Between settling and unsettling in a changing knowledge society: The professional learning trajectories of pastors

An ethnographic study of the professional learning of pastors in the Church of Norway

Thesis submitted for the degree philosophiae doctor (PhD)

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Between settling and unsettling in a changing knowledge society: Professional learning trajectories of pastors

An article-based PhD thesis

**Article 1**

**Article 2**

**Article 3**
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Foreword

Having a new job is a matter of overcoming challenges and developing expertise. Being a PhD-student, however, is different. Being a PhD student is an existential project of searching for wisdom – and not to forget, handling one’s own stupidity. In other jobs I may have been new, but not like this. I’ve never even been close. Writing pages after pages. Deleting pages after pages. Rewriting these pages. And overwriting the same pages again. It would be a miracle not to think of one’s own stupidity in this process. Stupidity or wisdom aside, developing a PhD-project is the most exciting professional experience I’ve ever had, as it gives the opportunity to ask questions, to read, to discuss, to see things with new eyes. Testing my patience. And find the will to do it better the next day.

Giving thanks - I cannot wait to speak of the Letra project. Where to start? Letra-meetings are not unlike being on a youth camp. Happy Monday mornings. Joyful long nights, in a bar, if we have been so lucky to travel together. You make it exiting to have a lunch, to fight about a Mac, to have an eager discussion about the theoretical implications of a triangular figure on a blackboard. You make the acceptance of an article a real celebration and a decline of one a reason for support and encouragement. There is all wow-factors when I think about you PhD-students in the Letra; Marianne, Morten, Fredrik, Elisabeth, Øivind. I catch myself in admiring you – often. Not to forget Tone and Heid, thank you for the time and engagement you have spent on giving sharp and insightful readings. It has been such an experience for learning. As pinpointed by Mezirow (2000) in *Learning to Think like an Adult*:

‘Transformative learning requires emotional maturity, awareness, empathy, control […] knowing and managing emotions, motivating, recognising emotions in others and handling relationships – as well as clear thinking’. Well aware that I do not inherit any of these qualities on a regular basis, I will add that working with you develops a number of unnamed processes through which I have been transformed. It has been such a joyful journey to learn, to loose, to triumph, to support each other, to nerd together, to not know together.

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Thank you, family and friends, supportive as ever. From now on, let’s talk about you. Thank you mamma Inger Christensen for your care, doing the dishes and buying the milk that I forgot, and last, but not least, spending time with your grandchildren and making this time priceless while I’m at work.

To my very own in our yellow, little house: Thanks to my wonderful, wonderful kids Olea, Isak and Mika. You greet me with enthusiasm, affection and give me the best hugs ever. I love our special traditions and treats, turning Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays into special days. I’m a very lucky mom. Thank you, Åge, my patient and supportive and smart husband on whom I can I all test my ideas. Actually, during this process I have developed the Åge-test, which is one of the hardest to pass as a PhD-student. Impress Åge, and I’ve got myself an argument. Impress Åge, and I’ve got my article accepted. Thanks again, Åge, for all our talks and breakfasts and wine glasses at night, I love you. And, for the things we’ve been through, we’re still here and side by side.
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1 Introduction

Telling other people about what I am studying has provoked many kinds of reactions – some people have shifted the subject, some have been provoked and some have literally backed into a wall, while others have been thrilled and eager to discuss the topic for hours. One lesson I learned from this is that the pastor profession is not neutral ground. Most people have an opinion about the profession of pastors: To some, pastors represent institutional power. To some people pastors can seem a little mystical, surrounded with an era of elusive knowing. Pastors may also be associated with a societal ‘safe’ ground of tradition and history, handling both death crises as well as rituals of celebrations. Further, pastors are persons that people may feel they can talk to, who can help them interpret and respond to events of their lives. To my eye, pastors represent one profession trading past and present, dealing with the frictions of plurality and handling institutional hybridity. Pastors’ most secure ground is that of change. And the learning trajectories of this profession are my fortune to study.

In this thesis, I present a study of the professional learning of pastors\(^1\). The study consists of three empirical articles analysing important fields of professional learning, namely, 1) education of pastors, 2) everyday learning of pastors and 3) pastors’ learning in times of national reform. I hold that professional learning is not a matter of individual practice or how pastors develop a set of skills through determined work. Instead, in this thesis, I am interested in how professional learning can represent multiple practices. Pastor practices can involve wide access to existing global knowledge and head towards new, creative knowledge. I take a material-semiotic approach to professional learning. A material-semiotic approach illuminates how materials, practices, collaborations, vision and the wills of many create manifold processes. Through the case of the pastor profession, I aim at elaborating theoretical tools for studying the many processes that value-based professions are part of. Pastors move between former and new practices and make use of different types of knowledge and tools, as well as taking part in different collaborations. In three articles and one extended abstract I explore these processes, which I characterise as the professional learning trajectories of pastors.

\(^1\) The term ‘pastor’ in this thesis refers to ‘prest’ in Norwegian, and refers to an ordained leader of a Christian community. As Kaufman (2011: 12-13) underlines, a pastor may be labelled rector/vicar amongst Anglicans, priest amongst Catholics or minister amongst Presbyterians. For Lutherans, however, ‘pastor’ is a common term. In this thesis, I will use ‘pastors’ interchangeably with ‘informants’ and ‘clergy’, and count them as part of the group of ‘professionals’, ‘actors’, ‘participants’ and ‘actants’.
1.1 Why this thesis?

The professional learning trajectories of pastors are the overall phenomenon explored in this thesis. In a rapidly developing knowledge society, professionals have one important challenge – to learn. However, contemporary professional learning is a complex task. Professionals negotiate between aims, tasks, responsibilities, history, practices and knowledge developments. Learning among pastors cannot be seen as straightforward journey towards becoming a professional. Instead, professional learning can be seen as negotiations conditioned by interchanging social and historical frames (Evetts 2012: 2).

As part of a knowledge society, many professionals experience that change is a usual element of the work they do. The task for professionals is not only to adapt to changes, but also to become experts on these changes (Lahn 2011; Jensen, Lahn m.fl. 2012; Nerland 2012a). However, becoming an expert in a changing society is not only a matter of how individuals handle their tasks. There are multiple factors that continually transform the everyday life of professionals. A value-based profession is characterised by a continuous shift of people coming and going, a change of mandate through reforms as well as changes caused by material, economic and technological developments. Studying change therefore demands a wider analytical lens embracing the changing conditions and complexities of professional life.

The complexities of professionals might seem fragmented. However, the experience and knowledge form certain patterns and trajectories of expertise. The professional trajectories reflect the specific patterns of interactions between many actors. Pastors find themselves as parts of complex ‘meetings’ between past and future, and between different contexts, practices and actors. Nespor (1994) calls these meetings ‘nexuses’ of space and time. In this thesis, I aim to explore how pastors as professionals navigate in these complexities through three empirical fields, namely education, everyday learning and reform.

In the following, I will first give an account of my entry into this project and the initial interests that brought me here. Second, I bring forth the profession of pastors, pointing out how the case of pastors can generate new understandings of professional learning. I describe and explain the main research question in the thesis, along with three sub-questions. Then, the main analytical frameworks are described and connected to the empirical material for this thesis. Additionally, I give an overview of the three articles included in this thesis and put forth how these articles together contribute to new insights about professional learning.
1.2 Points of departure into professional learning

My initial interest in this project was quite a wide one, addressing how professional learning is more than individual processes which could be measured as either successes or failures. Having the background as a school psychologist/advisor within education and special education\(^2\), my own aims in workplace practices have often been to move away from a focus on individual constraints. Instead, everyday challenges can be examined as collaborative and complex matters. In accordance with sociocultural approaches to special education, from my perspective, there is no such thing as a ‘difficult child’, as the difficulties have both reasons and solutions in material, structural, social and physiological or psychological matters. In 2010, a collaborative research project about professional learning and knowledge trajectories in church (LETRA) captured my interest\(^3\). LETRA brought forth an approach to professional learning as collective everyday negotiations.

The case of pastors intrigued me as a profession that not only deals with peak point challenges like crises, life and death, but also as a profession that must be in profound existential change in a secularised knowledge society. Pastors must deal with many of the same issues as professionals in the educational context of which I have been a part. For example, pastors represent important parts of Norwegian school history; their profession is a teaching profession, and is handling the tasks of care and normative knowledge regimes. The findings of this thesis reveal important findings about the professions of the Church of Norway (CofN). However, the findings of this thesis also have theoretical value for other professionals who deal with manifold aims and practices of values, knowledge in times of change.

1.3 Why pastors?

I study the professional learning of pastors because they bring forth the challenges of a changing knowledge society in a particular way\(^4\). Pastors find themselves in a hybrid position. On the one hand, pastors may represent important established features of society. Historically,

\(^2\) This profession is similar to a ‘school psychologist’ in other countries. In Norway, this is a centralised municipality service offering testing and counselling to students, parents and principals – and maybe most of all, guiding teachers. I have been working as the leader of two municipality offices. This is a privileged position for seeing and working on how knowledge, material organisation, school economy, social relations, language and so on establish conditions for learning.

\(^3\) Letra, (LEANring and knowledge TRAjectories in congregations) is a research group studying learning and knowledge processes amongst different groups in the Church of Norway. It will be described later in this chapter, as well as in Chapter 2.

\(^4\) I am aware that there are ongoing discussions about whether pastors can be counted as professionals, particularly in the Anglo-American tradition (Shulman 2005). In this thesis, I mainly argue for the pastor profession in terms of its history and tasks in a Northern European context. However, I also follow the logics of Sullivan (2005: 2-3), who addressed this debate in terms of the USA.
the clergy in Norway has been an established part of the state and government for centuries, representing both institutional power and academic knowledge, as an initiator of the Norwegian school system\(^5\). The CofN\(^6\) is also an official institution emblematising for certain values, ethics and care (Slagstad 2011). Most Norwegians (around 77%) belong to the CofN and occasionally take part in church rituals like baptisms, confirmations and weddings. Pastors therefore make up a profession that explicitly deals with deeply rooted official traditions and rituals. On the other hand, pastors – like other professionals – relate to how society rapidly changes when it comes to knowledge development, societal change and technological innovation. At the same time, in such processes, one of the main expert fields of pastors – religion – is deeply transformed.

Scandinavian countries can be viewed as some of the world’s most secularised, with less than 3% of the population coming to CofN church services regularly (Zuckerman 2009)\(^7\). However, although traditional religious practices have decreased, new and individualised and pluralistic ways of practicing religion have increased (Afdal 2013). Furthermore, along with high immigration rates within in the last 40 years, Norway has developed into a multi-religious society\(^8\). Moreover, there are many variegated discussions about how the disciplines, for instance, of sociology of religion and theology understand religion (Afdal 2013; Bender, Cadge m.fl. 2013). All of these changes have brought huge alterations to the pastoral role. Pastors have got ambivalent professional roles between historically based traditions and religious pluralism, between academic knowledge and care, between established ‘facts’ and new knowledge regimes. The profession of pastor finds itself between. Furthermore, radical societal changes demand that pastors engage in the changing character of knowledge itself (Slattery 2013: 108). This makes professional learning a main theme for pastors, which is a complex and ambiguous project.

1.4 What is ‘professional learning’?

The overall research field in this thesis is the professional learning trajectories of pastors. Professionals develop a certain kind of expertise within a specific occupational field of practice (Edwards 2010). Being a ‘professional’ can be described as a particular type of
occupation possessing specialised training in a body of abstract knowledge, and a collectivity or service orientation. Professionals have privileges to perform certain types of work (Jackson 2010: 23-24). The kind of knowledge required of a professional is not stable. Thus, what counts as being professional varies dramatically in different fields of practice; to become, develop and sustain oneself as a professional also implies very different things (Mäkitalo 2012). The processes of knowledge and learning of professionals are the focus of study here. I see professionalism in relation to interchanging social and historical conditions in society (Adler, Kwon m.fl. 2008). When society changes, professionals are handle knowledge in ambiguous ways. Professionals are supposed to learn and participate as part of established knowledge cultures and traditions (Kurunmäki 2000). At the same time, they are entitled to generate new knowledge to meet the needs of a society in change (Fenwick, Jensen m.fl. 2012, 3). The pastoral profession can be seen as a significant case of this ambiguity.

The professional learning trajectories make a broad phenomenon. Here, the study of learning has been guided by both theoretical choices and emerging perspectives in the empirical material. ‘Learning’ in this thesis does not merely mean teaching methods, but focusses on learning as a process. However, learning is not a singular phenomenon. Carrying out the empirical fieldwork for this study fuelled questions about how I can account for pastors’ professional learning as complex and ambivalent practices. Professional learning has conventionally been related to individual and personal processes (Boud og Hager 2012), involving competencies in knowing what to do, how and why. However, professional learning can involve more than cognitive achievements (Aberton 2012: 114). Thus, professional learning must be approached as embodied, situated and particular. The environment is constitutive for development, and knowledge is mediated by tools and social relations (Lave og Wenger 1991).

Changes in professional life can be driven by new organisational structures, economic and technological innovations, research, power interactions and so on. The reasons and the effects of a process are not easily traced to either human intentions or material conditions. I therefore approach the professional learning of pastors in terms of ‘material-semiotic’ analyses. Knowing, decisions and actions are shaped by social and material elements (Fenwick 2012b: 4); a material-semiotic entry can embrace important aspects of the professional enterprises of pastors, namely learning as an ambiguous and complex project. Here, these complex processes are examined empirically in three different fields, namely learning in education, everyday learning and learning through reform.
1.5 Aims and research questions

The aim of the PhD project is to elaborate an understanding of the professional learning of pastors. Learning can be seen as a ‘struggle’ (Fenwick og Edwards 2012: xviii). Pastors make a generative case for analysing this struggle, as they represent a profession between the traditional religion and pluralism, between academic discipline and the tasks of care, between the established and the new.

With this thesis I aim at contributing on three fields of research: 1) how different learning approaches in education condition future professional practices; 2) how everyday interactions can give insights about established knowledge on the one hand, and unfolding knowledge on the other; and 3) how a reform creates different dynamics of professional learning. The overall contribution of this thesis is established between these three fields. Together, the findings in the different analysis can show a specific learning trajectory of how the profession of pastors learn (Lahn 2011). The overall research question is therefore as follows:

What characterises the professional learning trajectories of pastors?

From this overall research question, three particular sub-questions have emerged:

1) What characterises the learning approaches in the curricula of Protestant theological education in Norway and the Netherlands?

2) What characterises the professional learning networks of pastors between blackboxing and unfolding?

3) What characterises the professional learning dynamics of pastor networks in times of reform?

In this thesis, I write for researchers of pedagogy and professionalism, exploring new analytical entries to professional learning in a Nordic context. I also write for researchers of the sociology of religion and theology. The thesis can have relevance for teachers in higher education, as it examines the learning conditions of professionals. Furthermore, this thesis may gain value among the empirical subjects of this field, namely the pastors. I write to point out the conditions for learning of the pastor profession, and hopefully pastors will recognise some of the challenges, dilemmas and questions many of themhandle from day to day.

This thesis contributes to the field of pedagogy and professional learning and is placed within the field of religious education in Nordic countries. Religious education is a cross-

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9 The Nordic countries have a particular history and common features on fields of education (Rasmussen 2008), professionalism (Slagstad 2011) and religious education (Krupka og Reite 2010)
disciplinary and multifarious field which spans across empirical studies of religion and education, history of Religious Education and theoretical studies (Skeie 2004). Many European and Norwegian contributions discuss the multicultural and plurality issues involved in the education of religion in school (Jackson, Miedema m.fl. 2007; Weisse 2007; Leganger-Krogstad 2011). Religious education in school represents non-confessional models and is established between theoretical and didactical models (Afdal, Haakedal m.fl. 2001; Mogstad 2004; Sødal 2009). Furthermore, Religious education is also characterised as different empirical and theoretical elaborations of teaching in church (e.g. Mogstad 2000). In the last decade, there has also been an increased focus on the church as a learning practice (for example Johnsen 2007; Afdal 2008; Johnsen 2012). In religious education, learning can also be seen as an ‘application’ of religious knowledge (Afdal 2013: 11). Relatively few see learning in the church context in a scientific pedagogical perspective. (Afdal 2008: 228). In this thesis, I elaborate a branch of Religious education with a main emphasis on pedagogy and professional learning practices. I mainly devote the work of this thesis to a dialogue with researchers on pedagogy and professionalism. Church and religion, however, do not represent a freeze-framed ‘background’ for this thesis (Latour 2010: 99). Rather, the religious field represents pluralistic practices that may serve as important and constitutive time-spaces of the pastor’s expertise.

As far as I am aware, there have been no former studies of pastor learning within the socio-material paradigm. Research and elaborations about knowledge and learning in theological contexts have concentrated on the relationship between theory and practice, on methods in theological education and learning as an existential and life-long enterprise (Browning 1996; Jarvis og Hirji 2006 e.g.; Driesen, Hermans m.fl. 2007). Socio-material approaches to professional differ from individual and social approaches (Paavola og hakkarainen 2005). A material approach is part of discussions about theology and religion (Finch 2012; Johannessen-Henry 2012), while ethnographic research\textsuperscript{10} is conducted in studies of pastor’s learning (Campbell-Reed og Sharen 2011). By studying the professional learning of pastors from an ethnographic and socio-material angle, I enter an empirical field that is rarely explored. This leaves me with a space of many possibilities.

Among these possibilities, I study three fields of professional learning. The first field is theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands. Together with Sverre Dag Mogstad, I study these through curriculum texts at a course level (Article 1). The two other fields are examined through ethnographic fieldwork on the everyday workplace life of pastors

\textsuperscript{10} Campbell-Reed and Sharen (2011) have conducted ethnographic group interviews.
(Articles 2 and 3). The three articles establish particular cases of professional learning. Yet, holding the particularities together establishes a tension between different empirical results and different ways of analysing professional learning. By seeing the three articles together, a fourth theme evolves, namely, what characterises the professional learning trajectories of pastors.

This study includes three important fields of the professional practices of pastors. Nevertheless, there are limitations to this choice of empirical fields. In a curriculum analysis, we speak of learning, yet not how the students actually learn. There might be important differences between how things are described in a course description and what is actually going on (Green 2010, 451-469). One important field might be to study how teachers and students in theological institutions conceive of learning. Another is professional learning as enacted in classroom practices, with a focus on internship practices. Furthermore, the transitions from education into workplace life are also critical issues that should be explored. Yet another important and relevant field would be to examine the interactions between pastors as professionals and groups of volunteers and other private/lay groups. Finally, professional learning and enactment of religion would be a highly meaningful field of exploration. Through studying the professional learning of pastors, these fields emerge as important aspects professional learning. However, within the scope of this thesis, it is not possible to include every aspect of pastor students’ and pastors’ learning. The curriculum texts and the fieldwork therefore represent selected approaches of many possibilities for research.

1.6 A material-semiotic approach to learning

I relate this thesis to a material-semiotic ontology. A material-semiotic ontology can be seen as part of a socio-material paradigm (Fenwick, Jensenm.fl. 2012) and is closely related to ‘material’ and ‘posthumanist’ accounts to learning (Sørensen 2009; Fenwick 2012b; St. Pierre 2013). Yet, a material-semiotic approach establishes its own stances towards ontology and methodology, representing specific tools, sensibilities and methods for research (Law 2009: 2).

Representatives of material-semiotics oppose the idea that there is a primary reality ‘out there’ and argue that that it is possible to observe it and represent it through language (St. Pierre 2013: 649). This approach also pervades ideas of phenomenological ‘in heres’ (Ibid: 651). The world is not a direct experience, but is mediated by its tools and materialities. Other related approaches also share this view, for instance, socio-cultural paradigms. However, in many socio-cultural approaches, mediation appears as establishing meaning through shared systems of abstraction (e.g. Wartofsky 1979; Cole og Engeström 1993; Wertsch 1998).
Instead of emphasising meaning as abstract systems, a material-semiotic paradigm underscores the need for ‘looking down’ (Ilyenkov 1982; Law 2004b).

What does the researcher see when she looks down? A material-semiotic stance claims that looking down displays a number of details and connections to be described. The first consequence of looking down is that the distinction between the individual and the environment is blurred (Law 2004b: 23). For instance, learning in education is not studied as macro-structural influences of ‘society’, ‘culture’ and so on. Instead, humans and nonhumans create a variety of processes together. As Urry (2007: 45) claims, ‘we have never been simply ‘human’, let alone purely social. Human life, we might say, is never just human’. A material-semiotic approach represents a movement away from assuming the primacy of human intention and action.

Another consequence of looking down is that the researcher must focus on processes and relations. This is particularly of interest when studying professional learning. Learning is not a phenomenon that is; it is something that is created in interactions (St. Pierre 2013). More than deciding on the creation of meaning, the material-semiotic helps to focus on what materials do (Fenwick, Edwards m.fl. 2011: 123). The ‘doing’ of participants is a ‘semiotic’ movement, implying that things become what they are in relation to each other. Learning cannot be studied from predefined categories of for instance ‘social’ and ‘material’, but must instead be analysed in terms of how different pieces work together (Rajchman 2000: 18-19). Thus, phenomena gain their reality in the enactments and relations they are part of.

A third consequence of looking down is that it is not only a registration of different parts. The different pieces and elements of an interaction work together. These pieces are called ‘assemblages’ (St. Pierre 2013: 653). Observing a phenomenon like learning is not a question of nailing its essential features, but rather describing its variations (Sørensen 2009). People and things participate in different ways in different situations. This has consequences for how knowledge is created. When I analyse learning in this thesis, I analyse different interactions between people and things. In these interactions various patterns of learning appear. Studying these patterns, what I label ‘trajectories’ can emerge.

By ‘looking down’, I am not employing a naïve empirical stance, as I as a researcher place myself within a material-semiotic paradigm and have specific theoretical interests. However, I emphasise that ontological categories like ‘the world’, ‘human’ and ‘non-human’ can be multiple and dynamic. These categories must be analysed as material and semiotic relations, as these relations are constitutive of the relations that humans, society and abstractions and phenomena like learning are part of.
1.7 Analytical frameworks

I will approach professional learning from a material-semiotic standpoint. There are three features that characterise the material-semiotic approach to learning in this thesis: First, the realities and challenges of professional life do not develop only as individual ideas. Rather, knowledge construction and learning is a matter of interacting with the world. Instead, in interaction, there is co-construction of learning (Fenwick 2012b). Thus, knowledge is not in any way ‘transferred’ to pastors, but is actually created in interactions. In other words, knowledge processes are mediated (Wertsch 1991). Although the individual pastor certainly plays an important role in the present study, my attention is on what happens in the interactions and contexts of pastors.

Second, learning is not a purely social action. Interactions involve people, things and different contexts. Actor-network theory (ANT) is an important part of the analytical approaches in this thesis. ANT foregrounds the idea that humans and nonhumans must be studied together. Content, aims, professionals, educational programs, superiors, technology, physical spaces, traditions, volunteers, economy and even God are examples that all intrude and may change the process of learning for pastors. ANT promotes the idea that all of these factors are really actors and affect knowledge processes (Latour 1999b).

Third, professional learning cannot be described as fixed arrangements moving from A to B (Mulcahy 2012: 126). When social and material elements are studied together, the different actors affect one another. This means that I do not only study the products of learning. Instead, there is a need to study the process of how the different actors change each other. Humans and materials gain their meaning in relation to each other. In these terms, professional learning processes can be understood as semiotic (Law 2009). Pastors form specific patterns as they live and act in education, through everyday tasks and in times of reform. Thus, the cases I study form enactments of professional learning.

Thus, I see professional learning as a co-construction and a material-semiotic enterprise. Between the actors of this co-construction different ways of learning appear. Learning can be summarised as ‘the interplay of force relations among technology, objects and changes in knowledge. [It] is a continuing struggle. This struggle is learning’ (Fenwick og Edwards 2012: xviii).
1.8 Sources of research and three articles

The present study is part of a larger project, The LEarning and knowledge TRAjectories in congregations (the Letra project). Letra examines learning and knowledge trajectories among different groups in the Church of Norway\textsuperscript{11}. In this research project I study pastors, and the materials of research are retrieved from two main sources, namely curriculum texts and ethnographic fieldwork.

The research material is retrieved from curriculum texts for theological education at the graduate level (MF Norwegian School of Theology\textsuperscript{12} and Protestantse Theologische Universiteit in the Netherlands\textsuperscript{13}). Other sources, such as interviews with representatives of the theological institutions, articles documenting educational debates through the last century and former research have also informed the study. Selections from the curriculum texts form the basis for the study in Article 1.

Material from ethnographic fieldwork represents the foundation for the studies in Article 2 and Article 3. In collaboration, Letra conducted a sampling of three congregations. The main sampling criterion was to study congregations with extensive programs of activities, which implied a diversity of professionals and other groups. Thus, the Letra group aimed at thick descriptions of knowledge and learning in the CofN (Pickering 1995). I shadowed five pastors from three CofN congregations. The empirical material was assembled in three phases that lasted approximately one year, as follows: a ‘getting to know each other’ phase with meetings, observations and an introductory interview; a phase of shadowing the pastors in their everyday life at work; and a last phase involving summarising interviews. This resulted in different sets of research materials, mainly from observation notes and interview transcripts, but also from e-mail prints and documents produced by the pastors during the fieldwork. From these two sources, I studied three empirical fields of professional learning, namely learning in education, everyday learning and learning in reform. These fields of professional learning form the basis for the three articles in this thesis.

1.8.1 Curriculum analysis of theological education

One important field of study is education. University teaching is claimed to have a special task to support students in adopting ways of thinking and learning (Fenwick 2012b: 4). Education is also an important context for developing learning for professional life. In

\textsuperscript{12} http://www.mf.no/en Retrieved 03.05.14  
\textsuperscript{13} http://www.pthu.nl/en/ Retrieved 03.05.14
professionals’ encounters with new and unknown claims, the question is how higher education bring forth tools for learning (Young 1999). I study how the curriculum documents of higher theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands promote various conditions for pastors’ learning. A curriculum not only shows the objects of theological practice, but curriculum is a knowledge practice (Nespor 1994; Gellin 2003; Muukkonen, Lakkala m.fl. 2011). Curricula show a complexity of space and time. Curricula reveal traces of what learning practices have been like in the past and what they are now; at the same time, they are directed forwards to the future learning of students.

Learning practices in theological education in curricula can be studied as the combination of different elements. These elements in curriculum documents include for example textbooks, teachers, rooms, timetables, students, assessment forms, technological devices, content and descriptions of collaborations. The different combinations of these elements create different conditions for learning (Edwards 2012). In order to study these different learning conditions, the perspectives of Sfard (1998) and Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005) have been fruitful. I analyse the curriculum documents from Norwegian and Dutch clergy education. Here, three approaches to learning form the basis for a thematic content analysis, framing learning as individual acquisition, as social participation and as knowledge creation. The three approaches, I argue, establish different conditions for professional learning for future clergy.

1.8.2 Everyday learning of pastors

A second empirical field of learning is everyday practices, and Article 2 draws on ethnographic fieldwork amongst five pastors in the CofN. In this study, I explore the professional learning of pastors as everyday interactions. The everyday practices can bring a different approach to learning than the curriculum documents do. As employees of the CofN, pastors represent a profession that constantly meet many new people and people of different beliefs and belongings to their congregation. It is therefore important to find empirical models and methodologies which do not rely on the intentionality of pastors, but that can instead take the many actors the pastors meet into account. Thus, this article adheres to material-semiotic perspectives. The idea is that different actors, work activities and workspaces together constitute learning and knowledge processes (Gherardi 2014: 61). Article 2 in this thesis takes into account how people, things and contexts interact. I call these interactions ‘networks’. However, the empirical material shows that in addition to innovative and creative activities, there are also many other activities that may be framed as learning. These everyday interactions can reveal not only the complexities, but also the trivialities of daily activities.
(Fauske 2011: 35; Fenwick 2012b). It has therefore been necessary to elaborate learning and knowledge processes that not only label how knowledge unfolds, but also how it is made into routines or even ‘secure facts’. I have therefore employed the perspectives of Bruno Latour (1987) for a thematic content analysis. With the findings in Article 2, I argue that the professional learning of pastors cannot only be described as one innovative process; instead, it turns out to be a continuum of many different processes.

