta business school who openly voiced their preference for graduates from two other Scottish universities on the basis of their social and communications skills.

According to Margaret this favours middle class students who are more likely to also have good higher results:

"[Margaret 1] Lots and lots of students have got 5 'As' at Higher and the big five look at that. They have these models and that's a big factor in their models, that they wouldn't really interview someone who didn't have very good Higher scores. This year, the first time ever, we've come across a problem, especially with one firm. They actually jointly recruited from Edinburgh and Glasgow and they said they liked Edinburgh graduates better and if you actually look at that, most of those graduates come from public schools so what they're actually looking for are people with certain kind of social and communication skills."

Kate, who works closely with the big firms, gives a similar example of the importance placed on higher results by the big firms. A student of hers obtained a first class honours degree but was not getting interviews on the basis of her higher results not being good enough:

"I don't know but most of them are in criteria where they have 24 points at one sitting of their Highers, which means they've got to have 4 'A's which is a lot but that's what is happening. [Kate 1] We had a student last year who had a first class honours degree from here and she wasn't getting interviews with the big firms and one of the big firms came and said it was because she didn't have 24 points in the first sitting for the Highers but her school hadn't allowed her to do enough to get those points."

Having overcome the hurdle of entry into the profession the training process to become a chartered accountant is highly competitive with the big firms taking on 'large numbers' of trainees, a significant number of which will not pass according to Keith. He notes that under the English system trainees are sent to private training firms to take their exams whilst under the Scottish system as run by the institute of chartered accountants of Scotland (ICAS), training is kept in house. Under both systems trainees are expected to undertake 'block study leave'. The nature of the job, with trainees 'travelling to and from client's, results in the job not being 9 to 5' which is a contributory factor in the need for

the big firms to provide 'block release'. Keith also highlights that the big firms 'recruit graduates' which according to other respondents has become the norm since the 1970s. Prior to this the accounting profession recruited primarily 'A' level standard students for the most prestigious jobs:

"The 1989 Companies Act allowed audit firms to become companies. The majority of them are still partnerships. So, for example, Andersons who are making 1500 people redundant, that includes about 40 partners. So that culture is still exactly the same in all the main firms. I mean the student that is at KPMG just confirms that the culture is exactly the same as it has always been in the big firms. [Keith 2] They take huge numbers of trainees because they know that the failure rate is very high, because the exams are so difficult, they [Keith3] expect trainees to pass first time. The trainees, they are on a training contract because they are working full time, you get blocks of study leave to do the professional exams where they go to private training firms to do the block study."

Question: Why private training houses?

"Well if you compare it with Scotland, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland, they have their own training centre so they teach the trainees to sit the exams, again block study, so you go for 2 weeks full-time. But the English Institute have never done that, they've always sent their graduates out to private training firms, so the main ones are BPP, Financial Training and they are really expensive. I know they are expensive because one of the things I did in the training department was keep the budget for the costs that they paid to these training organisations for the graduates. So I don't know why but the English Institute have never done it themselves, they've always used private..... I mean some of the big firms, for the professional exams, the two blocks of professional exams, they give them as much as 8 weeks block study at a time. So they could be doing as much as, in say their first year, 14-16 weeks of block study, full-time to do the professional exams that's, you know, 18 months after the first set, 18 months after they started."

Margaret highlights the pressure of the job as a trainee. When not on 'block release', trainees are still expected to commit fully to the job. Margaret also notes that the best firms, referring in this case to the big firms, also pay your fees with trainees rewarded with a 'bonus' for passing first time. What is evident from both Keith and Margaret accounts is the highly pressurised and competitive environment of the profession:

"[Margaret 2] I don't know if you know this, how ICAS works but it blocks the release that you do and in that time it was part 1 and part 2 so it gave you a block release but they still expect you to do a full day's work for the other times. With ICAS at that time you got three home exercises a week to do and they're really took up about six hours every week. So you're were working often, especially if you'd be to school at the weekends or in the evenings, then you were trying to do this studying, so it was a nightmare actually. Mainly auditing, which was quite interesting. We got to see a variety of companies and talked to a variety of people the overtime was OK. [Margaret 3] The best firms pay your fees as well so they would pay for you to do any studying but you always get a bonus if you pass first time so there is a lot of pressure to pass first time. Maybe we were luckier than because now some of the firms put huge pressure on the students. In fact, two of our second year students in their traineeship with one of the big firms has just been made redundant before they've even done their work. The TPU it's called now, the second part of their exams, so there wasn't that pressure then so I think it's probably even worse now but I think generally everybody just found it a nightmare, you've no time to socialise or do anything. It's just constant work. When I was doing it, if you didn't drive, which I didn't at the time and I was in Helmsworth, it's quite hard to get there for 9.00 o'clock so you had to leave the house at 7.00 to get there and then you'd get back there and back at 6.30 at night and then you just started with homework. It's in blocks generally of three or four weeks for around 10 weeks, all the studying as well, so in between the blocks you had home exercises to do and you got feedback on those within a couple of weeks and you had to look at your indication of how it was all going and then the exams were a lot of pressure as well. I just remember it as being frantic. You were just constantly chasing your tail and trying to get things done.

The pressurised and competitive nature of the working for one of the big firms is further evident when Keith discusses the experiences of one of his students working for KPMG. The student failed her conversion course by 1% and was subsequently asked to leave. According to Keith the big firms are 'ruthless in weeding out graduates who they think will not succeed':

"[Keith 4] And if you fail as a trainee you're out. One of the students who went from here to KPMG, she didn't do an accounting and finance degree, she did the pathway so she had to do, before she went on to the professional exams, she had to do 2, they used to be called conversion exams, and the pass James was both of those was 50%, she got 49% for both and she was told goodbye. She's left, she's left the firm, she was sacked. So they are totally ruthless in weeding out graduates who they think will not succeed. So as soon as you fail one set of exams, unless you get, there are situations where if you fail one paper marginally you can get referred on that paper, but if you fail a block of exams you're out. You're out."

Jean, a member of ACCA, elaborates further on the competitive nature of the profession, epitomised in the training phase to become a chartered accountant. The practices of offering 'bonuses' to trainees who pass first time is highlighted by Jean, alongside the practice of trainees being given 'block release' to study for the professional exams:

"The big firms hold no quarter. They demand success from those they take on. [Jean1] They offer bonuses as an incentive for young graduates to pass their exams first time. [Jean 2] You are given block release to study and take your exams. So there is a lot of pressure on you to pass. If you don't pass then you are more than likely going to be asked to leave. So the environment is competitive with trainees pitted against one another."

The structure of the profession has facilitated the development of 'language, which is specific to the professional bodies'. According to Jean this has resulted in the constructing of barriers around the profession that protects their members:

"[Jean 3] I think one of the difficulties with accounting for outsiders is that it seems to use common English and therefore one of the things is that they can understand it and actually it is a very skilful use of understated words which if you know the code words tells you that something is wrong. It uses words like material; something is material or not material. Now how would somebody outside know that actually what you're really saying is there is a real problem here...The profession does create mystique and plays around with the use of words...and convinces others who can't actually understand it and it uses different terminology. If you're in financial accounting or management accounting, there's a whole different sort of terminology to describe the same sort of incident."

Kate raises the same theme of the accounting bodies using 'language specific to there own areas' when discussing the work that she conducts with one of the big accountancy firm. To those not from the same accounting body or for that matter people outside of the profession this language makes little sense:

"[Kate 2] They [the large multidisciplinary firms] actually give all these figures of something they describe average net present value which to the average person with a magic number, it wouldn't mean anything at all.....The accounting firms that do the consulting work, they give this thing called average network value which to most people makes no sense at all."

In addition to the use of language the common theme emerged regarding the pay of accountants. In particular the two most established accounting bodies, the ICAEW & ICAS commandeer a 'higher salary for their members than the other accounting bodies'. The reason for this is not clear. It maybe that this is connected with status presage associated with the two most established

accounting bodies. Kate in the following quotation perceives the differential in pay as divisive:

"[Kate 3] You only have to look at the stats..the two most established accounting bodies are able to return a higher salary for their members. I don't necessarily think that is a good thing because it creates divisions within the UK profession."

Jean also highlights the theme of pay, noting that the Scottish and English bodies commandeer a premium for their members. When questioned on the difference in pay between the professional bodies for their members Jean is unable to explain why this is the case:

"If you look at surveys that have been done showing ACCA, Chartered and CIMA which are the management accountants, the Chartered will always come out on top. Even at starting salary you're at a premium of £3,000 or £4,000 and so there is that. Why this is I don't know. [Jean 4] But certainly both the Scottish and English bodies demand a premium for their members."

5.3.2 Lived Experiences- 'Working for a Big Firm' having Qualified

Keith highlights the activity of 'auditing firms' that as a newly qualified accountant working for one of the big firms is a major part of the job. He notes that 'conducting interviews' with staff of the firms he was auditing was main vehicle for collecting information. Keith left the profession because he did not want to be stereotyped as a chartered accountant:

"One of the reasons was that I didn't want to be stereotyped as a chartered accountant. [Keith 5] When you do an audit, you go into a company and you work as an audit team and you then collect evidence. One of the main ways of collecting evidence is interviewing staff. And they see you as an accountant, they see you as an auditor. One of the things they think is that you are there to inspect them and to check up on them to see if they are stealing the petty cash

and so they're very, what's the word, they're very suspicious of you coming into their company and asking them all these questions and they stereotype you as an accountant. In the big accountancy firms, you are also very much stereotyped as an accountant. So, for example, [Keith 6] you've got to wear a suit and a shirt and tie."

Margaret repeats the themes associated with working for one of the big firms. She notes that the audit function is the 'main part of the job' as a newly qualified member. The importance of interviewing as a key activity for collecting information is reaffirmed alongside the activity of checking invoices:

"The big firms it was nearly all audit that people got to do because that's the big part of the training contract that you had with the firms. So probably 75% of your time was spent on audit. [Margaret 4] My job was to go and collect evidence to support the audit which involved checking invoices and interviewing staff. The prestigious jobs involved auditing the multinationals like BP. These jobs were particularly popular. If you didn't get on particularly well with the Audit Manager or Partners, you would perhaps end up doing a local garage or something."

The big firms have continued to diversify according to Keith. He notes that auditing is still the core business and is used to draw in clients from which other services may be sold. The term in the business is called 'low balling' whereby a low bid will initially be offered to attract clients who require auditing and from which other more profitable services can then be sold:

"Well audit was always the main discipline in the past. But as these firms have grown bigger and provide a wider range of services, it's got smaller [Keith 7] but it's still the core business for the main firms of chartered accountants. And what they do is, they use the audit function to draw in big clients and to sell other services. So the term they use is low balling. If they tender for an audit and then put in a low tender, to get the audit, to get the client, so they can sell

tax services, management consultancy services, legal services, a whole range of other services that the firms use. So if you compare the size of the audit fee to non-audit fees, they've had to disclose, companies have had to disclose that for the last 10 years. There was a research study done recently, one firm the fees for other non-audit services was 20 times that of the audit fee, so they paid a tiny audit fee, but then paid 20 times that for a whole range of other services from the firm of chartered accountants."

Kate further elaborates upon the expansion of the big firms into activities other than auditing. She highlights auditing to be a key activity of the big firms:

"When I was working in the profession there was a range of services, there has always been things like tax, and tax planning. I suppose in the last 20, 25 years, there have been big management consultancy arms that were actually started by Andersen's. Andersen's were the first major US Company to move into the UK, 20 or 30 years ago and they had a big management consultancy department and I suppose gradually over time the other big firms have developed that as well. But they've got human resource departments, [Kate 3] I don't mean for the main audit function, I mean selling that service to clients; they've got public sector audit departments. Any kind of business service you can imagine they sell - insolvency, forensic audit, bankruptcy and administration. So if a firm has gone into administration, it is always one of the big firms, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Arthur Andersen that are the administrators."

5.3.3 Summary

The accounting institutional setting gives rise a range of behaviours and activities specific to the setting of accountancy. These are indicative of scripts that encode the institutional principles of the accounting profession. Examples of scripts associated with induction, through to working as an accountant for one of the big firms, have been illustrated. Figure 5.2 details a complete list of scripts for the accounting setting, alongside examples from respondents. As for figure 5.1, the codes underlined represent scripts relating to passages used for illustrative purposes within this chapter. The non-underlined codes are for other

accountancy respondents not drawn on in this chapter, but who also identified the same scripts. The list will be used to understand whether scripts impact on the framing of strategic issues within chapter 6. The following section is directed towards exploring themes associated with the academic setting. In the course of this scripts specific to academia and local scripts relevant to Alpha and Beta business school are reviewed.

Accounting

Code	Script	Example
The Accounting bodies		
Jean 3, Kate 2, Liz	Accountants use language with specific meaning to the profession and their area of expertise	'I think one of the difficulties with accounting for outsiders is that it seems to use common English'
Keith, Graeme, Liz	ACCA recruit from all types of backgrounds (non degree, mature students)	'ACCA have made it their policy to recruit predominantly from non traditional backgrounds. That is mature and part time students'
Jean, Liz	ACCA train students across the world	'I don't see the relevance as to why somebody in Nigeria should be taught British tax regulations'
Helen 1, Jean, Margaret	ICAS demands its members to have a degree	'So from 1974 onwards, accountancy in Scotland is entirely graduate orientated'
Graeme, Keith, Liz	ICAEW expect you as a student to have a degree	'What you find with ICAEW is that although you don't necessarily need to be a graduate they would prefer it if you were a graduate'
Kate 3, Jean 4	Chartered accountants (ICAS, ICAEW) commandeer a higher salary than other qualified accountants	'You only have to look at the stats - the two most established accounting bodies are able to return a higher salary for their members'
Keith 1, Margaret 1, Kate 1	To work as a CA for one of the big firms you are expected to have excellent 'A' level results or equivalent and a degree	'They say how many A-level points have you got. They are not interested in classes of degrees'
Keith 2, Graeme, Kate, Liz	The big firms take on large numbers of trainees specifically for the CA route, expecting a significant proportion to fail	'They take huge numbers of trainees because they know that the failure rate is very high'
Keith 3 & 4, Margaret 2, Jean 2	The big firms expect their trainees to pass their exams on block release first time	'Again block study, so you go for 2 weeks full-time'
Graeme,	The big firms take on trainee	'Trainees are graded at point

Kate, Keith,	accountants specifically for the technician route as opposed to the CA route	of entry, you either take the CA route or the technician route'
Margaret 3, Jean 1, Berry, Guy	The big firms offer financial incentives for students to pass first time	'The best firms pay your fees as well so they would pay for you to do any studying but you always get a bonus if you pass first time so there is a lot of pressure to pass first time'
Working for one of the 'Big' Firms having Qualified		
Keith 7, Kate 3, Graeme, Jean, Guy	The audit function is used to attract business and to sell a range of other services	'And what they do is, they use the audit function to draw in big clients and to sell other services. So the term they use is low balling'
Keith 5, Margaret 4, Helen	Auditors are expected to collect evidence through applying a range of methods when on the job	'One of the main ways of collecting evidence is interviewing staff'
Graeme, Kate, Keith	To become a partner you are expected to be a chartered accountant	'If you look at who gets promoted to partner level they are all CA's'
Keith 6, Graeme, Liz	As an auditor you are expected to dress formally when on the job	'got to wear a suit and a shirt and tie'

Table 5.2: Accounting Institutional Scripts

5.4 Academia Institutional Setting

As I note in chapter 4 the UK university sector has been subject to considerable structural change over recent decades, and is continuing to undergo structural change as a consequence of pressures on the financial resourcing of Higher Education. The process of change in recent times was ushered in by the Thatcher government and continued under the labour run Blairite government. The 'autonomy' of academics which has been a mainstay of this institutional setting continues to be under pressure, ushered in by the advent of the QAA and RAE. I commence by exploring the lived experiences of academics within the lecturing environment.

5.4.1 Lived Experiences-'Lecturing'

Melanie, a junior lecturer new to the setting notes that many of her questions are directed towards the person she shares an office with as opposed to any line manager. Outside of teaching responsibilities Melanie notes that she can choose

when and where to work. There is seemingly no need to work from the office outside of timetabled duties which enables Melanie to prepare lectures as a new member of faculty. For Melanie it is important to her to show a presence Monday to Friday, although Melanie notes that on days she is not teaching, she applies a differing time routine:

"Colleagues have been really helpful, and Janet who I share an office with has been very helpful and supportive in particular. She gets all my questions day-to-day. And teaching I've enjoyed. The bureaucratic side of it can be a bit of a nightmare. It takes longer to sometimes to change a room than it does to write the lecture you are going to give, though generally I really like it. [Melanie 1] I can choose what I do with the time I'm not teaching - when and where I work - so there's quite a lot of flexibility, so, for example, how you spend non-lecturing time, I can work at home, which allows me to prepare lectures. Days I'm not teaching I tend to come in later and leave later rather than doing nine to five."

Jackie, a long standing member of faculty at Alpha business school, highlights the same theme. There is a sense of autonomy that both Melanie and Jackie recognise. As a long standing member of faculty Jackie has taken on a substantial administrative role, working from home wherever possible, which allows her "not to be disturbed" by students and colleagues. For Jackie this is a beneficial arrangement that enables her to spend time with her young child:

"[Jackie 1] I don't like having to be told where to be all the time, every day, in a certain spot. I don't have to be in the office 9 – 5, fixed to the desk. I have a young child so it allows me some manoeuvrability in terms of my working hours, it allows me to work at home, I've got a laptop. So that's hugely beneficial to me. I don't know what other jobs allow you that sort of freedom so whilst the pay isn't brilliant, it's ok, it's very beneficial if you've got children. It works quite well because you can actually get home during the holidays. So that's ok and I can work from home, although pressures of work are partly increased lately."

Jean, an accounting academic field leader in Alpha business school perceives her working life to be in her control as an academic which was not the case in her previous career as an accountant. She notes that timetabled teaching and administrative duties are commitments that once set must be undertaken whilst the content of lectures and the delivery of these are at her discretion:

"When you work in an office you go in at 9.00 and come home about 5.00 and if you're not there between those hours that's how your actual presence is to define whatever you're doing with your job and depending on what level that you're at and there's less discretion over how you spend your time and I would say that we have working in a teaching aspect, that my life is much more within my own control and I can divide how to spend my time. [Jean 1] Obviously I can't decide when to turn up and teach or whether or not if there's a meeting that I need to attend so obviously there are timetable activities like that but I have a lot more intellectual freedom I would say to deliver things as I think they should be delivered. I think it's about freedom. Probably you have a lot more control than other individuals and you don't work strictly nine to five. You just organise yourself in a different way."

The same theme is present at Beta business school. This is exemplified by Kate, a Professor of accounting, who although she notes academic freedom is under pressure from external sources, she also highlights there is still freedom to pursue his academic interests:

"Some of the intellectual experiences have been related to the university context like getting involved in the continental universities and computers. That was tremendously stimulating...The point about working within a university context is the freedom it infers, [Kate 1] certainly when I started out not only could you teach what you wanted but outside of teaching you were and to some extent still are free to peruse your own interests."

James, a senior lecturer based at Beta business school, elaborates upon the theme of autonomy. He notes that teaching and admin duties, such as attending meetings is a given. There is little opportunity to change these arrangements

once they have been agreed upon at the beginning of each academic year. This aside, outside of these activities James is free to choose how he uses his time. At present he is putting together a bid for research which is important to James within the wider academic community:

"I am my own boss to a large extent which certainly was not the case when I was practicing as a solicitor. [James 1] There are certain slots which I have to be in the university such as being in the class room or attending meetings. Outside of these activities I am largely free to pursue my own interests. [James 2] I am currently preparing a bid for research which is important to me".

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that outside of timetabled duties academics are free to decide how to use their time. James, at present, is using his time to put together a research bid. The theme of research, and the legitimacy associated with this activity, is recognised by respondents at both Alpha and Beta business schools. However it becomes evident that respondents based at Beta business school are expected to undertake research as a prerequisite of employment at the business school. The same demands are not present at Alpha business school, with respondents expected to teach and undertake associated admin duties. Research in many respects is sidelined. This theme is evident in the next section when respondents reflect upon the role of research within their business schools and academia at large.

5.4.2 Lived Experiences-'Research'

Margaret, A senior lecturer at Beta business school, enjoys the student contact and the exchange of ideas with students. She has taken the decision herself to take on a heavy teaching load as compared with most other faculty. This has resulted in the majority of her term time taken up with teaching and to a lesser extent administration. Outside of term time and timetabled duties Margaret uses her time to write towards publication for which she and her colleagues at Beta business school perceive to be an important activity:

"I have a much heavier teaching load than most people in here and so I struggle to get anything written between September and June. [Margaret 1] This means that I have to spend a lot of time now through to September trying to catch up with my writing side."

Research is an important activity for faculty at Beta business school but clearly teaching and associated administration are also key activities. It would appear that faculty at both business schools have choices, in terms of whether to take a teaching & admin route as opposed to a research route. Margaret, within the above quotation, has clearly decided to take on a significant teaching role but still attempts to balance this with research outside of term time.

Faculty at Alpha business school recognise the importance of research within the setting of academia but nonetheless appear constrained, with the emphasis on teaching and administration. So for example, when discussing the impending merger, Jackie notes that there is an implicit understanding that although teaching is perceived to be important at Alpha business school within the wider academic setting research is the 'name of the game'. It appears that in order to move to other universities you must have a research portfolio:

"[Jackie 2] I think that what most people are thinking that they'll do is just build up their research profile and then move on."

This is further substantiated by Keith who highlights the importance of research within the wider community of academia. There is a tension between what is expected as a member of faculty at Alpha business school and the wider expectations of academia. That is teaching takes priority at Alpha business school but that within academia legitimacy is associated with research output:

"If you want to get on in the academic world, then you have to publish, you have to be a competent teacher..... [Keith 2] As long as you're publishing, that's really only what everybody cares about. I don't personally agree with this for our school but that is the reality within HE. "

The importance placed on research to your career as an academic appears to be key to inferring legitimacy on respondents. So for example, Barry a senior lecturer at Alpha business school, who perceives himself to be a teacher, notes that although the teaching and admin roles carries some legitimacy it is research which is ultimately the measure of success:

"I enjoy teaching and that to me is the most important part of my job. I also have to ensure the admin is completed on time. [Barry 1] If I was interested as a younger person to make a career in the university life then I would have or should have spent more time developing my research portfolio."

Unlike the professional settings, the academic setting would appear to allow for a wide latitude of behaviours associated with the activities of teaching, administration and research. So for example the common theme of 'nobody tells you what to research' dominates discussions, with academics expected to carve out their area of research. The first example of this comes from James, a senior lecturer at Beta business school:

"The freedom is obvious, in that you are pursuing your own agenda rather than reacting to someone else's agenda which is certainly an unattractive feature of it……I do find it's quite a liberating atmosphere that you can actually research what you want to research, you are an individual on the one hand loosely affiliated with the institution. To some extent, it's like being self-employed, I mean virtually [James 3] nobody has ever told me I need to do x, y or z and it is an opportunity to have a very pro-active existence in that you can plan your own research, I mean nobody dictates to me what research agenda I should have."

When interviewing respondents at Alpha business school the same theme was present. Indeed for Melanie, this is one of the reasons she left the law profession so as to pursue her research into women, as minorities within the law profession:

"I wanted to do something with an emphasis on academic law. [Melanie 2] Which really obviously means being within a university in effect. For me it was because I wanted to carry on with my own research and follow my own interests."

When exploring research with respondents at both research sites it becomes clear that there is a high degree of prestige and legitimacy associated with the activity of research. So for example the importance placed on research also impacts on promotion prospects. A good research record as defined by the RAE criteria aids your prospects of promotion. In particular academics should publish in four journals per round of the RAE with books not carrying as much weight. James when discussing the RAE exercise substantiates this. Teaching within the broad academic setting appears to take on a secondary role:

"[James 4] In a formalistic way promotion of a person is based on whether the person is going to make a significant contribution to the RAE and be a competent teacher and for professorial appointments the RAE is a kind of number one consideration, it's assumed that you would be a competent teacher, although sometimes not an appropriate assumption."

Kate, when describing her promotion from senior lecturer to that of Professor at Beta business school indicates the need to satisfy the RAE criteria to be perceived as legitimate. It becomes apparent through conversations with Kate that a 'good research record' helps in your prospects for promotion:

"I was fortunate in that as far as research is concerned, because I had established projects that were bringing in money and generating publications that enabled me to cope with the requirements of the RAE. [Kate 2] There were some problems in as much as this was an Action Research Project and it didn't generate as much publication as other kinds of research and if I hadn't been promoted a couple of years ago I would be sitting here complaining to you and saying it's bloody unfair, I did all this research and it didn't count for anything because I didn't generate the right quality of publication."

Richard, having established an impressive research publication record in what he has defined as his field, decided to write a practitioner-orientated book. He stresses the point that he has achieved his objective of submitting four publications for the next RAE:

"[Richard 1] I have written my publications for the next round. I'm now writing a book which...[has]...been in gestation for fifteen years but it's setting out in, in a much more detailed form, what I think the ethical or professional responsibilities, standards and rules as they exist in this jurisdiction probably are."

The same theme is recognised by respondents at Alpha business school. So for example Ben, a Senior Lecturer with the Law Department, notes that some universities recruit academics on the basis of their research portfolio. It would appear that universities 'buy in' certain academics on the basis that they will contribute to the RAE exercise. The RAE is conducted every four years. Consequently the period leading up to assessment is punctuated by transfers from one university to another on the basis of research output enhancing the overall score of that particular university:

"Because the environment is such that it has opened up you do get people doing research and there being a research ethos. [Ben 1 & 2] Westminster's a classic example, the law department there did very well recently in their research assessment exercise and that's solely because they recruited people who are good at researching, got outputs, so in that sense having a research portfolio enhances your career prospects."

Keith, based at Alpha business school, highlights the importance of research within academia, noting that after a period of time within academia you become aware of some of the "rules of the game". Publishing is perceived to be at the

top the agenda. This contributes to the ratings of the university which are assessed through the RAE:

"After a time in the game you begin to automatically know the rules and how to play them to your advantage. [Keith 3] So it's how you publish, where you publish, what you do to increase your chances of publication, what things matter in the RAE, all that kind of stuff.... If you want to get on, make an academic career for yourself, then you need to recognise this."

5.4.3 Summary

Within academia prestige and legitimacy is associated with the ability to publish within recognised journals. Unlike the professional settings, academics are relatively autonomous, setting their own agendas. So for example academics are free to decide what they do with their time outside of timetabled duties. This aside, it is evident that research is the prime activity that infers legitimacy as an academic over and above teaching and administrative responsibilities.

The themes described in this section are representative of scripts present within the academic institutional setting. Figure 5.3 details a complete list of scripts which are applied in chapter 6 to understand the role of scripts in the framing of strategic issues. (As for figures 5.1 and 5.2, the codes underlined Represent scripts relating to passages used for illustrative purposes only within this chapter. The non-underlined codes are for other academic respondents not drawn on in this chapter, but who also identified the same scripts). The following section details themes specific to Alpha and Beta Business Schools. Academic scripts are recognised by respondents at both universities although Alpha business school respondents place emphasis on teaching whilst respondents based at Beta business school place emphasis on research as well as teaching.

Academia

Code	Script	Example
Lecturing		
Melanie 1, Jackie 1, Jean 1, Kate 1, James 1, Helen 2, Margaret 1	Outside of timetabled duties you choose how to use that time and where Faculty devise the content of their lectures	'I can choose what I do with the time I'm not teaching - when and where I work, how and what I teach is largely up to me…yes I need to meet the learning outcomes but over and above that is up to me'
Jackie, Melanie, James	Nobody checks up on you as a lecturer unless there are numerous complaints	'You would have to have a load complaints before anyone asks any questions'
James, Richard, John	Within academia you are expected to design courses in a transparent way for students	'The QAA has resulted in classes being far more structured so for example you need to demonstrate learning outcomes and assessment criteria'
Research		
James 2, Richard 1, Jackie 2, Barry 1, Keith 1 & 2, Andrew 1, Ben 1, Melanie 2	Research is the name of the game	'If you want to get on, make an academic career for yourself, then you need to recognise that research is what counts'
James 3, Helen 1, Berry	As an academic nobody tells you what to research	'Nobody dictates to me what research agenda I should have'
Richard 1, James, Craig	Research active faculty are expected to focus on refereed publications that contribute to the RAE	'So it's how you publish, where you publish, what you do to increase your chances of publication, what things matter in the RAE'
James 4, Kate 2 Guy, Ben	A good research record aids your prospects of promotion	'In a formalistic way promotion of a person is based on whether the person is going to make a significant contribution to the RAE'
Ben 2, Helen, Jerry	Universities buy in research to bolster their academic credibility	'Westminster's a classic example, the law department there did very well recently in their research assessment exercise and that's solely because they recruited people who are good at researching'

Table 5.3: Academic Institutional Scripts

5.4.4 Themes Specific to Alpha business school

Faculty at Alpha business school recognise the importance of research to furthering their careers within academia. Nonetheless the orientation of Alpha business school places a high degree of importance on teaching and administration over and above research activities. So for example Keith notes that 'teaching comes first and if you have time and want to research then that would be fine':

"There's a general perception that teaching loads are much higher at a new university and they're not. It's lower, probably. I'd say on average the teaching loads at old and new universities are similar. They're just counted in completely different ways. [Keith 3] What you'll find that at an older university is that doing teaching as well as administration, you are required to research. Here it's like it wouldn't be a bad idea if you could do some. It would be possible to come to this university and say `I'll make my career here and I'll do my teaching, a bit of research and I'll play the administrative game', you know. So that would be possible but that would be valued here but that wouldn't increase your value in the academic community."