1.8.3 Learning in reform

A third empirical field is professional learning in times of reform. During my ethnographic fieldwork, a national reform was introduced, bringing forth another significant part of professional learning, namely reforms. Many professionals experience a number of reforms or standards implemented in work. In many workplaces, these reforms also overlap. The changes a reform brings can easily create tensions and uncertainty for professionals (Fenwick 2012b: 3). The question, then, is as follows: What consequences can a reform have for professional learning? Does it inspire and energise professionals, or does it lead to a lack of energy and a so-called ‘reform-weariness’ (Slattery 2013)? The third article in this thesis focusses on learning dynamics when a church service reform is introduced. I employ the analytical categories from Steven D. Brown and Rose Capdevlia (2005) and conduct a thematic content analysis of how the pastors participate in the work with the reform. As I have analysed these dynamics, it has become clear that there are no clear-cut lists for what brings energised learning in the work with a reform. I rather call for a sensitivity to various learning dynamics taking place and how these dynamics appear in the intersections between different practices, people and materials (Nespor 2012).

1.9 Research design

In the figure below, I will give an overview of the research design of this thesis. The overall research question represents the starting point for the thesis, along with the three sub-questions. A material-semiotic ontological and epistemological basis gathers this article-based thesis, which follows the logics of an ethnographic case study. The empirical material can be described as two-faceted. I study the curriculum documents of clergy education in Norway and in the Netherlands. The ethnographic fieldwork among five pastors in the CofN forms the basis for two different studies of professional learning, namely everyday learning and reform learning. The three articles represent the three studies of this thesis. They are all examined through thematic content analytic strategies, via different analytical frameworks. Holding the themes of the three articles together brings me back to the overall research question of this thesis, namely, what characterises the professional learning trajectories of pastors.
Overall research question: What characterise the learning trajectories of pastors?

Ontological paradigm: Professional learning as material-semiotic processes

Sub question 1: What characterise the approaches to learning in theological

Sub question 2: What characterise the everyday learning networks of pastors?

Sub question 3: What characterise the professional learning dynamics of pastors?

Methodological strategies: Ethnographic study of professional learning of pastors

Empirical material 1: Curriculum documents

Empirical material 2: Field notes/interview

Empirical material 3: Field notes/interview


Analytical strategies: Thematic content analysis


Article 2: Between Blackboxing and Unfolding: Professional Learning Networks of Pastors Argument: Professional learning is a process of moving between ‘blackboxing’ and ‘unfolding’

Article 3: Pastors and the Perpetuum mobile: The dynamics of professional learning in times of a reform Argument: Professional learning dynamics are constituted by how heterogeneous elements energize each other in a network.

Professional learning trajectories of pastors as established between article 1.2 and 3

Figure 1: Research design of the thesis: Professional learning trajectories of pastors
1.10 Outline of the thesis

I organise this thesis into two parts. The first part is an extended abstract, which consists of the overall aim and contribution of the thesis, as well as the empirical context, former contributions, analytical frameworks, methodological issues and analytical strategies. In the second part, I present the particular elaborations of professional learning trajectories, which consists of three articles.

The extended abstract consists of eight chapters. Chapter 2 gives a brief overview of religion in Norway, the context of professional learning of pastors, the Church of Norway as an institution and some of its recent reforms. I will also present theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands. In chapter 3, I provide an extensive review professional learning. In chapter 4, I present the analytical approaches for this thesis, which are elaborated from the apparently simple question ‘what is learning?’ The aim here is to show how distinct features of different analytical frameworks but also show that the analytical frameworks of each article can be interlinked. In chapter 5, I go through the methodological approach, making clear how I have carried out the research and some of its stumbling blocks. Chapter 6 describes the analytical strategies used in this thesis. Chapter 7 provides a summary of the three articles. Finally, chapter 8 represents the conclusion, reflecting how the three articles can contribute a material-semiotic account of professional learning trajectories. Professional education and professional practices are also important fields of discussion. As my contribution represents a particular account in a specific discussion on professional learning, I also sketch the necessity for further development in this area.
2 Context makes pastors

This chapter I have called ‘Context makes pastors’. ‘Context’ includes society, institutions like the CofN, history, people, decisions, policies and so on. These contexts do not only represent surrounding factors. Context is constitutive (Afdal og Afdal 2010), also of professionalism and learning (Adler, Kwonm.fl. 2008, p. 366). This thesis will not give full descriptions of context in terms of the history of the pastor profession or the societal developments in Norway; still, historical and societal aspects play a crucial role for the professional learning of pastors. In this chapter, I therefore give a brief introduction to religion in Norway and a description of the CofN. I also present a historical overview of the CofN in Norwegian society during the last centuries. Subsequently, I describe Protestant theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands.

2.1 Religion in Norway

Christianity has been the main religion in Norway for over 1000 years. The CofN exists as an important institution of the Norwegian society, building upon national identity and local traditions. Today 75.8% of Norwegians are members of the CofN (Johnsen 2013). Still, the practice of religion has changed dramatically (Repstad 2000). A major tendency is that participation in traditional communities is decreasing. Studies show that people label themselves as ‘Christian, but not religious’ and ‘spiritual, but not religious’ (Repstad 2000; Heelas og Woodhead 2005: 45; Afdal 2013). Rationalisation and individualisation have represented significant forces of religion in Norway through many centuries (Haanes 1998). Still, these processes affect religious practices in different ways (Hegstad 1996; Heelas og Woodhead 2005). Furthermore, along with high immigration rates since the 1970s¹⁴, globalisation and pluralisation, accounting for religion in the Norwegian society today is a complex enterprise. Religion cannot be characterised through singular practices, but rather appears as manifold, unstable and partial in many people’s lives (Bender, Cadgem.fl. 2013) Thus, as Afdal (2011) claims, religion and the representatives of religion finds themselves in a position of learning.

2.1.1 The Church of Norway

The CofN is the majority church in Norway, and has played an important role of the development of Norwegian society, history and politics since reformation in 1537 (Hegstad

¹⁴ Statistics show that one out of ten individuals is an immigrant or child of an immigrant. http://ssb.no/innvutv Retrieved: 08.02.14. Statistics also report that Islam forms the largest group of so-called ‘non-Christian communities’, also accounting for differences between Muslim groups; http://ssb.no/kultur-og-fritid/artikler-og-publikasjoner/et-mangfold-av-tro-og-livssyn Retrieved: 08.02.14. However, these statistical accounts do not give a very nuanced picture of religious activities and practices, and represent only one way of approaching religion in Norway.
The CofN was a ‘state church’ until the Norwegian Parliament passed a constitutional amendment in 2012, stating that the Evangelical Lutheran religion will no longer be the official religion of Norway. Still, the Constitution of Norway maintains that Norway’s values are based on its Christian and humanist heritage.

Although the CofN is no longer a state church, the constitution still denotes the CofN as a ‘people’s church’. Still, there are lively discussions on this topic. This is interesting in the light questions concerning what role the pastoral profession plays and should play in Norwegian society. On the one hand, being a ‘people’s church’ might represent a democratic value of the CofN, characterising the traditions and values of the people of Norway. On the other hand, a ‘people’s church’ can represent a change in the CofN. From protecting a confessional territory, the CofN collaborates with other churches and religious communities to promote plural values and beliefs. Nevertheless, there are strong opinions against the term ‘people’s church’ from voices in the National General Synod when it comes to demarcating the limits of a congregational mandate. There are also oppositions against the term ‘people’s church’ as a monopolising phrase which represents a challenge for freedom of religion in Norway.

Church services can be counted as the main activity in a church. The CofN has traditionally emphasised unified and institutionalised practices and standards. For instance, until recently, the church service was nationally regulated. The themes and content traditionally followed the ‘church year’, circulating every third year and mainly taking hymns from two books (Dale 1994: 79). Norwegians may attend church for the baptism of children, confirmation of youth, weddings and funerals and church services on Christmas Eve. In the last decade, the activities for children and youth in church have expanded. Many larger congregations offer, for instance, ‘babysinging’, gatherings with family dinners and activities, scouts activities and youth clubs.

The pastor has represented a major profession in Norwegian society for centuries. From the Enlightenment, pastors have been dominating many local communities as the only

17 The Norwegian term is ‘Folkekirke’, often translated as ‘the Norwegian people’s church’. The concept of CofN as the people’s church is widely discussed.
18 During the National General Synod of 2013, for instance, Berit Nøst Dales commented on the limitations which a ‘people’s church’ represents for demarcation lines of a congregation.
19 The Norwegian Humanist Association comments on this case, and emphasises that the way that in which the CofN is established in documents and laws in Norwegian society hinders the freedom of philosophies of life.
‘learned’ person (Haanes 1998). In the CofN, there are a number of professions among over 8000 employed people, and the main categories are pastors (parish pastor, chaplain, youth pastor), educators (catechist, religious educator, children and youth worker), professions of care (deacon) and church musicians (cantor, organist), in addition to administrative employees. Along these there are thousands of volunteers in the CofN, estimated to equal approximately 700 full-time positions. However, the CofN is now confronted with a lack of pastors, most significantly in the rural parishes (Høeg 2008: 166).

According to Hegstad (1996), there is a general silence when it comes to people’s descriptions of pastors, and especially their religious function. As many of the rituals people in participate are considered personal and almost private, many wish for an ‘ordinary’ pastor who makes the experience in church ‘light-hearted’, but who also safeguards traditions and relates the church service to those who participate (Hegstad 1996: 43).

2.1.2 The structure of the Church of Norway

The CofN has a threefold structure; it has an episcopal polity, a synodical structure and a congregational structure. Although this is constantly modified, it can still be fruitful to give an overview of it (Lannem og Saxegaard 2013). An episcopal structure means that the chief authority over a local Christian congregation is a bishop, although the scope of this authority is described as limited (Bråkenhielm 2012: 79). In Norway, there are 11 dioceses, each with a Diocesan council and a provost, which function as the pastors’ employers. Under the dioceses, there are 107 deaneries and rural deaneries led by a provost. There are 1260 parishes, each with one parish pastor who does not lead, but is part of the Parish council. In each of the congregations I studied, there was one parish pastor and one chaplain.

During the 20th century, a synodical and democratic structure was also implemented at the local and regional and national level. A synodical structure implies a line of authority following from a national General synod, to Diocesan synods and then to Parish councils. With the exception of the pastors, all employees in a parish report to a churchwarden and a Joint Parish council. However, pastors, deacons, cantors and catechists are all under the spiritual supervision of the bishop in a diocese. A synodical structure implies that laypeople hold the majority of seats at all levels of councils and synods. The overlapping of the roles of clergy and laity is an on-going process. Parish council members and members of the Diocesan councils are elected by the church members. In a Parish council, for instance, there are both representatives of the staff, where the parish pastor is a regular member, and elected

laypeople from the congregation. The leader of the Parish council is usually a layperson. The elected parish in Norway councils total about 9000 members. A congregational structure implies that each congregation is counted as the basic unit in the CofN, represented by a Parish council and a Joint Parish council.

Although the CofN is no longer a state church, the government still provides funding for it as it does for other congregations and ideologically based institutions. The Ministry of Culture carries out central administrative functions. State and municipal authorities share financial responsibility for salaries and the maintenance of buildings. Other parish activity largely depends on offertory money and voluntary activities.

2.2 Reforms in the Church of Norway

Over the last 20 years, pastors have been part of a number of reforms in the CofN. Two of the main reforms the last decade have been the reform of Christian Education and church services. I will therefore give a more detailed description of these reforms and point out how they have created new conditions for the professional practice and learning of pastors.

2.2.1 The Reform of Christian Education (Trosopplæringsreformen)

One reform has had a huge impact on the practices and context of pastors in the last decade. In 2003, the government decided to finance a reform for the education of children and youth in the CofN. This was called the Reform of Christian education. The aim of the reform is for congregations to offer systematic and continuing Christian education to all people baptised in the CofN between the ages 0 and 18 years. The reform has been organised as a period of experimentation and evaluation for five years (Høeg og Gresaker 2009: 94). The reform highlights article 27 of the UN convention stating that children have the right to spiritual development. Providing religious education has therefore replaced the responsibility for teaching Christianity in public schools in Norway.

More specifically, the aims of the reforms has been a) to create a continuous Christian education for children and youth; thus, the development of local plans have been crucial b) to establish Christian education as inclusive both qualitatively and quantitatively and c) to

establish Christian education as locally grounded (Høeg og Gresaker 2009). The aim has been for the congregations in the CofN to offer a systematic and continuous to all baptised members between 0 and 18 years old by 2014.28

The reform has received a total grant of 250 million Norwegian kroner per year29 and has been led by Bishop Haugland Byfugllien. It has had a five-year period of experimentation for renewing Christian education in congregations. As a result, 1280 congregations applied for projects, and numerous projects were initiated (Høeg og Trynses 2012). The reform has been evaluated in two ways, by a group for researchers led by Hauglin and Mogstad (Hauglin og Lorentzen 2008), and by the congregations reporting from the different projects. In 2008, there were 2400 reports from different projects, gathered in a resource bank available for all the congregations in the CofN. The reform is now implemented in on-going activities supported and financed by the government (Høeg og Trynses 2012).

Some of the results of the reform show that the reform is making new engagements with local society and between the church and children/youth and their parents (Høeg og Trynses 2012: 10). It also creates increased cooperation between church, schools and other institutions, establishing new and creative ways of working. The work of pastors are often seen as decisive for the success for these activities (Høeg og Trynses 2012: 96). In these reports, it is clear that although many other professions are involved in the activities of the reform, the pastors are among the main contributors for new activities in church. In addition, the Christian Education Reform sees the church service reform as its main field of intervention (Hauglin og Lorentzen 2008: 119). Thus, the reform seems to have changed the mandate and the tasks of the pastoral profession.

2.2.2 The church service reform

As reported by Fuglseth and Haakedal (2012), ‘We want a service where everybody can recognise his own life’ (Fuglseth og Haakedal 2012: 47). This quotation from the 2003 Youth synod in the CofN marks the call for what has become another major reform in the CofN. This has been labelled the ‘church service reform’. The national and unified church

service order from 1977\textsuperscript{30} has been challenged by three slogans of this church service reform: ‘increased flexibility, involvement and localisation’\textsuperscript{31}. In 2004, the General synod passed the issue to the Commission for Worship and five sub-committees were formed to review entrance, intercession and exit, the Word (texts and sermons), baptism, the Communion and hymns. In this process, there have been many consultants, including congregations, educational institutions and the synod of bishops\textsuperscript{32}. The reform was ‘released’ on the 1\textsuperscript{st} Sunday of Advent 2011, and is still on-going as a period of trial.

In a folder sent to the congregations, the Church council explains and describes the church service reform\textsuperscript{33}. The aims of the church service have been to ‘think new’, in contrast to the former order of church services which had been standardised for all of the CofN. The folder emphasises that the most innovative aspect of this reform is that the parish synod will develop a ‘local basic order’ (‘grunnordning’) in cooperation with pastors, cantors, other employees and volunteers. The point is that the local congregation will decide how the different church services are to be conducted. The effects of the reform will be a greater range of musical styles and aesthetic expressions. However, the folder states that the church service will be anchored in the Norwegian culture, the hymn treasures and the existing values of the Christian church services.

Immediately after the resolution of the Church service reform, a number of materials were produced and sent to the congregations. The most important of these materials are the ‘Church Services for the Church of Norway’ in a binder and paperback version (the liturgy binder from Article 3), ‘Liturgy Today’ (a binder), ‘Liturgical Music’ (binder), ‘Textbook for the Church of Norway’, ‘Together Before the Face of God’ (folder), a new book of hymns and a new book of chorales\textsuperscript{34}. Incidentally, there was a new Bible version presented in 2011; this was created by linguistic researchers, theologians and authors with a focus on using everyday language\textsuperscript{35}. This has affected, for instance, prayers in the church service, including a new ‘Our Father’. During the reform, the local congregations were asked to experiment with this material and present their experiences and local decisions on church services for the approval of the bishop.

\textsuperscript{31} http://www.kirken.no/index.cfm?event=doLink&famId=4731 Retrieved: 06.04.14.
\textsuperscript{32} https://www.kirken.no/?event=doLink&famID=9241 Retrieved: 09.02.14.
\textsuperscript{33} Can be downloaded at http://www.kirken.no/?event=doLink&famID=178213 Retrieved: 09.02.14.
\textsuperscript{34} http://www.kirken.no/index.cfm?event=doLink&famId=231833 Retrieved: 09.02.14.
The new church service reform, however, seems to represent tensions and ambiguities between the old and the new, between the voices for renewal and the need for institutional control, resulting in an enormous production of material artefacts. The liturgy binder alone, as Isaksen points out, represents 1.4 billion possibilities for how to conduct a church service (Thomassen 2008: 524- UKM 05/03). At the same time, the Church council reminds the readers that it should reflect tradition and established practices – and that the bishop will have to approve of the final versions. The reform has brought many different reactions (Isaksen 2011). The content of this reform includes every field of church services, which can affect both the content of pastor’s work in a church service and how pastors work with it. Thus, the church service reform represents a specific context for studying the professional learning of pastors.

The context of the CofN does not solely offer a background for professional learning. Instead, it reveals a number of possibilities and challenges for pastors today. In this thesis, the contexts of history, church structure and reforms play different roles. For instance, the Church was recently separated from the state, and along with changes in structure, the pastor’s role is continuously modified. On the other hand, the church still plays important and crucial roles in taking care of the tasks of welfare, care and cultural values. Religion does not represent an overarching system in Norwegian society. Still, many of the activities in CofN can represent valuable parts of people’s lives and society. Furthermore, different participants in the CofN may affect religious practices. In Article 1 (Curriculum), the history of the state religion and the former unified standards of church services may serve as an important actor in how learning is approached in the theological education in Norway. In Article 2 (Blackboxing), I foreground the value of many and sometimes non-traditional collaborations. The participation, for instance, of laypeople contributes to new practices in church services, among other things, and new ways of learning for the pastors. In Article 3, I explore how the church service reform can affect professional practices, while also investigating how the pastor networks create the content and the means of the church service reform.

In this way, the practices of the CofN must be seen in terms of being affected by context and of themselves changing the context. Context is not only a ‘background’ for interaction; instead, context is active. In this thesis, elements of context take part as actors that directly affect the professional learning trajectories of pastors. This back-and-forth movement does not place the church and religion as fixed entities. It is therefore relevant to speak of religion as learning (Afdal 2013: 17). However, how learning is framed can vary. In the next
chapter, I will go further into a literature review of different approaches to learning, both in pedagogical terms and in the context of theology.

2.3 Which professions can pastors be compared to?

The teacher profession and the pastor profession can be considered different, as they represent two different work practices and institutions in society. However, there are some important attributes that pastors and teachers have in common. First and most importantly, pastors and teachers share the task of teaching\textsuperscript{36}. Historically, pastors have initiated or been part of important developments of the school system in Norway and in Scandinavia (Larsen og Larsen 2012). Both professions have been parts of national unification projects. In Norway, most teachers are part of a unitary, public school. Moreover, until recently, pastors in the CofN have represented a state church. The CofN is still a national-wide institution and has strong connections to government decisions and values\textsuperscript{37}. Second, teachers promote normative knowledge enterprises (Klette og Carlsten 2012: 74), as do pastors. Both professions are founded on established societal values and traditions following Christian and Humanist values.\textsuperscript{38} Third, normativity entails that both professions deal with combining traditional, great narratives of society on the one hand and the on-going political slogans about ‘more knowledge’ in school on the other\textsuperscript{39}. Such innovation has taken the form of national and centralised standards. For teachers, this implies that political control over implementing national and international test standards, for instance, is changing the enterprise of teaching (Midthassel 2009; Afdal 2012). Although it is different for pastors, their everyday tasks have changed dramatically in the last decade because of national reforms and centralised decisions, in particular related to the Reform of Christian Education. Both pastors and teachers render important justifications for their enterprises in the mandate of supporting and

\textsuperscript{36} In addition to a general understanding of pastors as teachers, pastors also have an official mandate to teach. Department of Culture, http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kud/dok/noer/2000/noer-2000-26/8/3/5.html?id=361497 Retrieved: 12.04.14. The mandate for teaching is wide, and includes activities such as sermons and teaching children and youth.

\textsuperscript{37} http://www.human.no/Aktuelt/Nyheter/2012/Vi-jobber-videre-for-et-endelig-skille/ Retrieved: 30.04.14. The Norwegian Humanist Association has described these features of the CofN, although from a critical point of view.


\textsuperscript{39} ‘More knowledge in school’ has long been part of the political rhetoric. One example is a speech by the present Prime Minister of Norway, http://www.hoyre.no/Nye+ideer+og+bedre+1%C3%B8sninger+for+mer+kunnskap+i+skolen.d25-TMJLU3F.ips Retrieved: 13.04.14.
equipping children and youth for lifelong learning and the development of identity. Thus, teaching may be seen as a comprehensive task that may involve multiple logics of knowledge and values. The questions in a changing knowledge society are not necessarily how to overturn former knowledge and values of deep and complex epistemic structures (Afdal 2012:94). Instead, one of the core challenges for teachers – as for pastors – may be framed as how to learn between settling and unsettling knowledge.

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40 The general curricula of primary school in Norway and the Plan for Christian Education are similarly worded concerning the general mandate for teaching.
3 Professional learning trajectories: A literature review

In this chapter I will outline different accounts of professional learning trajectories that are relevant to this study. According to a socio-material paradigm, research is not a matter of ‘covering’ an empirical phenomenon and finding the ‘holes’ and ‘lacunas’ of research. Instead, research is a set of practices that are shaped by their historical, organisational and social context. As Law (Law 2004a: 8) claims, research is produced within these practices. Thus, I will frame some science practices of the research of professional learning. More than finding my ‘lacuna’ in the landscape of professional learning, it may be important to recognise relevant research debates about professional learning. This thesis is positioned within the paradigm of socio-material studies of professional learning. Socio-material approaches to learning emphasise how social and material elements condition how professionals handle, negotiate, struggle or leave behind the challenges they meet. The handlings and negotiations can form patterns of change and development, and are called ‘trajectories’ (Nespor 1994: 23).

Literature searches in databases and search engines like for instance ERIC, Web of science, ATLA Religion, Ebsco and Google scholar show that there are no specific socio-material studies about the professional learning of pastors. This means that I have to gain insights via other related studies of professional learning. As the unit of analysis in this thesis is professional learning trajectories, there is a need for a literature review on two fields, namely professional learning trajectories in general and professional learning of pastors. In the first part I present relevant research accounts of professional learning. I clarify briefly the terms ‘professional learning’ and ‘professional’. Then I outline the landscape of different approaches to professional learning trajectories, orientating this thesis as part of a socio-material account. In the second part I present how professional learning is framed in theological contexts and give an overview of Norwegian contributions to the empirical field of pastors.

3.1 Clarifications of terms

3.1.1 Overall descriptions of workplace learning and professional learning

Professional learning can be seen as part of another research phenomenon, namely ‘workplace learning’. The SAGE Handbook of Workplace Learning describes workplace learning as a phenomenon of many integrated traditions (Cairns og Malloch 2013: 12). Cairns and Malloch (Ibid.) suggest that workplace learning must be considered as a construct of the terms ‘work’ and ‘place’ and ‘learning’ (ibid.) Workplace learning and professional learning are used interchangeably as they refer to many of the same issues and publications (Cairns og
Malloch 2013: 11-12; Illeris 2013). Thus, one could say that a division between professional learning and workplace learning may be just a matter of angle and context.

However, there are also distinctions between 'workplace learning' and 'professional learning'. This distinction can be read from Fuller, Hodkinson et al. (2005), discussing the fact that workplace is not the origin of every learning process. People enter a workplace with beliefs, understandings, skills and attitudes to work and learning. Evans, Hodkinson et al. (2006: 30) outline how workplace can represent constraints or affordances for participation and learning at work. I see the distinction between workplace learning and professional learning as helpful. The learning context for professionals cannot be limited to a workplace. For pastors, workplace may represent just one of many sites for learning. Thus, I see professional learning as a phenomenon of work practices rather than workplace. The academic tradition of professional learning has also a specific interest in expert knowledge and the professional practices in society. I engage myself in the particular professional learning trajectories of pastors in a changing knowledge society. Therefore, elaborating the thesis as a distinct project of professional learning makes sense.

So, what is professional learning, then? Mäkitalo (2012: 60) claims that there 'is no way we could ever pin down or define what professional learning is in some basic sense. Just because learning exists as a term, we should not conclude it refers to one phenomenon'. I acknowledge that professional learning is less of a singular and stable phenomenon and more of a networked one. In this thesis I will sometimes emphasise 'professional' and other times accentuate 'learning'. Still, framing professional learning as a phenomenon is significant. If knowledge and information are seen as crucial to changes in society (Jensen, Lahn m.fl. 2012), if professionals often are involved in the development of these changes (Mäkitalo 2012: 60) and if clues for what knowledge is can be obtained through studying how knowledge is gained (Latour 1987: 220), then professional learning is increasingly important to study. How professional learning happens, or what it can be, though, in its many forms and contexts remain as empirical questions.

3.1.2 What is 'professional'?
Professional practice can be seen as a specific domain of vocational learning and work. Theories of professionalism promote societal values and accountability like for example 'Justice, Salvation, Beauty, Truth, Health and Prosperity' (Freidson 2001: 122). Freidson (2001: 2) assumes that professionalism is rooted in 'a set of interconnected institutions providing the economic support and social organisation that sustains the
occupational control of work’. It is widely accepted that ‘professionals’ divert from ‘occupations’ by for example internal and external regulation of professional’s knowledge and by their public accountability for what they know and do (Fenwick, Nerland m.fl. 2012: 1).

Professions must be accounted for as historical and contextual and not universal phenomena. Professionalism is contested and transformed continually (Freidson 2001: 122). Freidson (2001: 2) argues that professions need to be reconceptualised in order to sustain a new order of societies and it therefore have to be re-examined (ibid: 11). In this thesis I am not so much examining the institutions, the social organisation or the occupational control of work. I rather ask how professions are changing and how professions like pastors are challenged in different contexts (Freidson 2001: 2). Pastors take part in many contexts and must relate to, forces like market pressures, networks, declining discretion and public trust, new structures of management as well as personal vision and agency. Thus, ‘professionalism’ will here be seen as a cultural and performative phenomenon, not as essential characteristics (Evetts 2006; Evetts 2012).

Learning among pastors cannot be seen as straightforward processes into becoming ‘a professional’. Professional learning but must be seen as negotiations conditioned by interchanging social and historical frames (Larson 1977; Freidson 1983; Iedema, Degeling m.fl. 2004). This means that different contexts and times constitute what professional learning is. In this thesis, professionalism is a matter of changing spaces and times, and how pastors negotiate these changes. Through these negotiations, different professional learning trajectories appear.

3.2 What are ‘professional learning trajectories’?

Assuming that professional learning is a multidimensional and diverse process, how can I account for the patterns of professional learning evolving through the analyses of this thesis? I promote ‘trajectories’ as a fruitful concept for learning. However, ‘trajectories’ is also a concept with various meanings. In the following I present professional learning trajectories as three major categories, namely individual, social and socio-material learning trajectories. The categories of professional learning trajectories are inspired by the organisation in Lahn's (2011) review of professional learning trajectories. In each category I will focus on 2-3 main theoretical contributions and shortly show how these are taken into use in empirical studies.
3.2.1 Individual learning trajectories

Professional learning can be framed as individual learning trajectories. This category describes the learning process of an individual developing strategies for ‘learning how to learn’ (2011: 53). First, individual learning trajectories include problem-solving strategies. One well-known example of this is ‘reflective practice’, represented by for instance Hickson (2011), Argyris and Schön (1978), Schön (1978) and Boud (1983). ‘Reflective practice’ is still a common and productive approach in contemporary contributions (for example Bolton 2010; Dube og Ducharme 2014; Mehrotra, Chee m.fl. 2014). Schön (1983) presents ‘reflective practice’ as an approach to seeing, understanding and learning as a self-regulated process. Reflecting-in-action foregrounds learning trajectories in a specific way. Learning happens as tracing one’s actions and reflecting in action, reflecting while doing a task and reflecting on action after a completed task (ibid: 54). Thus, the professional ensures to include and generate particular knowledge that is useful (ibid: 137). This approach is often taken into use in health and teaching professions (for instance Larrivee 2000; Dugdill, Coffey m.fl. 2009; Paterson og Chapman 2013) but also widely used in general accounts of leadership and management (e.g. Wright 2009; Rosenberg 2010; Hughes 2011).

A second account is seeing learning as a process of many factors and capabilities of an employee. According to this view, professional learning is dependent on the individual’s performance at work, formal and informal learning and the context in which the professional is working. One example of this approach is for instance Eraut’s notion of trajectory. Eraut is particularly interested in the transition between teacher education and novice teachers at work and sees professional learning trajectories as what learners develop over time through a series of jobs and roles (Mc Kee og Eraut 2012: 3). Eraut sees trajectories as different types of knowledge, and promotes the non-formal and tacit knowledge at work (Eraut 2000; Eraut 2004; Eraut og Hirsch 2007).

A third account is framed as ‘biographies and lifetime trajectories’. These are the research approaches taking into account how the personal and psychological biography of individuals forms work experiences. Salling Olesen and Weber are central in this group, conduction empirical studies of practitioners like nurses, engineers, teachers (Salling Olesen 2004; Weber 2010).

3.2.2 Social learning trajectories

Another account of learning trajectories can be seen as a socially constituted frame for professional learning, first and foremost represented by Lave and Wenger (Lave og Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). I call these approaches ‘social learning trajectories’. Building on
empirical work of different craft apprenticeship and workplace learning, they hold that professional learning is first and foremost happening in context – it is situated. Knowledge and learning is relational, and meaning is negotiated (Lave og Wenger 1991: 33). Lave and Wenger hold that people learn through participating in social practices. The other main contribution is what they call a practitioner’s ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (Lave og Wenger 1991: 34). Trajectory is denoting a developing identity of how newcomers learn through participation with experts (Ibid: 36). Gradually, their participation takes new forms until they become experts themselves.

Wenger (1998) expands the ideas of legitimate peripheral participation into ‘Communities of Practice’, which are directed towards professional work in organisations and companies. Learning trajectories, he underlines, are not a fixed course or destination. Instead, a trajectory is a continuous and coherent motion of a professional, which Wenger sometimes uses interchangeably with identity. Wenger (1998) lists up five different trajectories, namely peripheral, inbound, insider, boundary and outbound trajectories (Wenger 1998: 154-155). The impact of Lave and Wenger is unquestionable and still making impact in empirical studies. Teacher education seems to represent one major field of the impact of Lave and Wenger (Blair 2008; Anderson og Hellberg 2009 for example; Thorgersen og Johansen 2012). The approach of Lave, Wenger and others mainly focus on social learning processes and identities. This forms the main critics from yet another approach, namely the socio-material account of professional learning trajectories.

### 3.2.3 Socio-material learning trajectories

This thesis about professional learning of pastors represents a material-semiotic approach to learning. The material-semiotic can be seen as part of a socio-material approach to professional learning trajectories. Socio-material learning accounts have in common that they will show how material artefacts shape everyday professional activity and knowing. Materiality does not play a secondary role to support learning or contribute to meaning making. Materiality is an intermingling of people and things and forms professional interactions.

### 3.3 Two branches of socio-material learning trajectories

The last ten years there are especially two main socio-material traditions making important development of professional learning trajectories. The first group I call ‘epistemic learning trajectories’ and the second group ‘network learning trajectories’:
3.3.1 Epistemic trajectories

Lahn (2011) and Lahn and Jensen (Lahn og Jensen 2010) propose a version of professional learning called ‘epistemic trajectories’. One important example of such an approach is the project Professional Learning in a Changing Society (ProLearn) (Jensen og Christiansen 2012; Jensen, Lahn m.fl. 2012; Klette og Carlsten 2012; Klette og Lahn 2012; Lahn 2012; Nerland og Jensen 2012; Smeby 2012; Strand 2012; Nerland 2012a; Nerland 2012b). The ProLearn project has represented an inspiring knowledge source all along my thesis, although I do not employ its specific analytical approach. The ProLearn project explores and compares the knowledge cultures of early career professionals of computer engineering, school teaching, nursing and accountancy in Norway. The ProLearn project employs Knorr Cetina’s notions of science-generated knowledge in social life to explore how professionals are enrolled in specific knowledge cultures Jensen, Lahn and Nerland (2012).

The ProLearn researchers point out that professionals increasingly engage themselves with open-ended, undefined and complex knowledge. This kind of knowledge is labelled ‘epistemic’ objects (Ibid: 9). Epistemic objects continually acquire new properties and change professional communities, applying a variety of sources (Ibid: 9). Working with an epistemic object involves the support of ‘intermediaries’. These intermediaries can for example be human beings, artefacts, texts/inscriptions and forms of capital (Ibid: 8-9). One important example of intermediaries can for instance be how-documents and standards (Nerland 2012: 41) Intermediaries contribute to link professionals towards wider circulations and loops of knowledge. These loops involve two processes: On the one hand the professional initiates a reflexive loop of reflection and abstraction of the knowledge object (Jensen, Lahn and Nerland 2012: 10). On the other hand, knowledge objects span across sites and institutional levels. (Ibid: 12-13). Jensen, Lahn and Nerland point out that expanding across boundaries of local work practices is a significant prerequisite for critical engagement with knowledge (Ibid: 4). Exceeding the local practice makes knowledge circulate. Knowledge circulation allows for ‘engrossment and excitement’ as well as a culture of sharing knowledge (Ibid: 12). When professionals involve themselves with epistemic objects, they become parts of ‘machineries of knowledge construction’. Put differently, professionals are enrolled into ‘epistemic cultures’

41 Jensen, Lahn and Nerland (2012: 9) draw on Callons four types of intermediaries. They describe intermediaries as ‘a way to define the creation and circulation of knowledge in a given area; human beings, artefacts that facilitate performance of work, texts and inscriptions […] The relative presence and emphasis on different types of intermediaries in a given culture […] form an important part of the epistemic machineries. They not only circulate knowledge and information, they also serve to reconfigure knowledge’. As I read this, the intermediaries represent objects for knowledge circulation and actors for reconfiguring knowledge, changing knowledge in the contexts they figurate. Latour labels ‘intermediaries’ differently, as I will come back to in the discussion in Chapter 8.
(Jensen, Lahnfl. 2012: 9,13). According to Lahn (2011: 64), this knowledge construction process and the epistemic cultures professionals develop can be summarised as ´epistemic trajectories´ of professional learning. ProLearn has represented an important development within socio-material approaches to professional learning, producing a number of empirical studies of four professions.

3.3.2 Network trajectories

´Networks´ can be used in many other contexts of workplace learning and can for example be associated with business expertise and collaboration. In this thesis the term network has a quite another sense. Networks label a learning material-semiotic process. In order to describe how this process happens, one must examine the participants in networks. A network approach to learning studies who and what is part of an interaction and how these participants affect one another. Representatives of network approaches hold that society is complex. Therefore, one must find inclusive models for this complexity. Thus, it may be important to take both social and material forces into account. Professional learning as network trajectories draws on the insights from Actor-Network theory and post-ANT.42

Jan Nespor (1994) was among the first to elaborate ANT into the terms of education on learning, studying how students are becoming more than students, namely how they get connected to disciplines as future professionals. Nespor sees learning as trajectories not as purely individual processes. Neither can they be described as only social forces. The communities that future professionals enter are heterogeneous ´actor-networks´ and must include different material elements as well (1994:7-9).

42 ANT will be presented more thoroughly in the chapter about the analytical framework in this thesis. Still, it could be useful with an introductory note here about ANT: Actor-Network theory (ANT) is connected to the STS-tradition (Science, technology and society). STS is a manifold field of research that describes variegated relations between science, technology and society. Common to STS approaches is a revocation of traditional understandings of science and technology, of humans and non-humans, of the social and the natural. ANT is a methodological approach developed by the studies of (Law 1987), Callon (1986), Wolgar and Latour (1986). Latour and Wolgar’s work (1986) express an ambition to abolish the division between social sciences and natural sciences as ‘two cultures’. Studying nature, they hold, implies a number of cultural rules and practices. Vice versa, cultural practices do not evolve independently from the materialities of nature. The intermingling of social and natural forces are both present when the ‘facts’ of science comes into being. This underlines a major point, namely that facts are made. Inspired by ethnography, they study laboratories as exotic cultures. They observe actions, instruments and controversies that lead towards certain facts. Knorr Cetina (1987) made a similar claim, developing a framework for sociology of scientific knowledge (SSK). After-ANT/Post-ANT underline the complexity of the world, and that entities and theories are continually adjusted and displaced from practice to another practice (Law 2005). In contrast to a social-constructivist who sees the same phenomenon as constructed in different ways, phenomena differs from practice to practice. Phenomena exists as a weave of tools, strategies, people discourses etc. Thus, phenomena must be studied as ‘enacted’ practices (Mol 2002). The post-ANT foregrounds the researcher as part of a research process. In this thesis I draw on writings from both the ‘ANT’ and the ‘post-ANT’ contributions, and do not emphasise the difference between them. My work can be seen as a network too. By establishing links between different contributions of different ANT-traditions, the empirical field and research questions, a new network is made. If I must categorise my work, it may find its logics amongst post-ANT writings.
3.4 Network trajectories elaborated

The last decade there has been a growing engagement in elaborating ANT and Nespor's insight into the field of professional learning. Especially researchers from UK and from Australia have taken ANT analyses of professional learning further. I will divide the many contributions into three groups:

1) Professional learning as socio-material co-productions
2) Professional learning as performatives and enactments
3) Professional learning: The spatial turn

3.4.1 Professional learning as socio-material co-productions

The first approach underlines that professional learning can be seen as co-productions of social and material entities. This means that usual analytical categories like 'social' and 'material' are not seen as separate, but that analyses must treat them as symmetrical and heterogeneous entities. As Nespor holds (2012: 2), this does not mean that humans and non-humans are all the same. However, in actions they interact in ways that make it pointless to divide them (Latour, Mauguin m.fl. 1992: 56). Examples of contributions of this approach to learning are Sørensen (2009) and professional learning is Fenwick (2012b), Nespor (2012), Hamilton (2012) and Edwards (Edwards 2012). I will present two of them:

Fenwick’s ‘Co-production in Practice. A Sociomaterial Analysis’ (2012b) is a good example of how professional learning can profit from a socio-material analysis. Fenwick foregrounds that knowing in practice can be studied as socio-material co-productions. In this article she conducts a study about co-production in police work. Through an analysis of everyday work of police officers, she presents police knowing as a negotiation of community, visibility and accountability. Fenwick studies this negotiation as a series of micro-interactions. These micro-interactions include complex social ties, cultural history, landscape, tools and technology. The findings underline an argument that typical political ideals of co-production cannot be imposed on practical work in prescriptive terms. Neither can they be claimed as abstract ideals to be applied from a policy level to local communities. Instead, Fenwick points out how co-production is a weave of material and social dynamics that may illuminate different needs for co-production. Various kinds of co-production constitute what becomes enacted as practice and knowing (Fenwick 2012b: 3)

43 I use trajectories as an overall term for learning, as presented by Nespor. The term is not part of every account of learning in a, b and c. However, in the final discussion of the thesis I will draw on the trajectory term again as I elaborate connections between the different accounts of the professional learning of pastors.
Nespor (2012) examines two cases of professionals at work in school in the article ‘Devices and Educational Change’. In his analysis he shows how devices in use establish change. Through non-humans like interactive video and a communication device, larger innovations can happen over time. His findings show that devices can have impact on a number of educational fields; they may be decisive for new professional roles, changed economy and new policies in education. These changes are not framed as linear or object-oriented, but happen as improvisations and translations. Through his analyses he shows that devices reshape relations, enrol allies or weaken organisational boundaries (2012: 1). Thus, he claims that devices can speed up or slow down interactions, forming the main ground for theoretical tools for analysing change as device mediations. I value this article for its contributions on translation and change. Change in professional practice is not only a matter of linear processes. It highlights the role of devices in creating different dynamics of changes. Nespor’s analysis also shows how things and people are enrolled in (or out) in workplaces. The article connects education, workplace and society, and the article supports how I establish trajectories between theological education and the professional practice of pastors.

A heterogeneous approach is part of all the articles in this thesis. On an analytical level, all the articles take into account both social and material entities. The socio-material symmetry will also represent important parts of the arguments for this thesis, as tools for understanding the complexity of professional practice. However, the heterogeneous approach creates many questions about how the social and the material work together, how these elements create a ‘vital materiality’ (Bennett 2010) and what kind of force that lies in putting the social and material together.

3.4.2 Professional learning as enacted

Another salient feature of professional learning, is that learning must be conceived of as enactments and performatives (Barad 2003: 810; Fenwick 2012b: 4). As Law (2005: 7) holds, ‘Actor-network is and has been a semiotic machine for waging war of essential differences’. Seeing knowledge and learning as enacted is a way of challenging a priori categories of phenomena. The universal, argue Timmermann and Berg (1997), is only ‘local universal’. When for instance a standard is introduced in a workplace, trajectories of professionals, things and tools become visible and must be negotiated (Ibid: 276). The

44 ‘Performance’ and ‘enactment’ are often used interchangeably, often decided by which connotation fits best (Sørensen 2009:17). To me ‘performance’ is associated with activities on a stage, while ‘enact’ seems as a more open term. I also prefer ‘enact’ because it is brings focus to activity and action, as its etymology means to ‘come to be, make’.
challenge, then, is controlling the enactments standards (Murdoch 1998; Moser 2010). In ANT accounts of education, the issue of standards and reforms represent similar challenges, as they are enacted differently from workplace to workplace (Nespor 2002; Edwards, Biesta m.fl. 2009; Fenwick 2010; Edwards 2012; Mulcahy 2012a; Mulchahy 2012b).

An example of a performative approach to professional learning, is that of Mulcahy (2012b). In case studies from eight schools in Australia, she examines how professional learning is enacted in teaching processes. The results show that there are manifold of ways and versions of teaching, which have consequences for all the interactions that the teachers are involved in. The results challenge the handling of policies, standards and other inscriptions in school practices reflect a manifold versioning. The many enactments of standards in teacher learning across different sites may illuminate practices that can be marginalised fields of teacher practices. Still, paying attention to enactments of standards of teachers may be fundamental to understand the on-going enterprises of teachers (Mulchahy 2012b: 134).

Aberton (Aberton 2012) challenges pedagogical authority of what can count as standard identity development and learning. Through the study of 17 retired women in voluntary community organisations, she underlines that identity can be described as socio-material enactments rather than fixed positions in society (Ibid: 131-132). The article underlines how formulaic responses and approaches to adult learning will not work. Seeing learning as enacted, situated, local and uncodified can help to open up unknown spaces for adult learning. Aberton explores how different materialities bring possibilities for new kinds of learning and identities (Ibid: 124) She argues that agency and passion does not emerge alone, never only as an individual, but are entangled with a collective, by objects, techniques and constraints.

The studies of Mulcahy and Aberton raise many questions that are relevant for the professional learning of pastors. On the one hand, the curriculum of theological education can be seen as a way of standardising the learning of future clergy. However, even within a European standardisation paradigm, there might be different ways of enacting learning in Norway and in the Netherlands. Standards are also a core part of the everyday working lives of pastors. There are rituals, traditions and ways of behaving that seem strongly scripted. Furthermore, reforms represent an increasing way of standardising pastor’s professional lives. Reforms challenge former experiences of pastors and force them into other ways of learning and interacting. The practice of standards and routines are highly relevant for the professional
learning of pastors, whereby the many actors and actions pastors interact with can create quite different ways of learning.

3.4.3 Learning and knowledge as spatial forms

A spatial approach to professional learning can be understood in different ways. This notion of ‘space’ can refer to many kinds of spaces, such as geographical, economic, sociological, ecological political, global and mental spaces. In this thesis, I approach ‘space’ in a specific way. I see a spatial approach as how social and material elements are combined and make up knowledge patterns. Nespor (1994: 11) labels this understanding of spatiality ‘spatio-temporal distributions of knowledge’. A spatial approach does not focus on single socio-material elements or single networks. A spatial approach establishes how one network is ‘hooked’ up with another network (Nespor 2002: 376). This means for instance that some kinds of knowledge gains favour prior to others. When the different parts of a network come together, strengthen some kinds of knowledge at the same time as other kinds of knowledge may be weakened (Nespor 1994: 9). This process makes up what I see as spaces and for learning. This learning approach is qualitatively all different from accounts of internalising knowledge. Questions about what we ‘know’ and in what sense we have ‘learned’ are not made ‘in the head’ but constituted by the space-time intersections we become part of (Ibid: 1994: 10).

Within ANT contributions there is an increased focus on the multiplicity of knowledge forms (Mol og Law 1994; de Laet og Mol 2000; Law og Mol 2001; Law 2002b). It is pointed out that ‘network’ represents only one way of theorising relations and participations. Networks identify how different actors and forces are enrolled into durable units of power. However, Law and Mol (2001) argue that interactions can take on different forms. This means for instance that knowledge can be more or less definite and coherent. More specifically, knowledge is treated as if it is more or less definite. The ‘as if’-element is the reason why different knowledge forms often are labelled ‘spatial imaginaries’ (Law 2004a: 138). They frame socio-material interactions in terms of different spatial metaphors. Three main ‘spatial imaginaries’ are highlighted in these writings: ‘Network’ labels connectedness, ‘fluid’ labels the varying character of how components are related and ‘region’ labels how elements knowledge can be seen as stable, immutable and self-referential.

Estrid Sørensen (2009) makes a noticeable theorisation of materiality and learning. The materiality of learning is studied through an ethnographic study of two schools in Denmark and how these schools implement technology. Materiality is a collective term for material as well as social relation. Sørensen aims at equipping education with analytical terms
that exceed only social relations. She claims that it is not magic who makes a network what it is; it is materiality (Ibid:54). Sørensen describes spatial ‘imaginaries’ as a performative way of theorising (Sørensen 2009: 29). According to Sørensen, the notion of spatial imaginaries creates sensitivity to describing how participants relate and what spatial formation is created. The spatial describes the pattern, landscape or shape that is formed spatially by and through relations (Sørensen 2009: 26). To summarise one of her main findings, through materiality different kinds and forms of knowledge can occur. Through interactions, knowledge obtains different forms, ‘spatialities’. These spatialities can be enacted as four different forms, namely network, resonance, fluidity and region (Sørensen 2009: 55). Other contributions on professional learning support this approach of Sørensen is Fenwick (2010), Fenwick and Edwards (2012) and Paechter (2004).

Another way to account for complexity is to expand the network metaphor. In her article, McGregor (2003: 357) confronts a view of space being a fixed material environment. Through an empirical study of teachers taking photos in their schools and discussing them, McGregor establishes a ‘topological approach’ to school as workplace for teachers. Workplaces, she holds) are intersections of relations going way beyond the classroom. McGregor argues that practices of teachers go beyond the classroom and are enmeshed within vast and expansive networks of space and time (McGregor 2003: 355). This means that the workplace of teachers is not created only in terms of inside classroom and outside classroom. Workplace is instead distributed, with shifting boundaries and compositions across space and time. Learning and knowledge, then becomes ways of organising spatial and temporal practices.

In this thesis I do not so much employ the term ‘spatial’. Still the issues and ideas of knowledge patterns are closely related to the analyses and interests in this thesis. The spatial approach in this thesis is used in the exploration of different forms and patterns of knowledge and learning. Spatiality can be examined as unified intersections of ‘space-times’, which I develop by the term ‘network trajectories’ (Nespor 1994). The reason for this is in the first place a pragmatic one; I do not so much examine the totality of the ANT vocabulary as I explore the effects material-semiotic trajectories – networks - have for professional learning. However, describing spatiality only in terms of networks does not necessarily simplify this study. As Fenwick argues, networks can be envisaged as complex in nature. Networks are webs that grow through connections (Fenwick 2012a: 101). The complexity of professional learning might bring new possibilities for a diverse notion of networks.
Thus, professional learning is not only understood as heterogeneous elements. I do neither study the enactments of professional learning as such. I hold the different particularities about pastor’s professional learning together. These particular patterns evolve into what I label learning space/time ‘trajectories’ across the articles. In curriculum and education such trajectories are analysed as how different elements of content, methods/tools and relations together form conditions for learning. Networks are a less explicit part of this article but are elaborated as trajectories of learning approaches. In the analyses of everyday learning of pastors, however, I explore the wide range of interactions, which create different modes of learning networks. When pastors learn in times of a reform, I examine networks as different energies of professional learning dynamics of pastors. Thus, a spatial dimension and networks represents sensitivity to the particular patterns and trajectories of the professional learning of pastors.

So far in this review I have aimed at giving an overview of different accounts of professional learning trajectories. This thesis is about the professional learning trajectories of pastors, and I will therefore give a short outline of how professional learning is accounted for in the context of pastors.

3.5 How is professional learning framed in the context of theology?

The debates about learning and knowledge for pastors make a variegated field. In the following I will briefly outline the main debates of professional learning for theological education and work practices. Such an overview can provide some clues about the contexts of the pastors in this present study.

The first theme has been – and still is- widely and lively discussed in theological education, namely the theory-practice relationship and the value of practical knowledge for learning in pastor education. This involves the question about a ‘core’ knowledge domain that can be ’applied’ to professional practice for instance espoused by Hummel (1982). However, applying theory to practice has been described as the problems of a ‘clerical paradigm’ as well as an ‘academic paradigm’ (Miller McLemore 2007:19) There are, however, reasons to understand practice and daily life as sites where knowledge come into being. This view challenges conventional dichotomies between theory and practice, between thinking, being and doing (ibid: 2). Such a view has resulted in a practice-oriented practical theology (Browning 1996, van der Ven 1993, Ballard and Prichard 1996). A practice-orientation of theology has been foregrounded as cross-disciplinary methods and learning in theological education (Fulkerson 2007; Campbell-Reed og Sharen 2011; Moschella 2012). From a socio-
cultural perspective, Driesen and Hermans (2007) argue that the main object of practical theology is the ability to contextualise through practice and empirical observations.

A second theme concerning learning in theological education is the matter of methodologies and teaching techniques. The question is how to create an integrative course for students in education for ministry, like medical and psychological internships, business apprenticeship, and social work (Drummond 2008). In higher theological education, many have raised theological education as an interactive process between teachers and students, opposing a view of students as ‘empty bottles to be filled’ (Raja og Rajkumar 2010; Buhrman 2011). Instead, theological seminars require a complex body of theological knowledge to develop people of faith and vocation. Inspired by for instance Argyris and Schön, complex theological knowledge and minister formation is conditioned by for instance experiential learning and reflective practices. Experiential learning provides a fruitful context for integrating affective, performative as well as intellectual perspectives of religion (Oldstone-Moore 2009; Heywood 2013). Sng (2011) takes this one step further, and argues that inquiry is one way to acquire quality in theological education. Through following a specific method of inquiry-guided learning, students can develop skills, attitudes and habits of independent thinking Wickett (2005) brings elements from all these approaches together. He frames how new models of learning are taken into use in different traditions of theological education, including self-directed, experiential and transformative learning.

A third theme ascends from learning as an existential enterprise and creating conditions for theological knowledge that expands traditional educational frames, which underlines the argument in the curriculum analysis of theological education. As Jarvis and Hirji underline (2006), religious learning is existential – and demands moving past the frames of cognitive learning theories. Learning should be an extensive term and include knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses. All these elements can be framed as ‘experiences’, establishing traces of lifelong learning (Jarvis 2006:6). Harkness (Harkness 2012) has conducted a survey of learning approaches in theological education. He claims that metalearning and critical thinking can enable life-long personal growth and professional development. One particular empirical project takes the analytical perspectives of Actor-Network Theory into account, namely the Johannessen-Henry (2013). Johannessen-Henry examines pastoral care towards cancer-patients. She proposes an expansion of the everyday and the systematic theology and foregrounds the importance of elaborating an empirical theology (Johannessen-Henry 2012; Johannessen-Henry 2013).
The different approaches to professional learning in education and workplace practices make an interesting context for this study of professional learning. The overview may be useful for this thesis in two ways: On the one hand, the issues I find at stake in this overview may have similarities to how learning is debated in other professions, and make possible links for further discussions about pastors as a case of professional learning. On the other hand, the approaches to professional learning in this overview represent times and spaces that the pastors in my case may be more or less a part of. The overview shows a rather manifold practice that can create certain traces and trajectories for future clergy.

3.6 Contributions about the research of pastors

In Norway there are no former ethnographic studies of pastors. However, I will mention examples of three different approaches that have made a difference when elaborating a research project on professional learning of pastors that in different ways foregrounds the different roles and hybridities pastors may be a part of.

3.6.1 The historical accounts of pastors and professions in Norway

The whole study actually began with a historical review of the pastor profession and pastor education in Norway. Haanes’ doctoral thesis gives a historical presentation of the development of theological education through the advances of modernity from the reformation until the beginning of the 20th century (Haanes 1998). Haanes argues that the demands and the expectation to pastors change according to the development of society and the Church of Norway. These changes have consequences for e.g. the relation between the practical and the theoretical elements in pastor education, the tensions between scientific ideals and the professional commitment and the many different tasks of a ministry in church. The changes through history has also had consequences for the position of the theology as an academic discipline, from being the ‘queen of the sciences’ during the emergence of the universities to being questioned as a discipline from the end of the 19th century (Haanes 1998: 3). Slagstad (1998; 2011) gives a historical account of the development of the professions of the 18th century until today. Slagstad analyses how the modernisation project of different academic disciplines has shaped the development of a knowledge society, where the pastor profession. In today’s knowledge society a scientific ideal appears as a medium for raising the status of professions. At the same time, there are on-going tensions between the academic knowledge and the professional aims of education. Slagstad pose some questions to this development, for instance whether the professionalisation processes will ‘socialworkise’ pastors and whether this is advantageous. For the context of my thesis, Haanes and Slagstad give a comprehensive overview of the historical context of pastors and deepen the knowledge
about a profession in change. The contribution of Haanes can also forefront how learning
cannot be viewed as the same enterprise, but must be elaborated as a socio-cultural and
mediated practice. Haanes’ and Slagstad’s contributions do not only bring about historical
summaries. They also bring highly relevant accounts of change in space and time and build up
a rationale in this thesis about how knowledge regimes, and how the conditions for
professionals change and may challenge for learning.

3.6.2 Theological accounts of pastors in the Church of Norway

Kaufman (2011) has elaborated a qualitative interview study of the spirituality
practices of 21 pastors in the Church of Norway. The study elaborates a phenomenological
understanding of spirituality of clergy, emphasising experiences of the relationship with God
and faith practices (Kaufman 2011:24). The findings show that clergy in the Church of
Norway engage in various spiritual practices. Kaufmann points out a number of ‘betweens’ of
the spirituality of clergy. Pastors find themselves in practices between classic ‘old’ Christian
spiritual practices and ‘new’ longings and personal spiritual experiences, between cultural
heritage and traditions and subjectivisation, between the history and the ‘here-and-now’,
between professional and private spheres, between the sanctified and the ordinary, between
the lay and the professional. More than questions about theological belief, Kaufman’s
dimensions of ‘between’ engage me as they unfold an overall perspective of the many
complexities the pastor profession may have to deal with. This comprehensive ‘between’
opens up many potential spaces for research and makes further research on professional
learning highly relevant. The contribution of Kaufmann thus establishes many threads for an
ethnographical study of professional learning of pastors.