The emphasis on teaching is highlighted by Melanie, a newly appointed lecturer within the law department. As a newly appointed lecturer, the expectation is that teaching materials should be organised, with little if any time given over to research. This is contrast to Beta business school whereby the expectation as a newly appointed member of faculty is that you will publish within a short time frame:

"[Melanie 3]Teaching comes first, I think especially for me because this is my first year, so obviously everything I'm doing from scratch, just the teaching side, writing lectures that side of it is just taking ages so the research kind of actually fills the sideline at the moment. I think once this semester's over then the research then I will be able to get on with my research, there is definitely encouragement to do research."

For Barry, a Senior lecturer, like many of the faculty at Alpha business school, teaching is the main reason for becoming an academic. Barry commences by discussing his role as a member of faculty that is directed towards teaching. Research for Barry is in many cases irrelevant unless it contributes to improving the life chances of his students:

"What the students don't understand by reading a particular technical part of the subject, your job is to explain it really. I've always run the bias in terms of the students really. Students come first....I've never wanted to be involved in research. [Barry 2] Most of the research I have seen does not deal with the real issues of how to improve teaching. For example , and it may seem trivial why is there not more research conducted into how to improve student presentations? We give students, in some parts of the course 40% of their examination results based on presentations."

Barry elaborates upon the theme of teaching taking precedence at Alpha business school. On financial grounds it is important that Alpha business school secures adequate student numbers that is the case for all UK universities according to Barry. He draws the distinction between Alpha business school and 'redbrick' universities. The assumption being that at redbrick universities faculty are encouraged to research to a greater extent than is the case at Alpha business school:

"[Barry 3] Well it's mass higher education. It's trying to teach huge numbers of students with limited resources. It's no different anywhere else. It's about getting bums on seats and whole sector is facing the same pressures. Perhaps in redbrick universities there may be more of an emphasis on research, but nonetheless they still need to make sure they get the volume of students."

A second theme identified at Alpha business school concerns the 'orientation of management'. All respondents based at Alpha business school raised this the issue of the management orientation. According to these respondents there is a lack of consultation by management, with initiatives coming from management that are subsequently 'forced through' with little or no consultation. Faculty are

expected to comply with management edicts. Jean, an Accounting Field Leader, discusses the introduction of the 'capability curriculum', concerned with ensuring consistency across modules as an example management's orientation:

"Initiatives have come from the top rather than the bottom, like the capability curriculum which had to be implemented and, again, I represented the accounting group on that and it took an enormous amount of time to start with lots of workshops...The VC had heard about this idea from a college in America and he bought lots of people over and it was this system that was put in a college, taught mainly white students with a religious slant. The VC wanted to import this system into a multicultural environment that we have here at this university....I didn't have a problem with students and identified the skills that and be able to discuss, be articulate in discussing the skills that they had picked up but we went around the houses for months and months about how these capabilities were going to be integrated into modules, how we would begin to assess them. If I'm teaching a profit and loss balance sheet and the skills to communicate it effectively in context, I don't need to assess that separately and it took a long time to come round to the fact that you didn't actually need to do that."

Question: Were the core capabilities enforced?

"[Jean 1] <u>It depends on how you understand that term. It wasn't an idea that came from the staff, it was an idea that came from the Vice Chancellor, then you were told that the entire under-graduate scheme was going to be reviewed and every single, solitary module had to have capabilities written into it</u>."

Melanie, when discussing the recruitment of two new members of staff notes that management did not consult with faculty. This resulted in information relevant to the post being left out and the need for the advert to be re-run at a later date. Across all respondents based at Alpha business school there is a sense of resentment that they are not consulted with decisions that directly impact on their jobs:

"Communication has become far more of an issue. We lost a member of staff, 2 members of staff, last year from our department that weren't replaced for ages because no-one could make a decision. [Melanie 4] Management did not listen to those within the department. So for example when a decision was finally made to appoint someone, the advert went in the newspaper but without any reference to anyone. If they had taken the time to consult with the department then this could have been avoided and prevented the rerunning of the advert. There was no need for this mistake to ever of happened. "

Barry, a senior lecturer within the law faculty further lends support to the management orientation when discussing the manner in which faculty receive communications. Towards the latter part of the quotation, Barry notes that communication is directed from the fourth floor. The business school is arranged over four floors which when questioned about this Barry notes that management reside on the top floor from where communication filters down:

"You see fragmented pieces of communication, I mean you might get a memorandum saying, this one here, this comes from Dr Marcus, this one comes from Professor Morris. [Barry 4] This is how you receive communication from management...The opportunity to have any say in this is minimal, it all comes from the fourth floor. I don't personally get involved in these decisions. But then again why would I, I'm not part of the ruling elite. "

5.4.5 Themes Specific to Beta business school

It became evident that respondents working for Alpha & Beta perceive their job and associated duties somewhat differently. So for example at Alpha business school there is a high degree of emphasis placed on teaching and administrative duties. This is in contrast to respondents based at Beta business school where the emphasis is clearly on research output alongside ensuring a high standard of teaching and administration. So for example Kate, a professor of accounting at Beta business school, when contrasting Beta business school with what she describes as "new" universities, notes that research takes a higher priority at Beta business school. Kate notes that the department 'would be devastated' if it

did not maintain its five rating in the RAE. There is little doubt that research forms an integral part of the job for Kate and her colleagues within the business school:

"We have those big classes...we have the admin.. and we also have to do research and there are people doing research in new universities but that's still not exactly the norm, or[Kate 3] they don't churn out the kind of publications that we have to churn out. This department here would be devastated if it didn't maintain it's five in the research."

Margaret, a lecturer in accounting, discusses the retirement of a member of faculty who was not expected to be replaced leading to increased pressure on remaining faculty. She highlights the three main areas of the job; research, teaching and admin. When questioned whether the activities of research, teaching and admin are of equal importance Margaret indicates that within the business school research is seen as the key activity, but that on a personal level teaching is very important whilst admin is 'something that we live with':

"I don't know how they're going to cope. It seems difficult to imagine that they are going to expect us to do with less staff but [Margaret 2] still expect people to get higher research going and good teaching quality and ensure admin is completed on time and to standard. It's going to be a difficult period."

Question: Is the order in which you mention the activities of research, teaching and admin significant?

"To some extent yes, although teaching is very important to me, seeing students develop throughout their time here. The admin is something that we live with and needs doing."

James, a senior lecturer within the Law Department, continues the theme of research. He acknowledges an increase in monitoring of teaching that has subsequently heightened the prominence of the teaching activity as a consequence of the introduction of the QAA:

"[James 5] I think as a department and a university research is very important. Certainly if you look at our department almost everybody is research active. This can only be beneficial for teaching especially with an increased awareness on teaching standards and admin which goes with the territory."

When further exploring research at Beta business school other themes connected with research emerge. So for example James highlights that 'as a new member of faculty you need to demonstrate the potential publish'. James notes that as a new member of staff you would be expected to have almost completed a thesis, perhaps been to a conference and most likely have some publications to your name:

"[James 6] You would need some publications or you would need to demonstrate that you had almost finished a thesis, which would be a major publication. I think probably when I started ten years ago, you might have got into the department with no publications, although I actually did have some... Now there would be an expectation that you had post-graduate qualifications in law at least at masters level and that you had some publications, even if it was just a couple, in reasonable journals. It is now becoming I think the norm that you had maybe given a conference paper based on some aspect of your thesis, so the entry qualifications to the academic profession are high."

The theme of the increasing pressure, that is to be visible in terms of publications for new faculty is noted by Helen, a professor of accounting. She also highlights that autonomy, expressed in being able to choose how 'you do things' especially at the level of professor is still present for present although this is changing for newly inducted faculty:

"[Helen 3] Life used to be fantastic and it still is. At the level I'm at it still is, because you can choose how you do things. It's very hard for a lecturer coming in today because there are so many targets and so many things to achieve."
Question: "Could you give me an example of that?"

"Well, a lecturer being appointed now must achieve research target within the first 3 years or they won't get, they won't achieve, probation. [Helen 4] So you've got to give a number of research targets which will involve - we've just finished a PhD that involved - publishing papers, going to conferences, all the things that you do to demonstrate you're a good researcher."

Andrew continues the theme of the importance of research and in particular the increasing research demands faced by new faculty. There would appear to be an emphasis on publishing in a "short space of time". It would also appear that pressure, in the form of questioning by management, would be applied for those not fulfilling their obligations:

"There's a vital importance in publishing enough to satisfy RAE requirements within a very short space of time. [Andrew 2] If a young member of staff arrives, you will very quickly be expected to generate the right quality of published articles. It's not that you're going to get the sack, but questions will be asked."

5.4.6 Summary

This section has been directed towards illustrating the presence of a sub set of scripts described in my research as 'local' academic scripts. These are unique to Alpha and Beta business schools. Scripts specific to academia and Alpha & Beta business schools are carried forward into chapter 6 to understand whether and the extent to which scripts play a part in the framing of strategic issues. Fig 5.4 details a complete list of local scripts to Alpha and Beta business schools.

Alpha Business School

Emergence of the importance of Teaching as a Theme
Relationship of Management to Faculty

Code	Script	Example
Keith 3, Melanie 3, Barry 2 & 3, Graeme, Jerry	Teaching and admin take priority over research	'At an older university you are doing teaching as well as administration, you are required to research. Here it's like it wouldn't be a bad idea if you'
Jean 1, Melanie 4, Barry 4, Mat, Guy	Management expect their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question	'It was an idea that came from the Vice Chancellor, then you were told that the entire under-graduate scheme was going to be reviewed'

Beta Business School

Emergence of the importance of Research as a Theme

Code	Script	Example
Kate 3, Margaret 2, James 5, Craig, Jack	Faculty are expected to publish, carry out Admin and teach	'It seems difficult to imagine that they are going to expect us to do with less staff but still expect people to get higher research going and good teaching quality and ensure admin is completed on time and to standard'
James 6, Helen 3, Andrew 2,	As a new member of faculty you must be able to demonstrate potential to publish	'It is now becoming I think the norm that you had maybe given a conference paper based on some aspect of your thesis, so the entry qualifications to the academic profession are high'
Helen, Richard, Andrew	Research is expected to be directed to the 4 and 5 star journals	'They [new universities] don't churn out the kind of publications that we have to churn out. This department here would be devastated if it didn't maintain it's five in the research'
James, Andrew, Helen	As a researcher you are expected to publish four articles towards the RAE	'I think as a department and a university, research is very important. Certainly if you look at our department almost everybody is research active'

Tables 5.4: Local Academic Institutional Scripts

5.4.7 Conclusion

The current chapter has been directed towards illustrating that scripts are present within each of the institutional settings of law, accountancy and academia. Scripts are specific to each of these settings, encoding the institutional logic. I also show within the academic setting that a subset of scripts is present, which are themselves informed by the overarching academic scripts. At Alpha business school teaching and administration take priority, whilst at Beta business school research takes on a high priority alongside teaching and administrative duties. It is also notable at Alpha business school that the management orientation features prominently with a need to follow instructions and edicts without question.

The following chapter is directed towards exploring how the institutional context impacts on the individual framing of strategic issues. The scripts detailed in the current chapter are used to ascertain whether the institutional context plays a role in the individual framing of strategic issues. This is important because neither the strategic issue diagnoses nor the problem formulation literatures have addressed the extent to which institutional processes impact on the individual framing of strategic issues. Chapter 6 commences by demonstrating that the institutional context, enacted through scripts, play a pivotal role in the framing of strategic issues.

Chapter SIX

Framing Strategic Issues

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter showed that scripts specific to each of the institutional settings of law, accountancy and academia could be identified, leading to a list of scripts specific to each institutional setting. The central argument of Barley & Tolbert (1997) is that macro-institutional arrangements are reproduced and altered through interaction between actors. Through interaction, and over time, scripts develop that encode institutional principles. Interaction consequently plays a role in shaping behaviour and action, which is itself they argue informed by macro-institutional arrangements.

In chapter 2, I note that Barley & Tolbert (1997) rightly contend that although actions may vary, to be interpretable, they must conform to taken-for-granted assumptions about the activities and interactions appropriate to actors. In order for social actions to be 'interpretable' they must presumably be carried in the minds of actors. This led to the question as to what role, if any, the institutional context plays in the shaping of interpretive processes?

I also note in chapter 2 that both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures, which form subsets of the strategy literature, have not adequately addressed the role that the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues. A micro-institutional perspective, informed in part by the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997), offers the opportunity to address this. This leads to the research question which my work addresses:

Research Question

How does the institutional context impact on the individual framing of the issue?

The current chapter shows how respondents frame strategic issues. The chapter comprises of three further sections. Section 6.2 shows that institutions, enacted through scripts, play a pivotal role in the framing of strategic issues. I show that respondents draw on the scripts identified in chapter 5 when discussing the institutionally relevant strategic issues I present them with. This is consistent with top-down institutional processes being at play.

Having shown that scripts play a pivotal role in the framing of strategic issues, section 6.3 examines the impact of multiple institutions on the framing of strategic issues. My findings demonstrate that respondents draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously. Stated differently scripts associated with a particular institution are applied discretely to frame issues relevant only to that institution. So, for example, when framing the legal issue, although all the law respondents are also part of the academic institution, they draw from scripts relevant only to law. Conversely when these same respondents are presented with the academic issue they draw only on academic scripts to frame the academic issue.

The design also included a question for respondents to frame that cuts across institutions. As noted in chapters 3 and 5 the tension between research and teaching was chosen to explore this on the basis that respondents at the two research sites might interpret this issue differently. The findings confirmed a division between Alpha and Beta respondents. It is clear that when local and academic scripts align (as for Beta business school with a focus on research) respondents draw predominantly from academic scripts; where they do not (as was the case with respondents based at Alpha business school with a focus on teaching) respondents draw predominantly from local academic scripts. This would suggest that individuals find it hard to draw on multiple institutions unless the scripts align in some way.

As I note in chapter 3 the research design was primarily set up to identify scripts and their role, if any, on the individual framing of strategic issues. Given this

caveat it became evident through the analysis stage of the data that some other factor also appeared to be playing a role in the framing of strategic issues. Section 6.4 illustrates that bottom-up institutional processes are also at play which enable respondents to interpret scripts. Two groups are identified: Those who seem to 'buy into' their institutional scripts, seeing them as legitimate, and who therefore apply bottom-up institutional processes that are in alignment with these scripts; and those respondents who don't see the institutional scripts as legitimate, displaying bottom-up interpretive processes critical of the scripts.

Walsh, Hinings, Ranson & Greenwood (1981) observe that organisations are composed of groups whose positions of relative advantage and disadvantage are shaped by the organisation and wider environment. An organisation's "dominant coalition" will seek to remove incompatible structures because of the risk of challenge of the status quo. I argue that respondents who buy into their institutional scripts are part of the dominant coalition with a vested interest to continue the status quo. Conversely those respondents that don't see institutional scripts as legitimate appear to have been marginalised by those supporting the dominant coalition. It would appear that this marginalisation is associated with these respondents having meanings critical of the institution.

In each of the following sections, I examine issue interpretation on an individual case by case basis. This highlights patterns in my data to do with respondents drawing on multiple institutions, but not simultaneously, and how respondents use bottom-up interpretive processes in conjunction with top-down interpretive processes to interpret issues.

6.2 Scripts: Top down Institutional Processes

As I note in chapter 2 both the problem formulation and the strategic issue diagnosis literatures have not addressed the influence of institutional processes on the formative stages of decision-making. I argued that by extending the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) further insight may be gained into micro-

institutional processes, which in turn offers an opportunity to understand the factors that contribute to the individual framing of strategic issues and the nature of this process. The current section shows that respondents apply scripts to frame strategic issues and is structured by institutional setting; law, accountancy and academia.

6.2.1 The Legal Institutional Setting

I commence with the legal profession and the issue of inequality. As I note in chapter 4 the issue of inequality has been extensively documented, not least by the Bar Council & Law Society, both of which acknowledge that the profession is still male and white orientated especially at the higher levels of the judiciary with a bias towards Oxbridge educated types. The professional governing bodies have responded by implementing initiatives designed to address the issue with some success now being noted. For example, there has been a significant increase in females entering the profession over the past decade but they have still not penetrated the higher levels of the judiciary.

6.2.1.1 James: Non practicing solicitor based at Beta business school

James is currently a non-practicing solicitor under the Scottish legal system, who qualified fourteen years ago. He notes that inequality is still present within the profession. Inequality for James is primarily defined in terms of gender. When discussing gender inequality, James notes that gender equality is improving with it being a matter of time before the profession is equally represented, noting that more women are now entering the profession, particularly as solicitors. Nonetheless, he still has concerns about the higher echelons of the judiciary with gender inequality still persisting:

"I think it still exists. Less so than it did but it's apparent at the higher reaches of the profession still. Solicitors firms in some ways have little choice now in terms of gender issues because there are so many women and so many of them are good candidates. Even if they wanted to take a very biased gender approach

and hire men, it would be very hard practically to do that because there are not necessarily the male candidates available because, as I say, for ten years now, virtually ten years bar one year, there have been more women than men going into the profession."

In further discussing the issue of gender inequality James applied the legal script referring to 'being self-employed'. In doing so James notes that some clients do not trust women with difficult commercial interests:

"At the end of the day, you're self-employed. That is where you might find there is discrimination in terms of 'may be we're not going to instruct you because you're a woman; you know we don't trust women with our difficult commercial decisions'."

When further exploring the law issue, James draws on the experiences of his partner, who was the first black female to be appointed as an advocate within the Scottish system. She has managed, according to James, to establish a strong positive reputation. James draws on the script of 'making/having connections', noting that his partner has been fortunate in impressing a number of quite senior advocates who often offer her work on their cases:

"My partner is an advocate and she finds this to some extent. She practises in some of the areas in which I research - planning law, for example. She's usually the only woman in meetings with developers and construction companies and so on. There are no women, it's all men. They kind of look at her and say what does this woman know and she's kind of quite fortunate because she is a good advocate and I'm not just saying that because she's my partner, but she's fortunate also in that she seems to have impressed a number of quite senior male advocates who often will bring her in on a case."

Towards the latter part of discussing the law issue, he goes on to suggest that the issue of gender inequality is linked with the script 'of the long hours mentality' with the prospect of bring up a family perceived by some sections of the

profession as a hindrance. This is particularly the case for high-level appointments with James citing partnership decisions:

"It might be argued, but I certainly wouldn't subscribe to this that as a woman you couldn't really commit fully to the job because you're having children and this kind of thing and all that. I mean I still do think these things are unfortunately taken into account in partnership decisions."

James discusses the issue of inequality along gender sensitised lines. It would appear that he draws on his experiences alongside his partners' experiences in framing the issue in terms of gender, drawing on law scripts to do so. He 'explains away' gender inequality through the structure of the law profession, which hinders gender equality.

6.2.1.2 Andrew: Working relationship with the High Court Judges based at Beta business school

I next explore the case of Andrew, who works with high court judges within the Scottish legal system. Andrew works closely with the High Court judges of Scotland. He begins by suggesting that it is taking 'a long time' for gender equality to emerge, noting that there has been some success, not least with three female High Court judges being appointed within recent time. Andrew notes that the reason for why this change is taking time is because cultural change is slow:

"It seems to be taking a rather long time for that gender equality, particularly at the highest levels of the profession but we're seeing some changes here. There are now three High Court judges, women judges, so changes are happening. I'd say there are changes happening but changes are slow and the reason is that while social change is slow, cultural change is slow. Earlier on women might not have got access to law schools and come out with law degrees, but that has now changed."

When questioned on why cultural change is slow within the profession Andrew highlights the bureaucratic nature of the profession built on tradition. He is

optimistic of seeing positive reform to the profession. In doing so Andrew raises the script referring to 'the long hour's mentality' suggesting that this does not have to be the only way of working within the profession:

"The profession has evolved over a significant period of time. So it is not surprising that there exists a sense of tradition and perhaps bureaucracy in parts. I think the profession will continue to reform. There is recognition now that quality of life is important. It is increasingly being recognised that the long hours mentality does not have to be the only way of getting on. You can also work more effectively and so have time to spend with your family."

When further discussing inequality within the profession, and in particular race, Andrew notes that minority groups are still under-represented within the Scottish legal system. When questioned about this Andrew raises the "old boy network", drawing from the script of 'having/making connections' within the profession. Andrew concludes by noting that change is unfolding but that this is a slow process because cultural change is slow:

"Race is certainly an issue... in Scotland because there are major African populations and there are also Asians and they're under-represented, both in the number of students who come here and in the profession as a whole, certainly at the senior levels."

Question: "Why do you think that might be?"
"There's still a bit of an old boy network around, I'm sure. As far as some of the other aspects, I guess its social class. There is some evidence that in the judiciary, the majority of them still have upper-middle class backgrounds. There are at least two or three High Court judges who are from humble origins, they come from working class communities, went to state schools and provincial universities. I'd say there are changes happening but changes are slow and the reason is that while social change is slow, cultural change is slow."

Andrew discusses the law issue in terms of both gender and race. Like James, he draws only on law scripts to frame the legal issue. Unlike James equality is

not only defined in terms of gender but also race. Andrew argues that it is a matter of time before inequality is redressed within the profession with him justifying this in terms of cultural change taking a significant amount of time.

6.2.1.3 Jackie: Trainee Barrister, based at Alpha business school

I next explore the case of Jackie, who undertook her barrister training within the London circuit. She acknowledges that this period of her life was one of her worst experiences, culminating in her failing her bar finals and leaving the profession. This led to a move to teaching in higher education, working for her present employer, Alpha business school, for the past twelve years. Jackie discusses the law issue only in terms of gender, drawing on her experiences when undertaking the bar finals. She commences by noting some positive reform to the profession, acknowledging an increase in women studying law. However this is overshadowed by the characteristics of the profession and in particular the middle-class orientation. Towards the latter part of the quotation, Jackie applies the script referring to the 'long hour's mentality', noting that this does not help female progression within the profession:

"I think it is still a very male-dominated profession and it probably is always going to be. I think that probably at undergraduate level there's more women studying law. I don't know the figures any more but I think there's a high number of, percentage of, women who study law at undergraduate level. But invariably I think that they drop out because it's still middle-class orientated. They end up married and having children and drop out of the whole link. And if they don't, then because of the nature of the pressures of very long hours, they just can't keep up the hours, so they end up working part-time."

The script referring to the 'need to have/make connection' is applied to the framing of the issue which is used as a basis to explain why equality within the profession continues to be a significant issue:

"Cherie Blair is a one-off, a woman who has actually managed to have children and keep her career and be really successful. But then she's an Oxbridge

graduate and I think she's had a very understanding husband. I think for most women it is more difficult to maintain that impetus all the way through. It is by the nature of the profession difficult for women to succeed. You only have to look at the types of people that make up the profession to see that as a woman it is problematic to make a career in the profession. The makeup of the profession does not help. The old boy's network is still a factor which prohibits women getting on within the profession...it is still important to know the right people and it is this which is the main stumbling block for equality. You only have to look at the statistics; women and other minorities are not progressing within law. There needs to be radical reform before we see this being redressed to any great extent. It need to come from the top. The Bar itself needs to put across a stronger view. Until this happens we will only be dealing with the tip of the iceberg."

Unlike Andrew but consistent with James, Jackie discusses the law issue solely along gender sensitised line. Again, like Andrew and James, she draws on scripts specific to the law profession. Yet Jackie is also highly critical of the practices and tradition associated with the legal system. Andrew and James are more accepting of the practices of the legal profession. The final case illustrated within this section is that of Barry, who is a non-practicing barrister.

6.2.1.4 Barry: Non Practicing Barrister, based at Alpha business school

Like Jackie, he is critical of the profession and the associated practices. Barry emigrated from Guyana in the early 1960s to study law. He graduated in the 1970s whereby he returned to Guyana to practice. Upon return to the United Kingdom Barry was not able to secure a position whereby he decided to change career. When initially discussing the law issue Barry is clearly critical of the profession and its practices. He draws from the script of being 'self employed' which prevents certain types of individuals from succeeding. This is exacerbated by the script of 'needing/ having connections' which makes the profession introspective and conservative according to Barry:

"The way the profession is structured really brings about the problem of inequality itself. The question should be is that 'do you believe that really as a barrister you are going to make a reasonable living out of it, or you're going to be successful at it?' You have to have a certain vision and projections of where you are going. If you feel that really that is not so, it means that really you are at a certain level, you will never excel. The issue it seems to me is the structure of the profession. The elite are drawn from the host nation and they have a preference to appoint their own kind. This makes the profession more inward looking and conservative."

Barry highlights the opportunity cost of training to become a lawyer, drawing on the script of 'having/making connections'. According to Barry, as an ethnic minority lawyer, the only financially viable route is to set up in practice as a solicitor. In doing so hew draws on the script referring to barristers 'being self employed' to justify this decision. It would appear that Barry perceives the barrister route to be closed to him and other minority groups:

"I mean you take 3 years for a degree, you then really move on, you then take another year vocational and then you take another year in pupillage and in the meantime you're not earning money. If you look at the opportunity cost in terms of where you are, you'd have lost really roughly £100,000 at least within that 5 years really. Now at least you must get that return in terms of that particular opportunity cost that you've lost. If you want to end up earning about £30,000 and you're moderately successful, it's not worth it. It's not worth the exercise, I mean you want to be earning about £100,000 at least. You have little chance of making it along the barrister route because the profession is structurally designed that way. You have to come from the right background with the right connections. Now the only scope that gives you [as an ethnic minority] that possibility is if you go on and become a solicitor and become a partner within solicitors' firm that is successful and that would probably take you about 5 years but at least there is the opportunity by your own abilities and the client base that you're developing to earn £100,000. The other one, really you have to wait for people to send you work ."

For Barry the law issue is discussed solely in terms of 'race' as opposed to gender. When framing the issue in terms of race he draws on scripts specific to the law profession. Like Jackie, Barry is critical of the profession and associated practices. These practices restrict in many circumstances those from ethic minority groups from fulfilling their potential.

6.2.2 Summary

This section has been directed towards illustrating that scripts specific to the legal profession only are applied to the framing of the legal issue. Although respondents have affiliations with academia they appear to draw solely on law scripts when framing the legal issue. Both Barry and Jackie take a different stance from that of James and Andrew which is apparent in their use of language. So for example James and Andrew explain away inequality applying a range of reasons, whereas Jackie and Barry confront the profession, exposing what they perceive to be serious shortfalls in the way the profession conducts itself. I now move on to show that, similarly, accounting scripts are used to frame the accounting issue.

6.2.3 Accounting Institutional Setting

The 'fragmentation' of the profession as encapsulated in the continued segregation of the five accounting bodies which make up the UK accounting profession was chosen as the issue for accountancy. The same procedure was applied as with the legal issue in deriving the accounting issue. As I note in chapter 4 there has been periodic discussions between the UK accounting bodies with the purpose of merging since the early 1970s. To date the professional bodies have blocked attempts to merge, preferring to continue their independence within a UK context. This is in the face of convergence of international standards that according to commentators in the accounting press makes little sense in the medium to long term. I commence by exploring the case of Helen, a member of the Scottish chartered institute (ICAS).

6.2.3.1 Helen: A member of ICAS based at Beta business school

Helen became a member of ICAS in the 1970s, establishing close links with the Scottish professional body. She commences by arguing she is against the merging of the accounting bodies on the grounds that it would dilute the 'voice' of the Scottish chartered institute (ICAS):

"I wouldn't want to lose that feeling of having a voice. If we did merge then some of the individuality would be lost. Besides the outside world seems to want to listen and the outside world takes notice of what is said. You'd lose the details, a bit of a blur. When you're trying to get agreement in a large body, you end up with consensus which pleases nobody. Smaller bodies can be more controversial, they can express stronger views and you can get agreement to express the stronger views. It's very hard in a very large body where there are so many interest groups. You just end up with a general bland comment which everybody can ascribe to."

Helen, in further discussing the dynamic of the profession, notes that any attempt to merge the accounting bodies would be problematic. The example of training and development is noted. In doing so Helen draws on the script referring to 'entry requirements' to each of the accounting bodies. So for example 'ICAS demand that trainees possess a first degree', whereas the 'ICEAW expect trainees to hold a first degree' whilst 'ACCA take on mature students and those without a first degree':

"There would be a whole host of issues which would need addressing. So for example recruitment and training; each body at the moment targets its own groups. Some expect you to have a degree and fresh out of universities, others do not. What you find is that the professional bodies have their areas of interest which are by in large unique to each body. I do not see the point in trying to bring these groups together, it would only lead to internal division."