3.6.3 Sociological accounts of pastors in the Church of Norway

There are also some sociological accounts of the working conditions of pastors. Høeg
and Gresakers report (2009) ‘Pastor in the Church of Norway’ gives a quantitative and broad
overview of how pastors experience their own working conditions. The results show that
many pastors have long workdays and often work nights and weekends. Taking a day off may
be difficult. These conditions may be the reason that every 5th pastor has or has had a burnout.
However, when it comes to the content most pastors have a high degree of job satisfaction.
Many pastors take further education, and underline that the guiding in their first jobs have
been poor. Many pastors also bring forth a lack of follow-up from leaders, both when it comes
to degree of personnel care and leadership structure.

Further studies on the working conditions has been conducted by Gresaker (2009) on
the job satisfaction of pastors in the Church of Norway as well as a report on recruitment for
the pastor profession. In a quantitative study among 780 pastors in the CofN, Skogstad, Einarsen and Nordeide (2008) found that burnout is a widespread problem among pastors. The reasons for burnout are often problems of taking time off, pressure between the needs of the congregations and family, conflicts among the staff and unclear leadership structures.

   The three fields of theology, history and sociology give important and useful information to get to know more about the everyday contexts of the workplace of pastors. These three fields shows how pastors elaborate their practices between the new and traditional knowledge domains, between the established historical institutions of the church and new, undefined demands of society as well as they negotiate the practical working conditions and everyday complexities. In my thesis, these insights illuminate the importance of studying the professional trajectories of pastors and what characterises pastor’s particular ways to learn.
4 Analytical framework

In Chapter 3 I clarified the terms 'professional', professional learning trajectories, and given an overview over accounts describing professional learning in terms of individual, social and socio-material learning trajectories. With an emphasis on socio-material trajectories, I have featured some research drawing on material-semiotic traditions, labelled 'network trajectories'. Additionally, I also gave an overview over theological approaches to professional learning. In this chapter I will elaborate analytical frameworks of professional learning for the three articles. This chapter has the following structure: After introducing a brief presentation of professionalism and the challenges of professions, I elaborate a theoretical account of learning. I do so in three steps:

1) I present learning as three wide and rough categories, making an entry for the whole thesis and for analysing the curriculum of theological education in Article 1;
2) I then discuss how professional learning can be elaborated with the apparatus of Actor-network theory (ANT) and processes of networks for Article 2;
3) Following this, I go deeper into specific accounts of After-ANT and how these can provide new ways of analysing professional learning dynamics for Article 3.

4.1 So, what is learning?

'Learning is the heart of productive activity. To put it simply, learning is the new form of labor' (Zuboff 1988: 395).

If learning is the new form of labour, the next question is – What is learning? Learning can often be associated with teaching, methods and didactics. However, while teaching affects arrangement of activities, I see learning as various processes. In this thesis, I will therefore not view learning through the lens of theological or religious knowledge. Instead, I elaborate theories perceived through my own professional glasses, namely pedagogy and education.

As an educator, teacher and pedagogical-psychological school consultant, promoting learning has been one key issue for my own professional practice. A part of this job was to define intellectual, developmental or other disabilities. As important as these procedures and systems are for obtaining further help in the welfare system in Norway, this was somehow in conflict with some basic assumptions I had about learning. In what situations are these tests really needed for helping a child, and in what degree can there be undiscovered resources in other ways of working? As a consultant, I often worked in dialogue with teachers. Although problems could be individual, many of the cases did not generate extra grants or resources. Thus, most problem solving demanded collaborative work amongst the teachers and
alternating practical solutions, although this work was often unacknowledged. These processes could be highly constructive, as they brought in different contexts as resources, such as a particular use of recess time, regrouping of classes, frequent contact with parents and so on. The example from school can illustrate major divisions between different approaches to learning, namely between learning as individual packages and learning as collective elaborations. This division is what Sfard labels the competing trends in the present conceptualisations of learning (1998:4).

4.2 Learning in Article 1: An expanding phenomenon

During the work on this thesis, learning has been an expanding phenomenon. The journey of this thesis started with an analysis of curriculum texts of professional theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands. It became soon clear that there was a need for an orientation in a vast landscape of learning theories. I was assisted by three different approaches to learning presented by Sfard (1998) and Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005). Anna Sfard (1998) divides discourses and theories of learning into two main metaphors, namely learning as acquisition and learning as participation. In addition to acquisition and participation learning, Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005) add one more metaphor, namely learning as knowledge creation.

The writings of Sfard (1998) and Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005) are important markers of this thesis in many respects. First, the two articles establish a starting point in my own emerging trajectories to professional learning in the work with this thesis. Second, the two writings establish a basic epistemological and ontological foundation for understanding learning in this study. Third, the three learning metaphors bring forth an analytical framework for the first article, namely the curriculum analysis of learning approaches in clergy education. In the next section, I present each of the learning approaches identified by these authors.

4.2.1 Learning as acquisition

The term ‘acquisition metaphor’ assembles various positions of knowledge and learning. Sfard includes a series of learning theories in the acquisition metaphor, including behavioural learning theories, cognitive learning theories and social-cognitive learning theories.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{45}Behavioristic theories explain how one can try to control and ‘stimulate’ a certain behavior (Skinner 1938). In cognitive theories, one sees how the individual receives, systematises and encodes impressions, information and experiences (Piaget 1928). In social-cognitive theory, in contrast, individual factors (biology, cognition, affects) are connected to events and circumstances in the environment. Learning is seen as personal agency and
First, these theories have in common that the *individual* is the basic unit of analysis in terms of knowledge and learning (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 537-538). According to Sfard, learning as acquisition is primarily based on the idea that knowledge can be seen as an individual ‘property’ (Sfard 1998, 6). Thus, this learning approach can be seen as ‘monological’ (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005, 537-538). In the curriculum, this may imply a focus on ‘the student’ and his or her individual need for developing professional knowledge.

Second, this approach seems to be grounded in a Cartesian division between the reflecting individual on the one side and reality on the other. Knowledge is seen as an ‘inner subjective knowledge’ in contrast to outer ‘independent’ knowledge (Vygotsky 1978; Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005, 538). In the theological education context, knowledge is also spoken of as ‘the rational’ versus the ‘affective’ or ‘embodied’ side of knowledge processes.

Third, an acquisition approach views learning as *mental* processes (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005, 537-538). According to such an approach, the individual is often seen as a ‘receiver’ or a ‘constructor’. In education, this means, for example, that knowledge is properly organised and the methods facilitate and make it easier for the individual student to learn. Roughly stated, teaching is about facilitating mental processes and constructions. This makes way for a fourth feature, namely one that favours propositional knowledge and conceptual knowledge structures (Sfard 1998, 6). Perceiving knowledge as specific structures presupposes that knowledge is seen as fairly constant and with clear boundaries. Such a view of knowledge can be associated with epistemological essentialism, or in theological education, with encyclopaedic knowledge (Ebeling 1975; Hummel 1982; Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005, 537). In the curriculum, this means defining ‘core knowledge’ or selecting certain ‘competencies’ the students are supposed to attain within a subject. To a certain extent, one can say that the acquisition metaphor represents the primary paradigm in educational systems (Sfard 1998: 6).

### 4.2.2 Learning as participation

Learning does not only happen within formalised, planned settings and with clear structures of knowledge, as Sfard, Paavola and Hakkarainen all argue. It can also be part of more informal settings. Learning can be conceived of as a process of ‘becoming a member of a community’ (Sfard 1998: 6; Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 538). ‘Learning as participation’ represents an intermingling of site, knowledge and process. Sfard draws on learning theories like ‘situated learning’, ‘apprenticeship learning’ and ‘communities of practice’ as

decisiveness. It is about having faith in one’s own resources and believing that one will benefit from extra effort (Bandura 1997).
representative of this view (Sfard 1998: 6). One primary feature is that none of these approaches refer to ‘concept’ or ‘knowledge’. Instead of ‘knowledge’, one speaks of ‘knowing’. Instead of ‘having’, one pursues ‘doing’ (Sfard 1998: 6).

A second feature is that the Cartesian division between individuals and their context is discarded. Learning activities are never considered as separate from the context in which they take place (Ibid.). In education, teaching should go on in a relevant setting for pastoral tasks, as in a congregation, hospital or institution. A participation view opposes knowledge as a property of individual minds and promotes learning as an aspect of participation in ‘cultural practices’ (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 538). Taking part in a cultural practice does not depend on inner knowledge structures; instead, learning and knowledge is mediated by culturally embedded artefacts and tools. Expertise and meaning are developed as results of social mediation. These learning practices are brought to the fore by talk about ‘practice’, ‘culture’, ‘discourse’, ‘communication’ and ‘mediation’ (Sfard 1998: 6). In education, a curriculum would be formulated as descriptions of practice rather than competencies.

As a third feature, participation learning also challenges the traditional way of seeing a learning process. Participation represents a fellowship where one gradually appropriates the norms of how to communicate and how to act (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 538). According to participation learning, professional knowledge develops as a result of the shift from being a newcomer to becoming an expert. This process is also called ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 538). Sfard holds that while the learners are newcomers (‘novices’) and potential reformers of practice in education, the teachers are preservers (‘experts’) of its continuity. Learning can therefore be described as integration, which favours vocabulary like ‘identity’, ‘dialogue’, ‘interaction’ and ‘negotiation’ (Sfard 1998: 10-11). These are described by Paavola and Hakkarainen as features of a ‘dialogical’ learning approach (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 539). In a curriculum, a participation approach would emphasise the ‘doing’ of typical professional activities, either in internship placements or in similar situations.

4.2.3 Learning as knowledge creation

Paavola and Hakkarainen describe three different models of innovative knowledge communities, namely Bereiter’s theory of ‘knowledge building’, Engeström’s theory of ‘expansive learning’ and Nonaka and Takeuchi’s model of ‘knowledge creation’ (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 540-544). Paavola and Hakkarainen frame these three theories as ‘knowledge creation’ because they ‘strive for something new’ (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 539).
Knowledge creation theories can represent innovative processes happening within communities. However, they do not focus only on the social interaction between people; instead, they include ‘specific objects of activity being systematically developed’ (Paavola og Hakkarainen 2005: 545). Learning as knowledge creation is called ‘trialogical’ because of its object-oriented character. An object can comprise signs, concepts or material tools (ibid.). This object can be described as a ‘mediating artefact’. The object not only mediates a practice, such as an educational institution, but also sets such a practice into motion.

According to Paavola and Hakkarainen, learning is a trialogical process between individuals, communities and objects.

In the context of learning in the curriculum of pastor education, a ‘trialogical view’ seeks to abandon predefined knowledge that reads like a list of curriculum goals. Instead, curriculum can describe knowledge fields or problems. This problem can be seen as the object of a course. Such problems are worked out with the aid of collective sources and collaboration. In other words, knowledge is no longer a list of goals; instead, it is turned into a mediating tool in order to solve problems and develop new insights. An education focusing on knowledge creation would emphasise the unknown and knowledge objects in the becoming. The ‘knowledge creator’ would say that acquiring knowledge is important for preparing students for professional practice, but only to a certain extent. Knowledge acquisition must be developed into a ‘knowledge base’ and be seen as equal to other kinds of knowledge the students have obtained. Theoretical knowledge within a course is not in a privileged position, but instead serves a higher goal, namely to be used as a tool to solve real and situated problems.

### 4.2.4 The contribution of the analysis of learning approaches in the thesis

The three learning approaches are important for this thesis in many respects. On a strictly analytical level, they create a basis for categorising all the Norwegian and Dutch curricula documents in Article 1. In the analysis, the learning approaches function as content categories, establishing certain patterns in Dutch and Norwegian theological education. However, one challenge that appears in the process of theorising is the valuation of the three learning metaphors. On one hand, Sfard establishes the two learning approaches of acquisition

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46 New knowledge is also a focus for Sfard, as she says that new knowledge ‘germinates in old knowledge’ and that it ‘has been promoted by all of the theoreticians of intellectual development, from Piaget to Vygotsky to contemporary cognitive scientists. The notion of metaphor as a conceptual transplant clearly complements this view by providing a means for explaining the process that turn old into new’ (Sfard 1998: 4). She describes this new knowledge as a ‘mechanism through which the given culture perpetuates and reproduces itself in a steadily growing system of concepts’ (1998: 5). Paavola and Hakkarainen make an important point, however: They not only promote the knowledge which grows and reproduces itself, but also turn the new and unknown into a unit of analysis and an epistemological focal point.
and participation as ‘symmetric’, saying that one comes into full relief against the background of the other. She holds that ‘giving up the acquisition metaphor is neither desirable nor possible’ (1998: 9). Sfard sees the differences between the two learning approaches as important for complementary pedagogical practices, and claims that a one-for-all practical recipe can become the worst enemy of success (1998: 10). On the other hand, Sfard also argues that having several, multivoiced theoretical outlooks on the same thing is a normal practice in science, and that the difference between the learning approaches is ‘not a matter of different opinions but rather of participating in different, mutually complementing discourses’ (Sfard 1998: 11). Sfard therefore argues that maintaining symmetry between the learning approaches is both possible and desirable for epistemological justification.  

I emphasise that the three learning approaches must be seen as separate from each other. They have quite different ontological and epistemological foci. Bridging them, as Sfard suggests, does not necessarily lead to higher and better ground. I argue with Paavola and Hakkarainen that another important reason for dividing the three learning approaches is that that both education and working life are challenged to go beyond individual efforts and integration into social practices. As the enterprises of pastors are changing, there is a need to elaborate frameworks of new ways of learning. Learning as knowledge creation represents a collaborative approach which makes knowledge ‘in the becoming’ a unit of analysis.  

On an analytical level, however, it is interesting to examine the three approaches to learning in professional education. The analysis in Article 1 (‘Curriculum’) can show how these three learning approaches appear in relation to each other. The results can bring valuable information about the different conditions for learning for future professionals. Analysing learning approaches may not only show different patterns of learning practices, but also initiate new ways of seeing learning in professional education.  

4.3 Professional learning as networks  
Article 2 and Article 3 are based on an ethnographic fieldwork among five pastors in three congregations in the Church of Norway (CofN). In this section, I present the questions that emerged with the observations in the fieldwork along with an increasing interest in the role of materiality for professional learning.  

Before the fieldwork, I had a set of assumptions about the knowledge and learning of pastors. As the CofN represents a range of members, I supposed that a great deal of the everyday lives of pastors involves meeting with people of different views, beliefs and opinions. I expected clashes between different kinds of ideologies, between traditions and the new (Henriksen 2007) and between specific religious practices and secularisation (Heelas og
Woodhead 2005). I also pictured that pastors’ knowledge would represent the ‘unlearnable’ and the ‘unknowable’ (Jarvis og Hirji 2006). Pastors can be called ‘masters’ of sacred places and practices, and are experts of a disciplinary field that can appear elusive in the public sphere (Afdal 2013: 216). Thus, I think I can say that I expected professional learning to be something on the edge and still hard to access.

During the fieldwork, I was quite soon faced with the matter that the professional learning of pastors can be much more than dealing with expansive and goal-directed knowledge. On the one hand, the pastors I followed handled many routines and strong traditions. Activities such as funerals and some church services appeared to be settled arrangements of people and actions. As I observed and asked questions, it became clear that these activities seldom represented existential areas of the pastor’s practices. Neither did these activities generate ‘clashes’ or innovative knowledge, at least, not in the way I expected, although many of the pastors expressed that it should be otherwise. I was repeatedly having the impression that some knowledge was ‘closed off’ to me and even to the pastors themselves. Examples of ‘closed off’ knowledge could comprise questions of truth or orders that appeared ‘given’ for pastoral tasks.

On the other hand, many pastors had tasks with very few standards. The pastors I followed needed to relate to an extensive and changing group of actors. Many situations demanded the handling of chaos, improvisation, creativity and imagination. These insights brought both frustrations but still curiosity concerning how to analyse the professional learning of pastors empirically. How could I call any of the settled routines, rituals and references to orders of God – or the rather loose improvisations – matters of professional learning?

4.3.1 Professional learning as blackboxing and unfolding

Bruno Latour’s book, *Science in Action* (1987), opened analytical possibilities for new insights about the professional learning of pastors. *Science in Action* (1987) is called the ‘state of the art’ of what has been given the label as ‘Actor-network theory’ (ANT). Latour uses examples from scientific practices and in particular from the ‘sacred’ core practice of science, namely the laboratory. According to Latour, scientific facts are not natural givens to be explored. Instead, scientific facts are made; they are constructed and fabricated (Latour 1987: 3; Blok og Jensen 2009: 27). Latour offers a philosophical and practical framework for ‘denaturalising’ scientific facts and establishing them as interactional phenomena.

Latour describes two main actions in the construction of facts. The first action he labels the ‘ready-made science’. This represents facts, routine choices and ‘blackboxes’. He
borrows the name from cybernetic devices, referring to a piece of machinery or set of commands being too complex to describe. This machinery then becomes a box about which nothing needs to be known but its input and output (Latour 1987: 2-3). Latour labels the other action ‘science in the making’. This is a reversing process of the forces prior to a blackbox, where the making of facts is unfolded. ‘Science in the making’ reveals a Pandora’s box of deadlines, passions, a multitude of voices and forces (Latour 1987:7). The forces prior to a black box can be described as ‘uncertainty, people at work, decisions, competition, controversies’ (Latour 1987:4).

Latour’s framework in *Science in Action* represents a starting point for how I developed a tool for analysing professional learning of pastors. Latour’s terms ‘blackbox’ and ‘ready-made science’ leads my attention towards how pastors and their networks in their interactions were building ‘facts’ or settled practices. I do not emphasise any fixed typologies of areas that are ‘settled’ or ‘blackboxed’ for the pastors. This means that I do not place any activity or any of the pastors as just ‘in the blackbox’. Instead, I explore how professional learning can be a matter of moving *towards* fixed and settled practices. Thus, I do not study ‘blackboxes’, but rather the activity of ‘blackboxing’. This means that I explore how interactions can confirm each other and lead towards settled knowledge and practices. Latour’s term ‘science-in-the-making’ of unfolding and reversing blackboxes can be compared to how pastors elaborate and handle areas that are in process, undefined and in the making. I elaborate on this activity as the analytical category of ‘unfolding’. ‘Unfolding’ refers to a dynamic process and realities. It is not a term that Latour uses explicitly, but can be coherent with his descriptions of processes (for instance in *Pandora’s Hope*, 1999) and other accounts of science (Deleuze 1993).

In my analysis of everyday learning I elaborate some of Latour’s writings to generate an analytical term for professional learning. Latour, however, is actually not coining learning as a term. Instead, his unit of analysis describes a) the processes of the professional work and expertise of scientists and b) their actions and interactions c) how scientific facts and technology come into being. To my eye, this unit of analysis can be compared to the processes of professional learning. In Article 2 (‘Blackboxing’), I study the processes of professionals, the processes between blackboxing and unfolding and how different processes lead to different kinds of knowledge.

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47 The term ‘fold’ and ‘unfold’ is analysed more deeply by (Deleuze 1993) in his analysis of distributed materiality.

48 Other researchers, for instance Hamilton, have made similar use of ‘unfolding’ as an analytical term for processes in education (Hamilton 2012).
4.3.2 Professional learning as networks

Latour’s framework brings forth how knowledge fields are constructed. The next question that arises is as follows: If processes of blackboxing and unfolding are dependent on different actors, which role do these actors play for elaborating professional learning? For instance, in the fieldwork, a routine was not only part of the pastor’s interpretations and explanations. The routine was also part of pastor’s actions and interactions with other people and depended on access to former documents and information, computers, available time and so on. Similarly, creative processes were not only matters of the imagination of the pastor’s mind; rather, among other things they were dependent on volunteers, children in the church service and available tools. As Latour holds, processes must be analysed symmetrically as interactions between both human and nonhuman elements (Latour 1987: 144). He calls these elements ‘actants’ (Latour 1987: 84). The interactions among ‘actants’ are called networks. Therefore, the term ‘network’ does not only label people and things, but is instead a process term. Networks produce specific results. Latour is occupied with what kind of knowledge is generated in networks. In order to transform a claim into a matter of fact, Latour asserts that one needs to enrol and include as many actants as possible (ibid.: 108–110). Latour outlines this enrolment process a ‘translation’ (Latour 1987: 4, 108). Translation can be described as a movement of gathering people and things towards specific interests. Latour argues that the more actants agree to or support a fact, the more powerful and established this fact becomes.

The analytical tools elaborated from Latour’s framework have opened a landscape of possibilities for my empirical study of the professional learning of pastors. I see the processes of blackboxing and unfolding as effects of interactions in pastor networks. Thus, the analyses in Article 2 are a result of continual interactions between the fieldwork activities and observations and the Latour’s conceptual frames. However, professional learning is not only a matter of establishing stable facts. Instead, the analysis examines how professional learning can be a matter of both closing facts/routines and establishing open and unstable knowledge. In ANT terms, I conclude that networks can be analysed as processes of blackboxing and unfolding.

49 Latour uses many words to describe ‘actors’; ‘actant’ is one of them. According to Latour, actants are ‘spokesmen’ in a network. As he states, ‘both people able to talk and things unable to talk have spokesmen. I propose to call whoever and whatever is represented actant’ (Latour 1987: 84). In Re-Assembling the Social (2007), Latour discusses the distinction between intermediaries and mediators in terms of how actants can have a network circulate through them. ‘Mediators’ (with high performativity) and ‘intermediaries’ (less performative, do not reconfigure the network) cannot create an analytical division between actors of more or less agency in an action. Instead, Latour argues that every node in a network is a mediator, contributing and shaping the networks as networks flow through each node. Mediators always affect whatever flows through them. For Latour, networks are chains of mediators, in which knowledge and networks are slightly altered by every node they flow through. These alterations are included in my frame of learning. In this thesis, I use the terms ‘actant’ and ‘actor’ interchangeably, although consistently within each article.
4.3.3 A third mode of professional learning

Seeing professional learning as networks of blackboxing and unfolding brings forth another remarkable feature. During the fieldwork, the pastors spent quite a lot of time on small-scale activities and problem solving. These activities could not be seen as challenging and unfolding fields of learning particularly. Neither could I say that blackboxing was the right way to coin them. They bothered me because I could not expel these activities and label them as not learning. The result was an expansion of the analytical tools of professional learning. I took another term into account, namely, ‘tinkering’.

*Tinkering* is a descriptive term used in many later ANT contributions to characterise the handling of daily life incidents, of making things work from one day to the next (Mol, Moser m.fl. 2010: 7). Using the example of professional care practices, Mol underlines that tinkering is representing ‘persistent activity done bit by bit, one step after another, without an overall plan’ (Mol 2010: 265). ‘Tinkering’ establishes a specific elaboration of the analytical tools for exploring the professional learning of pastors. First, it underlines professional learning as more than establishing ‘facts’. Professional learning is not a one-way movement towards increasingly ‘secure’ knowledge. Instead, tinkering establishes a continuum and the possibilities of analysing learning in-between blackboxing and unfolding.

Through nine empirical excerpts and analyses, I have elaborated nine different modes of professional learning. The boundaries between the modes are rather weak. For instance, one way of tinkering can show elements of blackboxing processes. Another tinkering mode may display unfolding features. The results imply that blackboxing, unfolding and tinkering appear with gradual differences. None of the pastors are only part of blackboxing or unfolding processes. The analysis shows that the different networks that pastors participate in make them move between different modes of learning. The gradual differences and the different participations of the pastors establish another dimension of professional learning, namely that professional learning can involve matters of movement and in-between processes.

4.3.4 The weaknesses and the strengths of the use of ANT in the thesis

The notion of networks has been a particular focus for criticism towards ANT. Some have argued against the symmetrical account of actants in networks. For instance, opponents have pointed out that in ANT humans appear to have limited capacity and lack meaningful intentionality (Winner 1993; Miettinen 1999). I have found the Latour notion particularly fruitful in avoiding this intentionality. The fieldwork has given clear impressions that professional learning of pastors is conditioned by more than the individual pastors could initiate or control. As I am less interested in traditional accounts of power (Whittle og Spicer
such as *who* was controlling a process, I am engaged in the process itself and *what* different actants can potentially create (Mol 2010: 264). ANT brings a particular empirical and performative approach to studying professional learning. ANT provides a semiotic view on learning which illuminates how entities become what they are in relation with other entities (Law 2005: 3-4). However, accounting for will and power, I do not find a lack of forces in analyses of heterogeneous networks. Rather the contrary. In networks, there are many wills and powers. However, humans and non-humans collectively contribute to the forces (Fenwick 2012b: 4).

Thus, a lack of focus on human intentionality does not mean that power, morality or different kinds of knowledge are not involved. Neither does it mean that there is no difference between humans and nonhumans. However, on an *analytical level*, it might be hard to separate materialities from socialities of actants (Nespor 2012: 2). In this project, a symmetrical analysis of networks means extended attention to whom and what participants is part of an interaction. For instance, economical challenges or a dysfunctional copy machine can cause new patterns of interaction and learning. A doll or keys to the buildings of another denomination may be crucial for certain ways of elaborating knowledge. ANT thus challenges me to avoid predefined structures of power, to look beyond accounts of inner structures of learning and establish alternatives to essentialist conceptions of learning versus non-learning. Instead, I am equipped with an instrument that is highly sensitive for the details that create and shape the networks and condition the learning processes of pastors.

So-called ‘After-ANT’ contributors have criticised ANT for the very same issue, namely the term ‘network’. They hold that networks can be understood as settling all components into an all-encompassing enterprise (Strathern 1996; Law 2005). Instead, additional categories and metaphors are added to describe different knowledge constructions, such as ‘fluid’, ‘region’, ‘network’ and ‘fire’ (e.g. Sørensen 2009: 68-69). Although I agree with parts of this criticism, I will retain ‘network’ as an analytical category. The analyses indicate that the processes of networks create knowledge in different ways. Still, more than giving interactions different names, I use the term ‘network’ to maintain an empirical awareness of possible new patterns of interaction. The result of keeping networks is an expansion of the network term into nine different modes of professional learning.

There can be many consequences of analysing professional learning in between blackboxing, tinkering and unfolding. First, this analysis establishes ‘translation’ as more than a process of enrolling actants into one, strong opinion or fact. Instead, nine modes give ‘translation’ an expansive character. Second, the nine modes can have the effect of showing
how professional learning is not either-or, but rather a multiple enterprise of different kinds of learning. Third, many learning modes can highlight the importance of empirical nuances. For instance, learning might be described as a multitude of different processes. Significant professional work is done in ways that might seldom be acknowledged. The categories ‘blackboxing’ and ‘unfolding’ are rendered from the highlighted practices of scientists (Latour 1987), while the modes of tinkering are elaborated in the context of care (Mol 2010). This combination of learning modes can create an interesting account for seeing professional learning networks as different professional enterprises. The pastors are not only relating to facts, nor are their learning processes all about unfolding and open processes. In addition, a lot of professional work is done as adjustments to details. Finally, through seeing professional learning as many modes, there can be an increased focus on how the pastors juggle a multitude of knowledge processes in a changing knowledge society.

To summarise, the analytical framework in Article 2 (‘Blackboxing’) makes specific contributions to the overall research question, as it forefronts the possibilities of analysing professional learning as networks, as movements, and as blackboxing, tinkering and unfolding. Using the case of pastors, the analytical account of pastors’ learning can identify some important features of professional learning today. The analyses can illuminate how professional learning is both about established facts and expertise and the processes that open up knowledge, in addition to finding ad hoc solutions from situation to situation.

4.4 Professional learning: The dynamics of professional learning

In Article 3 (‘Reform’), I ask the following question: What characterises the professional learning dynamics of pastor networks as they go through a reform? While I was doing fieldwork, a national church service reform was introduced in all three congregations. This reform had a twofold feature: On the one hand, the reform was initiated to encourage congregational participation and influence on the church services. On the other, the results of the reform were to be approved by the bishop. I observed that going through this reform evoked many kinds of responses and activities.

Reforms create a specific context for professional learning (Hubbaard, Mehan m.fl. 2006; Sawchuk 2007). Reform often bears with it two kinds of voices: First, the ‘senders’ of the reforms seem to encourage and require innovative and knowledge-intensive practices in public sectors (Strand 2001: 273; Fenwick 2013). Second, the ‘receivers’ of a reform sometimes experience that too many new elements can result in lack of energy and reform-
weariness (Tyack og Cuban 1995). Thus, the intensity, energy and dynamics of professional learning can be important matters to study.

In Article 2, I examine how actants in everyday interactions of pastors create various professional learning networks. When new actants enter a situation, they affect interactions in specific ways. I frame these network interactions as professional learning processes. If a network can change with each new actant, the question is whether learning is a fragmented process. I assume that there are patterns of interactions. I have called these patterns ‘modes’, referring specifically to the modes of blackboxing, tinkering and unfolding. Among the findings from Article 2, there is one specific feature of professional learning that has relevance for Article 3: I see learning as a continuous enterprise. Learning goes on and on, even in the cases of blackboxing modes.

During the fieldwork, I had the hunch that working with a reform is a matter of handling many complexities: The pastor networks negotiated new elements, traditions, material resources, existing practices and so on. The work demanded that the pastors negotiate the reforms as reorientations of collaborations, knowledge, visions and emotions. When new reform is introduced, then, how can the on-going processes be described? How to account for the complex dynamics at work?

Steven Brown and Rose Capdevila’s (2005) rich, fascinating contribution focusses on the energetics of network interactions. The article ‘Perpetuum Mobile: Substance, Force and the Sociology of Translation’ creates a starting point for analysing the professional learning dynamics of pastors going through a reform.

4.4.1 Brown and Capdevila and the possibilities of ‘substance’, ‘force’ and ‘time’

In the article ‘Perpetuum Mobile’, Brown and Capdevila aim to give an account of ANT and ‘After-ANT’. They ask what it means to ‘go after’. Brown and Capdevila parallel ANT ‘translation’ processes with examples from 17th-century classical philosophy and 19th-century social energetics. During the 18th century, as Brown and Capdevila recount, physicists hoped for a machine which once set in motion would run for all eternity. This was called ‘perpetuum mobile’. It was eventually given up when it was proven in 1912 that motion cannot exist in itself, but must be seen as ‘energy conversions’. The physicians found that motion depends on materials (Brown og Capdevila 2005: 31).

Brown and Capdevila (2005) give an account of the dynamics in translation processes. As Latour (1987) holds, translation can be described as a movement of gathering people and

50 Reform weariness is also a common part of the media discussions in education and also church, see for instance http://www.vl.no/folk/andersen-vil-ha-kirkelig-reformpause/ Retrieved: 01.02.14 and http://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/the-end-of-the-education-debate Retrieved: 01.02.14.
things towards specific interests. Brown and Capdevila elaborate on translation processes and parallel ANT translations with the example of energy conversions. Translation can be examined according to three ‘test signals’, namely ‘substance’, ‘force’ and ‘time’. I will not follow the parallel of philosophy and physics. Rather, I follow Brown and Capdevila’s suggestion that substance, force and time can develop how translation processes happen. The test signals of Brown and Capdevila can be utilised as generative and sensitising tools for analysing the learning of professionals.

In the next section, I present the Brown and Capdevila test signals of substance, force and time and elaborate on how they can contribute to an analysis of professional learning going on in times of reform.

4.4.2 Substance, force and time

Test signal 1: Substance

The test signal ‘substance’ may represent the who and what involved in a reform. I do not only look for people in an interaction, but also for who can be counted as resources in an interaction (Brown and Capdevila 2005: 32). These resources can be both human and nonhuman. They are analysed as equivalent and symmetrical. During the fieldwork, the reform appeared not as a ‘set’ agenda. There were not once-and-for-all presentations. In the getting-to-know period, the reform was not mentioned. During the fieldwork, some of the pastors had been sent materials from the Church council. I was part of some of the first meetings where the reform was a theme. This theme often appeared as a set of materials, which the pastors brought into a meeting, such as a liturgy binder and a folder. These materials appear as the main ‘representatives’ of the reform for the pastors and staff. It was primarily through browsing these materials that the reform became a theme. Otherwise, in the fieldwork transcripts, there are few and fragmented utterances about the ideas of the reform. Thus, taking the materials into account makes sense. Second, in an interaction, the reform seemed to initiate many different reactions. Some were frustrated, some seemed confused and some were inspired. Thus, I found that this very same reform invoked different kinds of interactions. In ANT terms, the participants are transformed – and translated. Brown and Capdevila maintain that translations do not always result in one, strong opinion about a matter (Brown and Capdevila 2005: 33). It seems like the reform appears in different versions – some more unified, some more chaotic and fragmented. Thus, the analysis shows different kinds of translations. Third, the reform seemed to have different effects on the pastors. Some seemed confirmed in their existing beliefs about the church services. Others seemed eager to make changes. Networks are not stable: Brown and Capdevila asserts that networks shift
constantly in relation to who and what is involved. However, there are different degrees of how stable a network will be, called ‘length’ and ‘surface’ by Brown and Capdevila (ibid.: 33). This means that I can analyse professional learning in terms of the extent the reform stabilises or destabilises the practices of the pastor networks.

**Test signal 2: Force**

Brown and Capdevila also describe force as an important part of network processes. Force may be associated with power. In observing the pastors and analysing the reform, I have consistently tried to avoid the elements called ‘power’. Not because it is not there, but because I sought other conceptions for it, as power can be associated with strangling a process (Clarke 2002). Power can also often be seen as an immanent feature of pastors from a historical perspective and in relation to other church professions (Foucault 1982: 783). This might be the case. ‘Force’, however, represents a more moderate term, which has made me seek for what the processes in pastor’s networks create empirically. The reform can take different kinds of force into use. Brown and Capdevila’s text points out that there are different elements of force, which I find useful for this article. One element of force is implementing a new element, for instance, a reform. Brown and Capdevila call this new element a ‘functional blank’ field (Brown og Capdevila 2005: 40). In this article, the reform may represent such a new element. However, going deeper into the analysis, I see that there is a need to specify what ‘new’ is, because what is ‘new’ tends to be different in the three congregations. The new elements of the reform are interesting because they do something with the pastors’ networks. The energy for learning looks different from network to network. The different energies of pastor networks may have to do with the different strategies that are taken into use when the reform is introduced. Brown and Capdevila call such strategies a ‘will-to-connect’ (Ibid.: 40). This can represent forces that contribute to the what for of a reform. This means that it is not only the reform that is different in the pastor networks. The force and strategies also vary.

**Test signal 3: Time**

The processes of a reform may have different results. Drift and exhaustion, inspiration or reform weariness relate to certain rhythms of professionals. It is often hard to tell why a reform does or does not succeed. Nevertheless, it may be interesting to look at how the interactions play out. How are these rhythms created in professional networks? To analyse the different dynamics it may also be fruitful to investigate Brown and Capdevila’s time as a dimension of translation. The authors hold that the processes in networks are not straightforward orders, but are instead folded. In the case of pastors, this may mean that
reforms are not singular processes of introduction-reception-implementation, and there may be a few constraints on the way.

Brown and Capdevila present three different orders of time, namely universal time, local time and narrative time (Brown and Capdevila 2005: 42–43). ‘Universal time’ refers to the Western and linear time system, comprising the calendar, amount of time, time limits and so on. ‘Local time’ signifies a series of local practices. In the reform, it may involve what ‘we usually do’ and ‘my practice’. Local time plays an important role, as it represents professionals’ knowledge, beliefs and attitudes (van Driel, Beijaard m.fl. 2001). Finally, ‘narrative time’ implies a re-telling of incidents and narrative techniques taken into use to make orders of things, such as a reform. Narrative time may play a crucial role, as it labels how a reform is presented, negotiated and re-represented in professional networks.

Brown and Capdevila highlight one important feature of time, namely that it establishes specific rhythms (2005: 42–43). These rhythms can contribute the how in an analysis of a reform. As Nespor (Nespor 2012: 3) underlines, the sequencing can answer questions about how and why ‘commingling’ happens. Clashes between different orders of time can create various dynamics. The analyses of the pastor networks show examples of clashes of different times. Finally, when it comes to time, I do not only analyse the clashes of times, but also examine how they make a rhythm, a set of energising dynamics in the pastor networks. Nespor describes learning as ‘duration, a pace, a ‘rhythm’ of speeding things up or slowing things down (2012:19). The tools of the perpetuum mobile help to draw some major contrasts between how reform is worked on in the three pastor networks. Additionally, time also accumulates the different processes of who/what, what for and how. On this foundation, I can establish what I label as the three dynamics of professional learning, which I label energised dynamics, slowed-down dynamics and dynamics of limbo.

Through the analyses, the learning dynamics comes out as highly variegated. In two of the networks, I had the impression that the pastors and the staff were ignoring or resigning from the reform. Through the analyses, I had to revise these opinions. In one network (Omega), it turns out that pastors are working to distance themselves from the reform. Nevertheless, there are new elements that make the pastors revise their former insights and knowledge. In another network (Alpha), the analyses show that the reform may represent an element that clashes with former local times and practices, and thus creates confusion and limbo. In Tetra, the new reform is taken into comparisons with former practices and generates many new ideas. Thus, substance, force and time are not established in order to be 'checked'
with the empirical material. Instead, the analytical categories challenge interpretations, and play along to analyse professional learning dynamics in new ways.

The analytical tools of substance, force and time may be important in analysing what appears to be the new, blank and unpresented field that the pastors work to find out about through the work with a reform. The analysis also suggests terms for the forces and strategies, the what for of a reform, and can show the substance of who and what are taken in. Furthermore, the analysis can give a more nuanced picture of what contributes to working at a ‘good pace’. A reform is not necessarily a linear process. It may involve former practices, clashes, different interests and clear and unclear opinions. I aim to bring forth something other than a story about reform as a failure or a success, as I believe the process of reform is more complex. Possibilities and constraints, which can be thematised in a reform, are not stable matters as factors for success or failure. Instead, they are relational; networks constrain, allow or even aspire new possibilities. Thus, the Brown and Capdevila article can contribute to shift a perspective and even help the three pastor networks tell another story about professional learning dynamics in times of reform.

4.4.3 The contributions of Brown and Capdevila’s analytical framework in the thesis

Brown and Capdevila’s (2005) text provides a multiple and almost baroque account of translation. Still, ‘perpetuum mobile’ and substance, force and time immediately made sense when I related them to the research material; they inspired me and made me eager. So, why do they have that effect for the analysis?

The closest answer I can give is that the Brown and Capdevila’s can function as generative and sensitising tools for analysing professionals’ learning. I am fully aware that ‘sensitising’ can be seen as a challenging term when speaking of theory. However, a ‘sensitising’ way of approaching phenomena can be seen as a core contribution of ANT, and perhaps the later ANT contributions in particular. As many hold, ANT is not a theory (Latour 1999; Law 2009); writing about ANT is in itself a contradictory enterprise. As Law

51 Law and many others claim that ANT is not a theory (e.g. Law 2009). Theories usually try to explain why something happens, but ANT is descriptive rather than foundational in explanatory terms; thus, Law assumes that ANT is a disappointment for those seeking strong accounts of theory. Instead, it tells stories about ‘how’ relations assemble or do not (Law 2009: 141). To me, however, ANT is no disappointment, as I see the enterprises of theory as wider than his. Moreover, even though I agree with his point, I think that this claim does not hold, as he also argues that the tasks for science are shaped by the social world and simultaneously produce it (Law 2004a: 12-13). He also opposes the rules of science (Law 2004a). Thus, if I take theoretical terms into use, this is not an objective tool, as I see those as shaped while at the same I put it into use in order to shape. Also, in my own Law style, I cross some traditions of how to frame a theory.

52 Latour (1999) says that ANT is meant to design a space for the actors to deploy their own categories. From this statement, it can appear that there is an almost phenomenological approach to theory. We must ‘follow the actors’, says Latour (1987: 12); ‘it is us, the scientists, who lack knowledge’. By following actors, we achieve
underlines, it is not possible to describe ANT in abstract terms. Rather, it must be grounded in case studies if it is not to miss the point (Law 2009: 141). Thus, ANT displays an empirical and attitude towards theory. Philosophical terms have to relate to a number of empirical phenomena, which is what Brown and Capdevila do with the parallels between philosophical terms and social energetics and physics.

*Sensitising* denotes therefore what substance, force and time do in the present analysis of reform. As substance, force and time are often associated with philosophical concepts, there is a possibility of misunderstanding my use of them. The three test signals represent tools for conducting a thematic content analysis of the professional learning dynamics of pastors. Theorising, then, means coupling analytical tools and the fieldwork material into new analytical categories. The ‘Perpetuum Mobile’ article has worked as a multitool for my analysis. This means that I do not use all the tools at once, nor do I employ all the tools equally. Instead, these tools bring a ‘set of sensitivities’, and ‘help to tell cases, draw contrasts, articulate silent layers, turn questions upside down, focus on the unexpected, add to one’s sensitivities, propose new terms’ (Mol 2010: 253).

4.5 **Summarising table: Analytical concepts in the thesis**

In this thesis, I aim to present the analytical tools for studying professional learning. In Article 1 (Curriculum), I analyse the curricula of pastors’ education through different learning approaches. In Article 2 (Blackboxing), I focus on empirical fieldwork on everyday interactions of pastor networks through the analytical tools of blackboxing, tinkering and unfolding. Finally, Article 3 (Reform) is an analysis of the dynamic activities of pastors working on a reform. These dynamics appear in the material through the tools of substance, force and time. In Table 1, I give a short summary of the design for analytical tools in the thesis about the professional learning of pastors. It includes different research questions, units of analysis, analytical tools and empirical material.
## An overview of the theoretical approach

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Table 1: Design of analytical framework in the thesis

### 4.6 Trajectories of professional learning

Through this thesis, I analyse, examine and explore the phenomenon of professional learning. In this process, analytical tools for studying this phenomenon are elaborated. I am restrictive with giving a once-and-for-all definition of learning. For a start, professional learning is an empirical and a theoretical matter. Through this Chapter, I have aimed to show manifold approaches to professional learning. A common feature of all the articles is that I approach them via material-semiotic analyses. The analytical tools in this thesis do not only represent separate contributions on professional learning in each article. The tools have emerged as a result of a specific way of theorising, where theoretical approaches and empirical materials intersect. The intersections between empirical material and the theoretical accounts establish analytical tools on learning approaches, networks and dynamics. The patterns arising across these analytical tools may establish trajectories of professional learning. In the next chapter I will describe the analytical process further through the methodological choices for developing a study of professional learning.
5 Methodological approaches: The process of studying professional learning trajectories

In this chapter, I describe the process of studying the professional learning trajectories of pastors. Until this point, I have clarified the aims and research questions, discussed the empirical contexts of pastors, reviewed the literature and developed an analytical framework for professional learning trajectories. In this chapter, I describe the research quality in this thesis and discuss important choices for this thesis process from planning the research to framing my conclusions.

There are several approaches to quality in qualitative research, from enhancing a detailed qualitative version of measurement validity, internal validity, reliability and replicability (Yin 2009) to framing quality indicators more roughly (Stake 1995). Quality here is not presented as a list of checkpoints. This means that I do not present a list of ‘validity’ and ‘reliability’. Rather, I see quality in research as an awareness relating to the some debates of methodological stances (Seale 2007: 7). In this chapter I will describe two issues of quality being accounted for along the different elements in this thesis. On the one hand, quality is a matter of how the materials and methods can elaborate on the overall research question and its philosophical foundations. The quality of this thesis is described in terms overall research strategies, sampling and generalisation. In the first part of this chapter I therefore present the overall research strategy, which is an ethnographic study. I then present the twofold empirical material of curriculum documents and field notes and transcripts. I give brief description of the sampling and selection of materials and data assembly methods, respectively, for these two types of materials.

On the other hand, I also see it as important to evaluate the quality of this research in terms of its warrants and justifications, the transparency and the ethics of research, systematics and intersubjectivity (Bergström og Boréus 2005: 35; Greene 2013). These issues are therefore addressed in the second part of this chapter. I provide an account of research techniques in the analysis the twofold material. In the curriculum analysis, it is important to highlight the sampling process and the comparative strategy employed. For the fieldwork material, I present shadowing as a research technique with its benefits and challenges. However, the process of a research project is not linear. Research activity involves loops between the research question, theories, people involved, ethical questions and the selective
activities of being a researcher. In these loops, the quality and the value of this research appear.

5.1 An ethnographic research design

This thesis establishes a qualitative and ethnographic research design. Yin argues that scientific studies are not atheoretical. Instead, a study should be built on a clear conceptual framework (Yin 2009). A research design is ‘a logical plan for getting from here to there, where here may be defined as the initial set of questions and there is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions’ (Yin 2009: 26). Studying the learning trajectories of pastors, I have been continually working on the research design. This has been an interactive process where different stages in the research project have been affecting the design. For instance, sometimes the aims and purposes of the research project have changed or given way because of empirical findings. At the same time, the design process has given the project purpose and important courses of direction (Yin 2009: 28). The methodological research design presents the model of logic of a research project, as shown in Figure 1 in Chapter 1 in this thesis.

This study has an ethnographic approach, studying social practices (Schatzki 2000)\textsuperscript{53}. It is ethnographic because it is a study of actors in naturally occurring settings or ‘field’ methods of data collection which capture social meanings and ordinary activities (Silverman 2010: 67). Social meanings and activities are features that include both curriculum studies and fieldwork studies. Along with an ethnographic approach, I borrow some elements from case research strategies. I employ case strategies in terms of two movements in the descriptions of professional learning – as a study of the particular interactions in the pastors’ networks in each article (Flyvbjerg 2011) and as the particular empirical studies establish patterns for generalising across the three articles. Being aware that ethnography and case studies can be separate research strategies\textsuperscript{54}, I still find it fruitful to combine them. In accounting for the differences between ‘ethnography’ and ‘case’ studies, there is a general acceptance that the two strategies may overlap (Creswell 1998: 61; Hammersly 2002: 183). In the next passages, I elaborate on how I conduct these research strategies.

\textsuperscript{53} The practice approach of Schatzki, for instance, makes a frame for the understanding of ethnography in this thesis, as he sees practice as ‘arrays of human activity’ which are embodied and material. Thus, practice should not be confused with ‘practice/theory’ divisions, but instead includes every kind of activity humans are or have been part of. I will not elaborate further on the studying social practices. My understanding of ethnography can represent a combination of the research process, the phenomena of professional learning networks and the activities of the researcher.

\textsuperscript{54} Such a view is held, for instance, by Hammersly and Yin (Hammersly 2002; Yin 2009: 12-13).
5.1.1 An ethnographic approach to professional learning of pastors

‘Ethnography’s tradition is that of Herodotus and of Montesquieu’s Persian. It looks obliquely at all collective arrangements, distant or nearby. It makes the familiar strange, the exotic quotidian…Ethnography is actively situated between powerful systems of meaning…Ethnography decodes and recodes, telling the grounds of collective order and diversity, inclusion and exclusion. It describes the processes of innovation and structuration, and is itself part of these processes (Clifford 1986: 2-3).

I employ the term ‘ethnographic’ in a wide and inclusive sense. The ethnographic approach allows me as a researcher to follow the traces and trajectories of learning of pastors as different practices. Traditional accounts see ethnography as the study of foreign cultures, and can be used interchangeably with participant observation (Bryman 2012: 711). Ethnography, though, can also be a complex enterprise of studying social practices (Hammersly og Atkinson 2007: 2; Silverman 2010: 68). The version of ethnography I employ is inspired by Raymond Madden (2011). He says describes ethnography as a ‘qualitative method that can articulate other ways of knowledge creation to produce a valid social portrait of the post-human condition’ (Madden 2011: 185). Madden sees ethnography as part of different activities in the research design. There are three particular aspects of ethnography that frame this project.

First, I employ an understanding of ethnography as a research approach concerned with understanding sociocultural problems and change in communities (Madden 2011: 33). Ethnographic research refers also to a ‘multi-sited and/or focus on a particular aspect or element of a society or culture’ (Madden 2011: 17). In a wide sense then, ethnography relates to how to follow a culture or a practice. The thesis focusses on the particular research problem of the professional learning of pastors and embraces it from different sites, such as curriculum documents of theological education, everyday interaction of pastors and pastors working with a reform. Thus, the ethnographic approach does not establish a technical research procedure for how to observe and follow pastors. Rather, it illuminates the particular practices of professional learning, as they appear across different learning sites of pastors.

Second, Madden’s understanding of ethnography can also be consistent with a view of research as a mediating activity and a practice in itself. Ethnographic research can be understood as a) the doing of ethnography – the rules and practical tasks of research; b) the thinking of ethnography – the reflexivity and the subjective considerations of the researcher; and c) combining of doing and thinking into a text. These three processes form what Madden calls ‘being ethnographic’ (Madden 2011: 7). In this thesis, ethnography concerning pastor learning therefore represents an approach to the very activities and practices of research.
Altogether, the articles on the professional learning of pastors can create a ‘knowledge production system’ (Ibid.). The way I study the professional learning of pastors, I am considering myself a participant; I am simultaneously shaped by the research activity while at the same time shaping it (Law 2004a: 12).

Third, an inclusive understanding of ethnography entails many activities of research, such as theory, reflection, musings, inspirations and analytical leaps. Ethnography is a way of ‘writing about people, a way of being with people, and in combination, a way of theorising about people’ (Madden 2011: 7). One important project in this thesis will be to examine tools for analysing the professional learning of pastors. Observation, however, is an inclusive and mediated activity of seeing, writing, interacting, feeling, analysing and being. I thus take part in an ontological project (Law 2004a: 13), both in curriculum analysis and in the fieldwork among pastors.

One weakness of an inclusive ethnographical approach is that ethnography does not have a standard, well-defined meaning. It can be used in various disciplinary contexts and seen as supportive of a range of theoretical ideas, such as those of anthropology, Marxism, hermeneutics and post-structuralism (Hammersly og Atkinson 2007: 2). Ethnography, then, can play a shifting role, and this can diminish the force of its tools. However, I find an inclusive approach to ethnography to be a dynamic and fruitful overall strategy to point out the fussiness of pastor’s interactions and opening up manifold methods to frame them.

Another criticism of ethnography is that it lacks criteria for scientific evaluation (Richardson 2000). This could clearly be discussed more thoroughly, because it raises ontological, epistemological and ethical issues. Within the scope of this thesis, I must delimit myself to describing ethnography and its problems in terms of what I have done and in relation to specific methodological issues.

5.1.2 Pulling up a case of professional learning – Elements of case strategies

Throughout this thesis, I argue that pastors represent a case of professional learning. This case may have value for how to account for professional learning in other analyses. The claim that the analyses in this thesis represent ‘a case of professional learning’ bears on specific stances, namely, certain principles from case research. Case strategies represent some capabilities in use in this thesis, namely strategies of generalising. Generalising, however, is a complex matter (Walters 2007). As I ask what characterises the learning trajectories of pastors, there is a need for a specific kind of generalisation. In this thesis, I emphasise two such strategies.
On the one hand, a case study represents the ability to see patterns across the different articles. These patterns establish continuity between the three articles. As Walters (2007: 95) points out, a case approach can provide tools for seeing themes across different sites and fields. In this thesis, these tools afford ways of generalising themes from one case to another. I argue with Yin (2009) that looking for patterns is not by any means a statistical generalisation strategy, as if the analyses can clarify how learning happens to all pastors or any other professional group. Neither is the case of pastors only valuable as ‘test samples’ for quantifying generalisations of phenomena (Flyvbjerg 2011: 74). Instead, I aim to make theoretical and ‘analytical generalisations’ (Yin 2009: 15, 38). This implies that through the descriptions of micro-interaction of pastors, specific learning patterns and generalisations may appear. Other researchers can generalise my findings in other ways. The patterns I elaborate on are not seen as set structures for professional learning, but rather sensitising tools for analysing professional learning. These tools may also be interesting for analysing the learning of other professional groups. This represents a pragmatic and systematic stance towards case studies, and underlines the demand for a tight research design (Yin 2009: 40–45).

On the other hand, the challenge for generalising is not only how to account for analytical abstractions. The task is also to bring forth a way of theorising that keeps in mind both analytical patterns across the articles, but still illuminates the concrete and particular in the everyday particularities in the data (Ilyenkov 1982). Thus, I also employ generalisation as ‘transferability’ (Walters 2007: 99). The method of establishing transfer points in this thesis is to bring forward particular and context-dependent knowledge about the various learning processes of pastors. The descriptions of particular micro-interactions establish ‘thick descriptions’ (Pickering og Guzik 2008), which can be explained as providing ‘the greatest possible amount of information on a given problem or phenomenon’ (Flyvbjerg 2011: 77). The variable, the context-dependent and the particular Flyvbjerg labels ‘phronetic’ generalising strategies (Flyvbjerg 2011: 56–57). By pointing out the particular, I believe that the findings can bring a sense of resonance with the experiences of other pastors in the Church of Norway (CofN) and other professionals (Swinton og H. 2006: 122). For instance, the details and small-scale problems of everyday administration may be a usual form of learning for many professions. Reforms may represent another example of how professionals engage themselves differently. Thus, I aim at valid descriptions that are not only of an abstract character. The analyses may rather touch upon ontological features of what it is like to be a professional today. As Mol (2002: 44) holds, ‘an object is real because it is part of a practice. It is a reality enacted’.
In the following, I will present the empirical material of the ethnographic case study I have conducted. I will then explain about sampling and generalisation of the three studies in further detail before I explain how the materials for each of the three articles were analysed.

5.2 The empirical material for analysing professional learning

The analyses in this thesis is based on twofold empirical material, as follows:

1) Curriculum documents of learning in theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands (Article 1); and
2) Transcripts and notes from fieldwork among five pastors in three CofN congregations.

The second approach is divided into the following two empirical foci:
   a) Fieldwork notes and transcripts from everyday situations and interactions of pastor networks (Article 2); and
   b) Fieldwork notes and transcripts from the work with a reform (Article 3).

5.2.1 Directions for sampling

I have analysed specific processes of professional learning by a small selection of pastors in strategically chosen educational programs and congregations in the CofN. In chapter 2, I accounted for the selection of pastors as a case of analysing professional learning. For selecting educational programmes for Article 1 (Curriculum) and pastors of the fieldwork for Article 2 (Blackboxing) and Article 3 (Reform), sampling has been a matter of finding similar programmes and congregations on the one hand, and also collecting samples with the potential of bringing important differences in the phenomenon of learning. The questions for sampling are as follows: What are the aims of analysing professional learning from two different materials? Why study the education and the curriculum texts of pastors’ education? Why conduct an ethnographic fieldwork?

5.2.2 Why two different sources of empirical material?

Through the curriculum texts and the fieldwork material, I elaborate on the professional learning of pastors in different ways. This may be a challenge, as the two different materials elucidate different analytical concepts and require different approaches to the phenomenon. While curriculum documents represent learning practices over larger spans of time and space, fieldwork studies provide detailed nuances of everyday threads, the here-and-now aspects and trajectories of pastor networks. However, their combination can create a triangulated blend for elaborating on professional learning trajectories (Seale 1999: 53–61). Triangulation does not ‘verify’ observations. In this qualitative study, triangulation may represent ways of establishing a variation of the phenomenon of learning through multiple data sources (Patton 1990; Hammersly og Atkinson 2007).
5.2.3 Why study the education of pastors and its curriculum?

In the analyses of Article 1 (Curriculum), the unit of analysis is the professional learning in the curriculum texts of theological education in Norway and the Netherlands. The materials for the comparative study of pastor education in Article 1 are curriculum documents from the graduate level of clergy education in the main theological institutions in Norway and the Netherlands. For Article 1, Sverre Dag Mogstad and I analysed the curriculum documents from mandatory courses in both countries. One starting point for pastors’ professional learning is theological education. Pastors in the CofN as well as in the Netherlands cannot be ordained without a graduate level in theology. Education therefore creates an important passage point for pastors in these countries.