Helen subsequently discusses the role of the big firms. Their role is perceived as important since they carry out audits authorised by the government. She

draws on the accounting script that only the 'chartered and certified accountants who work for the big firms can audit companies'. Helen believes that the multidisciplinary firms, who undertake audits, should be independent of other concerns, drawing on the script referring to the 'audit function being used to attract business and to sell a range of other services':

"The big accounting firms undertake a valuable role for accounting. They are charged through their members with auditing firms. Indeed whenever there is an inquiry intoa firms accounts authorised by government it is the big firms that they turn to. Accountants are and should be independent of other concerns. However these large multidisciplinary firms do by their very nature have competing interests some of the time. That is why it is so important that accountants adhere to their code of conduct. They need to be independent of business concerns and offer advice which is consistent with the code of conduct."

Helen is against the merging of the professional bodies on the grounds that this would dilute the 'voice' of the Scottish chartered institute (ICAS). Scripts specific to the accounting setting are applied to frame the issue. Helen also in discussing the accountancy issue, highlights the dominant role played by the multidisciplinary firms. Once more accounting scripts are used to frame their role in relation to the accounting issue.

6.2.3.2 Kate: Affiliations with the Big Firms based at Beta business school

The following case refers to that of Kate, based at Beta business school, who has close affiliations with the multidisciplinary or 'big' firms. Kate is a professor of accounting at Beta business school. Kate starts by stating that there is most certainly fragmentation of the profession and continues to give an example based on a recent experience of hers. As part of her job Kate was asked to put together a report on a prison and its accounting practices as undertaken by one of the multidisciplinary firms. She notes that one of the accounting bodies (CIPFA) was extremely supportive of the report whilst one of the multidisciplinary firms was highly critical. Kate appears to be unsure of the

significance of this, that is whether it may have been down to individual personality differences. In making sense of this Kate draws on the script referring to the traditional chartered accountant bodies (ICAS, ICAEW) commandeering a 'higher salary than other accountants':

"I think there is definitely a fragmentation. I'll go back to this prison thing again because this is in my head. The people who gave evidence at the Justice Committee long before we did were people from CIPFA which is the public accountant's body and they were extremely supportive of our research. Then the people who came after them were PWC which, of course, were upset about it. I was interested that CIPFA were supportive and it might just have been the individuals who had to give evidence to the committee, but it was kind of hard to know where they were coming from. I think these things are quite complex and I could say something now and it might be true in one situation but it's not true in another situation but the thing that's definitely true is that ICAEW and ICAS have been the two most prestigious bodies and that is reflected in the elevated salaries that they receive. I think ACCA are seen as struggling to climb the pole, as it were."

In further discussing the fragmentation of the profession, Kate raises the distinctions between the accounting bodies in terms of their respective training practices. In doing so Kate draws on the script that 'ACCA trains students the world over' but yet still expect their students to focus on UK accounting practices. This makes little sense to Kate and is used as one example to why the profession should merge so as to better represent international accounting practices as opposed to niche markets which are UK based:

"I don't know about the composition of ICAS and ICAEW but there are big race issues and linked to this class [Kate stresses the class aspect] issues as well. Lots of people from overseas and former colonies still do ACCA exams and they're typically very UK biased. 'Why should someone who lives in Jamaica be concerned about the tax rules in Britain?' It's totally mad so there are kind of cultural and colonisation issues that could be thrown up with different professional bodies."

Towards the latter part of the discussion Kate highlights differences between the accounting bodies regarding the types of exams on offer through ICAS and the other accounting bodies. Kate highlights an 'underclass' as she describes it, with a distinction between the well qualified and paid chartered accountants and accounting technicians. She draws on the scripts that 'accountant firms take on trainees specifically for the technician route' and that in 'order to become a partner you are expected to be a CA'. These scripts are contributing to the de-skilling of parts of the profession according to Kate:

"There's a horizontal split now in the profession where the elite are becoming more elite and then there's a underclass now which is part of a kind of de-skilling that's going on and that's being backed up by the professional bodies like ICAS actually offering two exams... There is actually a lot less recruitment now in terms of CA's and what some accounting firms have started to do, and the profession are backing them up in this, is that they take on fewer students to train to be a CA and they top up, as it were, if they take on a student to do an accounting technician's exam. So as I say from ICAS now you can do two different qualifications with them. You can do a CA or you can do an accounting technicians course. The CA route is considered to be the partner track. They definitely won't have the same career paths but they also won't have such interesting work. These will be the kind of people who do all the ticking and checking, very routinised, mundane work."

Kate when discussing the fragmentation of the profession draws on a number of scripts specific to the accounting profession. She commences by discussing difference between the accounting bodies, moving then on to discuss the training of accountants within the multidisciplinary firms drawing on accounting scripts to illustrate this.

6.2.3.3 Jean: A member of ACCA based at Alpha business school

The following case is that of Jean, a member of ACCA based at Alpha business school. Jean qualified as a member of the ACCA, taking a part time route. She

commences by noting that there is no immediate reason for why the accounting bodies should not merge but that in most likelihood this will not happen because of issues of power; each professional body protecting their and their members' interests:

"I see no reason for all these professional bodies but I think you're working with such powerful cohorts, it's almost as if the organisation has its own and needs a lot of its own and they feel they would be diluting their individual title if they sort of merged in any way. There have been some talks between the various players to do with merging but with little success... I think CIPFA and CIMA have talked about merging but I don't think it's got anywhere and ACCA will see itself as being swallowed up if it was taken over by the established Chartered bodies.

When making sense of why the accounting bodies continue to stumble over the issue of merging, Jean draws from her own experiences with ACCA. In doing so Jean draws on the script that 'ACCA recruit from all types of backgrounds (non degree, mature students)'. This appears to hold particular resonance for Jean herself trained on a part time basis with ACCA:

"Also ACCA allows people who come up from a traditional academic background a way into the profession. If I had come in as a mature student or I just could not continue with my education after 16, had to take a break, they would just not have allowed me a way in and so you need, if they are all going to merge into one, you still need the route in for the non-traditional student because not everybody can come up the other way."

It is clear that Jean sees no reason for the continued fragmentation of the profession other than issues of power, with each of the accounting bodies protecting their members interests. She draws on the accounting script specific to ACCA to frame the issue, showing concern that if the bodies do merge then their needs to be a viable route for potential accountants from non traditional backgrounds.

6.2.3.4 Keith: A member of ICEAW based at Alpha business school

The following case is that of Keith, a member of the ICAEW, based also at Alpha business school. Keith begins by stating that there have been attempts for the accounting bodies to merge but these have so far failed and will continue to fail until government legislates for change:

"There have been attempts for them to merge in the past. The sticking point has always been that there is a certain proportion of the membership that have to vote in favour before the mergers go ahead and they've always voted against....It's not going to happen, unless government legislates for it, which isn't likely, but there is no reason why it shouldn't happen."

When questioned why it will take coercive measures before the professional bodies merge, Keith highlights 'self interest' as the sticking point. He draws on scripts relating to 'training practices' that are specific to the accounting bodies. So for example 'ACCA recruit from all types of backgrounds (non degree, mature students)' whilst the ICEAW and ICAS expect students to sit their exams within the UK:

"It comes down to self interest. They don't see it in their self interest and that's all they consider.....they think they're better than anyone else. <u>They [the established accounting bodies] don't want to be members with ACCA for example because they are international. You can do ACCA in any country in the world</u>, whereas of course the Institute of Chartered Accountants is far more regulated. <u>You can take these exams in England and Wales with an authorised firm of accountants, with a training contract</u>. So they don't want to mix with the hoi polloi, they want to be chartered accountants and just chartered accountants, and only have chartered accountants as members of their body."

Keith reaffirms his rationale for the professional bodies not merging –that of self-interest. To Keith this is a "front" which needs to be recognised by the profession in order to move forward towards a more unified profession. The

sticking point of training, once again emerges, with Keith drawing from accountancy scripts that refer to training, identified in chapter 5:

"It comes down to maintaining self interest. All the bodies are actively maintaining this front of being somehow unique. At the end of the day they are all dealing with accounting issues. The sooner we have one single accounting body the better. How we achieve this is more difficult. I think increasing international pressures will result in the UK accounting profession recognising that it needs to have a common voice. They will have to decide on a common training package which is acceptable to all of the bodies."

Keith is sceptical about the accounting bodies merging on the basis of 'self interest'. He draws on scripts specific to the accounting profession and particular training practices to explain why this is the case. Nonetheless the increasing pressure brought about by the internationalisation of accounting standards will inevitably result in the accounting bodies merging according to Keith.

6.2.4 Summary

This section has been directed towards illustrating that scripts specific to the accounting profession only are applied to the framing of the accounting issue. Although respondents have affiliations with academia they draw solely on accounting scripts when framing the accounting issue. Helen, a member of ICAS, is against the merging of the accounting bodies on the basis that it will dilute the voice of ICAS. This is as opposed to Kate, who is more concerned with the working practices of the accounting bodies and multidisciplinary firms. Both Jean and Keith point to issues to power and self interest as the driver to explain the continued division between the accounting bodies. The following section is directed towards illustrating that academic scripts, whether general or local, are used to frame the university specific issues.

6.2.5 University Specific Issues

An issue specific to Alpha and to Beta was selected to explore issue framing with respondents at each of these business schools. At Alpha business school

the 'impending merger' with another local new university was used as the basis for discussions with respondents at Alpha business school. In contrast the 'saving of 5 million pounds' across the university was applied to respondents at Beta business school. I commence by exploring cases at Alpha business school.

6.2.5.1 Alpha Business School; 'The Impending Merger'

The impending merger between Alpha business school and another local university was chosen as the issue for discussions with Alpha respondents. The issue was chosen because it is a significant issue facing the business school, which has been widely discussed both formally and informally. The merger has the potential to result in redundancies and was anticipated to be recognised by all respondents as significant, with ramifications for themselves and their own departments. It becomes clear through the analysis of data that local academic scripts are applied when framing the issue.

6.2.5.1.1 Jackie, based within the law department

I commence by exploring the case of Jackie, a senior lecturer within the law department. Jackie is clearly uncertain about her future and what her new role may entail and appears resentful of not being informed of what is happening. She draws on the script referring to 'Management expect their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question':

"I think it has been handled very badly. For example, my role, well there is going to be no faculties. So what's happening to my role? No-one deems you worthy of discussion. ...Management simply expect us to wait and see what happens and when they are ready they will tell us what is going to happen. We're even being moved into the economics group. The whys and wherefores of that we have no idea."

Jackie's role as a recruiter for international students figures prominently. It would appear that the proximity of attending an international fair has sensitised Jackie in terms of her use of language. Jackie notes that the university sector as

a whole is shrinking, seeing the merger as one way of ensuring a 'bigger identity' within UK Higher Education:

"I think it is probably a positive thing for both universities actually, if the truth be told. I think it will give us a bigger identity in the market place.....If we are bigger, we have got one less competitor but also we are actually making ourselves more of a mark, as it were, so I think from that point of view it is a good thing."

Question: "Identity, that sounds like a marketing term to me. Where is that coming from?"

"Yes it is really, isn't it. I'm indoctrinated. These indoctrinations slip out, don't they, before you know it. But I guess, having just come back from a fair, that's probably why I'm still thinking in that mode."

In further discussing the implications of the forthcoming merger there is recognition on Jackie's behalf that she has little control over the event. It is also clear that Jackie enjoys working within the business school. She applies the local academic script referring to 'teaching and admin take priority over research' with the teaching element being important to Jackie. She perceives herself as a teacher first and foremost, helping to develop students:

"It's going to be an interesting time. For myself personally I will wait and see what happens. I have to say I enjoy working here, interacting with students and seeing them develop."

When further questioned on this Jackie reaffirms her commitment to students:

"The student interaction is very important, seeing them develop and finally graduate is quite satisfying. That is the main reason I am here, to teach and to see students learn in front of your eyes."

When framing the local academic issue, Jackie draws exclusively from local academic scripts. At no time does she draw on general academic scripts to

frame the issue. So for example many of the general academic scripts are informed by a research orientation. Career progression is linked with the ability to publish within the academic setting. This at no time is discussed by Jackie as one strategy for coping with the impending merger. It is clear that across all respondents interviewed at Alpha business school, local academic scripts play a pivotal role in the framing of the issue. This is evident in the next example, that of Jean, an academic field leader within the accounting department.

6.2.5.1.2 Jean, based within the accounting department

Jean, like Jackie, is uncertain about the future of the business school and what role she will play. She initially draws on the local academic script referring to 'management expecting their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question'. This leads to a sense of apathy by Jean towards the impending merger:

"I have absolutely no ideas what it is going to mean for me as an individual because the amount of information coming through is very scant so I can do one of two things, I can worry that I won't have a job, I certainly won't be a subject field leader, or I can just forget about it and almost put my head in the sand and just say well I'll wait and see and that course of action.....It is a top heavy management system here so that things like that they'd take a sledgehammer to crack a nut sometimes. A few years ago when there was going to be a strike about something we got this really aggressive letter reminding us about contractual obligations, almost threatening us. Completely over the top. They [management] just don't communicate. I didn't even know that they were not going to have faculties, that they were going to have departments until we had a staff development day in January, and because everybody was together there was a lot of nattering going on and I'm hearing this stuff just by hearsay really....Information clearly comes from above but little has been given away by management.... I figure you could drive yourself mad thinking what it meant for you so I've just decided I won't worry about it and I'll just wait and see what it turns out to be in the end."

Jean, towards the latter part of the discussion notes that she has an allegiance to the business school, herself studying there. The local academic script of 'teaching and admin take priority over research' is applied to frame the issue. She recognises the importance of research within the wider academic community that is demonstrated by her currently undertaking a PhD in an accounting related topic. Nonetheless teaching takes precedence which is why Jean continues to work at Alpha business school:

"I'm committed to the business school, I undertook my degree here. The teaching here is something that I take pride in. The students respond positively to the teaching within the accounting department and it is that which I myself am here to do."

Like Jackie, local academic scripts are applied to make sense of the impending merger at Alpha business school, with both of these respondents unsure as a consequence of the 'management' orientated script of what the future will hold. Jean recognises the importance of research within the wider academic community which is why she is studying towards her PhD. This aside teaching appears to be the main driver for why she continues to work for Alpha business school.

6.2.5.1.3 Keith, based in the accounting department

Keith is a senior member of faculty, taking on a different perspective on the merger from that of Jackie and Jean. He commences by noting that the initiating trigger is financially driven alongside political considerations. It is apparent that Keith perceives pressure to have been placed on the university from regulative demands from the funding agencies. Keith draws on the local academic script of 'management expecting their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question'. A somewhat different slant is apparent with Keith taking a strategic view to the application of the local academic script. The emphasis is not on operational issues concerning faculty or self but rather on the overall implementation of the merger:

"It's driven by cash considerations. And also political considerations. UNL has got cash flow problems, stemming firstly out of inability to collect student fees. And so they've got cash flow problems. And there have been problems of reducing student numbers. So the funding agency said 'we will try and encourage mergers by providing cash up front to those institutions that go forward'. So Michael thought, right, we've got cash flow problems, falling student numbers, the only way to survive is to go bigger and so put out feelers to a range of different universities in London and for some reason, came up with Guildhall and East London because it's envisaged that in the medium term we would also merge with East London as well. So I think the other driver with the merger is simply for him to be Chief Executive of a bigger organisation, it's as simple as that."

When questioned on how the merger will impact upon his role within the accountancy department, Keith notes that redundancies will be forthcoming. Unlike Jackie and Jean Keith is seemingly unconcerned. It is not clear whether this is as a consequence of his position as a member of management or idiosyncratic to Keith as a person:

"I suspect it will be based in Moorgate within a year or two years. So we have to move down to Moorgate. But there obviously, there could well be redundancies as well. Because there are, I don't know how many we've got, I think we have got 9 full-time accounting staff but they've got more than that and it's not possible that, for the number of students doing accountancy, that's too many so we will have to get rid of some."

Keith, as a senior member of faculty, holds a different perspective on the merger than that of Jackie or Jean. He perceives the merger to be going ahead on the grounds of financial and political grounds. The management related local academic script being the primary reason for this.

6.2.5.2 Summary

The above demonstrates that local university scripts play a significant role in the framing of the issue for respondents from Alpha business school. Jackie, Jean and Keith draw from scripts specific their business school. Having explored the university specific issue for Alpha, the following section is directed towards understanding what script sets impact on the university specific issue for Beta business school.

6.2.5.3 Beta Business School; 'the Saving of £5M across the University'

For Beta business school, the forthcoming requirement to save £5 million was used as the issue, applying the same criteria as for issue selection for Alpha business school. The cost saving is a significant issue for the business school with the prospect of redundancies and the possible closure of departments. It is an issue which has been widely discussed both formally and informally within the business school and as such was anticipated to be recognised by all respondents as an important issue with ramifications for themselves and their own department.

6.2.5.3.1 James, based in the law department

I commence by exploring the case James, a SL based in the law faculty. James applies the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' when initially discussing the issue. He notes that there appears to be no co-ordinated thinking about how the next RAE, which affects the status of universities, will impact on the business school given that redundancies will be on a voluntary basis:

"We may save £5 million but lots of departments may go down in RAE terms because they may be losing senior people. There seems to be no co-ordinated thinking about the next RAE and what impact redundancies now might have on that. Again, you obviously can't stop people leaving but surely there is a wider interest in keeping people who are going to make a strong contribution next time round, I think very little thought has actually been given to that."

When questioned on the importance of research to Beta business school, James draws on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game'. He is clearly concerned that by offering voluntary redundancy there is likely to be a loss of senior staff, and with this, skills and knowledge which contributes towards research output:

"The loss of some senior staff is likely to impact of the quality of training that new recruits receive. There is a lot experience tied up with these more experienced staff. For example how to go about researching a topic and subsequently successfully writing this up intoan article which is accepted by a journal."

The wider implications of tightening resources within academia are subsequently raised by James with recognition that he may be required to take a more active role in generating income for the department. James once more raises the general academic script referring to the 'importance of research':

"It's going to mean that a lot of our time is going to have to be devoted to marketing and developing money-making schemes. Not necessarily a bad thing as long as you're generating enough money to make sure that you have enough time to do that and do research.....but that may not always be the case."

When following up upon the previous statement James again highlights the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game', noting that there is a need to maintain the research excellence which has been achieved of late. This is problematic according to James given the need for voluntary redundancies:

"I think the university has to be aware of the general tightening of resources which all universities are facing. There is a problem to how to ensure that we maintain our excellence in researching. How we do this in the face of redundancies and through this the loss of valuable staff is something that still needs to be worked out."

In contrast to understanding at Alpha business school, James draws on general academic scripts to frame the issue. There is a clear emphasis on research which is not apparent at Alpha business school. Research is seen as the most important issue facing James.

6.2.5.3.2 Andrew, based in the law department

The following case refers to that of Andrew, a professor of law. Andrew was recently promoted internally within the law department. He initially discusses the issue in terms of 'relative safety' as somebody appointed to professorial ranking within the past two years. He notes that the emerging transition has been handled reasonably well. The inference being there has been no compulsory redundancies, in keeping with the collegiate culture of academia:

"Well as someone who sees himself as being pretty safe, I'm in a relatively comfortable position and I'm in a comfortably situated department as well because the law school generates its own income in lots of ways and it's a safety net. As I am a kind of member of the university community, I think it's been handled reasonably well. I think the strategy of trying to identify and offering voluntary redundancy to everybody, looking to see who takes it up and then hoping that the people who take them up are the people you want to get out, is the only way of approaching it and I hope that the university doesn't put a lot of pressure on them to take redundancy packages that they don't want to take. I suspect that will happen and I feel sorry for individuals who are in that position but if I was the boss, that's probably the line I would take as well."

When questioned on how the issue might likely impact on the business school, Andrew draws on the impact to research and in particular the general academic script that 'research is the name of the game'. He notes that unlike other parts of the business school, the law department has managed to maintain its five ranking under the RAE scheme:

"Well the business school has a significant deficit in that they're only getting a four in the RAE in Business Management. The law school got a five. I don't really know enough about what's going on. I know about restructuring that's

going on in other departments - in engineering and sociology and I've got friends who work in other departments, but they have to make difficult decisions. Environmental planning also, they had to make difficult decisions. I don't envy the people in those departments but they've known about these things for a long, long time. I think Planning have known for about ten years. Civil engineering has seen their numbers decline but engineers across the UK have been declining for a long time, for ten years, maybe even longer than that. The sociology section has always known of its weakness in terms of RAE terms and so on...It's just 'close your eyes and it will all go away'."

Towards the latter part of the discussion of the issue, Andrew highlights the tightening of resources faced within Higher Education. The restructuring process, brought about the requirement to save money must according to Andrew lead to improved performance. He again draws on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' as an important element of this strategy:

"The government has decided what's going to happen, there are going to be more students in higher education and we need lots of resources, so what do you do? You're in a competitive market and you've got to preserve your institution, you've got to try and ensure the University comes out with whatever situation there is in as strong a position as possible. That's your responsibility and the bottom line is that the university has to come out of this in a stronger position otherwise you're not going to do your job properly so the university needs to be restructured, needs to change. Thirty years ago it had a certain structure and that structure hasn't changed very much but the world has changed hugely. We have to ensure that we build upon our research record."

The above shows, as is the case with James, the general academic scripts are applied by Andrew to frame the issue. In particular the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' figures prominently for academic staff based at Beta business school. This is in contrast to faculty based at Alpha business school where local academic scripts take precedence.

6.2.5.3.3 Helen, based in the accountancy department

The following case refers to that of Helen, a professor of law based in the law department. Helen is initially sceptical about the grounds on which the case for saving £5 million is based, believing it to be a ploy by the VCs to secure future jobs. According to Helen the VCs are playing a game orchestrated by the government:

"If you read the Times Higher every week, another university's saving £5m. Salford was saving 6, Hariot Watt was 5, this one's 5, it's a kind of funny that Vice Chancellors can download and it says our university and certain other universities are to save £5m in the next year or two. So we're doing this by restructuring the organisation and 120/130 staff are to go. Would you like to volunteer. And that now is going all round the world I am convinced because they're all £5m, they're all 120 people."

Question: ·What are your thoughts on this then?

"I think it's a ploy for the Vice Chancellor's career enhancement! Because you have, because most Vice Chancellors now are being influenced by government. They've got time to develop two Vice Chancellorships before they retire. They are in their early 50's, you've got a 5 year appointment so then you can get 2 jobs before you retire. So the aim is to show a turn around in the first one and then apply for the next one. You can't do a turn around in the university unless you have rid of people because it would take too long for them to do that. So it's kind of £5m and 120. And it's a 5 year horizon and because in the past you appointed a Vice Chancellor five years before he retires it doesn't matter what they do. But now they've got time for 2, they've got time for another career move. But they're all £5m and all 120 staff."

The sceptical view once more appears when Helen discusses voluntary redundancy. She perceives the issue in terms of a 'reshaping exercise', drawing on the general academic script that 'research is the name of the game':

"Well I think this university intends to make it voluntary if they want you to go. It doesn't sound like a true redundancy situation. True redundancy is that you

declare redundancy and anybody who wants to can volunteer to go but that happens, in that case the most economically mobile person goes first and the least mobile stays. And that's not what the principal will want and therefore they try to kind of engineer it with little conversations and private meetings to encouraging those who are at the fringe in economic terms and that can be quite difficult for the powers that be, because it isn't true redundancy. True redundancy is, it's a very, there are very strict regulations and it's a very blunt instrument. What they're actually wanting is reshaping. And that applies to all universities. Here they need to ensure the right people stay. That comes down to experienced facility with the right research portfolios."

Helen is clearly sceptical about the rationale for the need to save £5 million pounds. However, what is clear is that Helen, acknowledges and draws on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' within academia.

6.2.5.3.4 Kate, based in the accountancy department

The following case refers to that of Kate, a professor of accounting. Kate shares the potential consequences of voluntary redundancy, like James. In so doing, Kate notes that 'good' members of faculty may be lost through offering voluntary redundancy. 'Good' in this sense refers to research orientated research according to Kate. She draws on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game':

"I think for all universities, funding is a big issue and I think the challenge for Alpha business school will be …when it comes to people taking early retirement. The problem is if you just open it to everybody, then people who get jobs elsewhere, especially if it's very generous terms, they will take it and then they will just get a job somewhere else…that result in some good staff who research."

When questioned upon this, Kate gives the example of a member of staff who recently accepted voluntary redundancy. Kate perceives this policy as being counterproductive in this particular case:

"Even in this department, we've got a Professor who was at Lancaster [another business school], who now works here half time because there are rules about how much you can work if you get another university job. He took early retirement, he took a big lump sum and then came to work here half time and even half time, he'd have a pretty good salary being a Professor and probably at Lancaster [another business school], he wouldn't have been the kind of person that they would have not wanted to lose. The challenge for Alpha business school is to make a very sensible, workable strategic plan and decide on that basis what should happen."

When following up upon this reply it was asked what kind of strategy Kate might suggest. Kate replies by stating 'other markets, including targeting mature students, wider access and more short courses'. There is a recognition that the business school is in a competitive market place. Over and above this the issue of research appears which does not on this occasion appear to sit easily with her previous comments. In particular Kate draws on the script of 'research is the name of the game' with a need to ensure research excellence within the business school. The balancing of the new market economics alongside the traditional research orientation within academia is clearly an issue for Kate:

"I know the government wants to get 50% of people into higher education and in Scotland we are coming up to that, I think more people here go to university than in England, in which case then we would have to look for other kinds of resources, get in more mature students, wider access, and more short courses. I think you'd have to be very innovative. We also need to clearly keep our eye on the ball in terms of ensuring we maintain our research contribution."

6.2.5.4 Summary

Beta business school respondents discussed the issue of saving £5 million pounds in somewhat different way. So for example Helen is highly sceptical about the rationale for the initiative. Others, most notably James, is concerned about the impact of voluntary redundancy on the business school. However

consistent to all business school respondents is the concern of how the issue might impact on research and consequently that research standing of the school. The general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' is applied by respondents to frame the issue which is consistent with local academic scripts to Beta business school.

6.2.6 Academic Issue "Tension between Research & Teaching"

The current section explores the 'general' academic issue that cuts across institutions. The issue chosen is the 'tension between research and teaching'. Through the following analysis it becomes apparent both general academic and local academic scripts are applied to frame the issue. I start with the case of James, a senior lecturer based at Beta business school.

6.2.6.1 James

James is a senior lecturer based in the law faculty at Bata business school. He commences by noting that research and teaching are not necessarily at odds with one another. His teaching is informed by the research he undertakes in many circumstances. This is however not always the case, particularly when undertaking 'service' teaching for other faculties. James draws on the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game':

"It's not always a tension. In the particular areas I research in I find my teaching is informed by my research material and I would hate not to be researching because I wouldn't be improving my classes so that's one point I would make. There is a tension, though, inevitably because you are required to teach subjects that may not always inform your research. I mentioned earlier in the interview about the service teaching we do. A lot of service teaching, you may be teaching a lot of very general, legal subjects and that kind of thing is taking up time which might be more devoted to research, contributing to the school and your community."

James notes that the potential tension is exacerbated locally within the business school by a lack of resources. He draws on the general academic script again of 'research being the name of the game' to frame the issue. It appears that to James research is a key activity:

"I think the issue, again, gets back to resources with financial and staffing. If you have an adequate staff there shouldn't be a problem because generally people should be teaching in the areas in which they research and that's a fruitful relationship. It's where you don't have sufficient staff resources that teaching begins to become a problem, particularly in departments like ours where we do have hundreds of extra students doing BAs and so on and if we have more resources, even in terms of more admin staff to free up academic staff time, it would be easier to cope with that tension. I would be able to concentrate on research. That would be my response but in general I don't see think you should describe it as a tension. There can be a tension but it's often complimentary and it's a very fruitful relationship. I find that in my core areas of teaching."

It is clear that to James 'research is the name of the game'. He draws only on general academic research orientated scripts to frame the issue. It is also evident that Beta business school is faced by resourcing issues that impedes James ability to focus on research to the extent that he would like.

6.2.6.2 Andrew

The following case explored refers to that of Andrew, a professor within the law department based at Beta business school. Andrew, commences by drawing on the local academic script (Beta business school) of 'faculty being expected to research, carry out admin and teach' noting that this places considerable pressure on particularly new faculty to research for which he perceive to ' be the name of the game (script):

"I've got a great deal of sympathy from my younger colleagues who are faced with huge teaching loads, which is mostly standing up in front of the class and you've got a class full of students and a potential problem, administrative work

generated by the extra numbers is huge - all of these things are multiplied and it's very difficult to try and get to know any of the students properly it is virtually impossible. At the same time they expect you to pick up research, so it's a tough, tough job that they have."