Why study the curriculum texts of education? One way of understanding professional learning in this context is to analyse texts, which educational institutions have produced about themselves, namely their curricula. In a curriculum analysis, I do not study how students learn or the teachers teach, although this would provide valuable insights. As I study the professional learning trajectories of pastors, curriculum is one major field of gaining insights into pastor practices as historically and contextually situated practices. Curriculum thus represents a specific field of ethnographic research for bringing forth a particular aspect of a culture (Madden 2011: 17). Curriculum has caught my interest as representing language and material-semiotic tools to bring about an overview of different spaces, different kinds of knowledge and of the past, of present and future of pastors (Wertsch 2007: 112). Curriculum texts therefore represent a way to promote the different and various contexts and conditions of how pastors learn. In other words, curriculum texts foreground the spaces and times of the professional learning of pastors and can bring some answers to the overall research question of what characterises the professional learning trajectories of pastors.

How can curriculum texts show ethnographic entry to professional learning?

According to Green, curriculum inquiry is (at least) a twofold field of representation. On the one hand, the curriculum can be seen as a political text, where it is linked with political agendas and thus represents ‘reproduction’ practices. In this way, the curriculum can be understood as intentions concerning what is supposed to happen in education. On the other hand, the curriculum can be studied as poststructuralist and postmodern text (Ibid.). This implies that education itself is not a process of technical input-outcome relationship between curriculum teaching and learning. Biesta (2007) underlines that education is made possible by

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55 Pastors in the CofN must have a professional master’s degree in theology and one year of ‘Practicum’ in order to be ordained. There are few exceptions from this system. In the Netherlands, there are similar orders for being ordained in the Protestant church.
a series of mutual interpretational activities. In other words, the teachers and the students together create what the curriculum is. As Biesta points out, education is rather a process of symbolic or symbolically mediated action (Biesta 2007).

5.2.4 Why conduct ethnographic fieldwork?
In the fieldwork in Article 2 (Blackboxing) and Article 3 (Reform), I have followed five pastors in three congregations in their everyday interactions at work over a period of about twelve months, with an emphasis on ethnographic shadowing lasting for three months. A basis for ethnographic fieldwork is that ethnographers create a thing called a ‘field’ (Madden 2011: 38). In fieldwork, I turn someone’s everyday space into another very particular sort of research space, from which I construct the professional learning of pastors. I put up boundaries around pastors’ activities and call them a ‘field’. What is explored in fieldwork is a problem or series of problems. The data are focussed on the interactions in the activities of pastors in which I take part (Madden 2011: 39). It is in these interactions that the phenomenon of professional learning trajectories comes into being. The specific contribution of fieldwork studies of pastors is that they can bring into focus the micro-levels and the here-and-now aspects of the everyday experiences of professionals. Through analysing micro-interactions, I gain insights into the kinds of actors taking part, as well as how the actors affect one another. I label these actions professional learning.

5.3 The sampling strategy of the comparative curriculum analysis

In spring 2012, Mogstad and I collected and analysed curriculum documents from the Protestantse Theologische Universiteit (PThU) in the Netherlands and from the MF Norwegian School of Theology (MF) in Norway. From these documents, we conducted a comparative analysis of learning approaches in the two curricula.

The sampling process for the curriculum analysis started as an initial interest in education as a starting point for the professional learning trajectories of pastors. The Norwegian pastors were interesting candidates, representing a profession of historical importance in Norway, while their professional boundaries and mandates have altered radically along with a changing knowledge society56. I first reviewed literature on theological education in Norway. I also carried out introductory interviews with key persons at the two main institutions educating Protestant pastors, namely the Faculty of Theology at the University of Oslo (TF), in addition to MF. In this way, I gained important insights not only about pastor education today, but also historical developments and the more or less heated

56 Chapter 2 describes the relevance of Norwegian pastors as a case of professional learning in detail.
discussions the last decades. It soon became clear that learning is a multiple enterprise in education. I therefore took the three learning approaches of Sfard (1998) and Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005) into use. Thus, sampling has been a matter of seeing research questions, the empirical fields and analytical possibilities together. I then conducted a pilot analysis of the master professional program of pastors in MF and TF (Reite 2011). This analysis showed that the two institutions had quite similar learning profiles. Both MF and TF emphasise learning as acquisition, although some elements of learning focus on participation and knowledge creation. The differences, however, were of minor character. To elaborate the former analysis, I therefore decided to perform an international comparison, expanding the scope of how professional learning trajectories can emerge in professional education. Dutch theological education was a good candidate, offering a ‘lens’ for comparison.

Some features were decisive for the selection of the countries, namely the history of the Protestant church and the general profile of theological education. The Protestant religion has played quite a different role in the two countries. In Norway, Protestantism was the state religion until 2012, and 82% of the population is Protestant57. Conversely, the Netherlands has valued the freedom and plurality of religion for centuries58. Protestants are a minority compared with Roman Catholics (they total about 20%)59. The PThU is the only institution educating pastors for the Dutch Protestant Church, whereas MF is one of three Norwegians institutions offering such a programme60. Academically, the Dutch education is influenced by British and American theological educational traditions, while Norwegian programme is mainly characterised by the German academic tradition (Elstad 2011). Thus, the Dutch theological education represents a ‘hybrid’, with elements of two traditions (Ebeling 1975; Visser, den Hollander m.fl. 2010). Therefore, although the academic background may represent difference, there are tangential points for comparison.

Given the background of education in Norway and in the Netherlands, I assume that differences make important conditions for this comparison. The two countries have a different bias and cultural ‘luggage’. This has required extensive collaborative work with representatives of the PThU. Before the analysis, Mogstad and I searched available web resources and literature, and travelled to the Netherlands to meet with representatives from

60 In addition, the Theological Faculty, the University of Oslo and the School of Mission and Theology, Stavanger offer theological education for pastors of the Norwegian Church.
PThU who had developed the current curriculum. We also consulted representatives from other institutions concerning Dutch religious education in general. Additionally, in order to understand the developments of the Norwegian curriculum better, we went through the available literature, academic journals and documents for curriculum decisions generated over the last 40 years.

In spite of differences between the curricula there are a number of significant similarities that make the comparison between Norwegian and Dutch theological education and curriculum. The analytical similarities between the theological institutions are as follows:

- Education in both countries must relate to standards and quality reforms of the OECD\textsuperscript{61} discourses;
- Both institutions educate for the pastor profession. MF is called a theological ‘school’, implying a seminary structure. However, both MF and PThU follow the same university structure. They have the same academic span, involving a bachelor’s degree, followed by a master’s level education and one additional year preparing for professional practice;
- The theological education in the two countries represents the main institution for educating Protestant clergy;
- The two countries have the German academic traditions in common. The Norwegian theological education is mainly founded on the German academic tradition, while the Dutch theological education is divided between the Anglo-American tradition and the German academic tradition; and
- On a course level, education in both countries has many course categories in common.

Based on these sampling criteria, there are definitively differences between the curricula of the two theological institutions. However, I find many relations and similarities, which also make further comparison worth studying.

5.4 Sampling and gaining access for fieldwork

In the fieldwork for Article 2 (Blackboxing) and Article 3 (Reform), the unit of analysis was the professional learning of pastors in three congregations. Sampling and generalisation rest upon a number of selections. In the selection of material for this research project, I have worked from the principle of describing ordinary pastor work with ordinary tasks. I have aimed at presenting and analysing the everyday challenges and complexities pastors are involved in, and seeing how these ordinary practices of pastors create a range of analytical variations of the phenomenon of professional learning.

My project is part of a larger study, The LEarning and Knowledge TRAjectories in Congregations (Letra, \url{www.letra.mf.no}). The sampling process of the three congregations in my study (Alpha, Tetra and Omega) was carried out in collaboration with the Letra project. In

\textsuperscript{61} The OECD is an abbreviation for The Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, and its discourses function as normatives for international assessment and systems of quality in education (Rychen og Salganik 2003)
the sampling process, we consulted representatives of the Department of Christian Education in the National Council of the CofN for possible congregations fitting our criteria. In forming the criteria, it was important to find congregations with a number of similarities. A first criterion was that the congregations needed to have a relatively extensive level of activities. An extensive activity programme could facilitate an analysis focused on activities and interactions among a number of actors, both in terms of professionals and laypeople. Thus, the selection of congregations opened for complex interactions (Madden 2011, 33). A second criterion was that the congregations needed to be relatively homogeneous. We asked the Department of Christian Education for help finding congregations that had taken part in the trials of the reform of Christian Education. Having relatively homogenous congregations primarily contributed to the aim of establishing thick descriptions. A third pragmatic criterion for me was that the three congregations would be situated in the south-eastern part of Norway. Thus, the sample facilitated flexibility for doing fieldwork and creating the ability to be present at extra arrangements and activities, even on short notice.

The result of the sampling process is that many of the Letra members have informants in the same congregations. Sharing sample congregations is beneficial in many respects. The selection has advantages for the Letra as a project, which have also become beneficial for my project. First, we have pursued a similar research approach in the same congregations, which implies a sociocultural approach to knowledge and learning trajectories in the CofN. Within this frame, everyone in the Letra project has his or her own empirical field (e.g. confirmands, volunteers, leadership, deacons). In spite of a sociocultural basis, the different projects have disparate theoretical entries. Thus, the common selection of congregations has been seen as advantageous in order gathering the empirical lenses. Second, a common sample of congregations has been important for the totality of the project’s products. After the Letra project is completed, we will have substantial knowledge about learning and knowledge in certain kind of congregations in Norway. Similarly, we also believe that the congregations can draw the benefits of a close-up focus on knowledge and learning in different parts of congregational life. Third, studying common congregations has engaged many enlivened discussions, making the work with the project an inspiring task. Fourth, choosing the same congregations has also been an important factor for go-along peer reviews, and thus, for strengthening the credibility of this thesis. The research design has given the researchers the opportunity to critically evaluate each other’s behaviour during fieldwork, to discuss observations and alternate analytical entries. Thus, choosing the same congregations has been crucial for the quality of this thesis.
The results of the sampling process are as follows: Each of the three congregations has two pastors. Thus, six pastors agreed to participate, all experienced pastors in their mid-50s with one younger exception. All pastors have about 10–20 years of experience, and they all possess a general good reputation in different fields, both within and outside the local parish. However, in the process of research, one of the pastors decided to withdraw from the project. Thus, the analyses in Articles 2 and 3 include five pastors. The five pastors in the research material are Alf and Alvin from Alpha church, Tara from Tetra church and Ole and Omar from Omega church.

### 5.5 Ethnographic fieldwork and shadowing: Information loops, benefits and challenges

So far, I have described some issues related to sampling and how these contribute to elaborating on the overall research question in this thesis. In the following, I turn the focus of quality in the interactions between me as a researcher and the objects of research. In Article 2 (Blackboxing) and 3 (Reform) in this thesis, I have conducted ethnographic fieldwork with a main focus on shadowing. Shadowing is an ethnographic research technique that has entailed following pastors throughout their workday from beginning to end. In the following, I describe the conditions for studying interactions in the fieldwork of this thesis, bringing forward important issues of quality. I will do so in two parts: On the one hand, I describe the organisation of the fieldwork and its loops of information. On the other, I discuss shadowing as an ethnographic fieldwork technique, along with its benefits and challenges.

#### 5.5.1 Organisation of the ethnographic fieldwork and loops of information

The ethnographic fieldwork of shadowing was organised into three phases: The first phase was a ‘getting-to-know period’ lasting from May 2011 until October 2011. The second phase was a period of ethnographic shadowing, lasting from November 2011 until February 2012. The third phase lasted from April to May 2012 and included follow-up interviews with each pastor. Altogether, from beginning to end, assembling fieldwork materials took a year.

In the first phase it was important to provide the congregations with substantial information; I used several channels before, during and after the fieldwork. In April and May 2011, we applied for the approval of the Letra project from the Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD)\(^\text{62}\). Then the Letra project made contact with four local parish councils by e-mail. We provided a link to a web page where the project was presented more extensively (www.letra.mf.no). Some of our representatives attended staff meetings and presented the project in spring 2011. Within three weeks, three out of four congregations had accepted,

\(^{62}\) See Appendix 3.
signing an informed consent\textsuperscript{63}. The consent outlined the responsibilities of the informants and the researchers, provided contact information and emphasised that any participants could resign any time without needing to provide an explanation\textsuperscript{64}.

The next step for me was to engage in individual clarifications with the pastors. I arranged meetings with the pastors in each congregation in September 2011, informing them about the purposes and the features of the research design. I also discussed the ways of observing learning and the practical arrangements for this. For this discussion, I brought a written agenda. I also framed the issues of anonymity\textsuperscript{65}. Furthermore, I presented a preliminary schedule for the research, and asked the pastors the periods during they would prefer for me to conduct the more intensive part of the fieldwork. An introductory semi-structure interview was also conducted with each pastor\textsuperscript{66}. Before the main fieldwork period, the pastors and I communicated via e-mail and SMS about practical considerations.

In the second period of the fieldwork, I shadowed\textsuperscript{67} of each pastor. I aimed at going through the activities by the start of the day, as well as engaging in discussions the next day. By the start of some meetings, I asked for permission to audiotape the proceedings. At the beginning of the fieldwork, I also described the different methods of assembling materials, which were through audio-tape, taking notes on a computer, taking notes in a notebook or letting the notes be (in sensitive situations, for instance, in meetings with relatives of a deceased person or at funerals). In any meetings with new actors, the pastor asked about the permission for my presence was reconfirmed with the new actors\textsuperscript{68}. I was frequently asked about my research project, and by and large I gave a version of the information I had first given the pastors. In sensitive situations, the pastors informed the individuals concerned about the research project and asked permission for me to participate. In general, I was allowed into most situations.

During the research project, I checked my observation with the informants to a certain degree. This ‘checking’ was conducted as asking questions between different activities about what they thought about what had happened in a situation, as well as their reflections on it. One reason for this is that the informants could ‘play back’ the analyses and check for reactions (as described by for instance Lincoln og Guba 2000). Communication with informants, however, does not fit in with a transactional model of ‘giving’ information and

\textsuperscript{63} See Appendix 2 and the contract with the three congregations in Appendix 3
\textsuperscript{64} This right to resign included not only the ‘primary’ informants of this study, but also other members of the research.
\textsuperscript{65} See Appendix 4.
\textsuperscript{66} See Appendix 5.
\textsuperscript{67} ‘Shadowing’ is an ethnographic research technique and will be further described below.
\textsuperscript{68} The pastors forgot to ask once, and I had to ask for myself.
receiving feedback’. One cannot check that my version is consistent with the ‘reality’, as implied by a realist ontological stance (Cho og Trent 2006: 333). Rather, I acknowledge that the interaction between me as a researcher and the many informants was transformational (Cho og Trent 2006). This means that communicating and developing a common understanding with the informants was not only an important strategy; rather, the quality of research must be accounted for as the co-constructed realities that develop from interaction between me as a researcher, the pastors and the other informants.

One practical consequence of a transformational view of research interactions is that I made space in the notes for some of my own actions and comments, though to a limited degree. Another consequence was how quality was framed with the researchers in the Letra project. The benefits of these discussions were not primarily in checking whether we had the same experiences, as we had different foci for our observations. Instead, the value of the Letra discussions was to discuss our findings towards other stances in the research design, such as analytical entries and theoretical possibilities. Thus, the discussions in Letra worked less as an instance of control and more as a generative source for discussion.

In the third phase, I conducted follow-up interviews of all the pastors. During the final interviews, I asked each pastor to sign a final informed consent. After the second phase, I had tidied up the fieldwork notes and transcripts and generated a good overall picture of the material thus far. Most of the follow-up interviews were not tightly structured interviews, but were rather thematic conversations and go-along interviews conducted in the pastors’ homes, along with activities like going for a walk and eating breakfast or dinner. These interviews were seen as elaborations of the second phase, but not in terms of ‘checking’ on the accuracy of my observations. Checking is not a guarantee for valid research (Wolcott 1990; Hammersly 2008). In fact, some of the informants saw this follow-up interview not as a chance to give feedback, but rather as an opportunity to receive feedback that would help to improve their practices. Thus, these informants did not want to ‘check’ the notes; instead, they wanted my version of the activities I had been part of.

During the second phase, I had not given any kind of systematic or constructive feedback, except for confirming their actions (that was well done, that was interesting, etc.).

69 These co-constructions are not tangential points between ‘my world’ and ‘their world’ as an interpretive and socio-constructivist stance would suggest (for instance Marcus og Fischer 1986). Instead, I believe that asking the informants about their experiences and logics is a way of creating common spaces (Donmoyer 1996). These common spaces were created through several points of interaction throughout the entire period of research.

70 See Appendix 6.

71 These thematic interviews were prepared with specific questions for each pastor about specific activities and relations. In the follow-up interviews, I also presented transcripts from the fieldwork to comment on. The interviews were conducted as ethnographic go-along interviews; and were extensive and partly following a prepared interview guide. Therefore, these final interview guides are not provided.
Thus, in the follow-up interview, I was rather cautious about giving constructive feedback. However, I still met them half way. I picked out some key incidents from the observations and gave the opportunity to comment on them. These interviews had the function of clarifying some incidents and of engaging in further reflections on these actions. However, more than sources of ‘verification’ of data sources (Hammersly og Atkinson 2007), these interviews became part of a learning conversation (Cho og Trent 2006).

5.5.2 Observation of heterogeneous actors and interactions

I have chosen ‘shadowing’ as the main fieldwork technique. Shadowing can be described as an ethnographic research technique, bringing a ‘rich, dense and comprehensive data set which gives a detailed, first hand and multidimensional picture’ of what is studied (McDonald 2005:4). Accounts of shadowing seems to represent some fragmented traces with little knowledge of one another (Czarniawska 2007:22). Actor-network theory (ANT) studies of workplace learning, which I employ in Article 2 and 3, take a similar methodological approach by ‘following the actor’ (Latour 2007: 12). In ANT terms, I have followed ‘nexuses’ and connections of human and nonhuman actors and described the pastors’ interactions in terms of ‘networks’ (Hamilton 2012:43-44). The focus for observation in the shadowing period can be described as theoretically inspired by socio-material accounts72 of professional learning. A socio-material perspective on professional learning takes into account how human powers are co-constituted by various material agencies of tools, objects, paths, books, technologies, buildings, nature, paper and so on (Büsher og Urry 2009). Shadowing has represented an opportunity to open the focus to manifold actors in the everyday interactions of pastors. However, along with the many benefits and possibilities of shadowing, there are also challenges. I will discuss the tensions of shadowing in relation to two important areas for professional learning, namely the observation of heterogeneous actors and the observation of interactions.

First, shadowing has brought forth richness in data sources and heterogeneous actors, aiming at a using multiple sources of evidence as a principle for this study (Yin 2009: 117). Shadowing has been a chance to experience the shape and form of the pastors’ day from morning prayer, through office work and walking their dogs and finally teaching confirmands. I had the chance both to observe and to ask for comments from the informants along with the activities. In my fieldwork I used both my eyes and ears (Silverman 2010: 88) to gain as many details as possible when shadowing about the materials, people, spaces and out-of-sight

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72 The socio-material approach to learning represents a broader account than the material-semiotic approach. At first, this project was oriented broad, and the specific material-semiotic perspective was made more specific along with the analyses of the empirical material.
resources. I tried to retrieve what the informant said, what he or she looked like, how it looked around us, how we sat or stood. Thus, shadowing can produce a higher level of detailed information than what is possible using other qualitative approaches (McDonald 2005:5-6).

An important downside of the inclusive approach of shadowing is that it is a physically demanding process of running about all day (McDonald 2005:7). I shadowed each pastor for approximately one week. For some pastors, this meant 6–7 days a week, from 9 am to 9 pm. For a few pastors, I made observations for three days and following up with another two days in another week. Additionally, I followed up on selected occasions of special interest. Physically and psychologically, this kind of shadowing was very demanding. This way of working might be a challenge to the attentiveness that is necessary throughout the day. Some days, I really had to work to keep my eyes and ears focussed, sometimes doubting my own abilities to obtain any reasonable data out of the situation. Going through the material, I admit that there are certain differences in the depths of observation. However, the tendency is that these differences could be caused by the lack of experience in the first shadowing situations. Shadowing could also be an intensive experience for the informants, having someone observing them all the time. Some of them wanted breaks during the day (smoking breaks) or needed time alone in the morning.

Second, another benefit of shadowing is that it can contribute to seeing individuals in their natural milieu (McDonald 2005: 5). During the fieldwork, it was important to follow pastors in their daily routines and tasks, and conduct interviews in their natural workplace surroundings. To a large degree, this fuelled analyses about the many different actors that took part in the pastors’ everyday life at work. Actually, the time with staff members took up quite a small part of the workday. Often, the situations involving volunteers, dogs, family and people we met – or being in non-traditional places – fuelled interesting analyses of interaction and learning. During the fieldwork, I made drawings of the paths between different places to see these patterns more clearly. Shadowing can bring out knowledge sources and actors that might not be described through other studies of pastors, which might relate more to the cognitive and verbally expressed side of the learning networks of pastors. Thus, shadowing can describe processes and strategies which the informants are not able to articulate (McDonald 2005:5). The challenge of taking in other spaces of professional learning may be that it will difficult to draw the lines of where ‘work’ begins and ends. Sometimes, the shadowing put me in a dilemma related to privacy and professionalism. For instance, the

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At the beginning of the fieldwork period and during the week, we had conversations about having ‘a shadow’, and it was made clear that they could feel free to ask for breaks, for instance, that we could make appointments for activities they wanted to keep for themselves each day. In general, the pastors seldom used this opportunity.
analysis of the prayer meeting in Article 2 shows such a situation. Being there, as well as transcribing and analysing the prayer meeting, repeatedly gave me a sense of the vulnerability and the risk that Alf displayed to me. Becoming part of this prayer meeting made me hesitant about how to handle this situation with respect, and whether I should refrain from using it in the analyses for ethical reasons. However, through shadowing, I found that exactly these risks and boundaries make important tensions in a pastor’s professional domain. Showing the negotiation of these limits may be a substantial finding when it comes to communicating about the professional learning of pastors.

Third, shadowing can describe collective learning and the role of an informant in and paths through an organisation (McDonald 2005:5). This also brings forth more detailed descriptions of the context of the pastors by describing whom they relate to in their daily lives. By following pastors around, I have seen problems being solved when talking in the corridors, standing by the copy machine or arranging alternative staff meetings with only some members of the staff or volunteers. However, a focus on interactions can also easily lead to change or divert the focus for observation. For instance, during the time I was engaged in shadowing, there were escalating conflicts between the pastors I followed in two of the congregations. This created doubts, not necessarily about how to act as neutrally as possible, but about the degree to which the very conflict should be part of the focus of the study of professional learning. I decided to not focus on the conflict as it was presented to me by each of the pastors, but instead to follow their actions and interactions. The combination of observation, participation and communication can bring a material of ‘the brief, fragmented, varied, verbal, nonverbal and interrupted nature of organisational life’ (McDonald 2005:6).

5.5.3 Gaining a confident relationship as an ethical enterprise

The very activity of shadowing has been a process of gaining confidence, yet keeping analytical distance, as I am committed to another practice and aim than my informants (Silverman 2010: 326). I will mention three fields of importance in the task of gaining a confident relationship, namely the issues of anonymity, becoming a part of the case congregations and the extent of personal involvement.

First, an important formality and also a criterion for a confident relationship is the issue of anonymity. In the analysis, all names of people and places have been changed, as well as specific names of the activities, programmes and tools the pastors used. Since many of the pastors have a reputation for specific qualities and competencies, these could be traced. This has been an on-going discussion in Letra. I therefore have been attentive to making as many factors anonymous as possible, such as names of people and places. In the analyses, I
have also had a principle of not making typologies of each pastor, which would have made them more vulnerable\(^74\). In addition, in the articles there are no introductory descriptions of the pastors or their individual characteristics. Rather, the articles emphasise their interaction. When it comes to the other informants in the pastors’ networks, unless they are staff members\(^75\), I have asked for their permission ahead of each meeting. When it comes to access with parents or relatives of deceased individuals, I have insisted that the pastors must ask the involved parts for acceptance of my attendance. For all five pastors, I was granted access to almost every activity they were involved in. Another part of a confident relationship was a need to know what I was looking for or how I could observe learning in the tasks they carried out. This was the case for the pastor who withdrew from the project. This experience made me more sensitive to whether the other pastors had the same need for information. In all the other cases, however, the pastors expressed that they knew what I was doing, and some of them even interrupted and fended off these questions. In many situations, however, the theme came up when other people came by, whether they were family, volunteers, relatives of the deceased, parents in baptism situations or other individuals. I then tried to explain quite briefly that I was part of a larger project that studied learning in church and that I was fortunate enough to follow the pastors in their workday activities.

Second, a confident relationship has also been part of the task of becoming a natural part of the work milieu while maintaining a role as researcher. When I first presented the specific research project to the pastors, there were several reactions. Almost all of them made fun of the fact that I would observe them, and that it felt like the Swedish movie *Kitchen Stories*\(^76\). I laughed with them every time, admitting that shadowing is a process of getting less extraordinary (McDonald 2005:8). However, some were eager to tell me that I would not be invisible, and agreeing in this, I tried to communicate how I was both involved in, and partially producing research (Flyvbjerg 2011: 115). The getting-to-know period was important for establishing a more relaxed relationship, and joining informal activities like lunches and staff meetings, engaging in small talk and not taking any specific notes were important for a more relaxed relationship (Jirón 2011: 43). Because being observed is often associated with being critically evaluated, I also aimed to maintain an encouraging tone, for instance by saying, ‘This was good/interesting’ after an activity. During the shadowing

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\(^74\) At any rate, such typologies of pastors would not fit into the overall theoretical interests of this project of seeing professional learning as socio-materially constituted.

\(^75\) Ahead of meetings involving staff there could be a discussion about what kind of recording technique to use, for instance audio tape recorders, computers or note books.

\(^76\) *Kitchen Stories* is a well-known Swedish comedy where a researcher is supposed to observe everyday life in a farm kitchen, depicting the researcher’s efforts to be invisible on a very tall chair in the informant’s kitchen.
period, I had a clear impression that the pastors were more relaxed in relation to my presence and my ‘office work’ (taking notes), and many of the conversations became longer and more informal. In some situations, I did not take notes, such as in sensitive conversations with relatives of deceased individuals or with parents. I continued to make mental notes, keeping track of the activities, body language, themes and about 3–5 direct quotations.

Third, doing shadowing and building a confident relationship is a challenge related to personal involvement and not getting too sympathetic with the views and problems of the informant (McDonald 2005: 9). I acknowledge this view, but I have also experienced that theories on shadowing methods can undercommunicate how keeping eyes and ears open more easily engages a range of emotions. The more attentive I was, the more sensitive I became, both in terms of sympathetic and antipathetic emotions. Thus, tears could fall in a funeral. However, I believe that the researcher should not necessarily keep all emotions away. Additionally, following the tasks of the pastor profession, one is often witness to great emotions. This could involve a baby’s baptism or a tragic death. On the one hand, sometimes feelings should come. It did not feel natural or even ethically right to be with someone mourning and not show a certain amount of empathy. Rather, there was an implicit requirement of somehow feeling with them. In this respect, I agree with Gubrium and Holstein (Gubrium og Holstein 1997: 58, 74), who valuate an emotionally involved researcher as part of culturally available modes of expression. However, even though I do not crave objectivity as a researcher (Silverman 2010: 353), I am obliged to maintain ethically responsible research practice and keep focussed on my research topic and aims (Silverman 2010: 326).

The results of a research process are situated and require a reflexive process, wherein I as a researcher constantly question and return to understand my position. However, as Jirón (2011: 50) emphasises, research is not only a subjective experience, but also an intersubjective one, as the researcher’s experience is part of the understanding of others. The fieldwork has been an expansive process of not only observing, but also interacting with the pastors. I have also kept a researcher’s eye on this, continually discussing observations with the Letra researchers. The knowledge one obtains through ethnographic fieldwork is ‘always in process, always becoming, and understanding will always be partial’ (Ibid.: 50). The partial picture I gain in this project is open to the fact that other methods would also be valuable for this kind of research. On the other hand, I believe that ethnographic fieldwork, and especially

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77 In the informal settings, I gave basic information about my background and family, told a few jokes and often asked little things about work routines and the history and information concerning the city in which the congregation is located.
the many different sources of shadowing, have been important tools for investigating the professional learning trajectories of pastors. In the next chapter, I will describe the analytical strategies in detail.
6 Analysing learning interactions

In chapter 4, which focused on analytical frameworks, I gave an outline of my theoretical approach to professional learning. In an analysis, I do not only ‘apply’ a theoretical framework to the empirical research material. Instead, the analysis comes to be in the triangulation between research questions, theoretical texts and the empirical material. Thus, the analysis has already begun, and must be counted as a simultaneous and continuous process (Bryman og Burgess 1994: 217). I presented some of the stages of this process in chapter 4 until the point when I elaborated the analytical operationalisation of the theoretical framework. I pick up the thread here and describe different material forms, analytical strategies and the analysis of learning in the curriculum and in the fieldwork followed via a summarising table of analytical strategies and modes.