Andrew moves on to focus on promotion structures at Beta business school and HE in general. The QAA and RAE have led according to Andrew to increased pressure on new faculty. There appears now to be more formal checks and balances faced by new faculty. When question on this, Andrew draws on the general academic script of 'internal promotions being hit and miss'. He argues that you can't keep the old system (promoting strategy) whilst introducing a new way of organising (measuring outputs of faculty):

"I think universities need to develop management systems much more effectively. A prison only works if there are prisoners stay in their cell, and comply. The staff can't control the prisoners without the prisoners' consent and the university can't work without support and collegiality, you're going to be in deep trouble. That may already be happening in certain institutions, in certain parts of the country, I don't know, so I think we need better management structures to help people and to have a much clearer promotions structure, we need a clear career development structure and if you're going to start measuring what people do, then you have to go on to see if you can have a research assessment exercise teaching quality exercise while measuring people and then a promotion strategy."

Question: You mentioned earlier that promotion was a dicey affair. Can you expand on that?

"It's just that it's competitive and it depends on resources so that you can go for promotion to Senior Lecturer and simply because twenty seven other people are applying for that job, you don't get promoted. The next year you go up there are fifteen or twelve. It shouldn't be like that, it shouldn't be dependent on that. The university should plan its resources in such a way that people can plan their own career and think if they achieve this goal, they can expect to get this. I

don't think you can introduce the new way on the one hand and keep the old way of working on the other."

For Andrew, scripts specific to the academia dominate the framing of the issue. The general academic script of 'research is the name of the game' figures prominently. The promotion structure for new faculty within the business school and academia at large need to be revised so as to better reflect the focus on outputs for new faculty according to Andrew.

6.2.6.3 Helen

The following case is that of Helen, a professor of accounting based at Beta business school. Helen commences by noting that there is a tension between research and teaching. Like Andrew, Helen draws attention to new faculty and the increasing pressures they face. The local academic script (Beta business school) referring to 'the expectation that new faculty must demonstrate a potential to publish' is applied to explain the pressures facing new faculty-in this case PhD students:

"Well it's tension for individual staff because of the time you've got to devote to both. It's tremendous pressure as I said before and I'm supervising PhD students now, just started lecturing, just starting writing a paper and writing the papers with them and they're clearly under tremendous pressure to get things out. You can see by the speed that papers have come back in our e-mail. They've got to be able to demonstrate they've got papers off to journals with a reasonable chance of success and they've got somebody somewhere asking them questions the whole time."

When further discussing the issue, Helen describes her and her colleagues experiences of teaching at Beta business school. She perceives the job of teaching as largely a thankless task, with teaching large first year classes as taken as 'read'. She applies the general academic script referring to 'nobody checks up on you as a lecturer unless there are numerous complaints' as an example of the importance placed on teaching. There is little additional credit for being an exceptional teacher. Instead the inference within the latter part of the quotation is that 'research is the name of the game' (general academic script):

"I think, the fact that no-one thanks you for teaching a big first year class says a lot. That's taken as read. Nobody checks up on your lectures. Maybe if we taught them badly we'd get in a row and we'd get hauled in and told off for teaching them badly but as long as they actually turn up and you give them an exam at the end and you mark it, that's just normal work. It is also very difficult for staff to get credit for good teaching because most things are seen as being within normal duties and as you think you've done a bit more you're told that's normal duties. So again, going back to being Dean, it was quite hard to put cases forward and explain to staff why cases couldn't go forward or wouldn't succeed. Because what they were doing would be seen as no more than normal duties as defined at the present time. And you say well I've done something new this year, done more, you know, that's normal duties, and still part of your teaching. What have you done beyond that? How can you do more in teaching? Very, very difficult. What management are really interested in is your research portfolio-that is what really matters."

Helen, as an established member of faculty, has observed an increase in pressure on new faculty. General academic scripts are applied to make sense of this. As a member of the 'old guard' she is relatively cocooned from these pressures faced by new faculty.

6.2.6.4 Kate

The following case is that of Kate, a professor of accounting based at Beta business school. Kate commences by noting that the only tension is that of 'time'. She draws on the script of 'research being the name of the game' when arguing that it would be 'nice to have fewer classes' which would enable Kate to spend more time on research. This aside, Kate sees research and teaching as being complimentary

"I think the only tension where I'm concerned is time. You know it would be nice to have fewer classes, that would definitely help my research but in terms of me as an individual, what goes on in my head, actually doing research and teaching, they're very, very complimentary and, of course. I'm always talking

about my latest research. That's probably a bad thing, boring everyone to death because I'm really intrigued by what I'm doing at the moment but I think if you get staff in front of students to talk about their research and they're enthusiastic about it and they can relate it to the kind of topics that they're teaching it's better than the text books which may be dry and mundane. And, as I say, the other thing is students, when they're doing their dissertations, you can learn an awful lot if you know what the students are doing as well, because you can never read everything and know everything, whatever. So teaching bright, challenging students who are going to ask questions and push you and discuss with you and then do their own research, is useful knowledge."

When further discussing the issue, Kate draws the distinction between 'new' and 'old' universities. She does not believe individuals in new universities should be forced to research, the inference being that within older universities you must research as a member of faculty whilst at new university teaching takes priority:

"I think that new universities shouldn't try and force people to research, well at least without giving them time to do courses or learn things. I think it's really hard just to say to someone, 'OK, you've got to go and do research because that's never going to work'. I think, actually, in terms of people trying to find out what's going on and looking at the latest journals everyone should be doing that for their students because that enriches what you to teach."

Kate describes the tension as being concerned with time. She perceives teaching and research as being complimentary; although it is evident that research is an important activity for Kate. General academic scripts are applied to make sense of this, drawing on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game'. Kate also towards the latter part of the discussion draws attention to the distinction between new and old universities, perceiving there to be a difference in the emphasis placed on research and teaching.

6.2.6.5 Jackie

The next case refers to that of Jackie, a senior lecture within the law department at alpha business school. Unlike James and Andrew, Jackie is at and early stage of her research career. She would clearly like to research but local constraints and local academic scripts are impeding this. She commences by noting that 'admin eats' into her time as opposed to research and teaching. The emphasis within the first passage is on admin and teaching, drawing on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research'. This is re-affirmed towards the latter part of the quotation. Jackie clearly recognises the importance of research, drawing on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game', but appears constrained by local commitments embodied in the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research:

It's admin that causes me the most, because the international office, I refer to it as the black hole, you know, I could just keep on and it just eats up all my time. I'm only on the emergent research level anyway but I just find it just incredibly difficult, just don't have time to do anything. I have to be really disciplined because as I say the admin just eats into it all the time. It's eaten into my teaching, that's why I don't have as much teaching as I used to because it has just eaten into it essentially. I think probably if you want to do research you can't do admin, you can't have a big admin job. I think the tension is more between the admin and the research because that's what eats up all your spare time. If you are teaching, you can just say that's it, off I go, go and do my research. But if you've got admin it just goes on and on and on and the job is university-wide. You just can't fit in the research. Or if you did it would be at the expense of your sanity, at the expense of your spare time. You've still got to carry out the same amount of, or you have so many hours teaching, or perhaps that's not totally correct but it's never enough, in order to do the research.

When questioned on whether the mix between research and teaching is the same at other universities, Jackie highlights the distinction between 'new' and 'old' universities. She perceives old universities to be more concerned with research

output than is the case at Alpha business school. That is 'research is the name of the game' within academia:

"I think older universities have got very easy lives compared to what we have. Few hours of teaching and the rest is research. Although you could argue that the pressure for them to produce research is actually awful as well. You know, they are having an awful time, so they say, because they've got this pressure to produce x-many papers per year and it actually is very difficult to work like that. Research is more of a creative thing, if you want to look at it like that, and you have got to be able to carry out the work and go off and think, and all that kind of stuff and to have the pressure you've got to produce a paper. You might actually not, it produces mediocre work as opposed to something that's really been left, and be done totally properly.

Jackie draws exclusively on the local academic script of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' to frame the issue, although she recognises the importance of research (general academic script) which she associates with 'older' universities. She appears constrained by the local academic script that is used as a justification as to why she has not developed a research portfolio.

6.2.6.6 Barry

The following case refers to that of Barry, a senior lecturer within the law department based at Alpha business school. Barry, when initially discussing the issue, highlights a change in the recruitment policy of Alpha business school. He draws on the general academic script of 'universities buy in research to bolster their academic credibility', noting that over the past five years research active faculty have been bought in. This is a significant shift according to Barry, with previous emphasis being on teaching. He recognises that in order to succeed within academia 'research is the name of the game':

"The people who are doing research now have only come in within the last five years. There wasn't any existing tension when I came in and teaching was more or less the norm. Research activity came in when they started to grade the

universities and they grade them if they have a certain amount of research capability or research publications and then they were given a particular type of grading. I think that encouraged the powers that be to employ more people of professorial rank and more people with PhDs and things of that nature. So in that sense the research part has had an impact in terms of employment."

Although Barry recognises the general academic script referring to the 'importance of research' within the wider academic community he largely dismisses the contribution of research unless it improves teaching. The traditional teaching orientation of Alpha business school is clearly evident, even though the new policy has been introduced of recruiting research orientated individuals:

"In terms of research and teaching, really, it has not, had no impact at all in terms of what I do. It is useful really since I supervise dissertations, to have an insight, in terms of productions like this, that's because it's functional in terms of what I do. So for my mind really the research is interesting only as far as it is useful. My thing really is utilitarian yardstick really."

Research, to the extent that is has any worth according to Barry, should be directed inwards on the institution to improve the student experience. Again, the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' is applied. Barry emphasises the teaching element:

"Now there are many areas I suspect which I would like to have seen researched really. In terms of the institution itself, some inward research. And that is why I don't see forthcoming, there's nothing that tells me anything more about anything else. I don't get any information why we have such a high level of drop out after the first year and what we ought to do really to retain our students. Because it must be expensive both for the university and the country, the high rate, we must be destroying a lot of expectations. You let people come in and after one or two semesters, you say hey you've got to go. I would have liked to see but I'm not a head of department, some internal research which impacts upon the problems that I see here.

Barry recognises the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' but draws on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin take priority over research' to frame the issue. As part of the 'old guard', teaching is the primary reason for working at Alpha business school. The local academic script appears to play a role in how Barry interprets the role of research.

6.2.6.7 Jean

The following case refers to that of Jean, an academic field leader of accounting, based at Alpha business school. According to Jean the tension between research and teaching is a result of financial pressures. She draws on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' to frame the issue:

"Oh, yes, there's tension all the time but here I think that the financial pressures on institutions like this means that their emphasis is on teaching but they want you to squeeze in as much research as you can but they can't fund it as much other institutions can and when you're trying to confine your research, it's a huge investment of time at the start and so I think there isn't enough money is this institution to give people really time to work through research but in fairness to them, I don't think that it's something that they've decided to do, there just isn't the money to go around."

When questioned on whether research might take on a more dominant role post the merger, jean is uncertain. She discusses the restructuring of her department, applying the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'management expecting their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question', suggesting that this may change post merger:

"I've absolutely no idea. Maybe it will and maybe it won't. I don't know enough about Polyton to know. I understand that that is why they want departments not faculties because they think you can't have this hierarchy with faculty, you have to have a flatter management structure and therefore it's not as

easy for the top to influence the bottom. So maybe it will have a positive impact but really I have absolutely no idea."

Only local academic scripts (Alpha business school) are applied by Jean to frame the issue. Jean commences by applying the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' to the framing of the issue. When questioned on whether research may take on a more dominant role after the merger, Jean applies the local academic script referring to 'management expecting their initiative to be implemented by faculty without question', noting that there may be some positive consequences to the impending merger.

6.2.6.8 Keith

The following case refers to that of Keith, based in the accounting department of Alpha business school. He commences by noting that there is a enormous tension between research and teaching. Keith gives an example to demonstrate this and in doing draws on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin take priority over research'. He goes a stage further by contending that research should contribute only to teaching excellence and be measurable:

"It's an enormous tension. A year ago we had a staff development conference. Two day staff development conference and I produced a video of him [the VC] talking about the mission statement of the university and he said it's a teaching university, which is true because over 95% of the revenue at universities is generated from teaching and from grants, from overseas fees, teaching fees. I personally don't see any role for research within the university other than it supports teaching. So if I wasn't responsible for, let's say the research budget, I would weed out any teaching that didn't have the right relevance, sorry, I would weed out any research funding that didn't have the right relevance to teaching. And I would look for evidence of where that research did support teaching."

When questioned on the research carried out at Alpha business school, Keith perceives the majority of research conducted by Alpha business school faculty not to contribute to improvements in teaching. He perceives research orientated people as being interested in bolstering their CVs and in doing so recognises the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game'. Keith notes that the research conducted by business school faculty has not received excellent ratings within the RAE yet faculty still play the game with their colleagues in the wider academic community. For Keith, as a PL who is openly teaching orientated, research that does not contribute to teaching should not be undertaken. He implicitly is drawing from the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' to frame the issue:

"I don't do research and I don't go into people's classrooms, but I suspect a vast percentage of the research doesn't inform teaching. Most of it is people improving their CV, not improving the quality of teaching, improving the quality of the student experience. The actual funded research that the university gets, let's say from companies or from government bodies is small. You know, the research assessment exercise, and there's no funding attached to that, when you're getting 3s and 2s you know, the only funding you get is 4s and 5s and you know, the feedback from the two business units was pretty poor and the research I suspect is also. I mean I think a much better term for research is scholarly activity which directly supports its teaching."

Keith draws on local academic scripts (Alpha business school) to frame the issue. He is openly against research that does not directly contribute towards improving teaching excellence. This is in stark contrast to respondents interviewed at Beta business school where research is perceived to be important in its own right and indirectly contributing to teaching.

6.2.7 Summary

This section has explored how respondents frame the general issue of the 'tension between research and teaching'. Both local and general academic

scripts are applied to frame the issue. There is a clear difference in perspective between Alpha and Beta respondents; Alpha respondents emphasise teaching although recognising the importance of research within the wider community of academia. This is in contrast to Beta respondents who emphasise the importance of research both locally within the business school and more widely within the academic community.

More generally, section 6.2 has explored the role of the institutional context enacted through scripts in the framing of strategic issues, showing that these scripts play a pivotal role. This is an important finding because neither the problem formulation nor the strategic issue diagnosis literatures have adequately explored the role of institutional processes on the individual framing of strategic issues. Having demonstrated that scripts are applied to frame strategic issues, the following section demonstrates that respondents draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously. Scripts specific to the institution are applied to frame strategic issues relevant to that institution only.

6.3 Actors draw from Multiple Institutions

As I note in chapter 2, there has been a distinct lack of research which focuses not just on how institutions affect issue interpretation, but also on multiple institutions and their role in influencing strategies, structure and behaviour. In this section, I therefore turn my attention to this. Having shown in section 6.2 that institutional principles, encoded as scripts, are applied by respondents to frame strategic issues, I now show that respondents draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously when framing strategic issues. I draw on the data presented above in section 6.2 to do this.

The current section is divided into two further sections. Section 6.3.1 explores respondent responses to the professional issue and subsequently the local university issue to demonstrate that respondents frame strategic issues by drawing on multiple institutions but not simultaneously. Section 6.3.2 builds upon this finding by exploring respondent responses to the issue that cuts across the institutions (the tension between research and teaching). I show that when

respondents are faced by strategic issues that span institutions they either draw predominantly on higher level academic scripts or local academic scripts. Through the analysis of the data it becomes apparent that when general and local academic scripts align, respondents draw predominantly on general academic scripts. Where they do not align respondents draw predominantly on local academic scripts.

6.3.1 Professional and Local University Issues

I commence by examining the framing of the legal issue by James, a non practicing solicitor, based at Beta business school. James applies scripts specific to law when framing the legal issue (see section 6.2.1) and general academic scripts when framing the local issue specific to Beta business -the saving of £5 million pounds across the university (see section 6.2.5.3). He discusses the law issue of inequality in term of gender only, noting that there has been significant change but there is still much more reform required. The legal script of being 'self-employed' is applied as an explanation as to why this may be the case. In particular he observes that clients do not trust women with difficult commercial decisions.

The law script of being 'self employed' is associated with a second law script according to James which refers to the requirement of 'making/having connections'. This disadvantages females with the status quo upheld, especially at the higher levels of the judiciary. Likewise the law script that refers to the 'long hours mentality' is also applied to frame the legal issue. This script is used by parts of the profession to justify why women are perhaps not being successful at reaching partnership status within law firms. Again commercial interests seem to figure prominently within this setting.

It is evident from the above that James draws only on law scripts identified in chapter 5 to frame the law issue. Conversely when framing the local academic issue James draws on general academic scripts to frame the local academic issue. The local academic issue for James, being a member of Beta business school, concerns the 'saving of £5 million pounds' across the university. He applies, on

several occasions, the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' when noting that there 'seems to be no co-ordinated thinking about the next RAE' and what impact redundancies might have on research output for the business school.

Like James, Andrew a professor of law at Beta business school, applies law scripts specific to the legal issue (see section 6.2.1), and predominately general academic scripts when framing the local academic issue (see section 6.2.5.3). There is no evidence of scripts from either institutional settings transferring when framing the issue. Andrew who works with high court judges observes that it has taken 'a long time' for gender equality to emerge, noting that there has been some success, with three female High Court judges being appointed within recent time. Andrew puts forward two explanations as to why this may be the case. Firstly females now have access to Law schools that may not have been previously the case. Secondly changes are slow and this is because cultural change is slow.

He justifies why cultural change is slow on the basis of the law script referring to 'the long hour's mentality'. Andrew suggests that there are alternative ways of working that improve the quality of working lives of lawyers. The script referring to the 'old boy network', that is 'having/making connections' is raised by Andrew when discussing why ethnic minority groups are not necessarily represented within the higher levels of the legal profession. Andrew discusses the law issue in terms of both gender and race. It is evident like James that Andrew draws only on law scripts to frame the law issue. However unlike James equality is not only defined in terms of gender but also race.

When Andrew discusses the local university issue (the saving of £5 million pounds across the university) he draws predominately on general academic scripts to frame the local academic issue. He discusses the issue in terms of 'relative safety' as he had recently been appointed to professorial ranking. Andrew is happy with the manner in which the cost saving exercise has been handled. In particular he perceives the fact that compulsory redundancies have

not been demanded as being consistent with how he would approach the matter and also importantly in keeping with the collegiate culture of academia.

Andrew is clearly sympathetic to colleagues within other departments that may be faced with closure due to not being financially viable. He applies the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' to justify why certain departments may need to close. There is according to Andrew a requirement that if the department is not ranked sufficiently high in the RAE and linked with this not attracting acceptable numbers of students, then it is only right that questions should be asked.

He continues to frame the issue in term of the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game'. So for example he draws attention to the five research rated status of the law department on several occasions. This holds particular resonance for Andrew as he links the restructuring exercise with improved research performance. It is evident that Andrew applies only law scripts to frame the law issue and conversely applies general academic scripts to frame the local university issue.

I next explore the case of Jackie within the legal setting, who undertook her barrister training within the London circuit. She acknowledges that this period of her life was one of her worst life experiences, culminating in her failing her bar finals and leaving the profession. As a consequence of this she changed career, moving into the HE sector, where she has been employed for the last 12 years, based at Alpha business school as a senior lecturer within the law department.

Jackie discusses the law issue only in terms of gender. She draws specifically on legal scripts to frame the law issue (see section 6.2.1). So for example the law script referring to the 'long hour's mentality' is applied by Jackie to justify why women are not progressing to the higher levels within the law profession. Jackie also applies the law script referring to the 'need to have/make connection'. According to Jackie Cherie Blair is as an exception to the rule,

whereby as a female she has managed to rise to the higher levels of the judiciary based on her connections (legal script).

Unlike Andrew but consistent with James, Jackie discusses the law issue solely along gender sensitised lines, drawing on legal scripts to frame the law issue. However Jackie is highly critical of the practices and tradition associated with the legal system. Whereas Andrew and James are more accepting of the practices of the legal profession.

When Jackie discusses the issue specific to Alpha business school (the impending merger) she draws predominately on local academic scripts (see section 6.2.5.1). So for example Jackie when discussing how the merger has been handled applies the local academic script that refers to 'management expect their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question'. There is recognition on Jackie's behalf that she has little control over what may happen as a consequence of a merger. She applies the local academic script referring to 'teaching and admin take priority over research', with the teaching element being important to Jackie. She perceives herself as a teacher first and foremost, helping to develop students. It is clear that when framing the local academic issue, Jackie draws exclusively from local academic scripts. She at no time draws on the general academic scripts to frame the issue which are largely informed by a research orientation.

Barry, like Jackie is critical of the legal profession and the associated practices. He emigrated from Guyana in the early 1960s to study law in England. After graduation he reconsidered career paths leading to a move to the HE sector and in particular to a senior lecturer position in law at Alpha business school. Barry draws only on law scripts to frame the legal issue (see section 6.2.1). So for example he draws on the law script of being 'self employed' as a justification as to why certain types of individuals are not succeeding. Certain types in this sense refer to ethnic minority groups. The law script of 'needing/ having connections' that makes the profession introspective and conservative according to Barry exacerbates this. It is evident that Barry draws specifically on law scripts only when framing the legal issue. For Barry the law issue is discussed

solely in terms of 'race' as opposed to gender. Like Jackie, Barry is critical of the profession and associated practices. These practices restrict those from ethic minority groups from fulfilling their potential according to Barry.

Having discussed how respondents frame the legal issue and local academic issue I next explore how respondents frame the accounting issue concerning the continued fragmentation of profession and the local university issue. The fragmentation of the profession as encapsulated in the segregation of the five accounting bodies, which make up the UK accounting profession, was chosen as the issue for accountancy.

Helen draws only on accountancy scripts to frame the accountancy issue (see section 6.2.3) and likewise when framing the local academic issue draws predominately on general academic scripts (see section 6.2.3). So for example Helen notes that the attempt to merge the accounting bodies has been problematic. She gives the example of training and development to demonstrate this by referring to 'entry requirements' to each of the accounting bodies. Helen applies the accountancy scripts when framing the accountancy issue referring to 'ICAS demanding that trainees possess a first degree', whereas the 'ICEAW expect trainees to hold a first degree' whilst 'ACCA take on mature students and those without a first degree'. When further framing the issue, Helen discusses the role of multidisciplinary firms. In doing so she draws on the accountancy script that only the 'chartered and certified accountants who work for the big firms can audit companies'. Helen perceives multidisciplinary firms, who undertake audits, are not as independent as perhaps they should be. She justifies this by drawing on the accountancy script referring to the 'audit function being used to attract business and to sell a range of other services'.

It is evident that Helen is against the merging of the professional bodies on the grounds that this would dilute the 'voice' of the Scottish chartered institute (ICAS). The role of multidisciplinary firms and associated accountancy scripts are applied by Helen to frame the accountancy issue.

It also becomes evident that when Helen discusses the local academic issue she draws predominantly on general academic scripts to frame the issue (see section 6.2.5.3). She is initially sceptical about the grounds on which the case for saving £5 million is based, believing it to be a ploy by the VCs to secure future jobs. Helen draws on the general academic script 'research being the name of the game', noting that it is important that the right academic staff are kept. In this sense the right faculty refer to those that can demonstrate an appropriate research output. Helen draws only on general academic scripts to frame the local academic issue likewise when framing the professional issue draws only on accountancy scripts to frame the accountancy issue.

Kate is a professor of accountancy based at Beta business school with close affiliations with multidisciplinary or 'big' firms. She applies only accounting scripts when framing the accounting issue (see section 6.2.3). When discussing the fragmentation of the profession Kate gives an example based on her recent experiences. Kate refers to an episode when dealing with one particular accounting body and a multidisciplinary firm. The two appeared to have competing ideas about how the conclusions should be interpreted from her report. In attempting to make sense of this she draws on the accountancy script referring to the traditional chartered accountant bodies (ICAS, ICAEW) commandeering a 'higher salary than other accountants'. CIPFA, the accounting body in question, commander a lower salary for their members and take on a more conciliatory approach in dealing with accountancy issues and accountants. Whereas the employees of PCW are predominately chartered accountants from England, Wales and Scotland (ICAS, ICAEW) and who take an aggressive approach to commenting on reports.

Once more when discussing the accounting issue Kate applies accounting scripts to frame the issue. So for example Kate applies the accounting script of 'ACCA trains students the world over', but yet still expects their students to focus on UK accounting practices. This makes little sense to Kate given these students study and practice accounting in parts of the world where UK based practices will be largely irrelevant. Throughout the discussion of the accounting issue it is

clear that Kate only draws on accounting scripts to frame the accounting issue. Conversely when discussing the local academic issue Kate draws only on general academic scripts to frame the academic issue (see section 6.2.5.3).

Kate, like James is concerned with the issue of redundancy when discussing the local academic issue for Beta business school. In particular Kate draws attention to the fact that in restructuring the university 'good' members of faculty may be lost. 'Good' in this sense refers to research-orientated faculty. Repeatedly Kate draws from general academic scripts to frame the local academic issue. So for example 'research being the name of the game' figures prominently. Kate appreciates the need to balance new market economics alongside the traditional research orientation within academia which has been brought about by the Blairite government access target of 50% to the HE sector.

Jean took the opportunity to study with ACCA on the basis that they allowed for part time study. She currently works at Alpha business school as an accountancy field leader. Like the previous respondents when framing the accounting issue Jean draws only on accounting scripts to do so (see section 6.2.3). She perceives no obvious reason for why the accounting bodies should not merge. However she anticipates that this will not happen given issues of power; whereby each professional body protects both their and their members' interests.

The script that 'ACCA recruit from all types of backgrounds (non degree, mature students)' is raised by Jean. She expresses concern that if the bodies do merge, then their needs to be a viable route for potential accountants from non traditional backgrounds.

When Jean moves on to discuss the local academic issue she draws predominately on local academic scripts to frame the issue (see section 6.2.5.1). She is initially uncertain about the future of the business school and what role she will play in the future of the school. She frames the university specific issue in terms of the local academic script that refers to 'management expecting their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question'. This leads to a sense of apathy by Jean towards the impending merger. In addition, the local academic

script of 'teaching and admin take priority over research' is applied to frame the issue of the merger. Jean also recognises the importance of research within the wider academic community and acknowledges the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' but nonetheless she is constrained by local academic scripts.

Keith is a member of the ICAEW, based also at Alpha business school. He frames the accounting issue in terms of accounting scripts (see section 6.2.3), perceiving recent attempts for the accounting bodies to merge to have failed due to a lack of government intervention. He draws on accounting scripts relating to 'training practices' that are specific to each of the accounting bodies. So for example, 'ACCA recruit from all types of backgrounds (non degree, mature students)', whilst the 'ICEAW and ICAS expect students to sit their exams within the UK'. Keith's rationale for why the accounting bodies have failed to merge relates to 'self interest' of the accounting bodies. He perceives this to be a "front" which must firstly be recognised by the profession in order to move forward and merge. The crux of the matter for Keith is accountancy scripts associated with different training arrangements by the accounting bodies. He is critical of the accounting profession and this perspective appears to inform how he frames the accounting issue.

In contrast, when Keith discusses the local academic issue (the impending merger) he draws predominantly on local academic scripts to frame the issue (see section 6.2.5.1). As part of the management team based at Alpha business school, he perceives the merger to be connected with financial and political considerations, adopting a different perspective to that of Jackie and Jean. It is apparent that Keith perceives pressure to have been placed on the university from regulative demands from the funding agencies, themselves directed by government targets. He initially draws on the local academic script of 'management expecting their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question'. For Keith it is imperative that the initiatives coming from management are implemented if the merger is to be successful.

6.3.1.1 Summary

From the above discussion it is clear those respondents, who possess membership to a profession and a university, apply scripts specific to the profession (law and accountancy) and scripts specific to the university in a discrete manner. That is professional scripts are applied to frame the professional issue and, likewise, general and local academic scripts are applied to frame the university specific issues. It is of interest that scripts that would appear quite similar between institutional settings are not applied across the settings. So for example the fragmentation of the profession and the impending merger faced by Alpha business school respondents have many similarities. Most obviously members of both institutional settings are faced with common issue concerning the consequences of merging. Nonetheless what we see is that scripts specific to each institutional setting are applied discretely to frame each of these issues.

The following section examines the pattern of when local as apposed to general academic scripts are applied to frame the general academic issue. As I note in chapter 3 the design incorporated a question that spans across institutional settings. The tension between research and teaching was chosen to explore this on the basis that respondents from Alpha business school (teaching orientated) and Beta business school (research orientated) might view this issue differently.

6.3.2 University Specific Issue

The research design purposefully incorporated a question that allowed respondents to apply scripts that might cut across institutions. As demonstrated in chapter 4 there is a potential tension between research and teaching within academia and therefore this issue was selected. This is because that it was thought the respondents from new and old universities, with a potential difference in the emphasis their institutions place on research versus teaching, may see this issue differently.

It is demonstrated that respondents from Alpha and Beta business schools framed the general academic issue somewhat differently. All respondents'

recognised scripts specific to academia but on occasion also drew on local academic scripts. I observe that when local and academic scripts align (as for Beta business school with a focus on research) respondents draw predominantly on general academic scripts; where they do not (as was the case with respondents based at Alpha business school with a focus on teaching) respondents draw predominantly from local academic scripts. This supports the finding that respondents do not draw on multiple institutions - unless the scripts align in some way. I draw on the cases shown in section 6.2.6 to support this finding.

I commence by exploring the case of James, a senior lecturer based at Beta business school. He suggests that research and teaching are not necessarily apposed to one another, being in many circumstances complimentary. James, as a member of Beta business school draws, on the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game' to frame the issue. Local constraints have exacerbated the tension according to James. In particular he is expected to undertake service teaching that he notes does not contribute in any sense to his research output. There is little doubt that for James the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' dominates the framing of the general academic issue. At no time do local academic scripts play a part in the framing of the general academic issue for James.

Like James, Andrew is based within the law department within Beta business school. He acknowledges the local academic script of 'faculty being expected to research carry out admin and teach'. This according to Andrew places considerable pressure on new faculty to research. In noting this, Andrew draws on the general academic script of 'research is the name of the game' to frame the general academic issue.

It is evident that Andrew is concerned with local management related issues specific to Beta business school. He explicitly acknowledges the role of the QAA and RAE in influencing the strategy of management within the business school. In particular there appears to be more formal checks and balances that

new faculty are subjected to. Andrew draws on the general academic script of 'internal promotions being hit and miss' to frame the general academic issue. It is evident that Andrew is concerned with how the present system of promoting faculty sits with the new system resulting from the introduction of the QAA and RAE. Stated differently there is an expectation under the new system that faculty have measurable outputs that does not always coincide with the promotion strategy of the business school. From the above it is clear that scripts specific to academia are applied to frame the general academic issue. There is a clear sense that research dominates over and above teaching.

Helen is a long-standing member of faculty based at Beta business school. Like Andrew, Helen applies general academic scripts to frame the general academic issue. She describes the tension between research and teaching as being particularly sensitive for new members of faculty. To these end she acknowledges the local academic script (Beta business school) referring to 'the expectation that new faculty must demonstrate a potential to publish'. This is particularly salient to Helen given her close supervision of PhD students. Helen subsequently applies the general academic script referring to 'nobody checks up on you as a lecturer unless there are numerous complaints' as an example of the lesser importance placed on teaching at Beta business school and other academic institutions. In particular according to Helen, there is little legitimacy associated with the activity of teaching. Clearly to Helen 'research is the name of the game'(general academic script).

Kate, a professor of accounting based at Beta business school, also draws predominately on general academic scripts to frame the general academic issue. On a personal level the only tension that exists between research and teaching is that of time. There is little doubt that research is the most important activity for Kate. She draws on the general academic script of 'research is the name of the game' to frame the general academic issue. When discussing the tension between research and teaching, Kate acknowledges the distinction between new and old universities. Within old universities it is clear that the activity receiving

the most legitimacy is that of research. This is not the case according to Kate within new universities.

Unlike the previous cases, Jackie as a member of Alpha business school draws predominately on local academic scripts to frame the general academic issue. It is evident that she also recognises that within her wider academic community, research is an important activity. So for example Jackie observes that within older universities faculty have more time to dedicate to research. This is not the case according to Jackie in new universities. What is clear is that local constraints and associated local academic scripts at Alpha business school, place research as a secondary concern. She reports that admin takes up a considerable portion of her time and in doing so draws on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research'. When framing the general academic issue that Jackie draws exclusively on the local academic scripts.

Barry is a colleague of Jackie, based at Alpha business school. He is critical of the new recruitment policy that favours candidates with research outputs. In doing so he acknowledges that within the broader academic community that 'research is the name of the game (general academic script). This is a significant shift according to Barry, with previous emphasis being on teaching that is consistent with the local academic script of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research'. In particular Barry sees no role for research unless it directly contributes to the life chances of his students. The traditional teaching orientation of Alpha business school is evident, even though the new policy has been introduced of recruiting research orientated individuals. Barry acknowledges the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' but applies the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin take priority over research' to frame the issue.

Jean, an academic field leader of accounting is based at Alpha business school. She describes the tension between research and teaching resulting from financial pressures. Like the previous Alpha business school respondents, Jean applies local academic scripts to frame the general academic issue. So for example she

draws on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' to frame the issue. Research is not a priority to Jean even though she is currently studying towards a PhD. It is apparent that local academic scripts and constraints play a significant role in how Jean frames the issue. Toward the later part of framing the general academic issue jean discusses the impending merger. In doing so she draws on the second local academic script referring to 'management expects their initiatives to be implemented without question'. There is an expectation that the status quo post merger may be changed in some way.

Keith is a PL in the accounting department of Alpha business school. There is little doubt according to him that there is a significant tension between research and teaching. So for example he draws on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin take priority over research'. He believes that research that does not directly contribute to reaching should not be encouraged at Alpha business school. Keith is sceptical about the grounds on which research is conducted at Alpha business school. In many circumstances he perceives research to contribute to the individual rather than teaching excellence. It is evident that Keith draws ostensibly from the local academic script referring to teaching when framing the general academic issue.

6.3.2.1 Summary

This section has explored how respondents frame the general issue of the 'tension between research and teaching'. Both local and general academic scripts are applied to frame the issue. There is a clear difference in perspective between Alpha and Beta respondents; Alpha respondents emphasise teaching although recognising the importance of research within the wider community of academia. The majority of Alpha respondents when framing the general academic issue also apply a second local academic script specific to Alpha business school referring to the management orientation. This is in contrast to Beta respondents who emphasise the importance of research both locally within the business school and more widely within the academic community. The findings show that when general and local academic scripts align, respondents

draw predominantly on general academic scripts. Where they do not align respondents draw predominantly on local academic scripts.

More generally, section 6.3 has shown that respondents draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously when framing strategic issues. This is important because there has been a distinct lack of research which focuses not just on how institutions affect issue interpretation, but also on multiple institutions and their role in influencing behaviour and interpretive processes.

The following section shows that respondents do not necessarily mindlessly enact scripts. What is apparent is that respondents in many circumstances make sense of scripts, representative of bottom-up institutional processes being at play. There is a small but growing acceptance within the institutional community that both top-down and bottom-up institutional processes operate in conjunction with one another within institutional settings (see for example Dobbin *et al.* 1993; Edelman, Uggen and Erlanger, 1999; Scott, 2001). My research lends support to this point of view.

6.4 Bottom-Up Institutional Processes

I showed in section 6.2 that respondents draw on scripts identified in chapter 5 to frame strategic issues. This is important because although scripts have been shown to influence behaviour there is a lack of research that explores the extent to which they influence interpretive processes (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). Institutionalists have also tended to focus on one industry at a time, as opposed to how multiple institutions influence behaviour and action. Section 6.3 addressed this by exploring the impact of multiple institutions on the framing of strategic issues, demonstrating that respondents draw on multiple institutions but not simultaneously.

The tension between research and teaching was selected as one of three strategic issues for respondents to frame that potentially cuts across institutions (Alpha business school with a teaching orientation and Beta business school with a research orientation). I showed that when local and academic scripts align (as

for Beta business school with a focus on research) respondents draw predominantly from academic scripts; where they do not (as was the case with respondents based at Alpha business school with a focus on teaching) respondents draw predominantly from local academic scripts. This confirms the finding that respondents do not draw on multiple institutions unless the scripts align in some way. What is clear from the analysis of findings is that respondents draw on institutions enacted through scripts to frame strategic issues. This is consistent with top-down institutional processes being at play in strategic issue diagnosis.

This section demonstrates that bottom-up institutional processes that enable respondents to interpret scripts are also at play. I identify two groups: Those who perceive institutional scripts as legitimate and who appear to 'buy into' these scripts and consequently reproduce these scripts; and those respondents who don't see the institutional scripts as legitimate and interpret these same scripts critically. I describe these bottom-up processes as 'meanings' that enable actors to interpret scripts. This is consistent with the work of Bartunek (1984) as I discuss when describing the sense-making element of interpretive schemes in chapter 2. I draw on the work of Bartunek (1984) because she is one of the few to define interpretive schemes; comprising of scripts and (associated with top-down institutional processes), and their relationship with how actors make sense of actions (meanings, representative of bottom-up institutional processes). Taken together, scripts and meanings enable actors to interact with one another and make sense of these interactions.

The issue of power would appear to play a significant part in the perpetuation of institutionally relevant scripts and associated meanings. Those respondents interpreting scripts as legitimate are associated with the 'dominant coalition', themselves directly related with reviving institutional scripts. Organisations and presumably institutions are composed of groups whose positions of relative advantage and disadvantage are shaped by the organisation and wider environment (Walsh, Hinings, Ranson & Greenwood 1981). As Greenwood and Hinings (1993: 1058) suggest "[s]tructures and systems allocate scarce and

valued resources and indirectly legitimate and perpetuate distributive inequalities by the consistency of the cues and messages transmitted. An organisation's "dominant coalition" will seek to remove discordant structures because of the risk of challenge of the status quo". Those respondents interpreting institutional scripts critically are consequently marginalised by the dominant coalition. This has resulted, in many instances, with those respondents leaving the institutional setting.

This section is structured by institutional setting; law, accountancy and academia. I show that within both law and accountancy there are those respondents that buy into the institutional scripts and those that don't. Those that don't are critical of the associated institutional scripts. Within academia all respondents appear to have bought into the academic scripts. This may be because they perceive the academic setting as their current and main role.

Nonetheless, differences do exist between Alpha and Beta respondent responses for the local and general academic issues (Alpha business school-the impending merger; Beta business school- the saving of £5 million across the university; & the general academic issue that cuts across institutions-tension between research and teaching). Respondents based at Alpha business school, with the teaching orientation reflected in local academic scripts, all apply meanings that are predominantly teaching orientated. This is as opposed to Beta business school respondents, with a research orientation reflected in their local academic scripts, who all apply meanings that are predominantly research orientated. This suggests that sub institutional scripts are also present within the academic institutional setting.

6.4.1.1 Law Institutional Setting

As noted in section 6.2.1 James is currently a non-practicing solicitor under the Scottish legal system. He discusses the law issue of inequality along gender-sensitised lines, drawing on law scripts. He is supportive of the practices and associated scripts of the legal profession 'explaining away' gender inequality

through the structure of the law profession. So for example when James initially discusses gender inequality within the profession he notes that more women are now entering the profession. Accordingly 'even if they [members of the legal profession] wanted to take a very biased gender approach and hire men, it would be very hard practically to do that because there are not necessarily the male candidates available'.

He notes that this is 'where you might find there is discrimination' by drawing on the law script referring to 'being self-employed'. This is interpreted but not supported on a personal level by James, on the grounds that some sections of the legal profession don't trust women with difficult commercial decisions. It would appear that he is distancing himself from these practices as a member of the law society.

Later in the discussion of gender inequality James draws on the legal script of 'making/having connections', noting that his partner has been fortunate in impressing a number of senior advocates who will often pass work her way. When explaining this, James stresses the point that his partner is 'good' at her job, which accounts for why she has managed to cultivate connections within the legal profession. Consequently he interprets this law script in terms of being 'good at your job' as being the most important attribute.

Towards the latter part of the discussion of the legal issue James draws on the legal script referring to 'the long hour's mentality'. He distances himself with minority sections of the legal profession by noting that he 'certainly wouldn't subscribe to the view 'that as a woman you couldn't really commit fully to the job because you're having children'.

James applies law scripts, and makes sense of these by applying meanings that are consistent with the law profession. Like James, Andrew is supportive of the legal profession and associated legal scripts. As I note in section 6.2.1, Andrew works with High Court judges within the Scottish legal system. He acknowledges that at the highest levels of the legal profession gender reform has been slow, although in the recent past three female High Court judges have been

appointed. Andrew explains that gender inequality is improving; justifying the length of time that reform is taking in terms of 'cultural change' by its nature is slow.

As I note above it is evident that Andrew is supportive of the legal profession and associated legal scripts. So for example when drawing upon the legal script referring to 'the long hour's mentality' to frame gender inequality, Andrew suggests that all members of the profession can work more effectively so as to spend time with the family. This implies a choice faced by legal professionals with Andrew apparently opting to rethink his approach to how he organises his time.

Andrew, unlike James, also discusses the issue of inequality in terms of race. He notes that there are insufficient numbers of African and Asian studying law within universities. This results in the profession being unevenly represented in terms of ethnic groups when practicing law. Consequently the issue of race is initially discussed not as a problem for practicing lawyers but as a matter of recruitment prior to joining the profession. When questioned on this and the role of the profession in promoting equality, Andrew draws on the legal script of 'having/making connections' when referring to the existence of the 'old boy network'. He interprets this once more in terms of positive reforms to the profession that is taking time because 'cultural change' is slow.

Unlike James and Andrew, Jackie, who undertook her barrister training within the London circuit applies a more critical perspective to the legal profession and associated legal scripts. She acknowledges that undertaking the Bar exams were one of her worst experiences, culminating in her failing her bar finals and leaving the profession. Like James, Jackie discusses the law issue only in terms of gender.

In her opening remarks about the issue of inequality within the profession, Jackie notes some positive reform, acknowledging an increase in women studying law. This is eclipsed according to Jackie by the dominating characteristics of the profession, namely the middle-class orientation. Having noted this, Jackie draws on the legal script referring to the 'long hour's

mentality' which prevents women from achieving their career aspirations, forced in many circumstances to reconsider their role within the profession as a consequence of bringing a family up. Jackie places emphasis on the traditional role of women within the legal profession of 'bringing children up' on several occasions, with there being little room to continue a professional career. These same requirements do not cross over when discussing the academic setting, with Jackie acknowledging that as a single mother can continue to develop your academic career and still devote time to bringing up a child.

Later, when discussing the issue of inequality, Jackie draws on the legal script referring to the 'need to have/make connections' to frame the legal issue. She perceives the 'old boy network' as discriminating against women succeeding within the profession. The only way this will be addressed according to Jackie is through 'radical reform' with the 'Bar itself need[ing] to put across a stronger view'. It is clear that Jackie does not accept the legal scripts that operate within the profession. This is demonstrated by her comments that radical change is required and in this case must come from the top, that is the Bar council.

Like Jackie, but unlike James and Andrew, Barry is critical of the legal profession and the associated practices. As I note in section 6.2.1 Barry emigrated from Guyana in the early 1960s to study law. When initially discussing the issue of inequality Barry draws from the script of being 'self employed'. According to Barry this prevents people like him, from backgrounds other than the tradition set from succeeding. He links a second legal script of 'needing/ having connections' when framing the legal issue. Taken together these two legal scripts result in the legal profession being introspective and conservative in its outlook according to Barry.

There is a sense of apathy on the behalf of Barry, with little opportunity for reform within the profession. The legal scripts of being 'self employed' and 'needing to have/make connections' are applied to justify Barry's position. He also draws attention to the high 'entry barriers' in terms of financial burden placed on all aspiring barristers. This, to all intensive purposes, leads to the barrister route being closed to Barry and other ethnic minorities.

6.4.1.2 Law Summary

I have shown in this section that respondents are split between those that 'buy into' legal institutional scripts and those that do not. Those respondents that do not buy into the legal scripts apply meanings that are critical of the legal scripts and associated practices. Respondents that do buy into the legal scripts also apply meanings that are sympathetic to the legal scripts. The following section is directed towards illustrating the same pattern with the accounting institutional setting.

6.4.2.1 Accounting Institutional Setting

Five accounting bodies within the UK as described in chapter 4, oversee the accounting profession. The structure of the professions for accountancy and law are quite different. This is reflected in their practices. So for example as I note in section 6.2.3 Helen became a member of ICAS in the 1970s, establishing close links with the Scottish accounting body. She is against the merging of the accounting bodies on the grounds that it would dilute the 'voice' of the Scottish chartered institute (ICAS). Helen justifies this by drawing on the accounting scripts referring to training. In particular 'ICAS demand that trainees possess a first degree', whereas the 'ICEAW expect trainees to hold a first degree' whilst 'ACCA take on mature students and those without a first degree'. She notes that the professional bodies have their own areas of interest with little point in bringing these groups together because it would upset the status quo. It is evident that Helen perceives herself to be part of ICAS which is reflected in the meanings that she applies to accounting related scripts.

Helen moves onto to discuss the role of the big firms. She is supportive of these firms, noting that they have an important role in undertaking audits authorised by the government. In the course of discussing the role of these firms Helen draws on the accounting script that only the 'chartered and certified accountants who work for the big firms can audit companies'. There is little direct criticism of these firms although Helen does raise the issue of potential competing interests that result from the accounting script referring to 'the audit function is

used to attract business and sell a range of other services'. This is why these firms and their employees have a code of conduct and adhere to it according to Helen. In this manner the practices of the profession are not directly criticised with adequate measures (in this example a code of conduct) in place to ensure accountants working for these big firms are independent of business interests.

Like Helen, Kate, based at Beta business school and who has close affiliations with the multidisciplinary or 'big' firms, is supportive of the accounting profession and associated accounting scripts. She is under little doubt that the profession is fragmented, giving an example of a recent report written which was scrutinised by the CIPFA accounting body and one of the multidisciplinary practices. Both interpreted the report in a way consistent with their own interests. Kate makes sense of this by applying the script referring to the traditional chartered accountant bodies (ICAS, ICAEW) commandeering a 'higher salary than other accountants'. Like Helen, Kate does not directly criticise the practices of the multidisciplinary firms.

Kate moves on to discuss distinctions between each of the accounting bodies with particular emphasis given to training related accounting scripts. She draws on the script that 'ACCA trains students the world over' but yet still expect their students to focus on UK accounting practices. When making sense of this she asks the question as to 'Why should someone who lives in Jamaica be concerned about the tax rules in Britain?'. She is for the reform of the profession, with the professional bodies merging, advocating change from the inside as opposed to change being enforced from outside. This is exemplified when discussing practice of multidisciplinary firms recruiting chartered accountants and technicians. Kate draws on the accounting scripts that 'accountant firms take on trainees specifically for the technician route' and that in 'order to become a partner you are expected to be a CA'. These scripts are interpreted as contributing to the deskilling of the profession, something that she is against. Again she advocates change coming from within the profession as opposed to external pressures culminating in change. Kate perceives herself as an advocate

and champion of reform, with continued dialogue between the accounting bodies underpinning this process.

Unlike Kate and Helen, Jean, a member of ACCA based at Alpha business school, notes that there is no immediate reason for why the accounting bodies should not merge but that this is unlikely given the 'powerful cohorts' involved. The powerful cohorts in this sense referring to the accounting bodies. She is critical of the profession as a whole on the basis that 'they appear not to be able to discuss the future of the profession in a sensible manner'. When making sense of why the accounting bodies continue to stumble over the issue of merging, Jean refers to her own experiences with ACCA. In doing so Jean draws on the script that 'ACCA recruit from all types of backgrounds (non degree, mature students)'. This appears to hold particular resonance for Jean, herself trained on a part time basis with ACCA. She interprets any potential merging of the accounting bodies as needing to take account of the ACCA training script. In particular Jean sees the need for a non-traditional route to be available for mature and part-time students. She is on the one hand critical of the profession and its inability to grapple with the issue of fragmentation, whilst supporting ACCA and in particular training related scripts specific to ACCA.

It is clear that Jean sees no reason for the continued fragmentation of the profession other than issues of power, with each of the accounting bodies protecting their members' interests. She is critical of the continued division that exists between the accounting bodies. Change is only likely to unfold through the intervention of government according to Jean.

Like Jean, Keith, a member of the ICAEW, based also at Alpha business school is pessimistic about the accounting bodies merging with a need for governmental intervention (see section 6.2.3). He draws on scripts relating to 'training practices' that are specific to the accounting bodies. So for example, 'ACCA recruit from all types of backgrounds (non degree, mature students)'; whilst the ICEAW and ICAS expect students to sit their exams within the UK. Keith interprets these accounting scripts as an expression of the individuality of each of the accounting bodies and in particular 'self interest'. This is

exemplified by his comments on the traditional accounting bodies (in this case ICAS and ICEAW) whereby Keith notes that 'they don't want to mix with the hoi polloi, they want to be chartered accountants and just chartered accountants, and only have chartered accountants as members of their body'. He once again makes sense of why the accounting bodies have not yet merged as being as a consequence of this 'self interest'. Like Jean, Keith raises the training related accountancy script that is used as a basis as to why the accounting bodies should not merge. However Keith is more explicit, interpreting these accounting scripts as being used as a 'front' by each of the accounting bodies, including the ICAEW for which he is a member. The profession will not merge until it recognises that these differences as demonstrated within the accounting training related scripts are a 'front'. This is unlikely to unfold in the short term that is why he advocates external pressure from the government being required to ensure change.

6.4.2.2 Accountancy Summary

Like with the law respondents I have shown in this section that respondents are split between those that 'buy into' accounting institutional scripts and those that do not. Respondents that do buy into the accounting scripts reproduce the accounting scripts whilst those that do not buy into the accounting scripts apply meanings that are critical of the accounting scripts and associated practices.

Sections 6.4.1.1 and 6.4.2.1 has shown that respondents either 'buy into' institutionally relevant scripts or do not. In both cases respondents apply meanings to make sense of scripts, indicative of bottom-up institutional processes being at play. The following section shows that meanings, representative of bottom-up institutional processes are also at play within academia. I show that Alpha business school respondents apply meanings that are consistent with local teaching orientated academic scripts. Likewise meanings applied by Beta business school respondents are consistent with local and general research orientated academic scripts.

6.4.3 University Specific Issues

I show in this section that respondents apply meanings that are consistent with local academic scripts. Alpha business school is teaching orientated which is reflected in local academic scripts, and in turn the meanings that Alpha respondents apply to make sense of scripts. Conversely at Beta business school, which is research orientated, respondents apply meanings that are consistent with the local and general research orientated scripts. As I note in chapter 5 'impending merger' with another local new university was used as the basis for discussions with respondents at Alpha business school. The 'saving of 5 million pounds' across the university was applied to respondents at Beta business school. I then examine the cross business school issue of the 'tension between research and teaching' which further illustrates teaching orientated meanings of Alpha business school respondents and research orientated meanings of Beta business school respondents. This is representative of sub institutional scripts being at play within the academic setting. I commence by exploring issue interpretation of respondents at Alpha business school.

6.4.3.1 Alpha Business School; 'The Impending Merger'

The impending merger between Alpha business school and another local university was chosen as the issue for discussions with Alpha respondents. Meanings specific to Alpha business school and associated local academic scripts are applied to make sense of the impending merger.

As noted in section 6.2 Jackie is a senior lecturer within the law department. She draws on the local academic script referring to 'management expect their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question'. She interprets this as making little sense, with 'the foot soldiers having to hold the teaching side together'. There is a sense that Jackie has little control over how the merger proceeds. She applies the local academic script referring to 'teaching and admin take priority over research' with the teaching element being central to Jackie. To Jackie teaching is an important activity and she supports this. She interprets teaching as her main reason for working in HE and at Alpha business school.

It is evident that for Jackie when framing the local academic issue she draws exclusively from local academic scripts. At no time does she draw on general academic scripts to frame the issue. Meanings specific to the teaching orientation of Alpha business school are applied to make sense of the issue. Jean, like Jackie, draws on local academic scripts to frame the local university issue. She initially draws on the local academic script referring to 'management expecting their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question'. She interprets this in terms of a sense of apathy. Like Jackie, Jean believes she has little control over the event. She perceives the best strategy as being one of waiting to see what unfolds. To this extent she is a participant or spectator in the change process.

It is also clear that Jean is supportive of the business school. When applying the local academic script of 'teaching and admin take priority over research' she interprets this in terms of the pride that that she takes toward her teaching. Research subsequently takes a secondary role, even though she is in the process of undertaking a PhD that has taken second place to teaching commitments.

As noted in section 6.2, Keith is a member of the management team, interpreting the merger at a strategic level. Keith notes the initiating trigger is primarily financially driven alongside political considerations. He draws on the local academic script of 'management expecting their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question'. He interprets the local academic script in terms of the authority that the VC has, himself believing that teaching is the most important activity undertaken within the business school.

6.4.3.2 Beta Business School; 'the saving of £5M across the University'

For Beta business school, the forthcoming requirement to save £5 million was used as the issue, applying the same criteria as for issue selection for Alpha business school. It becomes clear through the analysis that research orientated 'meanings' consistent with local and general academic scripts are applied to make sense of the local academic issue. So for example, as noted in 6.2, James is an SL based in the law faculty. He applies the general academic script of

'research being the name of the game' when initially discussing the issue, interpreting this in terms of 'no coordinated thinking' across the business school as to how this may impact on both the quality and quantity of research outputs. This is fundamentally a short term view according to James and likely to have repercussions for himself. In particular James perceives the knock on effect resulting in him and others dedicating more time to teaching and administrative duties as opposed to research. Consequently this places pressure on research excellence within the department and business school.

In contrast to Alpha business school, James draws on general academic scripts to frame the issue. There is a clear emphasis on research that is not apparent at Alpha business school. Research is seen as the most important issue facing James. The meanings associated with Beta business school revolve around the significance of research that is perceived as a key activity for all Beta business school respondents. Andrew, a professor of law, confirms the importance of research at Beta business school. As I note in 6.2.1, Andrew was recently promoted internally within the law department. He initially discusses the issue in terms of 'relative safety' as somebody appointed to professorial ranking within the past two years. Andrew interprets the transition as being handled reasonably well in the sense that the process has involved voluntary as opposed to compulsory redundancies.

When questioned on how the issue might likely impact on the business school, Andrew draws on the impact to research and in particular the general academic script that 'research is the name of the game'. He interprets the law school as being in a strong position because of its ability to secure funding through both student numbers and research output. Towards the latter part of the discussion of the issue, Andrew highlights the tightening of resources faced within Higher Education. The restructuring process, brought about the requirement to save money must according to Andrew lead to improved performance. He again draws on the general academic script of 'research is the name of the game' as an important element of this strategy, interpreting research as needing to be further strengthened across the department.

Like James and Andrew, Helen, a professor of law based in the law department, applies meanings that are consistent with research orientated local and general academic scripts. She is sceptical about the grounds upon which the current crisis is based. Rather than being about tightening resources within HE, Helen believes the crisis has been driven by personal motivations of the VCs within HE. Helen draws upon the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' when discussing the restructuring process which will be brought about by offering voluntary redundancy within the university. She interprets this in terms of potentially resulting in the loss of experienced academics with established research portfolios. No alternative strategy is given but nonetheless there is clear concern on Helen's behalf to the research standing of the business school.

Kate, a professor of accounting, also shares the concerns for research raised by Helen. Kate is apprehensive as to how the restructuring process might impact on the department through the loss of 'good' members of faculty. Good in this sense referring to research productive faculty. She draws on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game'. Like Helen, Kate interprets this potential loss in terms of impact on research excellence within the department. As noted in section 6.2.3 Kate gives the example of a member of staff who recently accepted voluntary redundancy. Kate perceives this policy as being counterproductive in losing research active faculty to other universities.

There is also recognition on Kate's behalf that the university is faced with stark choices given the state of funding in HE. She advocates the targeting of 'other markets, including targeting mature students, wider access and more short courses', although she shows concern that this might impact on the time that faculty devote to research. In doing so she draws on the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game' interpreting this script as requiring balancing with the reality of funding faced by Beta business school and HE in general.

6.4.3.3 Summary of Findings on Local Academic Issue

Consistent to all Beta business school respondents is the concern of how the issue might impact on research and consequently that research standing of the school. All respondents recognised and draw on general and local research orientated scripts, interpreting these in a way consistent with the research orientation of the business school. There is a sense of real unease as to how the issue might impact on research as opposed to teaching or administrative duties. This is in contrast to Alpha business school respondents where local academic scripts are raised and interpreted in terms of the impact on teaching.

6.4.3.4 Academic Issue "Tension between Research & Teaching"

The current section explores the 'general' academic issue that cuts across institutions. The issue chosen is the 'tension between research and teaching'. The same pattern as observed in sections 6.4.3.1 & 6.4.3.1 also appears when respondents discuss the general academic issue. That is Alpha business school respondents apply meanings that are consistent with the local teaching orientated scripts. Likewise meanings applied by Beta business school respondents are consistent with local and general research orientated academic scripts.

I start with the case of James, a senior lecturer of law, based at Beta business school. He emphasises the importance of research, drawing on the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game', interpreting this in terms of his service teaching commitments. This in many circumstances is 'generalist' teaching, 'taking up time which might be more devoted to research, contributing to the school and your community'. Research is an important activity for James, both within the school and the wider academic community for which he associates himself with.

The service-teaching requirement is one constraint raised by James alongside a general lack of resources within the business school. He refers to a lack of admin staff as one example of the resourcing issue. This places pressure on research, with James again drawing on the general academic script of 'research

being the name of the game'. This aside he at no point openly criticise the business school and proceeds to interpret the general academic script in terms of research and teaching often being 'complimentary and a very fruitful relationship'.