6.1 Different forms of data materials

This thesis includes different forms of data materials. The materials gathered from the data collection were 1) curriculum texts for article 1 and 2) notes and transcripts from ethnographic fieldwork comprising shadowing and semi-structured interviews. In the following, I describe the process of analysing texts and notes and then discuss what kinds of findings these analyses have resulted in. Research material texts are a complex enterprise. Ethnography, as Clifford and Marcus (1986: vii) argue, lies in what the researchers do. Texts must be seen as contested codes and cultural representations in which the poetic and political are inseparable. The way I describe pastor practices is intermingled with the aims and intentions of the research project. Historical, linguistic and cultural practices, which the curriculum texts of theological education bring forth, must then be seen as more than constructed parts of learning (Clifford 1986: 2). The consequence of an ethnographic strategy in this thesis is that I see text, actions and speech as part of social practices. This means that text, talk and action can all be considered actions drawing on different spaces and times (Bakhtin 1981).

In Article 1 (Curriculum), I see text as inscriptions of practices (Wertsch 2007). According to a material-semiotic paradigm, texts can be viewed as intersections of theoretical frameworks, fieldwork observations and the researchers' questions and attentions and goals (Law 2004a).

In Article 2 (Blackboxing) and Article 3 (Reform), speech and action are both analysed as interaction (Nespor 1994: 153) The interviews from phases 1 and 3 are crucial, as they add important contexts and support for interpretation. Still, since learning in this thesis is framed
as interactions; the main emphasis is on activities and go-along interviews initiated between activities.

In the following sections, I first describe the general analytical strategies used in this thesis. Second, I present curriculum analysis in the process from preparation of the documents and the analytical strategies and actions for Article 1. Third, I describe how the research material for the fieldwork was prepared for analyses, relating how the material for Articles 2 and 3 was analysed. Finally, I present the analytical strategies with a summarising table that highlights the differences and similarities between the analytical strategies in the articles.

6.2 Analytical strategies

A thematic content analysis is employed as a general analytical strategy in this thesis. In methods literature, this strategy is referred to in different ways, as a thematic content analysis renders its stances in relation to a classical content analysis, and the boundaries between them may be unclear (Vaismoradi, Turunen m.fl. 2013). Some call it just ‘thematic analysis’ (Bryman 2012); some call it ‘intuitive inquiry’ (Anderson 2004), while others call it ‘applied thematic analysis’ (Guest, MacQueen m.fl. 2011). A thematic content analysis is fruitful in this context, as ‘thematic analyses move beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focus on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, that is, themes’ (Guest, MacQueen m.fl. 2011: 10). A thematic content analysis may or may not include code frequencies or graphical presentations. In this thesis, the articles apply such an analysis in three quite different ways. Article 1 involves the more ‘classical’ content analysis with quantifying elements and Article 2 establishes a dual emphasis on theoretical as well as empirical categories, while Article 3 employs an empirical approach to professional learning dynamics as ‘enacted’. In the next sections, I will describe the analytical strategies in the articles further.

6.3 Analysing learning in curriculum

Analysing learning in curriculum texts demanded actions in two stages, namely, preparing documents for analysis and then the actual analysis. In the following, I will present these activities along with some of their possibilities and constraints. Mogstad, the co-author of Article 1, took part in some phases of analysing the curriculum article. Mogstad participated in the data collection at MF and at the PThU. He also represented an important discussion partner, particularly in the beginning of the analysis.

6.3.1 Preparing the curriculum documents for analysis

In the preparations for the curriculum analysis, a first challenge was language translation. Mogstad and I had the texts translated from Dutch and Norwegian into English.
This is more than a technical task. We engaged insiders from the Dutch theological education and others to translate and discuss different course descriptions, as well as words and phrases. In some of the courses, there were English course descriptions. Translation has required participation of insiders and sustained dialogue (Blömeke og Paine 2008: 2035). Mogstad and I also worked closely to discuss the different course descriptions. As far as possible, we translated phrase for phrase as close as possible to the original language. In the coding stage, we did not use codes based on single words. Translation was one reason for this, as the meaning of single words is sometimes diverse. Instead, we based our coding on units of words, and thus reduced the problem of misunderstandings that would have occurred in a translation.

Second, I worked out a concept map in order to operationalise the three theoretical learning metaphors (Table 1 in Article 1). The concept map has been worked out as an intermediary between theoretical learning concepts and empirical curriculum material. It has one vertical axis with the three theoretical learning approaches. On the horizontal axis, we have placed three empirical ‘pedagogical categories’: ‘Content’ includes aims, competencies and knowledge descriptions in the course descriptions. ‘Methods’ includes tools, activities and organisation of courses. Finally, ‘relations’ describes student and teacher participation, and includes ideas of ownership of knowledge and activity, also sometimes referred to as agency. The body of the analytical table includes generalised phrases from the course descriptions that can be interpreted as coherent with the theoretical concepts of one of the three learning approaches. Before I describe the methods, I show how the theoretical metaphors can be operationalised in this analytical concept map.

A third preparation was selection of corresponding course descriptions. Mogstad and I analysed the higher degree courses of the theological professional education in Norway and the Netherlands. In both cases, courses are part of professional degrees. The graduate level is directed towards professional practice to a greater degree than the bachelor level. In both countries, graduate studies extend over three years. We therefore chose the mandatory courses from the graduate level. To elicit texts that were as comparable as possible, we had to ensure that the detail level of the course descriptions was approximately the same. The Norwegian course descriptions were not always as detailed as the Dutch ones. To make the texts correspond, we therefore chose a combination of Norwegian course descriptions and specific

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78 Relations is a kind of third dimension category in this analysis, and lies between the categories of ‘methods’ and ‘content’. It can say something about agency and ownership of knowledge and activity, and is theoretically inspired. In the course descriptions, we can find formulations and words that indicate a focus on a singular student, on collectives, what kind of role the students and the lecturers play and so on.
semester descriptions (‘Emneark’). We organised all courses into ‘course categories’ like ‘sources’, ‘beliefs’, ‘practices’ and ‘integrative courses’.

6.3.2 Analysis for Article 1: Curriculum and learning

The three learning approaches (metaphors and analytical concept map) were the starting point for coding all of the course descriptions. The analytic strategy is a specific kind of thematic content analysis. Content analysis is the usual method for investigating texts, particularly in mass communication research (Silverman 2010: 159). Most content analysis results are described in quantitative terms (Bergström og Boréus 2005: 49). Data can be regarded as symbolic phenomena, however, and thus interpreted from different perspectives. Therefore, as Joffe and Yardley (2004: 56) point out, there are other feasible options, such as ‘thematic analysis’. Thematic analysis is similar to content analysis but pays more attention to the qualitative aspects than traditional content analysis does. I see the curriculum analysis as ‘thematic’ because the coding is not totally open coding, but rather coding into theoretically oriented learning categories. The curriculum analysis has also quantitative features, although it can hardly be claimed to be ‘quantitative’ according to the rules of quantitative research strategies. This means that the quantitative is not comparable or cannot be generalised statistically. It quantitative still played a role, however, in materialising the findings concerning the distribution of learning approaches and presentation of the results. I therefore consider our thematic content analysis to be qualitative and quantitative.

In conducting the thematic content analysis, Mogstad and I divided the curriculum texts into what we saw as units giving meaning. This means that we did not code single words. Instead, we created ‘semantic units’. Then, the coding could start. We used the analytical concept map (Table 1 in Article 1) diligently: We classified every semantic unit as content, methods or relations. Mogstad and I also categorised them according to the different learning approaches of ‘acquisition’, ‘participation’ or ‘knowledge creation’. Nobody should believe that this coding task was simple. Sometimes, we doubted which learning metaphor would fit best. Single phrases could sometimes be understood differently. We solved this by carefully

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79 In two courses, we also analysed a set of documents from the national program ‘The Road to Pastor Ministry’ (‘Veien til prestetjeneste’), because the MF course description refers to this to a large extent.


interpreting single phrases in the light of some of the context phrases. We also coded some courses separately, and then met to compare our coding. Furthermore, the courses were coded and checked repeatedly (Bergström and Borèus 2011:50). Since the analytical concept map was worked out to correspond with the course descriptions, most of the analysis of the concept map worked well. At last we counted the learning approaches and placed them in the course categories and the pedagogical categories as shown in Table 2 in Article 1.

The results are presented both as tables of counted codes and as text analysis. The quantitative elements are presented as colour codes for a clearer presentation of the differences between the countries. The colour codes also serve another purpose in the analysis, namely to illustrate that each course could have many learning approaches. Thus, the colour codes distinguish between dominating, challenging and ‘inferior’ learning approaches in both course categories and pedagogical categories in both countries. The text analysis in Article 1 elaborates these tendencies as a ‘multivoicedness’, offering combinations of learning approaches, pedagogical categories and course categories. The different dominant patterns, along with the multivoicedness of learning approaches, contributed to the main finding that theological education can be seen as intersections between multiple spaces and times, creating different conditions for the knowledge and learning of future clergy.

6.4 Analysing learning in the fieldwork

The research documents consist of different sets of sources, such as observation notes, transcriptions of audio files, interview transcriptions, printed e-mail and documents produced by the pastors during the fieldwork. This process has involved interpretations, elaborations and simplifications, both in the collection of the data material and in the transcription and preparations of the fieldwork material.

6.4.1 Collection of fieldwork material

During the fieldwork, I took notes in a notebook or on a computer, depending on the sensitivity of the situation. If there were meetings where many individuals used a computer, I did so too. If the pastors were conducting office work, I was also doing my special ‘office work’ on the computer. Sometimes, the computer was a kind of ‘camouflage’, making me more ordinary in a workplace where everyone had one. In situations where the computer drew attention, however, I took notes in a book or on the programme for church services. In these situations, it was only possible to note keywords and phrases, which were filled in immediately afterwards.

There were also sensitive situations and meetings, for instance, when the pastor and I visited people’s homes or in some conversations in church, at the shops and so on. As a rule, I
memorised about 4–5 phrases, and completed the notes as soon as possible afterwards. In some of the fieldwork, I used audiotapes. These worked best in meetings of 2–3 participants. In larger meetings, the audio files were hard to transcribe, as the sound was variable and it could be hard to distinguish who said what. Sometimes, I tried to audiotape when the pastors were ‘on the move’. Somehow this felt weird or even unethical, as I did not stop every conversation with each person the pastor met to ask for his or her permission to participate. Ultimately, these files were also hard to transcribe, as the conversations were blended with too much background noise. During the process of shadowing, taking notes and memorising were my main data collection strategies. During the initial and final interviews, I used audiotaping.

6.4.2 Strategies for transcription

Transcription is also a process of decision-making and exercising rules for research. In the fieldwork, I collected other sources like pictures and church service programmes and other documents I received from the pastors. In the fieldwork, these served as background materials. The audiotapes were transcribed into text files, following standard procedures of transcription, marking pauses and underlining modes of expression (Bryman 2012: 485). The notes of my own observations were usually made into whole sentences when this made sense. I only filled in informants’ quotes with single words until the statements made sense. The principle of these transcriptions was to create useful field narratives, stripped enough to be accurate, but still fleshed out enough to be more than fragments. In all field notes, I noted basic body language and material tools. Some conversations had implicit meanings, like irony, conflicts present but not expressed and so. In such situations, I added this information in brackets. In some situations, there were sequences that I did not write down immediately, and could even forget to note. When I then remembered these details, I wrote them down. The important thing then was to write down only incidents, but not quotations. Memory can be a deceitful player, and sometimes I was surprised how quick I could forget and how easily I seemed to put my own words into the material.

The last stage in the transcription was configuring situations. I shadowed pastors in their everyday work, and sometimes it was hard to tell when a situation started and when it stopped. For instance, this was the case with the liturgy binder from Article 3. The liturgy binder was part of many meetings, carried around or lying in the pastor’s office. In some cases, a situation continued when the pastors were making comments after a meeting. As a main rule, I defined a situation from when it first was brought up until it was no longer an issue. This means that some situations in the analyses have shorter or longer time spans or can
stretch out across different sites. An example of this is the children’s church service with Ole in Omega, which I refer to in Article 2. Another challenge in writing up the field notes was creating a smooth flow in the text and deciding when it should keep the informant’s voice or when it depended on my narration (Bryman 2012: 485).

6.5 Coding and writing up professional learning from fieldwork
At this point, all the different sources were transcribed into text files. I then transferred the text files into the qualitative research software program Hyperresearch and the coding process could start. At this point, I tried to ‘log off’ every theoretical preference I had in mind and start out with fresh eyes. Coding materials from shadowing means handling a wealth of research materials, and I coded all the empirical material from the fieldwork. While I was coding, different categories of codes evolved, and one section of 10–12 lines often had 5–8 codes.

I started out with so-called ‘activity codes’ to label what kind of activity a passage was part of, whether it was a church service, office work or a lunch. I also employed different theme codes for passages that occurred often as descriptive themes in the material, like ‘prayer/spiritual life’, ‘private/work’, ‘home’ and so on. These theme codes were elaborated and adjusted throughout the coding process to make them fit for all the material. I created a word category of words and phrases the pastors used frequently. A form code eventually appeared to mark ‘continuity’ or ‘breaks’ in a situation. I applied ‘continuity’ where continuing a practice arose as a theme or many confirmations of one point of view. I applied ‘break’ in situations of disagreement, opposing views or silence. In addition, I had a code for ‘break between the informant and me’, which made any misunderstandings and disagreements visible. At this point, I singled out some passages with a few theoretical codes, like ‘blackboxing’, ‘unfolding’ and ‘energising’. All in all, the process of the material gave about 70 codes, among which about 8 were theoretical codes.

Many passages were coded repeatedly. In the process, I consulted others in the Letra project, giving overviews of the codes, reasons for the code categories and examples of how the codes were applied to the text. From this point, I could start analysing for Articles 2 and 3.

6.5.1 Analysis for Article 2: Networks between blackboxing and unfolding
In Article 2, I analyse the cases of five pastors in three congregations. I establish a framework for how learning between blackboxing and unfolding can happen. In this article 2 professional learning networks, I elaborate an analytical instrument founded on the

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81 I analyse processes towards blackboxing and unfolding, not aiming to describe dimensions like complete and unconscious routinisations and knowledge. Neither will I analyse the total ‘white’ fields of unfolding and chaos.
analytical framework of Latour, but also as adjustments and elaborations of observations and hunches arising from the fieldwork. Table 1 in Article 2 is therefore a constructed analytical instrument and a coding scheme (Bergström og Boréus 2005: 49).

In the analysis, I ask what characterises the processes of blackboxing before it becomes completely ‘black’ (becoming an unquestioned fact and a ‘thing’). I also ask what the opposite processes look like, namely how the process of unfolding happens. From one point of view, I take a theoretical stance to explore theoretically loaded codes like ‘blackboxing’ and ‘unfolding’. However, these codes do not appear as settled analytical units. Instead, the philosophical stances also establish blackboxing and unfolding as themes. As Bryman (2012: 297) underlines, it is not only manifest content, but also latent content I analyse. After selecting a situation for analysis in the material, I took Table 1 (Article 2) into use and started by asking the following: Who and what participates in this situation? I then listed these as ‘actants’. Then I asked how the actants worked together, whether they were connected together into a unity (like Alvin speaking about the 20 grandmothers becoming boxes). This kind of analysis is reminiscent of social network analysis (Breiger 2004).

In some cases, the actants were not enrolled into a clarifying unity, raising mysteries, open questions and things unsaid (like the doll of Alf). In others, the actants were loosely connected or split, carrying out activities with several or short-term objectives. This analysis was elaborated with an explorative aim, namely to present a range of networks and their interactions. These interactions expanded Table 1 into three overall categories, namely ‘blackboxing’, ‘unfolding’ and ‘tinkering’. Each of these had three modes of learning networks. The aim at showing the range of learning networks ended in nine modes of learning. Such a theoretical aim had the consequence that the empirical range was less presented; for instance, not all pastors were represented equally in the analysis.

The challenge of creating an analytical table like Table 1 can ultimately confirm a theory. The extensive open-coding process, however, and treating ‘blackboxing’ and ‘unfolding’ as themes, contributed to a whole series of new findings. I am aware that this table is comprehensive. However, through the coding, one of the findings was that learning networks of pastors are more continuous than distinct categories. I attempt to show the blurred boundaries through the nine modes and the qualitative analysis. I therefore ended up with yet another finding, namely that professional learning networks are something in-between. The analysis therefore builds up the argument that professional learning networks are characterised by modes in-between blackboxing and unfolding. These findings are summarised in Table 2 in Article 2.
6.5.2 Analysis for Article 3: Perpetuum mobile and learning dynamics

The analysis in Article 3 explores professional learning dynamics in times of reform and aims to develop analytical tools for analysing them. From the coding process, the categories of different dynamics and reform were soon catching interest as repetitive themes. In the presentation of the analytical framework, I establish three themes for analysis, namely Brown and Capdevila's (2005) ‘substance’, ‘force’ and ‘time’. In contrast to the other two articles, this analysis does not elaborate an analytical table. Instead, the analytical categories are presented as ‘test signals’. Substance, force and time are included as lenses for exploring the depths of the data themes, thereby representing a variant of thematic content analysis (Bryman 2005: 580). However, the analysis might also be seen as having semiotic features, with loosely connected codes that mediate, indicate or symbolise cultural phenomena (Breiger 2004: 572, 582). Substance, force and time do not establish a one-to-one relationship with the material; rather, they function as semiotic and indicative explorative tools for generalising about the dynamics of professional learning.

In the analysis, I take a similar approach to the article, asking explorative questions about who/what, what for and how in the work with a reform. Substance, force and time are not analysed separately, but as unified spacetime networks (See Chapter 3). Thus, substance, force and time are intermingled and treated as prolongings of each other. I often start with ‘force’ and the new blank actants, asking, what is the new to these pastors in a situation and how they engage to connect to new elements. Force describes the what for. Then I examine who was participating and what this kind of participation produced, whether interaction lead to for example strong opinions or questions. This I label ‘substance’. ‘Time’ describes how universal time (straight-line process) could clash with former practices (local times), but also clash with the re-telling and the narrative rise and fall of tensions in interaction (narrative time). A situation could evolve in different ways, with breaks and ruptures, ambivalences, decisiveness or affirmations (time). Together, these elements created certain rhythms and dynamics.

The challenge in such an analysis can be less transparency. The analytical tools of substance, force and time provide philosophically saturated categories and the interpretations of the situations may demonstrated the nonverbal and embedded elements amongst the pastor networks. However, I attempt to solve this at many stages in the process of the analysis in Article 3: I establish possibilities for operationalisation in the theoretical chapter, I conduct an in-depth analysis referring to the categories and I summarise the analysis and the findings in Table 1.
The results of the analysis in Article 3 give insights about professional learning in times of reform and how three different dynamics are generated, namely, energising, slowing down and limbo dynamics. The analysis thus establishes an empirically founded analytical tool for analysing professional learning dynamics.

6.6 Summarising the analytical strategies in this thesis

Before the summaries of the articles in the next section, Table 2 summarise the analytical research strategies of the three articles in this thesis in terms of the different versions of content analysis, theoretical/empirical emphasis, modes of analytical presentation and ways of presenting the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Article 1</th>
<th>Article 2</th>
<th>Article 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emphasis of thematic content analysis</strong></td>
<td>Analysis of semantic units in curriculum texts, quantifying semantic units</td>
<td>A thematic content analysis of large parts of the fieldwork texts, no quantifying, but still bringing forth generalising ‘tendencies’ in the material</td>
<td>A thematic content analysis tending towards a semantic analysis with loosely linked codes. No quantifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theoretical/empirical emphasis</strong></td>
<td>A theoretical emphasis, examining theoretical units in the curriculum texts</td>
<td>Empirical codes, eventually combined with theoretical codes to explore the range of learning in the material</td>
<td>Analytical framework used as semantic ‘test signals’, representing generative effects of the empirical research material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation mode</strong></td>
<td>A quantifying table along with a table of conceptual elaborations</td>
<td>A thematic content analysis including large parts of the materials</td>
<td>A thematic content analysis selecting three qualitatively different situations to be described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation of results</strong></td>
<td>An extended analytical table and qualitative examples</td>
<td>An extended analytical table along with nine modes of professional learning networks</td>
<td>In-depth analyses of three situations to show examples three different dynamics empirical categories of professional learning dynamics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The analytical strategies of the three articles
7 The studies in this thesis

7.1 Article 1: Learning for future complex tasks: Learning approaches in curricula


In article 1, Mogstad and I foreground and analyse different approaches to learning in higher theological education. We conduct a comparative analysis of contemporary Norwegian (MF Norwegian school of Theology) and Dutch (Protestantse Theologische Universiteit) curricula for higher degrees in theological education, and explore learning in the education of future clergy. We ask the following question: *What characterises the learning approaches in Protestant theological education in Norway and the Netherlands today?*

In a changing knowledge society, the professional education of pastors is a challenging task. As knowledge becomes increasingly pluralistic, theologians – like those in other professions – struggle to maintain an expert role and frame their expert fields. More than handling singular questions, professional knowledge is a complex enterprise. For pastors, the core of the challenge may be described as *how to learn*. We argue that different learning approaches in professional theological education can establish variegated conditions for how future pastors learn and handle knowledge.

In Article 1, ‘learning’ does not refer to didactic methods or classroom interactions in clergy education. Instead, we analyse curricula. The arrangements in a curriculum do not only refer to a practice. Curriculum can instead describe different spaces and times related to learning practices in theological education. In the present study, we develop three tools for analysing learning, rendered from the articles of Sfard (1998) and Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005). Through these learning approaches, we label learning as ‘acquisition’, ‘participation’ and ‘knowledge creation’. ‘Acquisition’ learning often refers to individual processes, and may imply a ‘package’ or ‘core’ knowledge, embracing lecturing and assessment forms like exams ‘checking’ on a certain type of knowledge. ‘Participation’ learning refers to collaborative relations, involves less formulated knowledge goals and places emphasis on practice knowledge. Methods may be described as conversations and reflections. Finally, learning as ‘knowledge creation’ promotes new knowledge and problem solving. The relationship between students and teachers can be characterised as ‘symmetrical’, and the methods emphasise critical discussion and the use of knowledge sources from many different contexts.
We have conducted a thematic content analysis of the three learning approaches in the curricula on fields, namely ‘content’ (how knowledge is framed), ‘methods/tools’ (which processes, methods, literature are utilised) and ‘relations’ (how student relations are described). The curricula of the two countries show quite different learning profiles. In Norwegian courses, the major approach is acquisition learning. Acquisition learning occurs in all course categories and appears more often than the other learning approaches. In the Dutch curriculum, knowledge creation is the dominant learning approach in all the course categories. However, although the analysis gives clear and distinct learning profiles between the two curricula, another feature is also salient, namely that most courses have ‘multi-voiced’ learning profiles. This means that even though one learning approach dominates a course description, concurrent learning approaches often appear. Thus, the analysis also elaborates on how dominant learning approaches can be challenged. Learning as acquisition and learning as knowledge creation can often appear together. Another common feature is that learning as participation appeared as rather weak, and what we refer to as ‘inferior’, in the analyses.

The analyses bring forth important insights about the conditions and learning trajectories for future pastors. The curricula in Dutch theological education represent some possibilities and challenges worth discussing. First, the analyses may show the challenge of acquisition-oriented knowledge. The challenge of an acquisition approach to learning may be, amongst other things, that it underestimates the complexity that characterises the professional interactions of pastoral work. Learning as knowledge creation, as it appears in the Dutch curricula, brings into view the knowledge of different contexts and illuminates that knowledge bases are not established to settle, but instead to be put into motion by being critically compared. As the tasks are often featured as real-life problem solving, the curricula tend to involve the resources of many actors, such as students, peers, teachers, the local community and internship place.
7.2 Article 2: Between blackboxing and unfolding: The everyday learning of pastors


In this article, I analyse the professional learning networks of pastors, presenting an ethnographic study of five pastors from the Church of Norway doing their everyday work. I ask what characterises the professional learning networks of pastors between blackboxing and unfolding.

Many professionals have to handle and negotiate challenges in an everyday life that is materially and socially complex. However, these networks create different conditions for knowledge construction and learning. I therefore bring a socio-material perspective into the value-oriented field of education. A socio-material perspective on learning see processes as more than results of human intention and social interactions. Instead, people and things affect one another. I call these interactions and processes ‘networks’. The case of pastors can illuminate the challenges which many professionals have today, namely to handle different modes of learning. The question is how these modes of learning are created and how they can be characterised.

The second article in this thesis takes a socio-material approach and employs the analytical stances of Actor-network theory (ANT) and Bruno Latour (1987). Latour’s framework describes the process of making knowledge, and how different social and material elements work together in the process until they appear a ‘fact’ and ‘ready-made science’. Latour argues that one must analyse the process prior to stabilised knowledge, namely ‘science in the making’, referring to the process of creating and gaining knowledge. In this thesis, this framework is utilised as an analytical tool to look at two movements of the learning networks of pastors. On the one hand, social and material elements can create ‘blackboxing’ movements and things the pastors reckon for ‘sure’ knowledge. On the other, socio-material elements may make knowledge insecure and open. I have called this learning movement ‘unfolding’.

I have conducted ethnographic fieldwork amongst five pastors in the Alpha, Tetra and Omega congregations in the Church of Norway. I have conducted a thematic content analysis

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82 The paper version of this article has been published, and it will soon be published in an online version. The paper version differs slightly from the online version, as some of the text has been positioned differently from the original manuscript. In this thesis, I present the article as it will appear in the online version.
in relation to the analytical tool in order to describe the different learning networks which pastors may be a part of.

The findings show that pastors take part in many and variegated networks. On the one hand, one can say that pastors engage in blackboxing processes, describing how ‘fixed’ orders, standards and routines are made and justified. On the other hand, learning also appears as the opposite as blackboxing, namely as unfolding. Many of the pastors find themselves in situations when the result is not given, when something unfolds step by step. In the case study of pastors, unfolding can be analysed as processes of moving towards creative solutions, de-expertising and free spaces. However, there was a third finding in the analyses. Amongst the pastors, there were many processes that involved problem solving and negotiation, referred to ‘tinkering’. Tinkering networks are described, for instance, as ‘mending and bending’ practical solutions or negotiating when facts and beliefs do not hold. Altogether, the findings show three groups of learning networks containing nine modes of learning processes altogether.

The results show the complexity of professional enterprises. However, this analysis demonstrates that professional learning represents more than singular processes and ‘styles’ of learning. The results also illustrate that learning represents more than the individual control of the pastors. The findings show how learning may represent a number of processes, and the pastors may move between different modes of learning. These processes, I argue, move in-between ‘blackboxing’ and ‘unfolding’.

The findings in this article can point out how professional knowledge and learning are enacted in different ways. The enactments of learning can illuminate some of the challenges for professionals in their materially and socially complex everyday life. Professional learning is not only interesting in terms of its strength for innovation and progress. Instead, the findings in this article may add other accounts of professional learning as ‘growth’, ‘new knowledge’ and ‘successful mobilisations’. Thus, accounts of learning should be complemented by descriptions of how learning can also move towards blackboxing, as well as the weak links ambivalent processes of tinkering.
7.3 Article 3: Pastors as perpetuum mobiles: Learning through a reform


In the third article, I ask the following question: What characterise the learning dynamics of pastor networks in times of frequent reforms? Reforms are often initiated to make professionals learn and change their practices. A reform implies, amongst other things, new ways of working, improvement – and professional learning. However, the last decades’ reforms seem to occur more frequently and sometimes even overlap each other. This brings forward questions about the dynamics of professional learning. When a reform is introduced, are professionals like an ever-moving machine – a perpetuum mobile – always learning with full energy? I argue that introducing something new like a reform does not always effectuate high-powered learning. When professionals experience a reform, socio-material elements energise or slow each other down and lead to various professional learning dynamics.