Like James, Andrew, a professor within the law department based at Beta business school, draws on research orientated scripts. He commences by drawing on the local academic script (Beta business school) of 'faculty being expected to research, carry out admin and teach' noting that this places considerable pressure, particularly on new faculty, to research, which he perceives to ' be the name of the game' (general academic script). Andrew interprets these scripts as placing significant pressure on 'young colleagues' that results in the academic-student relationship being cursorily in nature.

As noted in section 6.2.6 Andrew focuses on the promotion structures at Beta business school and HE in general. The QAA and RAE have led according to Andrew to increased pressure on new faculty. Andrew draws on the general academic script of 'internal promotions being hit and miss'. This is contrasted with a greater degree of formal checks and balances faced by new faculty interpreting the script in terms of it being inappropriate to keep the old system (promoting strategy) whilst introducing a new way of organising (measuring outputs of faculty):

Like Andrew, Helen a professor of accounting based at Beta business school draws attention to the increasing pressures faced by new faculty. The local academic script (Beta business school) referring to 'the expectation that new faculty must demonstrate a potential to publish' is raised in the course of the discussion. This is particularly salient to Helen who as noted in section 6.2.3 manages PhD students. She interprets the script as placing 'tremendous pressure' on these students who are also expected to publish along the PhD route and lead seminar groups.

Helen later draws on the general academic script of 'nobody checks up on you as a lecturer unless there are numerous complaints' and interprets this in terms

of it being 'very difficult for staff to get credit for good teaching because most things are seen as being within normal duties'. Instead emphasis is placed on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game'.

Kate, a professor of accounting based at Beta business school continues the theme of the importance of research by initially drawing on the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game'. She interprets the issue in light of this general academic script as it would be 'nice to have fewer classes' which would enable Kate to spend more time on research. This aside, and as noted in section 6.2.6 Kate sees research and teaching as being complimentary.

Kate draws attention to the distinction between 'new' and 'old' universities. She does not believe individuals in new universities should be forced to research, the inference being that within older universities you must research as a member of faculty whilst at new university teaching takes priority.

Jackie is employed within a new university as a senior lecture of law, at Alpha business school. Unlike James, Andrew, Helen and Kate, Jackie is at the emergent stage of her research career. It is evident that she would like to dedicate more time to this activity but local constraints and local academic scripts impede this. When drawing on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' she interprets this script in terms of research and a big admin job as being mutually exclusive. It would appear that the proximity of undertaking a big admin job is being applied to justify why Jackie has not been in a position to progress her research.

As noted in section 6.2.6 Jackie is aware and draws on the general academic script of 'research being the name of the game' but again interprets the script in terms of local university constraints. She notes that to fit in research as well as her other responsibilities, most notably admin, would be untenable or using her language would result in the 'sanity' of the individual being questioned.

Like Kate, Jackie raises the distinction between 'new' and 'old' universities. She perceives old universities to be more concerned with research output than is the case at Alpha business school, recognising that 'research is the name of the game' within academia as a whole. In making sense of the general academic script, Jackie acknowledges that there is a different set of pressures on faculty that pursue a publishing career. In particular she draws reference to the 'creative' skills required in publishing academic papers and the unique pressures associated with this.

Barry, a senior lecturer within the law department based at Alpha business school is sceptical about research and faculty that research. When initially discussing the issue Barry draws on the general academic script of 'universities buy in research to bolster their academic credibility', noting that over the past five years research active faculty have been bought in within the department. He interprets the introduction of the RAE as being responsible for this policy shift within the university and in doing so recognises the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game'. Unlike the previous respondents, Barry holds a critical viewpoint, interpreting this general academic script as irrelevant within his realm of experiences. It is evident that research serves little purpose unless it contributes towards improving teaching and as a consequence of this the life chances of his students. To these ends, research, to the extent that is has any worth according to Barry, should be directed inwards on the institution to improve the student experience. Again, the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' is applied. Barry emphasises the teaching element:

Jean, an academic field leader of accounting, based at Alpha business school holds the view that the tension between research and teaching is a result of 'local' financial pressures. In elaborating upon this she draws on the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' to frame the issue. It would appear that local university constraints have played a part in how Jean is interpreting the local academic script.

When questioned on whether research might take on a more dominant role post the merger department Jean is uncertain. She applies the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'management expecting their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question' interpreting this script as being brought into question given the new way in which the business school will be organised. Jean is referring to the flattening of the formal structure of the university when expressing this view.

Keith, a PL in the accounting department of Alpha business school, recognises the general academic script referring to 'research being the name of the game' but interprets this general script in terms of local constraints and local scripts. So for example Keith contends that research should contribute only to teaching excellence and be measurable. This is similar to the perspective adopted by Barry whereby research should only be undertaken which contributes to teaching. Keith's view on the role of research appears to be informed by his personal experiences of research active faculty within the department. He perceives research orientated people as being interested in bolstering their CVs. For Keith, who is vocal in the importance he places on teaching, research that does not contribute to teaching should not be undertaken. He is interpreting the issue in terms of the local academic script (Alpha business school) of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' to frame the issue.

6.4.3.5 Summary of Academic Issue

Two groups of 'meanings' were identified which appear to be associated with local academic scripts. As noted previously, Alpha business school is teaching orientated which is reflected in the widely recognised local teaching orientated script. The meanings applied by Alpha business school respondents echo this emphasis placed upon teaching. This is in contrast to Beta business school, which also places a high degree of prestige on research, which is reflected in the widely recognised local research scripts. The meanings applied by Beta business school respondents reflect this emphasis placed upon research. This is evidence of sub institutional scripts and associated meanings being present and applied to the strategic issue within the academic setting.

6.5 Conclusion

Unlike previous institutional studies my research set out to gain insight into the role of 'multiple institutions' and how these influence the individual framing of strategic issues. Respondents have affiliations with academia & law and academia and accountancy. Four key findings have been set out in chapter 6;

Section 6.2 has demonstrated that institutions, enacted through scripts, play a pivotal role in the framing of strategic issues. I have showed that respondents draw on the scripts identified in chapter 5 when discussing the institutionally relevant strategic issues I present them with. Scripts influence how respondents construct their realities, shaping their interpretive processes. Consequently I have shown top-down institutional processes to play a role in strategic issue diagnosis. This is important because although scripts have been demonstrated to influence behaviour there has been a lack of research that examines whether scripts play a role in issue interpretation.

Section 6.3 showed how multiple institutions impact on the individual framing of strategic issues. The findings demonstrate that respondents draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously; scripts associated with a particular institution are applied discretely to frame issues relevant only to that institution. There has been a distinct lack of empirical work investigating the impact of multiple institutions on actors' behaviour and interpretive processes. My work addresses this offering an understanding of the role of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues.

The design also included an issue for respondents to frame that cut across institutions. The tension between research and teaching was chosen to explore this since it was thought that respondents from new and old universities, with a potential difference in the emphasis their institutions place on research versus teaching, may see this issue differently. The findings confirmed this division between Alpha and Beta respondents. All respondents recognised and applied scripts specific to academia but also on occasions pulled on scripts specific to the working context of their respective universities. I labelled these university

level scripts as local academic scripts. Under closer observation it became clear that when local and academic scripts align (as for Beta business school with a focus on research) respondents draw predominantly from the general academic scripts; When academic and local scripts do not align, as was the case with respondents based at Alpha business school with a focus on teaching, respondents draw predominantly on local scripts. This supports the finding that individuals find it problematic to draw on multiple institutions unless the scripts align in some way.

Finally section 6.4 showed the presence of bottom-up institutional processes that enable respondents to make sense of scripts and therefore impact on issue interpretation. I describe these bottom-up processes as 'meanings' in line with the work of Bartunek (1984) when discussing the sense-making element of interpretive schemes as detailed in chapter 2.

Chapter SEVEN

Discussion &Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

This chapter draws together the findings presented in chapters 5 & 6 and the literature in chapter 2 to build the concluding argument of the thesis in relation to how the institutional context impacts on the individual framing of strategic issues. My work like others (see for example Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Johnson, Smith & Codling, 2000) addresses micro-institutional processes. In providing micro-translation there is also a need to further understand the linking mechanism between micro-individual and macro-institutional arrangements. This is why my research built upon and extended the conceptual work of Barley & Tolbert (1997).

Within this chapter I first discuss the contributions my research is able to make to the literature on problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis (section 7.2). I show that the institutional context has not been adequately addressed by either the problem formulation or strategic issue diagnosis literatures. Instead both have tended to be directed towards researching a combination of individual and group level factors within an organisational context. I am able to demonstrate that the institutional context impacts on issue diagnosis through the enactment of scripted behaviours. Secondly I explain why organisations in the same competitive environment or what I describe as the institutional setting define strategic issues differently.

I then detail the contribution my research is able to make to the institutional literature through explaining the role of multiple institutions (section 7.3). I show that consistent with Barley & Tolbert (1997) institutional scripts operate at multiple levels ranging in the case of my research from the institutional to sub institutional levels (e.g. academia and business school institutional levels).

Linked to this point there has been a distinct lack of empirical work investigating the impact of multiple institutions on actors' behaviour and interpretive processes. I show that scripts (representative of top-down institutional processes) are applied 'discretely' to frame strategic issues. That is respondents in my research drew on multiple institutions and associated scripts but not simultaneously.

In section 7.4 I discuss the contribution my research is able to make to the institutional literature by separating out the concept of 'scripts' and 'meanings' within interpretive schemes. The findings presented in chapters 5 & 6 lend support to institutionalists (see for example Dobbin *et al.* 1993; Edelman, Uggen and Erlanger, 1999; Scott, 2001) who contend that both top-down and bottom-up institutional processes are at play. I add a level of clarity through elaborating on both the nature and role of bottom-up institutional processes. To achieve this I draw on the work of Bartunek (1984) in describing these bottom-up processes as 'meanings'. These enable actors to interpret institutionally defined scripts. Two groups of meanings are identified: Those who appear to 'buy into' their institutional scripts, seeing them as legitimate, and who therefore apply bottom-up institutional processes that are in alignment with these scripts; and those respondents who don't see the institutional scripts as legitimate, displaying bottom-up interpretive processes critical of the scripts. I present a model in section 7.4 that depicts scripts forming the 'building' blocks around which alternative meaning systems, indicative of interpretive schemes are arranged (Bartunek, 1984).

In chapter 2, section 2.6 I presented the following conceptual model (figure 7.1). I argued that scripted behaviours played out through action result in the replication or alteration of interpretive schemes. Interpretive schemes (Ranson *et al.* 1980; Bartunek, 1984) have been viewed as being resilient to change (see for example Ranson *et al.* 1980). This according to Ranson *et al.* (1980) is because the dominant coalition has a vested interest in the reproduction of the prevailing ways of thinking and behaving within an institutional setting.

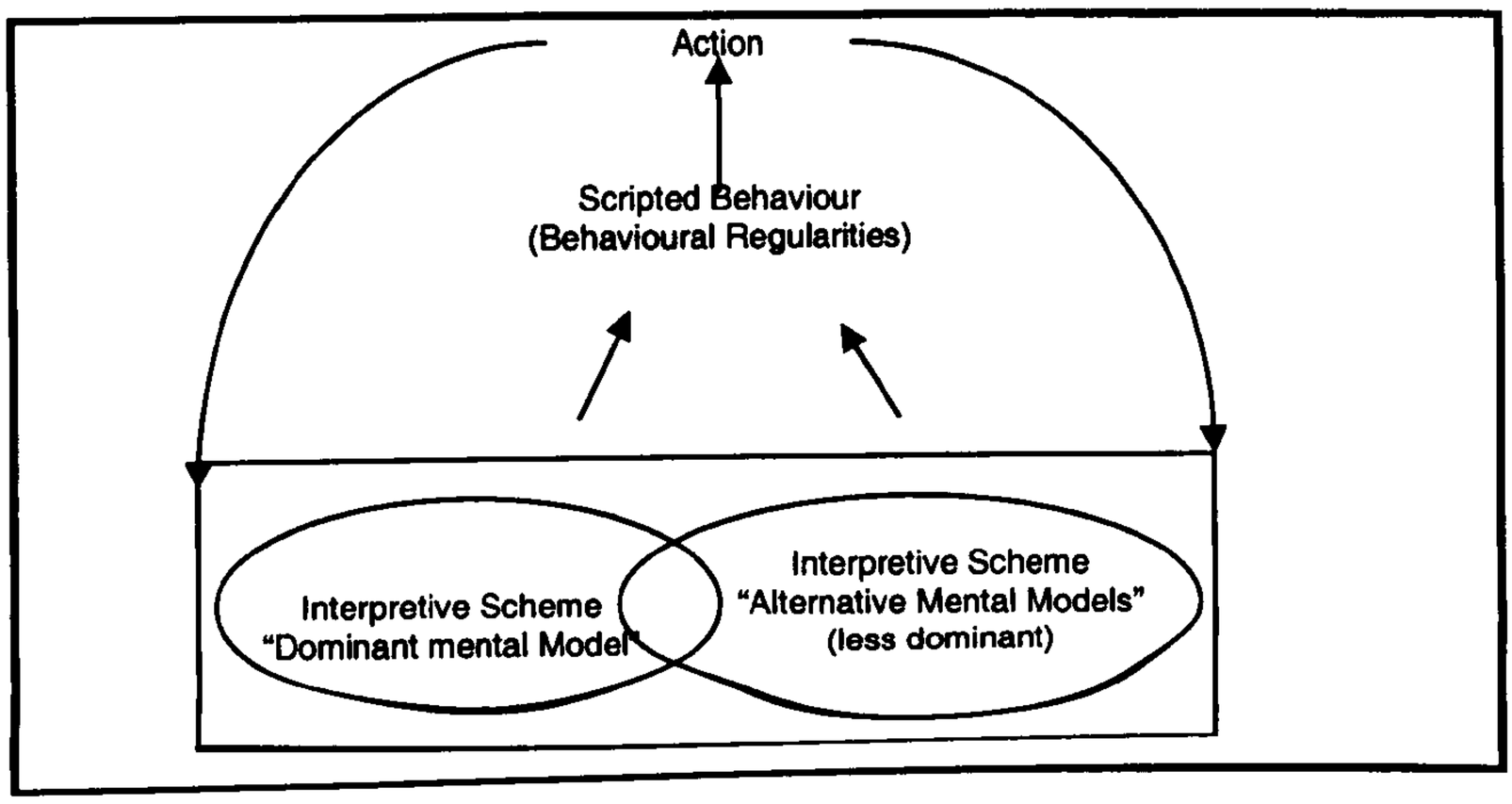


Fig 7.1 Conceptual Model developed in chapter 2

I complete this chapter with a detailed discussion of reflections on the PhD process, followed by the practical implications of my research.

7.2 The Role of the Institutional Context in Issue Interpretation

As I note in chapter 2 both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures have explored the individual framing of strategic issues, focusing primarily on individual and group level factors. Neither have addressed how institutional forces impact on the individual framing of strategic issues. As such, the institutional context is an important yet under researched arena within the strategic diagnosis and problem formulation literatures. The findings from my research demonstrate that the institutional context does indeed play an important role in shaping how actors frame strategic issues. These enable me to:

1. Show that the institutional context impacts on issue interpretation through the enactment of scripted behaviours.

2. Extend the work of Dutton *et al.* (1989) by explaining why organisations in the same competitive environment or what I describe as the institutional setting interpret strategic issues differently.

7.2.1 The Role of Scripted Behaviours in Issue Diagnosis

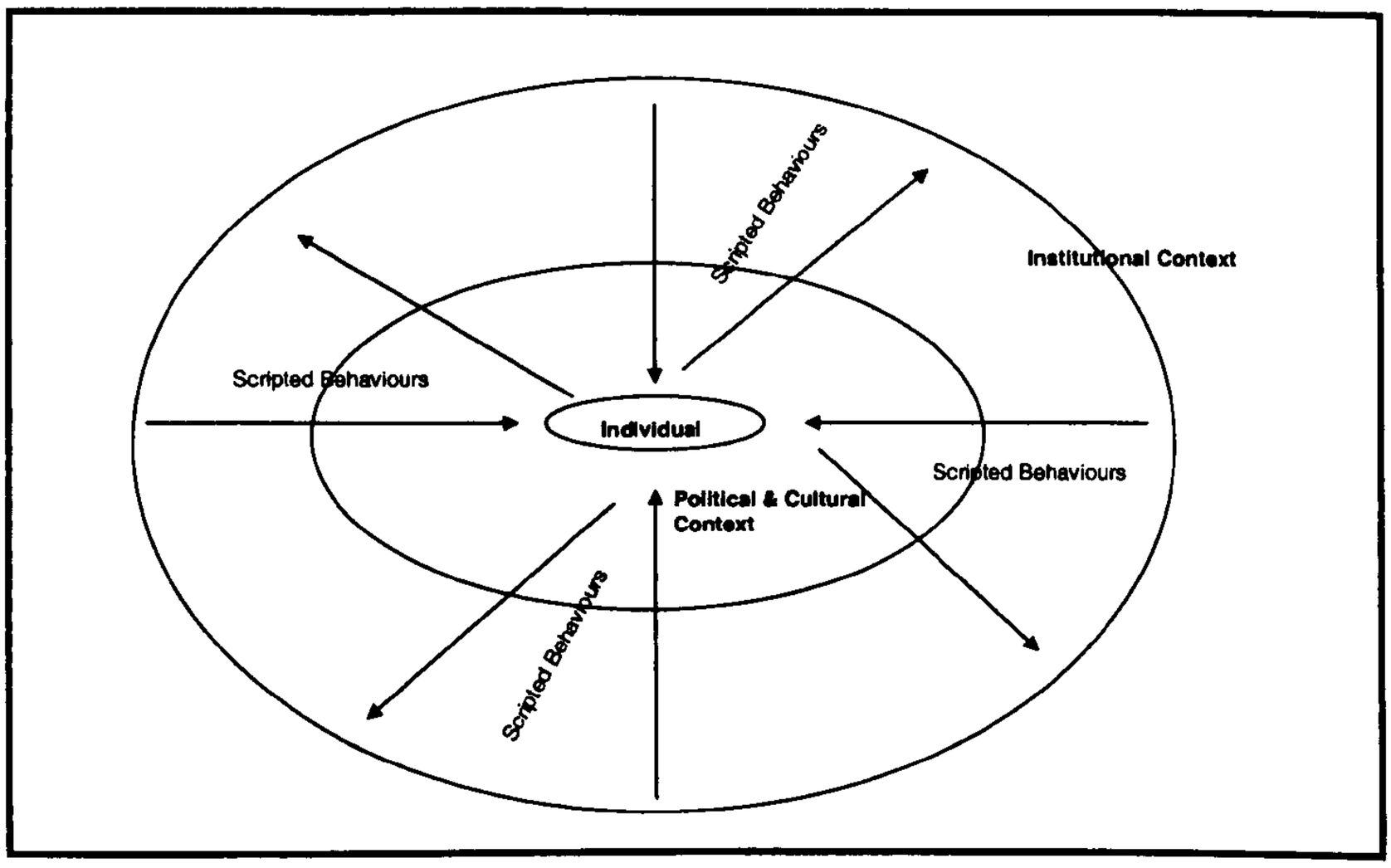
Both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures have been directed towards gaining insight into the formative stages of decision-making.

The strategic issue diagnosis literature has tended to focus on the diagnosis phase whereby stimuli are interpreted and understood within the context of an organisation exposed to political and cultural influences. This is as opposed to the problem formulation literature that has focused on the individual and group influence on problem perception.

According to both the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures the way in which an issue is identified, defined, and communicated can influence individual interpretations and, subsequently, organisational actions (Daft and Weick 1984; Dutton and Duncan 1987). For example, when organisational actors view an issue as urgent and feasible, they will be more likely to work to mobilise organisational resources toward resolving the issue than if the issue is not viewed as urgent or feasible (Dutton and Duncan 1987). An issue that is interpreted as a threat versus an opportunity will also elicit a different response according to Dutton and Jackson (1987). However, these studies reveal little about how the institutional context impacts on issue interpretation. Indeed this in part led Ginsberg and Venkatraman (1992: 26) to note that "previous research has neglected to demonstrate whether institutional contexts directly influence strategic responses".

My research was directed towards addressing the role of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues. I showed in chapter 6 that institutions, enacted through scripted behaviours play an important role in issue diagnosis. This raises an interesting question for the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures: To what extent do institutions influence the political and cultural contexts of organisations? Taking a structuration perspective it might be expected that this may be only part of the question. The question also needs to be addressed as to how the cultural and political contexts of organisations influence the maintenance and change of existing institutional arrangements. A future research agenda might explore issue diagnosis by applying a multilevel model, incorporating a structuration perspective, which includes organisational and institutional level factors. Fig 7.2 depicts the relationship between the institutional context and the political and cultural

context as advocated by the problem formulation and strategic issue diagnosis literatures.



7.2 A Proposed Relationship between the Institutional Context and Political & Cultural Context

At the individual level I showed in chapter 6 that scripted behaviours also play a role in shaping the interpretive processes of actors. Consequently scripted behaviours shape the realities through which actors construct their ways of seeing and perceiving their environment. This is consistent with the work of Berger & Luckmann (1966) & Weick (1979) who contend that issues are constructed by organisational actors to reflect the reality they inhabit. As noted in chapter 2 the problem formulation literature has focused on problem perception at the individual and group levels. So for example Newell & Simon (1972) found that individuals structure the nature of the problem in such a way so as to be in agreement with past experiences. Nutt (1998) builds upon the work of Pounds (1969) in examining the role of activists on both the framing and formulation process.

My research suggests that by studying the role of institutions on behaviour and cognition it may be possible to gain further insight into problem perception. Consequently future strategic issue diagnosis and problem formulation research should address the extent to which institutions, enacted in terms of scripted

behaviours, impact on issue diagnosis within a range of institutional settings. There has been an on going debate within the institutional literature (see for example Scott, 1981) that environments differ to the degree to which they subject organisations and actors contained within to institutional forces. For example Scott (1981) argues that the retail sector is subject to low institutional forces but relatively high competitive or 'technical' forces. A future research agenda might readily explore the extent to which different institutional contexts (subject to differing levels of institutional and technical forces) impact on the formative stages of the decision making process.

7.2.2 Why Organisations and Actors within the Same Institutional Setting Interpret Strategic Issues Differently

Dutton (1993) establishes a number of 'conditions'[5] that put decision makers on automatic in their diagnosis of strategic issues. She argues that to advance her findings a future research agenda should study the content and structure of issue schemas. Previous to this Dutton *et al.* (1989) similarly argued that a future research agenda should address why it is that actors within similar organisations and within the same [institutional] setting frame strategic issues differently. My research addresses the latter point, showing that sub-institutional contexts enable organisations and actors within to interpret similar issues differently. As I argue above in section 7.2.1, institutions enacted through institutional scripts, direct behaviour and play a role in how respondents construct their realities.

As noted in chapter 3 my research design was set up to explore not only how institutional scripts impact on issue framing, but also to explore the impact of scripts operating at multiple levels within the same institutional setting. This is important because institutionalists have tended to focus on single institutional settings and at a single level - more often than not the organisational field level although not exclusively[6]. I achieved a multiple level focus by interviewing

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[5] Dutton discusses conditions in terms of 'standardisation'. That is where strategic issues may be routinised and where norms for consistency are strong, and past performance successful.
[6] See Scott (1995: 55-60) for a full discussion who explores research at varying levels of analysis used by institutionalists, ranging from the organisational sub system to the world system levels.

respondents that were both academics (institutional level) and employed by a business school (sub institutional level).

In chapter 6 it was shown that within the academic setting, both academic and local academic institutional scripts played a role in the framing of the general academic issue (tension between research and teaching). Scripts specific to academic and local academic institutional contexts were applied to interpret the general academic issue. Alpha business school respondents interpreted the issue of the tension between research and teaching in terms of local 'teaching' and 'management' orientated scripts, although they were aware of the importance of research. So for example Barry in section 6.2.6.6 drew from amongst others, the local academic script of 'teaching and admin taking priority over research' to interpret the general academic issue. In contrast, Beta business school respondents, which as a university has a long and established history of research excellence, applied 'research' orientated academic and local academic institutional scripts to interpret the issue. For Example, Mark in section 6.2.6.1, an aspiring researcher, drew extensively from the academic script of 'research being the name of the game' to frame the general academic issue.

This suggests that although all respondents were aware of the general academic scripts, which place a high degree of legitimacy on research orientated activities and associated behaviours; local academic scripts also play a mediating role in the framing of strategic issues. It becomes apparent that when local and academic scripts align (as for Beta business school with a focus on research) respondents draw predominantly from general academic scripts. When academic and local scripts do not align (as was the case with respondents based at Alpha business school with a focus on teaching) respondents draw predominantly on local scripts.

It would appear that the historical context of Alpha and Beta business schools, discussed in chapter 4 would appear to be playing a role. Alpha business school is a 'new' university which has traditionally focused on teaching of vocational orientated courses. This is in contrast to Beta business school which as a

'traditional' university places emphasis on research excellence at an international level.

What is clear is that sub-institutional scripts play a role in determining how issues are interpreted. To date the strategic issue diagnosis and problem formulation literatures have partially explained why actors within the same institutional setting interpret strategic issues differently in terms of organisational level issues. There is a need to address not only the extent to which the institutional context impacts on issue interpretation but also how the sub institutional level further shapes the interpretive processes of actors within the same institutional setting. This may offer valuable insight into why organisations and actors within the same institutional setting interpret issues in different ways. By gaining insight into the extent to which sub institutions impact on issue interpretation we will be in a better position to understand why actors frame issues in different ways and consequently more fully understand the role of institutions on issue interpretation.

7.3 The Role of Multiple Institutions

Unlike previous institutional studies that have focused on single institutional contexts that are also relatively unified (*i.e.* do not contain competing institutional logics as found for example in academia), my research examined firstly the role of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues and secondly the role of multiple 'levels' on the framing of strategic issues. Since my research first and foremost was set up to explore the impact of multiple institutions as well as sub institutions I am able to show that:

1. Consistent with Barley & Tolbert (1997) institutional scripts operate at multiple levels.
2. Demonstrate that individuals cannot draw on multiple institutions simultaneously.
3. And as a consequence of this finding challenge the focus to date made by prominent institutionalists on explaining change by drawing on opposing and contradictory institutional logics.

7.3.1 Multiple Levels & Multiple Institutions

Institutional accounts have been conducted at various levels and with differing units of analysis. Of late, multilevel approaches have received increasing attention in institutional analysis (see for example Friedland & Alford, 1991; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Greenwood, Suddaby & Hinings, 2002). The assumption that underpins these works is that "institutions operate at a variety of levels, and their elements can be embedded in and carried by cultures, by regimes, and by formal organizations" (Scott, 1994: 70). This is also consistent with the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) who themselves draw on a structuration perspective (Giddens, 1984).

Friedland & Alford (1991) suggest that analysis should be employed at the individual, organisational and institutional level to gain insight into individual and broader based phenomenon within institutional analysis. The implication is that all three levels are interdependent rather than existing separately.

> "An adequate social theory must work at three levels of analysis- individuals competing and negotiating, organizations in conflict and coordination, and institutions in contradiction and interdependency....All three levels of analysis are necessary to adequately understand.. Each level of analysis is equally an abstraction and reification; each is implicated in the other; none is more 'real' than any other. Individual action can be explained within a societal context, but that context can only be understood through individual consciousness and behavior. We conceive of these levels of analysis as 'nested', where organization and institution specify progressively higher levels of constraint and opportunity for individual action".
>
> (Friedland & Alford, 1991: 240-242)

My research lends support to the conceptual work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) by demonstrating that institutional scripts operate at multiple levels. More specifically lower order scripts are themselves informed by higher order scripts. This is important because it further demonstrates that there is a graduation of

scripts which become relatively more abstract as you move away from the individual to the institutional realm. I showed in chapter 6 that scripts specific to the sub-institutional settings were informed by the academic institutional setting, itself informed by the general principle (Barley & Tolbert, 1997) of 'autonomy' within the UK HE institutional setting. Alpha business school respondents recognised and in limited cases applied academic institutional scripts. Beta business school respondents recognised and applied a combination of academic and local institutional scripts.

To date the institutional literature has tended to view the affiliation to multiple institutions as a resource for which actors can presumably choose to pick institutionally relevant scripts from one setting and apply these to another institutional setting (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Scott, 2001). My research suggests something different; actors are not like children in a sweet shop able to pick and mix. Rather actors are constrained by existing institutional arrangements. This once more brings to our attention the degree to which actors have agency and can break free from the 'iron cage' (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). The findings from my research suggest that actors are blinkered by the institutional context that both offers ways of looking at the environment but also plays a role in how that environment is perceived.

Friedland & Alford (1991) claim that each social institution has its own central logic encapsulated by a "set of material practices and symbolic constructions" (1991: 248). According to Friedland & Alford (1991) institutional logics are often in contradiction that enables actors to draw from a range of logics and associated scripts. The cases of the diffusion of grievance procedures (Friedland & Alford, 1991), of work computerisation (Prasad, 1993), of corporate philanthropy (Galaskiewicz, 1991), of gay and lesbian employee advocacy for changes in human resource policies (Creed & Scully, 1998) and more recently the conceptual paper by Seo & Creed (2002) are testament to the growing literature advocating that actors are both knowledgeable and capable of exploiting contradictions in alternative institutional logics for which they have previously been associated with.

Sewell (1992) argues along similar lines when discussing the "transposability of schemas" (1992: 17) whereby although logics arise in one arena they may over time be applied to another, providing a rationale for acting and behaving differently. Sewell (1992) observes that "the schemas to which actors have access can be applied across a wide range of circumstances" (Sewell, 1992: 17) and institutional settings.

All of the aforementioned authors draw reference to actors drawing on logics or in the case of Sewell (1992), schemas, from one institutional setting and apply these to other settings. It is this overlap or previous associations that enables and facilitates change according to institutionalists (Scott, 2001). My findings contradict the work of Friedland & Alford (1991) & Sewell (1992) & other notable research detailed above. From the findings presented in chapters 5 & 6 it would appear that respondents do not arbitrarily draw on scripts from one institutional setting and apply these to another setting. Instead what was found in my research was that respondents apply scripts to strategic issues only relevant to that institutional setting. One explanation for this is that actors are constrained by existing institutional arrangements. I include in these institutional arrangements incentives and power arrangements that may direct behaviour and cognition.

Indeed through applying a hierarchy of issues, it became evident that respondents were both aware of academic scripts, both at a local university level and a wider academic institutional setting level. The example still holds value regarding respondents based at Alpha business school, with a focus on teaching, who although recognised academic level scripts applied local academic scripts to make sense of the tension between research and teaching. Likewise, respondents based at Beta business school, applied general academic scripts (in alignment with local academic scripts) to make sense of the same issue.

7.4 The Role of the Institutional Context in Shaping Interpretive Processes

This section adds to the institutional literature by expanding upon the relationship between bottom-up and top-down institutional processes. I show

that bottom-up processes are informed by existing institutional arrangements that are themselves informed by the interpretive schemes at play. This is important because I link behaviour and cognition to existing institutional arrangements.

As I note in chapter 2 a major criticism of institutional theory concerns the lack of consideration given to agency of decision-makers to "construct, change, and enforce" new ways of behaving and acting. So for example Covaleski & Dirsmith (1988) demonstrate the process of institutionalisation has tended to be interpreted as a "relatively passive, subtle, and long term phenomenon wherein societal expectations exist and organisations [and actors] conform to them" (1988: 562). The controversy surrounding the degree of agency stems from differing interpretations of industry creation and diffusion. There are those that favour a top-down process, whereby the institutional context determines behaviours and action. Conversely, there are those who favour a bottom-up process, whereby actors invent, adapt and negotiate their social world.

My research addresses micro level institutional processes by adding to the debate on top-down versus bottom-up institutional processes. I commence by discussing the work of Sewell (1992) because he is one of the few to address this. However his work focuses more on the structural domain as opposed to micro level institutional processes. I argue, in line with prominent institutionalists that bottom-up institutional processes require addressing if we are to provide a fuller account of institutionalisation processes (see for example Jepperson, 1991; Johnson, Smith & Codling, 2000; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 2001).

Sewell (1992) observes that structural arguments tend to "assume a far too rigid causal determinism in social life" (1992: 2) with top-down institutional processes constraining behaviour and action. I concur with Sewell that this has resulted in individual actors being viewed as mindlessly enacting institutionally defined scripts. The metaphor of structure as stability lends itself to "explanations of how social life is shaped into consistent patterns, but not to explanations of how these patterns change over time" (1992: 2). According to

Sewell (1992) there is a need for a more nuanced articulation of the meaning of social structures that acknowledges the capacity of people to transform them (i.e., bottom-up institutional processes).

However in terms of the emerging portrait of agency as re-interpreting and deploying established cultural schemas (Sewell, 1992), it still leaves us with an abstract image of the process of meaning-making. Consequently the work of Sewell (1992), which was directed at the interplay of institutional arrangements and individual meanings, pays specific attention to the institutional realm. He does not answer, for example, the question: What does providing common meanings look like and involve?

Over the past decade, our understanding has begun to shift away from a view of legitimating accounts as imported institutional scripts, reproduced in local settings by constrained actors to justify their practices and social arrangements. This view has emphasised isomorphic tendencies, linking legitimising accounts to the diffusion of identical organisational structures and logics of action (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991).

My research suggests that to some extent actors are constrained by broader institutional arrangements but also possess the ability to interpret institutionally derived scripts through applying meanings. Respondents in my study did on many occasions recite institutional accounts and scripts. However they also applied meanings to make sense of the strategic issues I presented them with. We can infer from this that there is interplay between actors and the institutional context. Actors are both conditioned by the institutional context and enabled by the same institutional context to apply an array of meanings, grouped into supporting and non-supporting of the institutional scripts. These meanings enable individual actors to innovate and change the existing institutional arrangements.

The work of Bartunek (1984) helps to add clarity to what common meanings look like and involve. Within my research respondents recognised on many occasions institutionally derived scripts, representative of top-down processes.

These same respondents also applied meanings, representative of bottom-up institutional processes. Meanings are grouped into those that support and help reproduce institutional scripts and those that apply meanings that are critical of the current institutional arrangements. These groups of meanings and associated scripts are indicative of differing interpretive schemes being employed by actors (Bartunek, 1984).

It is not the conflicting nature of institutionally derived schemas (macro level, represented by top-down institutional processes) that accounts for innovation and change. Rather it is the bottom-up processes described in my research as meanings from which change and innovation commences. Whilst the origins of these meanings were not the focus of my research, it seems sensible to argue that meanings are informed by both primary and secondary socialisation processes and that form a backdrop from which institutionally relevant scripts are interpreted.

It is also evident from the findings presented in chapters 5 & 6 that when presented with institutionally relevant strategic issues, respondents consistently applied scripts and meanings associated with specific institutions. This would suggest that actors are conditioned by institutional arrangements that both influence behaviours and ways of thinking. These institutional arrangements also play a role in the development of interpretive schemes. Actors possess a multitude of interpretive schemes, informed and directed from the institutions from which they have affiliated or have affiliations with. Scripts and meanings, which comprise the interpretive schemes, would appear to be discretely compartmentalised in the minds of actors.

The work of Johnson, Smith & Codling (2000) addresses in part the bottom-up institutional debate, connecting this to macro-institutional arrangements through a structuration perspective (Giddens, 1984) as adapted by Barley & Tolbert (1997). They explored change in the context of the privatisation of British Rail, examining the move from one institutional template to another. Unlike Sewell (1992) Johnson *et al.* (2000) focused on micro-institutional processes, applying script theory. Scripts are depicted as being mindlessly enacted under the pre-

privatised template, whilst more mindful script processing occurred when interpreting the new post privatisation template. Deinstitutionalising processes are highlighted which suggest a finite move from one template to another.

My research adds another layer of detail by introducing the concept of interpretive schemes (Bartunek, 1984). In order to move from one template to another it is likely that it is not only necessary that script revision takes place but as a precursor to this meanings become fluid. It seems sensible that the need for meanings to become 'unstuck' is the first stage, although this needs to be further understood and as such should form part of a future research agenda. For script revision to take place, actors partake in acts of individual and group 'experimentation' from which new meanings begin to emerge and take shape. Through this process of experimentation new meanings and scripts interact with one another reflecting the repositioning of interpretive schemes.

Seo and Creed (2002) addressed the issue of how institutional arrangements change. They ask the question that if " institutions are, by definition, rooted in taken-for-granted rules, norms, and routines, and if those institutions are so powerful that organizations and individuals are apt to automatically conform to them, then how are new institutions created or existing ones changed over time?" (2002: 222).

They introduce a dialectical framework for change that brings in the historical context of institutional contradictions and human 'praxis' as the mediating mechanisms that link institutional embeddedness and institutional change. They argue that the issue of agency has not been adequately tackled by Barley & Tolbert (1997) and others writing from this tradition (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Hirsch & Lounsbury, 1997). In particular Seo & Creed (2002) attempt to advance the Barley & Tolbert (1997) paper by asking the questions of where does contextual change come from and how do actors both individually and collectively come to conscious point?

The research design was directed towards ascertaining the presence of scripts and whether or not these play a role in the individual framing of strategic issues.

Given the arguments of Seo & Creed (2002) there is a need to further understand the role of power and politics and the extent to which these account for how new practices and ways of thinking emerge within institutional settings. There is a need therefore to understand the extent to which power and politics play a part in the development of interpretive schemes and the mêlée for 'which' interpretive scheme dominates and subsequently how the institution develops.

Research examining institutional change has tended to focus on either exogenous or endogenous explanations (Scott, 2001). Those favouring the former contend that jolts can create a space for institutional entrepreneurs to introduce new logics from which interpretive schemes change and form (DiMaggio, 1988; Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002; Oliver, 1992). After jolts and adoptions other key reference groups are important legitimising agents (Lee & Pennings, 2002; Townley, 2002; Zilber, 2002) that enable the interpretive scheme to become institutionalised.

Change that unfolds from endogenous sources has been relatively under researched (Scott, 2001). Bartunek (1984) illustrated in her landmark paper that major changes in interpretive schemes unfold through 'dialectical processes' in which old and new ways of thinking and understanding interact resulting in a synthesis. She also notes that change in interpretive schemes involves substantial uncertainty and chaos that may be 'disorientating and paralysing'. Actors actively lobby for their preferences (Lawrence, 1999), to the point where fields have been characterised as "arenas of power relations" (Brint & Karabel, 1991: 355) and institutional war zones (Hoffman, 1999). My research suggests that actors who buy into their institutional scripts are part of the dominant coalition with a vested interest to continue the status quo. Conversely those supporting the dominant coalition marginalise actors that don't see institutional scripts as legitimate. It would appear that this marginalisation is associated with these actors having meanings critical of the institution. The role of power and politics in the development of interpretive schemes still requires addressing and should form part of a future research agenda into micro-institutional processes.

Where my research can add to the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) is through linking behavioural scripts with cognition; something that Barley & Tolbert (1997) sought to advance in there future agenda of institutional theory. I introduced a structuration perspective (Giddens, 1984) in line with the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) because it is one of the few linking mechanisms between micro and macro-institutional arrangements that have been applied within the social sciences and management literatures respectively. It has been demonstrated that that bottom-up institutional processes are also at play with top-down institutional processes. I add a level of clarity by describing the nature and role of bottom-up institutional processes. This is important because up to the late 1990's the institutional literature had tended to take a deterministic point of view, with institutions, enacted through scripted behaviours accounting for why actors behave and act as they do (see for example Scott, 2001). Consequently my research lends support to the conceptual work of Scott (2001), showing that scripts (representative of top-down institutional processes) work in tandem with meanings (representative of bottom-up institutional processes).

Whilst individual actors may attach different meanings to the scripts, so long as these individuals continue to enact the same scripts, they are still able to interact and work together to achieve their work goals. These scripts are also relatively resistant to change, re-enforced and perpetuated through interaction and socialisation processes (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). This therefore may explain why more than one interpretive scheme can exist within the same institutional setting. Actors recognise and in many circumstances repeat taken-for-granted scripted behaviours enabling them to work together, despite that these scripted behaviours are associated with a variety of different meanings. These meanings are grouped into alternative interpretive schemes, one of which associated with the dominant coalition, and others that are associated with other coalitions within the institution.

The clearest indication of this was present within the legal institutional setting. As noted in section 6.4.1.1 James and Andrew applied meanings that were

sympathetic to the legal institutional scripts, appearing to buy into these scripts. This is opposed to respondents such as Melanie and Jackie who applied meanings that were critical of the profession. These are indicative of differing interpretive schemes being in use. Nonetheless all of these respondents recognised the scripts that help define the legal institutional setting. These common scripts facilitate communication and a common understanding even though the meanings that they apply are clearly different. Fig 7.3 shows the revised model described in section 2.6 of chapter 2.

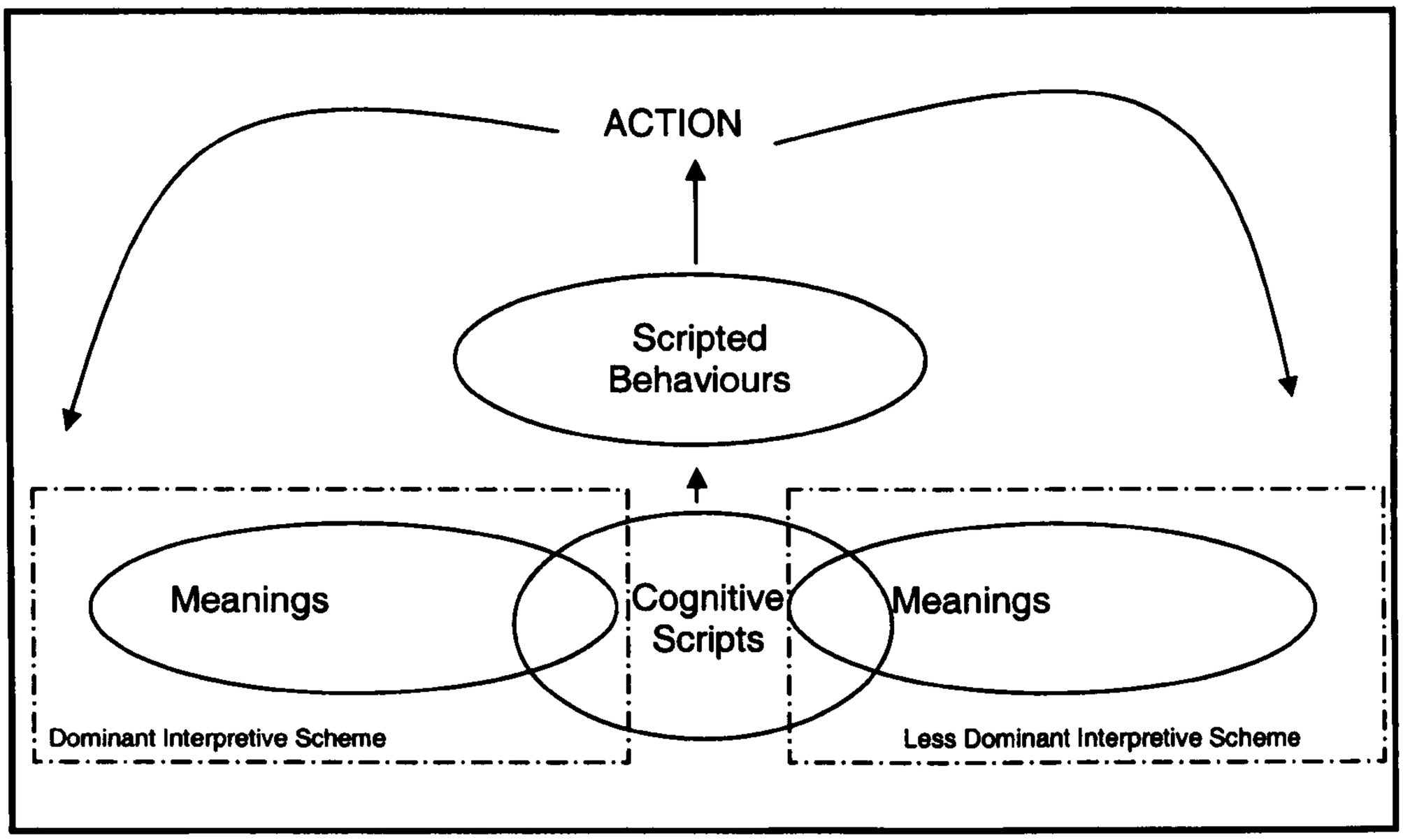

Fig 7.3 Revised relationships between meanings, cognitive scripts and scripted behaviours and action

In terms of a future research agenda, the review of the extant literature culminating in the research design, which was refined through the piloting exercises, led to a focus on academia, accountancy and law as institutional settings. There is however a need not only to verify this within these institutional settings but also to establish the extent to which these findings are transferable to other less typical institutional settings (Bartunek, 1984). By presenting the findings in chapters 5 & 6 in thick description (Geertz, 1973) the reader is in a position to assess the degree of transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A future research agenda should seek to ascertain the relative strength of top-down (scripted behaviours) and bottom-up institutional processes (meanings) that are present? To what extent do they play a role in the framing of

strategic issues within institutional settings that are not subject to the same regulatory requirements?

To these ends there is a need to further investigate when scripted behaviours and meanings dominate the framing of the issue. It was found within the institutional settings investigated within this research that where meanings and scripts align; actors predominantly draw on institutionally defined scripts. Where meanings and scripts did not align, actors drew predominantly from meanings. There remains a significant research agenda; Firstly to affirm or refute these findings; Secondly to ascertain what other factors might give rise to meanings dominating the framing of the issue as opposed to scripts and vice-versa. So, for example, the strategic development literature (Nutt, 1998) and to a lesser extent the institutional literature (Selznick, 1957) draw attention to the role of self-interest and the role of politicking as factors that influence the framing of the issue. Nutt (1998) sought to understand the role of "activists" and, in particular, the impact of claims by stakeholders on the framing and formulation process. Future research might readily explore these findings and in doing so elaborate on the relative alignment of scripts and meanings.

Finally, this research has shed light on the role of scripted behaviours and meanings on the framing of the issue. The extent to which this is a conscious, as opposed to a subconscious process has yet to be determined. It appears from my research that actors are able to reflect upon scripts and therefore do not act as 'cultural dopes'. It may be because the respondents in this study were experiencing significant change which 'alerted' them to their behaviours and actions. A future research agenda should therefore attempt to replicate these findings in settings that are relatively stable.

7.4.1 Summary of Contributions

Through the discussion presented in this chapter I have shown that the institutional context impacts on issue diagnosis through the enactment of scripted behaviours. I have also offered an explanation as to why organisations in the same institutional setting define strategic issues differently.

My research contributes to the institutional literature through highlighting the role of multiple institutions. I showed that scripts (representative of top-down institutional processes) are applied 'discretely' to frame strategic issues. That is actors may draw on multiple institutions and associated scripts but not simultaneously. In doing so I challenged the focus to date by institutionists on accounting for change primarily by relying on top-down orientated institutional processes through drawing on opposing and contradictory institutional logics. Instead change may also stem from bottom-up institutional processes when actors apply meanings to make sense of the institutionally derived scripts.

Scripts were also shown to operate at multiple levels ranging in the case of my research from the institutional to sub-institutional levels that supports the conceptual work of Barley & Tolbert. Finally I demonstrated that both top-down and bottom-up institutional processes are at play. To further understand the nature and role of bottom-up institutional processes I drew on the work of Bartunek (1984) in describing these processes as 'meanings' which enable actors to interpret institutionally defined scripts. Two groups of 'meanings' were identified; those that apply meanings that are sympathetic to institutionally derived scripts and those that are critical of these same scripts. To further our understanding into micro-institutional processes I have also argued that it is useful to view scripts as the building blocks around which alternative meaning systems, indicative of interpretive schemes are arranged (Bartunek, 1984). The following section is directed towards critically reflecting upon the research.

7.5 Reflections on the Research

This section is directed towards evaluating the research and research process, it comprises of four further sub sections. In section 7.5.1 I reflect upon the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpinned my research. I draw specifically upon the work of Bryman (1989) to illustrate my position on the degree to which these philosophical assumptions should bind a researcher to a specific research paradigm. Section 7.5.2 examines the theory that I drew

upon in chapter 2. I discuss the implications of applying the Barley & Tolbert (1997) framework to my research. Section 7.5.3 reflects on the research design and method, and how these might have affected the quality of the data. I note that by applying an interviewing method there are several limitations. In evaluating each of the three areas discussed, section 7.5.4 examines the practical lessons I have learnt from undertaking the PhD.

7.5.1 Reflections on Ontology & Epistemology

I recognised from an early stage of the PhD process that my beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology) and interlinked with this the grounds upon which knowledge may be sought (epistemology) lean towards a socially constructed perspective. The PhD 'experience' afforded me an opportunity to deliberate on questions associated with these assumptions and their relationship with the research problem. On reflection the readings of the work by Berger & Luckmann (1966) influenced my perspective on the nature and content of management research. They inform my perspective on institutional theory and my assumptions regarding the nature of reality and the grounds upon which knowledge may be sought.

Berger & Luckmann (1966) draw attention to symbolic activity and how social order is negotiated on a day by day basis. From such a standpoint actors collectively negotiate and invent their environment. Such invention is not however random but is itself informed by existing institutional arrangements. They argue that 'reality is socially constructed and that the sociology of knowledge must analyse the process in which this occurs.' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966: 13). From this perspective knowledge is contingent upon social, historical and cultural processes, which in turn casts into doubt claims that knowledge can be universal. Therefore the application of functionalist (Burrell & Morgan, 1979) and scientific methods to social and culturally orientated phenomena and the attempt to discover universal laws cannot be sustained.

This conclusion evolved over the time taken to complete the PhD. It is also a conclusion that is a 'world' removed from my beliefs and assumptions as of the time of embarking upon the PhD. This has significant implications as to how and what I research within the management field. So for example when asking myself do my assumptions and beliefs now result in ready made universal models being largely redundant my response would be *no*. I do see benefits to management research in pursuing and developing these types of models but that these need to be adapted to local contexts that take into account social, historical and cultural processes.

My ontological stance adopted in this thesis also impacted at the time on my beliefs regarding the on grounds on which knowledge may be sought (epistemology). This was particularly the case given that my research into micro-institutional arrangements was itself informed by a social constructionist perspective. I perceived the need at the time to understand the 'individual framing of strategic issues' from the point of view of the respondent. This was because early on in the research process there was a perceived requirement to understand the role of prior experiences (both in terms of primary and secondary socialisation processes) of respondents and how these might impact on the individual framing of strategic issues.

In reflecting upon whether given the same research question and literature would I elect to base my methodological approach on my epistemological and ontological beliefs my response would be *no* but this requires qualification. Regarding ontology, my personal beliefs and the research problem informed by the extant institutional literature that I drew upon were consistent, therefore I would not change my stance adopted throughout this thesis. However with regards to epistemology I would consider alternative positions. Perhaps what is more important and that I have recognised on reflection is that the research problem should be the main consideration for selecting the appropriate method(s) as opposed to my epistemological beliefs. Indeed Bryman (1989) expresses this more eloquently as illustrated in the following passage:

"Each research design and method should be taken on its merits as a means of facilitating the understanding of particular research problems, and that a fetishistic espousal of favoured designs or methods and an excessive preoccupation with their epistemological underpinnings can only stand in the way of developing such an understanding"

Bryman (1989:255)

This statement accurately reflects my beliefs regarding the role of epistemology in management research. The nature of the research problem should be the starting point upon which research methods are selected. On reflection I became 'caught up' in philosophical debates that hindered my attempts to untangle the research problem as informed by the extant institutional and strategic formulation literatures.

I also acknowledge that given the definition of scripts as applied to my research, alternative methods at the piloting stage could have been more thoroughly considered. I discuss this further in section 7.5.3. My position on the role of epistemology versus the research problem will not only direct my future research activities but also importantly how I intend to guide PhD candidates. I discuss this in section 7.5.4.

7.5.2 Reflections on Theory

It was argued in chapter 2 that the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) is one of the few to give a compelling account of the linking mechanism between macro and micro-institutional arrangements. This was why my research drew extensively on their work. As a sensitising devise the model described by Barley & Tolbert (1997) proved useful to operationalising my research. Indeed I adopted the same definition of institutions and scripts with scripts subsequently shown to play a pivotal role in the individual framing of strategic issues. However in terms of understanding bottom-up institutional processes (meanings), their model gave little guidance. This is why I drew upon the work of Bartunek (1984) and Ranson *et al.* (1980) and their research into interpretive schemes. I

applied the work of Weick (1995) on sensemaking to further link micro and macro-institutional arrangements.

The research above and detailed in chapter 2 enabled me to gain some insight into the research question for which this thesis has addressed. Within chapter 7 I grappled with the issue of change which given the emphasis on deterministic nature of the environment has proved problematic for institutionalists. Here again the model developed by Barley & Tolbert (1997) proved problematic. Barley & Tolbert (1997), like Giddens (1984) develop their model for the purpose of sensitising researchers to particular issues. In terms of change, Barley & Tolbert (1997) propose that change is likely to occur when a generalised consensus arises around a particular issue and even then will likely require an external jolt before script revision occurs. They do not address the issue of what happens when an actor seeks to revise an institutional arrangement but runs into opposition from powerful actors who seek to preserve that arrangement. Instead their model presents institutionalisation as a cognitive process, distinct and separate from other factors such as the role of power and politics.

This is why I drew specifically on the work of Ranson *et al.* (1980) who discuss the role of the dominant coalition in preserving the status quo. However my interview protocol, designed prior to incorporating the work of Ranson *et al.* (1980), did not fully capture these types of exchanges. This is perhaps the most significant short falling of my thesis to theory. Future research should address the role of dominant and less dominant coalitions and how these impact on micro-institutional processes.

There are also other promising and emerging debates regarding how micro-institutional change may unfold. So for example the work on institutional entrepreneurship (see for example Beckert, 1999) offers promising new ways of thinking about micro-institutional change. However given the findings presented in chapters 5 & 6 alongside the literature review presented in chapter 2, I argue there is still a need to understand the role of power and politics played

out between the dominant and less dominant coalitions and how these impact on the individual framing of strategic issues.

7.5.3 Reflections on Methodology

As rightly noted by Guba & Lincoln (1994) questions of paradigm are a fundamental starting point to guide research inquiry, and should come before the choice of methods. Consequently my decision to embark upon a qualitative method at the time was primarily informed by my beliefs regarding the grounds on which knowledge may be sought (epistemology) but also by the question as to the nature of reality (ontology) as informed by the extant institutional literature and my own beliefs.

By its very nature, taking an interpretist approach to the epistemological question places a commitment on the researcher to justify and demonstrate that methodological issues have been adequately dealt with (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Further to choose to undertake an interpretive research study is also to place limitations on the extent to which findings can be generalised. While some, such as Lincoln & Guba (1985), argue compellingly that all research in the social sciences is contextual, this accusation falls most deeply on qualitative research carried out from an interpretive stance (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Consequently I acknowledge that my research is limited in the extent to which findings can be generalised.

My decision to embark on an interpretive methodology employing an interviewing method was at best can be described as time consuming. This was primarily because of methodological issues concerning firstly identifying scripts and secondly understanding their relative impact on the individual framing of strategic issues. In retrospect many of the dilemmas faced can be attributed to the lack of agreement in the literature on the level of detail that should be considered. So for example should scripts be very detailed, containing descriptions of every single activity and associated patterns of interaction? Within my research scripts were identified at what can be described as operating at a high level of abstraction. This can largely be attributed to the application of

a semi-structured interviewing protocol. The research tool was relatively effective at identifying 'activities' but was less effective at identifying patterns of interaction. This should have been identified in the piloting exercise undertaken prior to the main fieldwork.

Prior to discussing the applicability of alternative research tools it would be useful to revisit my decision to adopt the HE sector as a suitable context to observe scripted behaviours. I argued in chapter 3 that as a prerequisite the research context was required to provide a 'good prospect' of observing differing institutions on the framing of strategic issues. One of two options could have been adopted. Firstly the study of actors operating in sectors undergoing structural change, so for example the NHS, local government. Secondly, the study of organisations with actors from differing institutional backgrounds, so for example Charity Trustees and Universities. My decision to apply the latter option was primarily informed by the time constraints of undertaking a PhD and for which longitudinal studies are likely to require extended periods of contact.

Having deliberated upon the context of study and given the definition of scripted behaviours as applied within my research, I recognise that other plausible methods could have been more thoroughly considered within the piloting stage. Again I need to acknowledge my evolving perspective on the role of epistemology throughout the PhD process and how this constrained myself from exploring alternative strategies.

In light of the relationship between my research problem and epistemological assumptions I acknowledge that participant observation offers the potential to further study the content of scripted behaviours. Having identified scripts through the application of participant observation a number of approaches could then be applied to understand the individual framing of strategic issues ranging from quantitative to qualitative. So for example the application of individual or group based interviews or for that matter the application of vignettes incorporating a cross section of scripts identified from the participant observation phase of the research.

The decision to incorporate a range of strategic issues was taken because it was found that scripted behaviours associated with a particular institution were being applied discretely in order to frame issues relevant only to that institution. On reflection it would have been advantageous to incorporate a fourth strategic issue that had relevance to all institutional settings. This could then have been taken forward to confirm or refute the finding that 'respondents draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously'. The question could have been as simple as asking respondents to comment on their purpose: That is 'what do you see your purpose being?' By leaving this question purposefully open ended the intention is to permit respondents to draw upon a range of experiences and scripts that may or may not cross institutional settings.

Given the foregoing discussion it should also be recognised that my research is limited by the size of the study. The fieldwork took place in two research sites, which allowed for comparison between them and the respondents, and some theoretical replication (Yin, 1994). A greater number of cases, however, may have reinforced the findings apparent in the study, or exposed some alternative explanation that was not revealed. Moreover, the fieldwork involved a relatively small number of respondents, which was partly a result of the nature of the question being researched, and partly the small number of eligible candidates who could take part in the research. At the time of the study, academics were generally busy individuals with demands on their time that made interviews with PhD candidates a relatively low priority. While the findings showed considerable consistency across all respondents interviewed and therefore is suggestive of saturation having been reached (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the sample is still small. There is a requirement therefore to further understand the extent to which these findings are replicable within firstly the same institutional settings and secondly alternative institutional settings.

The primary focus of this research from the outset referred to the role, if any, of scripted behaviours on the individual framing of strategic issues. The emergence of the concept of meanings became most apparent through undertaking the main fieldwork. Having defined the parameters of meanings in

relation to the extant institutional literature (see for example Bartunek, 1984), establishing broad patterns in the form of the insider/outsider dimension was as far as the research could claim credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Consequently there is a need to further understand these bottom-up processes in both their relative impact on issue interpretation and also their content.

7.5.4 Practical Lessons

In this section the major lessons learnt from reflections on the foregoing discussion in section 7.5 in conjunction with my personal experiences of the PhD supervisor-supervisee relationship are discussed. I further break this down into two interlinked domains; Firstly the need to develop a workable supervisor-supervisee relationship from the outset of the partnership; Secondly the establishment of reasonable, agreed expectations based on clear lines of communication.

Through undertaking this research two key themes are discussed in relation to the nature of the supervisor-supervisee relationship. Firstly, the need to understand from an early stage academic strengths and weaknesses. Secondly the need to build a working relationship based on empathy. In hindsight I benefited from early meetings in the PhD process with my primary supervisor. Although I did not fully realise this at the time these embryonic discussions set the agenda as to how the supervisor-supervisee relationship should work in reality. It seems particularly relevant to gain an understanding of what knowledge and skills students bring to their project so that strengths can be identified and weaknesses addressed. There are several areas I would probe for student understanding at the beginning of the supervisor-supervisee relationship; knowledge of relevant theoretical base; understanding of methodological procedures and options; writing skills. These issues are addressed in the remainder of section 7.5.

In my case my supervisor recognised that my general academic background in management studies was a potential weakness. Within the first two months of commencing the PhD programme I was asked to read a selected number of

readings in organisation theory as a means to address this. I found this particularly useful in building a foundation of knowledge from which to further build upon throughout the PhD process. I also found locating my voice and style of writing challenging given my generalist background in management studies. A particularly useful strategy employed by my primary supervisor involved directing me towards specific journals in order to establish an appropriate style of writing. This learning will be incorporated into how I address the issue of appropriate style.

I also see the need for regular contact points for the supervisor and supervisee to be negotiated upon at the start of the partnership. There are clearly times when it will be necessary to meet more regularly, so for example within the first year. These meetings are directed towards enabling the student to take stock of their progress. The rationale for this approach is quite simply to tangibly show a route through to completion. For the supervisor these regular directed meetings afford an opportunity to re-evaluate progress and set further agreed targets.

From this I recognise the importance of not only setting the scene initially but also being available to lend support to PhD candidates. This seems especially important given the isolation associated with this type of study. In terms of this 'special relationship' there is an incumbent requirement on behalf of the supervisor to demonstrate specific expertise in the field of studies but also build a relationship based on empathy with clear lines of communication between the student and supervisor. Psychological needs are by their nature perhaps more difficult to identify than academic needs which is why I stress the need to support students through regular meetings to discuss progress. In the final analysis the success of the relationship depends on sensitivity and tact.

The second and interrelated learning point involves the establishment of reasonable, agreed expectations based on clear lines of communication. Again regular meetings early on in the partnership establish how this will work in practice. Questions around how frequently to hold meetings and the submission of written papers to direct the meetings need to be addressed. I recognise that people have different approaches to learning and preferred habits of work. Nonetheless the structuring of time, both inside and outside of agreed meetings,

seems particularly salient in enabling both the student and supervisor to take stock of the situation.

On reflection the requests from my supervisors to write regular papers on progress helped but did not overcome in my case the psychological pattern in which writing-up became a more and more daunting prospect. I faced regular points on the PhD process of writer-block. Several strategies worked with varying degrees of success. So for example requests from my supervisors for short documents in a short time frame aided in overcoming immediate and seemingly immoveable problems. Essentially this involved breaking what I perceived to be large insurmountable problems into smaller achievable tasks. On a limited number of occasions I was asked to complete short papers at a desk near the office of my supervisor within the space of one to two hours. Although a relatively extreme tactic it clearly has its place as a strategy and again would be considered if the need was to arise. Finally the writing and rewriting of specific chapters enabled me to recognise that although there was still a significant amount of work still to complete that I had moved forward. However the linking of these chapters later surfaced as an issue which had to be addressed towards the latter part of the writing up phase through sheer determination on my behalf and regular exchanges of drafts with my supervisors. Again much like at the beginning of the PhD process there was a need in my case for regular contact in the writing up phase of the thesis. From my own experiences I recognise the need to be sensitive and vigilant to student requirements at this later and pressurised period in the PhD process.

There is a need to balance the freedom of the student to explore literatures and methodologies and the need to complete in an appropriate time frame. A number of interlinked issues resulted in the extended time that it took to complete the thesis. Difficulties with writing certainly account for part of this and I have outlined strategies intended to overcome these above. There is also a need to steer students away from dead-ends and extravagant ideas. My supervisors attempted this through asking for specific papers on for example the development of the argument within the literature review and how I addressed methodological issues associated with my research question. They also strongly

recommended the development of the methodology along more positivistic lines of enquiry during regular meetings. Reflecting on my own experiences I did not fully internalise the outcomes from these discussions.

This may explain why more than one pilot was required to develop a suitable research design and associated method. Before embarking upon a piloting exercise there is a need to have sufficiently defined the nature of the research problem and the scope of the project which in turn is grounded in the extant literature. I acknowledge that my supervisors were working towards these ends but that I did not verbalise my concerns at that time. This is a weakness that I recognise unnecessarily extended my development of the PhD thesis.

To summarise in advising PhD students I would take forward the learning points discussed in this section. I have recognised through personally reflecting on the PhD experiences that I naturally lean towards social constructionist or interpretist approaches but this should not certainly be the only consideration in my future research and equally will not colour my advice to students. The question remains, if starting this research again, would I apply the same methodology and method? The answer in terms of doctoral research in which there are several demands, would be *no* as indicated in section 7.5.3. I would consider the use of alternative methods including participant observation. In the future I intend to more closely be guided by the Bryman (1989) statement discussed in section 7.5.1. This would also direct my advice to future PhD students alongside the essential learning points detailed throughout section 7.5.

7.6 Practical Implications

In undertaking this research, the first and foremost aim from the outset has been to advance academic areas of concern and in my case to apply an institutional lens to the formative stages of the decision-making process. In doing so, insight into micro-institutional processes has been gained, including their influence on the individual framing of strategic issues.

In investigating the impact of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues I recognise there are significant implications for practice. Given the nature of my research, which was exploratory in nature, the findings are closely associated with the institutions under investigation for my research. Having specified this caveat it becomes clear that the way in which strategic issues are presented by the senior management team to employees is of some importance.

The work of Goffman (1959) with regard to impression management is of particular use. One small part of the skilfully crafted works of Goffman was directed towards understanding how actors are influenced by social arrangements but also towards how actors might undertake a creative role in interpreting social arrangements to construct an 'impression'. In applying the work of Goffman, senior management should be aware that the framing of the issue towards staff will play a significant role in determining which scripted behaviours are applied to make sense of the issue presented to them. This theme is also highlighted by Pounds (1969) who contends that problem finding is not usually the result of formal planning systems, but rather as a result of someone else defining or framing the problem for you. Nutt (1998) lends further support to this line of inquiry in highlighting the role made by important stakeholders on the framing and formulation process.

The initial framing of the issue by the senior management team is important in that this plays a significant role in determining what behaviours and actions are subsequently employed, and how the issue is made sense of (representative of bottom-up institutional processes). This is further supported by Mintzberg *et al.* (1976) who propose that the framing of the issue is probably the single most important "routine since it determines in large part, however implicitly, the subsequent course of action"(1976: 274). Consequently senior management teams need to be aware of their own influence on how the issues they present to their employees will likely impact on issue interpretation.

7.7 Summary.

This chapter was designed to act as a conclusion to the thesis. My research explicitly built upon the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997 because they have been one of the few to give a compelling account of the linking mechanism between macro and micro-institutional arrangements. They argue that macro-institutional arrangements are reproduced and altered through interaction between actors. Consequently interaction influences and shapes behaviour, which is itself informed by macro-institutional arrangements.

Nonetheless by focusing on behaviour and interaction Barley & Tolbert (1997) acknowledge they marginalise interpretation and cognition. I have argued that this need not be the case. Indeed Barley & Tolbert (1997) rightly observe that for actions to be interpretable, they must conform to taken-for-granted assumptions about the activities and interactions appropriate to actors. I have also argued from the outset that for social actions to be 'interpretable' they must be carried in the minds of actors. The question then arose as to what role, if any, the institutional context plays in the shaping of interpretive processes?

A micro-institutional perspective, informed by the work of Barley & Tolbert (1997) offered the opportunity to address the role of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues. This lead to the research question for which my research addressed:

How does the institutional context impact on the individual framing of the issue?

Up to this point scripts have been demonstrated to be an important component in explaining behaviour and action. However there has been a lack of research investigating whether scripts play a role in issue interpretation. In chapter 5 & 6 I demonstrated that institutions, enacted through scripts, play a key role in the framing of strategic issues. Subsequently I have shown top-down institutional processes are at play in strategic issue diagnosis.

I also examined in chapter 6 the role of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues. Respondents drew from a range of institutionally derived scripts but not simultaneously. The design also included an issue for respondents to frame, that cut across institutions (the tension between research and teaching was chosen to explore this). All respondents recognised and applied scripts specific to academia but also on occasions pulled on scripts specific to the working context of their respective universities. It became evident through the analysis of the data that 'when local and academic scripts align (as for Beta business school with a focus on research) respondents drew predominantly from the general academic scripts; When academic and local scripts do not align (as was the case with respondents based at Alpha business school with a focus on teaching) respondents drew predominantly on local scripts'. This demonstrates that actors find it hard to draw on multiple institutions unless scripts align in some way.

Finally in chapter 6, bottom-up institutional processes were shown to also be at play. I drew on the work of Bartunek (1984) in describing these bottom-up institutional processes as meanings. These were shown to enable respondents to make sense of scripts and therefore impact on issue interpretation. In line with prominent institutionalists (see for example Dobbin *et al.* 1993; Edelman, Uggen and Erlanger, 1999; Scott, 2001) my research confirms that both top-down and bottom-up processes are at play.

I make several contributions to the strategic issue, problem formulation and institutional literatures respectively. Firstly regarding the strategic issue and problem formulation literatures I have shown that institutions, enacted through scripted behaviours, play a central role in the framing of strategic issues, representative of top-down institutional processes being at play. As established in chapter 2 both of these literatures have not addressed the role of the institutional context on the individual framing of strategic issues. Secondly I also explained why organisations in the same institutional setting define strategic issues differently.

I have also contributed to the institutional literature by confirming that institutional scripts operate at multiple levels (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). One of the primary purposes of this study was to further understand the role of multiple institutions on the individual framing of strategic issues. I have demonstrated that actors draw from multiple institutions but not simultaneously; scripts are applied to frame issues relevant only to that institution. Consequently my research challenges the focus to date by institutionists on explaining change by drawing on opposing and contradictory institutional logics (see for example Seo & Creed, 2002; Sewell, 1992).

As opposed to focusing exclusively on top-down explanations of change I have argued that bottom-up institutional processes are also important if we are to gain a fuller understanding of how institutions evolve. The findings presented in chapter 6 lend support to a growing consensus within the institutional community (see for example Dobbin *et al.* 1993; Edelman, Uggen and Erlanger, 1999; Scott, 2001) that both top-down and bottom-up institutional processes operate in tandem. I add a level of clarity through describing these bottom-up processes and their relationship with top-down processes. I presented a revised model in fig 7.3 that portrays scripts as forming the building blocks around which differing meaning systems are arranged. Scripts (top-down institutional processes) facilitate communication and continuity. Meanings (representative of bottom-up institutional processes) enable actors to interpret institutionally defined scripts. Linked with these meanings the role of dominant and less dominant coalitions may further account for how change unfolds.

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APPENDIX TO CHAPTER FIVE

Introduction

This appendix is designed to illustrate all scripts identified in the study that was not previously drawn upon in chapter 5. Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 & 5.4 in chapter 5 showed all those respondents that recited scripts relevant to the institutional settings of law, accounting & academia. The appendix follows a similar 'tabulated' format, commencing by detailing the legal institutional setting, followed by the accounting and academic institutional settings. Lastly the sub institutional setting scripts for Alpha & Beta business schools are illustrated.

Legal Institutional Setting

Script: "Trainees are expected to undertake vocational based training"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Andrew	Affiliations with the High Court Judges	"The way in which we were changed just before I joined the profession. It moved from being what I would describe as academic testing whereby you sit and take exams to being more orientated towards learning skills."
Sam	Non Practicing Barrister	"The training is quite hands on in nature. Some group work, certainly lots of interaction with legal professionals."

Script: "Attending formal dinners is mandatory for entry to the Bar"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Andrew	Affiliations with the High Court Judges	"I was taken by surprise by the need to take formal dinners. I came from a non traditional background, i.e. a comprehensive upbringing followed by studies at a new university. In hindsight the experience was surreal."
John	Non Practicing Barrister	"One of the most enjoyable experiences I experienced whilst training was attending the formal dinners. This was a great opportunity to mix with your friends and perhaps more senior people in a relatively informal setting if I can say that."
Craig	Non Practicing Solicitor	"I converted over to the solicitor route at an early stage which from a personal point of view was a complete change. With the Bar you have to attend these formal dinners, which when I say formal they really were quite formal…very traditional in their outlook."

Script: "<u>When attending formal dinners as a trainee you must be dressed appropriately (e.g. black gown)</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Sam	Non Practicing Barrister	"I simply remember the dress code. Dressed in black all of us were sitting there eating the food put in front of us."
Ben	Non Practicing Barrister	The abiding memory of my training was the attending of the formal dinners. We were all required to dress in black. Before we could sit we were required to stand as the important people filed in."

Script: "<u>Wait for the judges to file in</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Andrew	Affiliations with High Court Judges	"There is undoubtedly a lot of tradition associated with the Bar Councils of Scotland and England. Under the English…sorry English & Welsh system the Judges file in before you may sit down. A bit like attending our award ceremonies here I guess."
Ben	Non Practicing Barrister	"I found the whole experience overly theatrical. We, as trainees were required to stand in complete silence as the Judges and teaches filed in."

Script: "When attending the formal dinners as a trainee you must bow your head to the judges"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Ben	Non Practicing Barrister	"It was all very ritualistic…bow your heads as the judges slowly walked by, passing the odd comment to one another."
Craig	Non Practicing Solicitor	"Like I have already stated, the whole affair was very, what can I say traditional. We stood with our heads down as the judges made there way in."

Script: "When attending the formal dinners as a trainee you can't leave before the judges leave"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Craig	Non Practicing Solicitor	"From the start to the finish the dinners were all about ritual…conforming to past traditions. For example at the end of the evening the trainees were not expected to leave and certainly quietened down as the Judges made their way out of the hall."
Ben	Non Practicing Barrister	"I've spent a couple of evenings as the guest of one of my friends…it really was noticeable returning that students were required to make way for the Judges as they filed out."

Script: "<u>As a qualified member you get a placed name when attending the formal dinners</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
John	Non Practicing Barrister	It was really quite bizarre. We were all required to find our own seating arrangements. Whereas the more important people were given seating places. I can only say that this reflects the hierarchy of the profession."

Script: "<u>QC's & Judges are positioned at the head of the dining hall at the formal dinners</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Richard	Non Practicing Solicitor	"The thing I remembered most was the seating arrangements. The top QCs and Judges sat separately from the rest of us."
Ben	Non Practicing Barrister	"Like with any well established ritual the formal dinners had their own quirks. The important people [Judges and QC's] would sit at the top of the hall quite separate from other groups."

Script: "<u>The courtroom is the preserve of barristers/advocates</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Richard	Non Practicing Solicitor	"The courtroom has traditionally been the domain of barristers. The conservative government attempted to open up the court room but this has been largely ineffectual."
Sam	Non Practicing Barrister	"There is a divide between barristers and solicitors.....barristers practice their work in the courts. This tends not to be the case for solicitors."
Barry	Non Practicing Barrister	"I have seen changes in my time. So for example specialist solicitors are now able to present cases in the High Court. However the uptake of this change has been slow. I think this in part comes down to the tradition of the profession which has seen barristers as being the main force within these courts."

Script: "<u>When in court as a barrister/ advocate your role is combative</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Melanie	Non Practicing Barrister/ Solicitor	"There's a very specific culture in court. Your job is to argue your case forcefully. So what you tend to see is those women that are successful take on some male traits. I don't see anything wrong with that but that is the case."
Ben	Non Practicing Barrister	"I remember the training...we were being trained to be argumentative and in some cases to bully your opposition but very much in a controlled way with some degree of finesse also required."
Mat	Non Practicing Solicitor	"There is a real art to the job of being a lawyer (reference to barristers and advocates)...It's about how you develop your line of argument is also about being subtle and then using this to your advantage in a forceful but controlled manner."

Script: "When attending court as a barrister/ advocate you must wear formal dress"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Jo	Trainee Solicitor	"There's all the tradition associated with being a barrister…So for example the wearing of wigs when in court and the black dress."
Criag	Non Practicing Solicitor	"It must feel incredibly intimidating fro some defendants. There usually expected to attend not knowing the outcome and over and above that people like me are dressed quite formally…in a black outfit."
Barry	Non Practicing Barrister	"There is a lot of tradition associated with being a barrister, representing your client in court. The way we are expected, no told what to wear…which generally is themed by a lot of black."
John	Non Practicing Barrister	"As a barrister in court there are certain give away signs which tell you I think about the culture of the profession. For a start you're dressed predominantly in black. "

Script: "As a junior barrister/ advocate a significant amount of your time is spent in preparing cases"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Craig	Non Practicing Solicitor	"Of course you have help, but a significant amount of my time as a young barrister was punctuated by admin…the preparation of cases has to be meticulous."
Richard	Non Practicing Solicitor	"From my conversations with colleagues [reference to barristers and advocates] there is less paperwork as you become more established but then the price of mistakes also become higher."

Script: "<u>As a successful lawyer expect to work long hours</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Craig	Non Practicing Solicitor	"There are fewer people in the profession anyway from ethnic minority backgrounds. We are know seeing changes in top female lawyers, starting to get a few at the very top but what maybe is putting some females off is the work life balance. There is little opportunity to bring up a family or for that matter much else other than work if you want to excel."
Richard	Non Practicing Solicitor	"One of the reasons I left practice was because of the increasing demands placed on practitioners. So for example the 'work all hours' mentality is still there. In fact these pressures have probably increased, especially so when working for one of the 'big' firms."

Script: "<u>As a lawyer you are expected to remove emotion from the case</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Andrew	Affiliations with the High Court Judges	"I think law teaches you to understand the tangible facts and then to develop your case off the back of that. I think this means that more than likely you will be able to look at these facts dispassionately."
John	Non Practicing Barrister	"I think lawyers probably are quite detached from their emotions when involved in developing cases. The nature of the law itself probably accounts for this."

Accounting Institutional Setting

Script: "Accountants use language with specific meaning to the profession and their area of expertise"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Liz	ICAS	"I don't think those outside the profession really understand the significance of the language and terminology that we use. Indeed [the meaning] it even changes depending on what type of accounting you are."

Script: "ACCA recruit from all types of backgrounds (non degree, mature students)"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Keith	ICEAW	"We [reference to the ICEAW] tend to be more selective about who we train. I don't necessarily agree with this policy. You only have to look at ACCA who would appear to be far more inclusive in terms of who they accept into the profession."
Graeme	ICEAW	"ACCA has traditionally been the part of the profession that accept people with a range of background."
Liz	ICAS	"ACCA have made it their policy to recruit predominantly from non traditional backgrounds. That is mature and part time students."

Script: "ACCA train students across the world"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Jean	ACCA	"I've been quite active in recruiting ACCA students for out business school. This involves going to other like minded institutions and letting them know that they can come to London to study towards their professional qualifications."
Liz	ICAS	"The great strength in ACCA is that they do in a range of people from around the globe. This broadens the appeal for ACCA as a professional body."

Script: "ICAS demands its members to have a degree"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Jean	ACCA	"There can be a sense of snobbery for some of the accounting bodies. I think the fact that the Scottish institute only accepts graduates is both a strength but also results in a 'Anderson' type of person."
Margaret	ICAS	"I don't see the Scottish Institute changing the practice of recruiting only graduates. It helps set them apart in their minds from over professional bodies."

Script: "<u>ICAEW expect you as a student to have a degree</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Graeme	ICAEW	"For the ICAEW it would be beneficial for students to have a degree but they don't necessarily always follow this rule. I think if they did they might lose some promising talent."
Keith	ICEAW	"Many that join [reference to ICAEW] do hold a first degree. This certainly can be useful because it gives an indication that the students have the potential to make it."
Liz	ICAS	"Many trainees studying towards the English and Welsh professional exams are also taking degree programmes…I don't think that need always be the case though."

Script: "<u>The big firms take on large numbers of trainees for the CA route, expecting a significant proportion to fail</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Graeme	ICAEW	"There is a high degree of prestige associated with becoming a CA. Partly because the rewards are so high financially. This may account for why the failure rate is allowed to be quite as high as it is."
Helen	ICAS	"It's always been the case…A lot of trainees fighting for a small number of places. It comes in part down to the culture of the profession which is very competitive."
Liz	ICAS	"The big firms seem to encourage trainees to work hard. When I say hard the pressures are significant with little time to do anything else than concentrate on the job at hand. Part of this is reflected in the failure rates."

Script: "<u>The big firms take on trainee accountants specifically for the technician route as opposed to the CA route</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Graeme	ICEAW	"There is a separation between what I would describe as technicians and those being groomed to take the CA route. Certainly if the CA route is where 99% of partners will come from."
Kate	Affiliations with the Big firms	"There is this separation between technicians and the CA route. I think some of this has come about because of the rise of MBA's....so in many respects this is a direct response to protect the interests of the profession as a whole."
Liz	ICAS	"Trainees are graded at point of entry, you either take the CA route or the technician route."

Script: "<u>The big firms offer financial incentives for students to pass first time</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Berry	ICEAW	"As I said earlier the competitive nature of working for a major firm are very high. You simply must pass first time if you want to get on and succeed in the profession. For their part [the Big firms] they do go out of the way to motivate you to pass...financial bonuses for example are common place."
Guy	ACCA	"The Big firms do support their trainees but they are also ruthless if you don't come up to scratch..... The rewards are also high both in terms of bonuses and responsibility."

Script: "<u>The audit function is used to attract business and to sell a range of other services</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Graeme	ICAEW	"Historically the Big firms have diversified into a range of consultancy based activities. This aside you can still see the importance of the traditional audit function as a vehicle to sell an array of other services."
Jean	ACCA	"These multidisciplinary firms are described as such for a good reason…This aside the traditional role of auditing is still a big part of the business."
Guy	ACCA	"I worked as an auditor for several years..What I saw was the auditing role being used quite simply as an opportunity to review and consult on businesses and their activities."

Script: "<u>Auditors are expected to collect evidence through applying a range of methods when on the job</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Helen	ICAS	"Whenever I went into the firms the staff were always quite cautious about saying too much…My main ways of collecting evidence were through targeted interviews and simply observing what was going on."

Script: "<u>To become a partner you are expected to be a chartered accountant</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Graeme	ICAEW	"Just look at the stats…the vast majority of those that make it to partnership status are CA's. I think that may be changing or certainly may well change as other routes open up….MBA's are certainly one threat to the status quo."
Kate	Affiliations with the Big firms	"The CA route has dominated and probably will continue to but I wouldn't dismiss the rise in status of general management."
Keith	ICAEW	"It has always been the case that CA's are where partners look for their successors. I don't see this changing in the short term."

Script: "<u>As an auditor you are expected to dress formally when on the job</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Graeme	ICAEW	"It's especially important to look like an accountant when you're out auditing. After all you are representing the interests of your firm."
Liz	ICAS	"I think it became everyday practice to dress slightly more formally when out on business…I would wear perhaps a smarter broach and tie my hair differently."

Academic Institutional Setting

Script: "<u>Nobody checks up on you as a lecturer unless there are numerous complaints</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Jackie	SL, Alpha Business School	"I have always found teaching to be quite an independent activity. …I've never had any one come in and check up on me unannounced….I guess if you had several complaints then they [management] might start asking questions."
Melanie	Lecturer, Alpha Business School	"As you are aware I'm relatively new to this profession but what does surprise me is the lack of supervision in lectures. There seems to be little overt questioning going on."
James	SL, Beta Business School	"I know of a colleague from another institution who had several complaints against him for his teaching from students…It took months before anything was done."

Script: "<u>Within academia you are expected to design courses in a transparent way for students</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
James	SL, Beta Business School	"Since the introduction of the QAA I've observed much more attention to the logic of how courses are both put together and delivered to our students."
Richard	SL Beta Business School	"When I'm putting together my modules I always try to asses the degree to which the learning outcomes fit with the content and assessments of the modules."
John	SL, Beta Business School	"I think it is a good idea to have transparent courses. I am however concerned those students are now being 'spoon fed' with little initiative required on their behalf."

Script: "Research active faculty are expected to focus on refereed publications that contribute to the RAE"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
James	SL, Beta Business School	"If you accept hours in compensation for teaching or admin then you really are expected to deliver on your research. It has to contribute towards the output for the school…measured in terms of the RAE That is not always easy given that research is not a 9-5 activity."
Craig	SL, Beta Business School	"I've received some hours to research. I'm pleased about this but I am not convinced that the RAE should so explicitly direct the work of me and others."

Script: "A good research record aids your prospects of promotion"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Guy	SL, Alpha Business School	"If you want to get on in this world then you simply have to publish and it has to contribute to the reputation of the school."
Ben	SL, Alpha Business School	"I should of perhaps focused more on research earlier in my career. But what I can say with some clarity is that I enjoy student contact and the satisfaction I get from seeing them progress out into the real world."

Script: "<u>Universities buy in research to bolster their academic credibility</u>"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Helen	Professor, Beta Business School	"There have been several cases recently that I'm aware of that close to the RAE, faculty were bought in. I'm not judging that but simply saying that certainly does happen here."
Jerry	SL, Alpha Business School	"It's like football transfer season as you approach an RAE point. Clearly research is important to most universities. It helps give some credibility to the institution."

Alpha Business School

Emergence of the importance of Teaching as a Theme
Relationship of Management to Faculty

Script: "Teaching and admin take priority over research"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Graeme	SL	"Research certainly isn't discouraged here but finding time for most academics may be more of an issue....There is little doubt that for here teaching is the bread and butter. Anything over and above this is cream."
Jerry	SL	"I would like to spend more time researching, but unless I'm willing to use my holiday time for this there really is not much time for it."

Script: "Management expect their initiatives to be implemented by faculty without question"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Mat	SL	"The recent talks on the merger would be a good example of our management team....There has been a lack of communication with management simply expected us to pick up the pieces and run with it."
Guy	SL	"Management relations are generally good in my department-I have a good boss. Unfortunately I don't believe this is true of the business school as a whole...Only recently another department was discussing the need for additional faculty. There was no discussion held, it wasn't even up for discussion...They were simply told to get on with getting ready for the next semester."

Beta Business School

Emergence of the importance of Research as a Theme

Script: "Faculty are expected to publish, carry out Admin and teach"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Craig	SL	"The continued pressure is something that I would comment on. I immensely enjoy my job and the high standards we have achieved here… Teaching and research along with the mandatory administration all need to be taken account of."
Jack	SL	"I'm currently grappling with my research…partly because my other core duties also have to be undertaken."

Script: "Research is expected to be directed to the 4 and 5 star journals"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
Helen	Professor	"We are proud of the research we carry out here…it's of a very high standard" Question: In what sense? "It's directed towards the top journals…mainly 5 star but also four rated journals."
Richard	SL	"The research here has been something all research active staff has been working on. I would say that most, if not all of the research here is targeted towards the top journals in our field."
Andrew	Professor	"My research is currently on my mind. As you might know the next RAE is round the corner and my aim is to make every effort to ensure it is of the highest possible standard."

Script: "As a researcher you are expected to publish four articles towards the RAE"

Respondent	Professional Role	Quotation
James	SL	"Research to me and many of my colleagues is the reason we are here [at this business school]. I've been strongly encouraged to publish my next RAE contribution."
Andrew	Professor	"As you know I do undertake a fair amount of teaching here and I enjoy that. I also need to make sure that I get my publications ready. That can be quite a juggling act."
Helen	Professor	"The teaching has got to be done because that's our bread and butter but research is strongly encouraged...We all have to juggle our time and it's awkward sometimes…For me I'm currently shaping my contribution for the next RAE….This means putting together my portfolio of 4 key articles."