In Article 3, I follow how a reform is enacted in three different situations amongst pastors in the Church of Norway as a national reform of the church services is carried out. On the background of an ethnographic fieldwork study of three congregations in Norway, I conduct a thematic content analysis of the dynamics of professional learning.

The empirical material has been collected through ethnographic shadowing of five pastors in the congregations Alpha, Tetra and Omega in the Church of Norway. A thematic content analysis is conducted, elaborating the idea that professional learning dynamics emerge between substance, force and time (Brown and Capdevila 2005). ‘Substance’ represents an analysis of the resources involved in an interaction. Substance refers to the who and what drawn on in a situation. For some of the networks, resources may have the effect that they gather around singular facts and insights. Other networks open up, revealing a number of opinion and possible new knowledge. ‘Force’ denotes the new elements and the what for in interactions. I analyse which elements that are experienced as new and the strategies taken into use for making meaningful connections to new elements. ‘Time’ – here as universal, local and narrative time – labels the how of a reform. A reform does not necessarily represent a linear and universal process from introduction to implementation of the reform. The local times of different local practices may clash. Additionally, the way in which pastor networks re-tell and emphasise distinct issues may also be different. Substance, force and time may thus
denote different aspects, bringing forth different dynamics of professional learning in times of reform.

The findings show how three different dynamics emerge when pastor networks go through a reform. For some of the pastors, the learning processes are energised, revealing how the new reform may involve existing practices, create questions and foster the search for new answers. For others, like in Omega, the reform brings in some new elements; still, they are controlled knowledge developments, and are soon settled. I call this a slowed-down learning dynamics. In Alpha, however, the reform causes confusion and a state of ‘limbo’. New questions, former practices and the reform are not taken into thorough consideration.

An important implication of the analysis of pastors’ learning through a reform is the point that singular elements, like a reform, are not decisive for creating different learning dynamics. The reform seems to be enacted quite differently in the three pastor networks. Thus, the analysis shows that it may be hard to evaluate a reform as a ‘failure’ or a ‘success’, at least in accordance with singular factors of possibilities and barriers. Instead, this analysis turns its attention towards how different aspects and actors of a reform relate to each other. The point is not either that there are many actors, clashes, or one or the other new element. Instead, the analysis shows that energised learning networks depend on how different elements are put into play and how new and existing knowledge interacts.
8 Concluding discussion: Professional learning trajectories between settling and unsettling

In this thesis, I have examined professional learning trajectories, which have been studied through the case of pastors. At this journey’s near end, pastors still represent a case that makes me curious about the manifold processes they take part in. How can I pinpoint the complexity appearing in a profession? The case of pastors brings forth core challenges of learning in a changing society, namely being able to settle some courses of action while unsettling others. Pastors explicitly draw on traditions through their rituals, holding onto core knowledge or making ‘facts’. Pastors are thus part of settling learning practices. Still, the issues of pastors can just as well be a matter of unsettling – of handling technical and practical issues, of constantly meeting and engaging with people, creating and envisioning new knowledge. The analyses in the three articles in this thesis show how pastors create noteworthy patterns of professional learning, paving the way for an overall finding in this thesis: The professional learning trajectories of pastors can be characterised by movements between settling and unsettling practices.

In this concluding discussion, I first elaborate on the overall argument through the findings across the three articles of this study. Second, the challenges and learning trajectories of pastors may illuminate core issues for other professions. I therefore discuss how the analyses in this thesis may challenge other research accounts of professional learning. Finally, the empirical analyses in the three articles may have important insights for an enterprise that specialises in learning, namely professional education. Thus, in the final part in this concluding discussion, I turn my attention to the conditions that education can offer future professionals for learning in a changing society.

8.1 The learning trajectories of pastors

The initial research question for this thesis is as follows: What characterises the professional learning trajectories of pastors? Taking a material-semiotic approach to learning, I have explored professional learning trajectories through the case of pastors. I have chosen three important empirical fields for investigating their professional learning. These are learning in education, everyday learning and learning in reform. I have posed particular questions for these empirical fields, namely:

1) What characterises the learning approaches in Protestant theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands?
2) What characterises the professional learning networks of pastors between blackboxing and unfolding?

3) What characterise the professional learning dynamics of pastor networks as they go through a reform?

Across the three articles, there are new insights to gain about the professional learning trajectories. Three special features of the professional learning trajectories of pastors are worth foregrounding, namely learning as a multiple enterprise, elaborations of ‘new’ learning and learning as movement.

8.1.1 Professional learning is a multiple practice

First, the thesis shows that professional learning trajectories involve many different learning processes. Professional learning does not represent singular accounts of learning. What learning means is not given. Instead, analysing learning as heterogeneous networks elaborates many versions of professional learning.

In Article 1, the curriculum texts of higher theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands show that learning can appear as multivoiced. This means that learning can be practiced differently within one educational institution. Learning as ‘acquisition’, ‘participation’ and ‘knowledge creation’ is part of the curricula in both countries. Yet, as the analyses show, the various learning profiles create widely different conditions of learning for future pastors. Some approaches to learning emphasise ‘core’ and settled knowledge, while others foreground problem solving and triangulation of different knowledge sources.

The analysis in Article 2 discloses a Pandora’s box of various modes of the everyday learning of professionals. From the position that ‘well, some pastors rarely learn’, one important finding was simply that pastors are put into learning processes in every network they take part in. Analysing the everyday negotiations of pastors shows that no learning process is similar to another. I had the insight that the everyday interactions of pastors established many ways of learning. From the many learning networks, a range of learning modes could be pinpointed, from settling processes of ‘blackboxing’ to unsettling and ‘unfolding’ learning processes.

In Article 3, I have studied learning dynamics through the implementation of a reform. Also in this case, one and the same reform put three diversified learning dynamics into view. The intensity and energetics of professional learning may vary, even when one and the same reform is introduced. These learning dynamics can be energising, putting existing knowledge
into unsettling modes. They can also be slowed down and settled, or appear as a tensional ‘limbo’.

The main insight from the three articles in this thesis is that professional learning trajectories are not only heterogeneous and dependent on social and material actants. Instead, professional learning trajectories describe learning as a multiple enterprise. The constant and varying interactions between people and things establish professional learning as on-going and constant processes.

8.1.2 Professional learning is different kinds of new

Second, in all three analyses, the notion of new learning is central. The question in analysing professional learning is what is ‘new’? At first sight, the ‘new’ is part of the knowledge creation learning approach in Article 1 (Curriculum). It is also a distinct part of the learning modes of ‘unfolding’ in Article 2 (Blackboxing). ‘Energising’ networks in Article 3 (Reform) are also easily associated with new learning. ‘New’, then, seems to involve valuing the unsettling processes of pastors’ learning trajectories.

In Article 1 (Curriculum), for instance, the Norwegian emphasis on acquisition learning involves ‘core’ and settled knowledge. Nevertheless, the analyses of the Dutch curricula show that even knowledge creation draws on this so-called ‘settled’ knowledge. This seems to blur the picture of the ‘settled’ – but also diffuses what can be counted as the ‘new’ and unsettled.

The findings in Article 2 (Blackboxing) took me by surprise. The analyses show that ‘new’ is hard to exclude from any of the processes. However, it seems as though new elements gain different forms. For instance, ‘new’ can be part of a blackboxing process. Such processes tend to involve, for example, a gathering of some actants and exclusion of others. The result of this activity is that ‘given orders’ are not ‘given’; rather, they are gained and created. Former practices are not just ‘existing’: They are taken into use and recreated. However, another ‘new’ is created in the unfolding modes of professional learning. Unfolding networks represents, for instance, involving many and new actants and might result in creative or even chaotic learning processes. The result is that ‘new’ cannot be excluded from any of these processes. However, settling learning processes result in quite other versions of ‘new’ than unsettling processes do.

In Article 3 (Reform), there is another approach to ‘new’. This article thematises the new in a particular way, namely through a reform. In Alpha, the new elements of a reform can
result in a limbo. ‘New’ creates doubts about the expertise of existing practices. In Omega, the existing practices are turned down; new elements are explored and then settled again. In Tetra, the new reform results in an extensive process of unsettling questions, and numbers of practices are put into play and unsettled.

The findings of the analyses in this thesis show that professional learning involves vast different kinds of ‘new’. Analysing the different interactions in curriculum, in everyday learning and in reform shows that the ‘new’ may be part of all learning processes. The finding is that ‘new’ is enacted differently in the different, and gains distinct values and roles in the different learning networks. The new is not only part of the unsettling learning processes, but also seems to take part in the settling learning practices.

The consequences of the analyses in the articles are that the picture of ‘new’ between settling and unsettling learning trajectories is blurred. ‘New’ is not tantamount to unsettling learning processes. Similarly, existing practices are not synonymous with settling learning processes. The consequences of the many versions of ‘new’ may be another approach to ‘old’ and existing expertise. Studying professional learning, then, should value more than the discourse of the creative and unfolding. One reason for this is that the creative and unfolding are not constant or distinct categories. Another important reason for this is that professional learning gains its creative powers from how existing practices and other elements are turned into play. There is a need for an extended empirical attention to what elements do prior to what they are. Thus, in addition to new elements, existing practices can be sources for professional learning. There is a need for empirical accounts that not only take new and innovative for granted as a desirable, normative discourse. Instead, this thesis adds valuable insights about other dimensions of professional learning.

8.1.3 Professional learning is movement

So far, I have concluded that there are different approaches, modes and energies involved in professional learning. The various ways that professionals learn can be described as settling and unsettling practices. The analyses in this thesis show one more feature, namely that settling and unsettling are not separate practices of professional learning. This means that pastors do not only find themselves in a landscape of ‘settling’ practices alone. The same pastors and their networks can also be part of unsettling practices. There are no distinct divisions between these processes. Thus, I have found that settling and unsettling must be seen as learning modes appearing on a continuum. As Dugdale (2005: 125) proposes, these trajectories can describe an oscillation between the singular and multiple. Professional
learning trajectories, then, can be described as movements between settling and unsettling. These movements take on different forms in the three articles.

In Article 1 (Curriculum), the findings from the Dutch curricula give a particular example of movements between settled and the unsettled learning practices. The analysis shows how existing practices, the contexts of the different students and student groups and the new problems from internships are mingled together and form a movement. The Dutch curriculum texts show what I call a triangulating relation between individuals, communities and new knowledge objects. Thus, the theoretical account of knowledge creation is expanded. ‘New’ knowledge is not only new, but becomes part of a movement between settling and unsettling learning practices.

In Article 2 (Blackboxing), one major finding is how pastors are dealing with settling and unsettling learning practices at once. The various situations that pastors take part in demand different ways of learning. The findings also show that the divisions between the learning modes are indistinct. In the article, these distinctions are presented as three main categories – blackboxing, tinkering and unfolding. Each of these has three modes of professional learning, showing gradual differences between the main categories. Article 2 shows that the networks the pastors take part in continually change, and thus shows that professional learning is an on-going process between settling and unsettling learning practices.

In Article 3 (Reform), I examine the dynamics and energies of professional learning in detail, bringing particular and empirical findings about what movements of professional learning entails. The findings in this article show that on-going processes are not synonymous with high-powered learning, but rather that different heterogeneous elements of new and existing practices can energise, slow down and put professionals in limbo. Settling and unsettling can be parts of the same actions and create tensions, leaving the actants confused and with little room for action.

8.1.4 Towards the overall findings of the thesis

To summarise, professional learning trajectories appear as multiple and heterogeneous learning practices. Pastors are not only in need of ‘new’ learning in terms of innovative and unfolding processes. Instead, the unsettling processes cannot be described without also describing how professionals work to settle knowledge. The findings show that these processes are made and constituted by how different social and material elements work upon
each other. Across the articles, the analyses lead to some overall patterns. On the one hand, some practices are made and reinforced as ‘core knowledge’, habits and facts. It is as though learning can be described as settling interactions. On the other hand, professionals connect, create and produce new solutions, creativity and open-ended knowledge. These patterns appear as unsettling interactions. However, the findings also show that professional learning is characterised by hybrids of different kinds of learning: Sometimes, different learning approaches may be present at once in the same study or course; at other times, the pastors vary from one learning pattern to another between the networks. Moreover, sometimes the pastors shift interactional patterns within one and the same network.

8.2 Beyond the case of pastors: Comparing the findings

Until this point, I have elaborated on professional learning trajectories from the empirical fields of pastors. Pastors represent a particular case of professional learning. From now on, I will expand the area of discussion and elaborate implications of the findings of this analysis with two different accounts of learning. First, I will relate some of my findings to Estrid Sørensen’s (2009) *The Materiality of Learning* and network approaches to learning and materiality in school. Then, I expand this, and outline three approaches for how to account for knowledge and learning in a changing society. Among these, I select my other main discussion partner, namely the ProLearn project, and in particular, Monica Nerland’s (2012) analyses of teachers’ learning in the article ‘Professions as knowledge cultures’.

Sørensen and Nerland have one main thing in common: They examine school and teaching using a socio-material approach. Their contributions have been selected for a particular reason, namely that the domains of school and teachers – in spite of different enterprises – may have many areas of work in common with those of pastors. I will mention a few of these features: First, pastors and teachers share the task of teaching83. Both render important justifications for their value-oriented enterprises in the mandate of supporting and equipping children and youth for lifelong learning and the development of identity84. Second, from a historical perspective pastors in the Church of Norway (CofN) have initiated or been important parts of developments of the school system in Norway and in Scandinavia (Larsen

83 In addition to a general understanding of pastors as teachers, pastors also have an official mandate to teach (Department of Culture, http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kud/dok/nouer/2000/nou-2000-26/8/3/5.html?id=361497 Retrieved: 12.04.14. The mandate for teaching is wide, and includes activities of sermons, of teaching children and youth.
og Larsen 2012). Both professions have been part of national unifying projects. In Norway, most teachers are part of a unitary public school. Moreover, until recently, pastors in the CofN have represented a state church. Both professions are thus constituted by historically and societally founded practices, negotiating past, present and future. Third, both pastors and teachers represent a combination of care and upbringing, as well as promoting normative knowledge enterprises (Klette og Carlsten 2012: 74). Thus, there may be good reasons for expanding the scope of the professional learning of pastors and relating it to teaching, learning and school. I will start with selecting some of the issues Sørensen (2009) foregrounds in her account of the materiality of learning.

8.2.1 Relating to Sørensen’s Materiality of learning

The analyses of the professional learning of pastors may elaborate material-semiotic accounts of learning. The findings of this thesis can be discussed in relation to Sørensen’s (2009) spatial approaches to learning. Sørensen has conducted ethnographic fieldwork in two school classes and in her book she investigates how materials and technology are part of the interaction in these classes. She explores how materials participate in and affect accounts of learning. As materials and technology are increasingly part of education, she explores how technology and other materials work and eventually why they do not work (Ibid.: 1–2).

The materials in education, Sørensen points out, can establish widely different enactments and versions of learning. Learning must be explored as variegated ways in which people and things interact (Sørensen 2009: 28). Participants interact according to distinct logics and patterns. These patterns create certain knowledge spaces. Sørensen describes different forms of learning as ‘spatial imaginaries’. These are characterised as ‘network’ (stable relations), ‘resonance’ (stable relations with a centre), ‘fluidity’ (gradual mutation) and ‘region’ (boundaries surrounding objects; Ibid.: 55).

Sørensen’s (2009) study represents a major contribution to developing a material account of learning. Her approach to learning can be useful in many respects: On the one hand, I see the imaginaries of Sørensen as elaborations on learning as difference. This means that Sørensen challenges predefined structures of learning, such as linear processes like intention-means (applied materials)-result. Sørensen not only develops new ways of thinking about learning, but also creates new ontologies of how practices come into being (Ibid.: 13). In this thesis about pastors, the articles show variegated patterns and spaces of professional learning. For instance, learning is analysed as three different approaches (Article 1), multiple modes of professional learning networks (Article 2) and various learning dynamics (Article 3). On the other hand, Sørensen’s four imaginaries of learning are distinct from each other in
terms of how they lead to ‘stability’ or ‘instability’ (Ibid: 55,85). This may be a similar approach to the overall argument of this thesis, as I hold that professional learning trajectories are characterised by settling and unsettling learning practices.

Sørensen (2009) claims that there are distinct divisions between some forms of learning. As she states, ‘my analyses have not concluded that regionality is actually a network or a fluid […]’. Regions are regional, period’ (Ibid: 191). However, Sørensen (Ibid.: 83) also describes the interactions in one school class (Femtedit) as two forms of learning (‘networks’, ‘fluid’). As I read Sørensen, the forms of learning tend to be described as quite categorical. She underlines the divisions between forms of knowledge. This impression of categorical division between learning forms are sustained by her rendering imaginaries in other contributions (de Laet og Mol 2000; Law og Mol 2001; Sørensen 2009; Fenwick 2012a). I do not criticise categorisations and abstract patterns as such, which must be seen as part of any researcher’s enterprise. However, the analysis of four ‘strong’ forms of knowledge may represent a challenge for further analyses of professional learning. I give two examples of these challenges below.

On the one hand, the way in which Sørensen (2009) describes practices as four imaginaries may give the impression of a less empirically founded and more standardised analysis of professional learning. According to an ANT account, this would work against ideals of performative conceptions of learning. In this thesis I keep the network term. However, in this study of pastors, the analyses represent an expansion of the network as enacted and spatial forms. For instance, the empirical material in Article 2 show that the learning interactions of pastors cannot be described only in terms of one or two modes of learning. The pastors participate in many and various interactions during a day at work. Pastors are therefore an example of a profession that deals with great multiplicity. One consequence for the analyses is that it is not possible to enclose learning into one form or one trajectory per pastor or congregation. Instead, the pastors become part of many kinds of learning networks. The findings in this thesis reveal the need for an analytical framework that takes a range of learning modes and spaces into account. The results in this thesis represent a challenge for further analyses of professional learning, namely that of creating nuanced categories for empirical diversity.

On the other hand, pastors participate in different learning networks simultaneously. This means that they must negotiate between different contexts and modes of learning. Such an analytical model foregrounds continuity between different modes of learning. Article 3
(Reform) represents one way of showing such continuity. The material illustrates that the learning processes of pastors do not always move at the same pace or in the same form of learning. For instance, the analyses of Omega show how learning can go from unsettling learning forms and rejection of former practices towards new knowledge, followed by a process of settling insights. Many learning forms may be part of the same interaction. Thus, negotiating between different modes of learning demands analytical models that take movement into account. Pastors do not only move towards one form of learning but rather move between learning modes and dynamics. In further material-semiotic studies of professional learning, it would be interesting to explore further how these negotiations appear, for instance by comparing other professions.

8.2.2 Knowledge sources for professional learning in a changing knowledge society

‘Most of them go out and become congregational leaders all over the country. Within a year or two, I begin hearing back from them. They complain that we didn’t teach them what they really needed for their work. What they really needed was an MBA, a master’s degree in counselling, and perhaps a few electives in architectural drawings and negotiating with contractors’ (Shulman 2005: x)

Throughout this thesis, the trajectories of pastors have been developed as a case of professional learning in a changing society. A core challenge is to support future professionals to handle these changes. To a greater degree than other professions, pastors explicitly represent institutional traditions, culture and other existing practices. Nevertheless, they also represent a profession that must reformulate its very mandate along with solving the many undefined problems never learned in any education. The quotation of Shulman above put its finger on what may be experienced as general problems of many professions in a changing society: It seems like the knowledge taught in professional education does not fit the professional reality. Is also seems that the knowledge required for professionals’ work is in flux. In the scholarly sparring concerning the needs for professional learning in a changing society, there are crucial issues at play.

In the following, I outline three different approaches to accounting for knowledge in a changing society, namely an academic model, a knowledge economy model and a socio-material ‘call for knowledge’ model. I then highlight one important socio-material position to professional learning, namely the ProLearn project and the findings in Nerland’s article, and relate its findings to the analyses in this thesis.
The academic model of knowledge

A first model of configuring professional knowledge for a changing society can be called the ‘academic’ model. This views professional knowledge as a set of different subjects (Rasmussen 2008). A specific ‘mix’ of subjects makes the knowledge base for a profession and defines the limits of the profession. This discourse of designing the ideal model of disciplines may be common in academic models, but is widespread in seminary models as well (Rasmussen 2008). The challenge of this approach to knowledge is that form is divided from process (Straume 2011). Professional learning becomes stacked into the corners of the ‘real’ knowledge. The Norwegian theological curriculum shows a model that is reminiscent of such an academic model. The analysis in Article 1 shows that the curriculum texts value descriptions of knowledge content and not methods and processes. As Rasmussen (2008: 11) points out, processes can be established as a didactical task and the inferior ‘glue’ of other major disciplinary subjects. Socialisation and subjects like pedagogy are framed in terms of morality, ideology and attitudes of professionals, and appear only in the background for the problems of designing knowledge for a changing society (Rasmussen 2008: 12).

The knowledge economy model

A second approach sustaining the focus of ‘content’ knowledge is what I see as the general discourse and the structure the knowledge economy-model. A knowledge economy model has a so-called ‘performative’ focus; this implies an emphasis on measured outputs, performance indicators and academic audits and is considered to be an influence of a neo-liberal economic global turn (Olssen og Peters 2005). The challenge for learning is answered by pinning down detailed key competencies ‘for a successful life and a well-functioning society’ (Rychen og Salganik 2003) The effects of this turn, however, have been heavy criticised. On the one hand, some point out that the economy-oriented and performative focus on professional education freeze-frames the disciplines and relies on a modernist conception of knowledge (Lau 2001: 32). On the other hand, there is a comprehensive engagement in how economy-oriented accounts of education are part of a postmodern discourse that has emptied the notion of ‘content’ (Lindgard, Hayes m.fl. 2003: 406). As Young (2009: 202) states, ‘Thinking and learning are treated as if they were processes that can be conceptualised as educational goals independently of what the thinking and learning is about’.

A third element is that teachers may become objectified elements in the process. As long as the curriculum is serving the needs of the planners, the objectives may be justified as politically correct (Lindgard, Hayesm.fl. 2003). This challenge is common for many
professional fields (Young 2009), including that of pastors. It appears that both the modern and the postmodern approaches separate content from learning processes. In the light of the findings in this thesis, I see some parallels in how the economy-model frames and settles knowledge (modern conceptions). However, the knowledge economy model may also represent an all unsettling and emptying approach to knowledge (postmodern conceptions).

The socio-material ‘call for knowledge’

The economical oriented discourses have resulted in different accounts of seeing knowledge bases and learning as a unified process. Some approaches, such as ‘communities of practice’ (see chapter 3), value the embodied expertise prior to economic models (for instance Blair 2008). However, practice traditions have been criticised from the perspective that professional knowledge disappears. Instead, knowledge and learning in a changing society are described as placing an increased emphasis on the knowledge objects that characterise different professions. Such an approach represents what I label the ‘call for knowledge’ model (Moore 2007; Young 2009; Lahn og Jensen 2010; Livingstone og Guile 2012).

The ‘call for knowledge’ represents a socio-material approach to professional learning, which emphasises how knowledge objects are generated from research cultures and circulate in different professional communities to handle emergent and complex problems in society. Among the ‘call for knowledge’ studies, there are particular contributions from the ProLearn project which are noteworthy (Jensen, Lahn m.fl. 2012)\(^{85}\). This project gives a significant and socio-material framework for a comprehensive research-based approach to professional learning in a changing society. In the following, I present some findings from the ProLearn project and discuss them in relation to the results of this thesis.

8.2.3 Teachers, pastors and the challenges of professional learning

As part of the ProLearn project, Nerland (2012a) takes the discussion about knowledge sources and learning processes further. Nerland examines the conditions for the professional learning of engineers and teachers as accounts of ‘knowledge cultures’. Knowledge cultures establish sets of conditions for professional learning: Knowledge cultures are defined as ‘sets of practices, arrangements and mechanisms bound together by necessity, affinity and historical coincidence, which, in a given area of professional expertise, make up how we know what we know’ (Nerland 2012a: 25). In my reading of Nerland’s study, the teachers

\(^{85}\) See chapter 3 for further descriptions in the ‘Epistemic trajectories’ section.
come out with less favourable results in terms of professional learning than the other studied professions\textsuperscript{86}. These descriptions are supported by Klette and Smey (2012) and Klette and Carlsten (2012), who are also involved in the ProLearn project\textsuperscript{87}. The profession of teachers therefore catches my interest primarily as a divergent case, but also because the teachers share some key features with the pastor profession\textsuperscript{88}. There are two particular elements in Nerland’s article that I will discuss, namely her descriptions of knowledge sources and of learning processes. These will be discussed in relation to the findings of this thesis.

\textit{What kind of knowledge sources support professional learning?}

The background for speaking about ‘epistemic cultures’ in Nerland’s article is Knorr Cetina’s study of scientific practices. Scientific practices are no longer in the background of society. Instead, the logics of science ‘spill over’ and influence the knowledge construction of professional work (Nerland 2012a: 44). Professional learning, then, becomes increasingly similar to the processes of research.

‘Epistemic objects’ primarily generate the main sources for this process. Such objects are ‘marked by their unfolding character and their lack of completeness of being’ (Nerland 2012a: 34). According to Nerland (Ibid.: 45), how-documents and standard procedures appear to be the most important source and intermediaries\textsuperscript{89} for professional learning. Nerland claim that ‘standards have the potential to mediate between scientific knowledge advancements and practical work’ (2012a: 41), and are significant prerequisites for professional engagement. Without these intermediaries, teachers may find themselves ‘in a vacuum’, restricting the space of knowledge engagement’ (Ibid.: 41). Crucial for learning is an experimental attitude and sensitivity to objects that are open but still provide some direction. Direction ‘propels

\textsuperscript{86} The concluding discussion of Klette and Carlsten (Klette og Carlsten 2012) gives an even more clear-cut presentation of how these findings can be seen as less favourable.

\textsuperscript{87} There are many articles in the ProLearn publication, \textit{Professional Learning in the Knowledge Society} (Jensen, Lahnm.fl. 2012) which present similar results on teachers. In the introduction of Jensen, Lahn and Nerland (2012: 18, 20), the findings are summarised and appear as shared across the articles. The articles also refer to each other internally. I therefore treat the ProLearn findings as quite unitary. I have chosen to refer mainly to Nerland’s article (2012a), but will also mention Klette and Carlsten’s and Klette and Smeby’s work from the same anthology.

\textsuperscript{88} See chapter 2 for a discussion of the comparisons between pastors and other professions.

\textsuperscript{89} ‘Intermediary’ is a theory-laden term in socio-material approaches to knowledge. Latour (2005: 39) describes ‘intermediaries’ as objects that transmit forces, whereas mediators are transformative. Schatzki (2000: 2) and Knorr-Cetina (2009) formulate a similar position. In my reading of Nerland, she seems to use the intermediary concept as a kind of standard that is transmitted from one context to another. Further, Jensen, Lahn and Nerland (2012) describe how knowledge objects are not only transmitted passively, but are also worked upon by professionals. Still, Nerland’s article (2012a) tends to refer to standards as intermediaries. The approach to intermediaries may not only have consequences for what to study, but also for analytical choices about the objects in and of study. I acknowledge that the discussion about objects/mediators/intermediaries should be discussed further, but cannot be elaborated on within the scope of this thesis.
learning forward’ (Nerland 2012a: 37). Teachers have open-ended questions, says Nerland, but lack standardised procedures and clear directions for learning (Ibid.: 42).

In the study of pastors, standards play a quite different role. On the one hand, I point out that standards have different consequences in different professional learning network. The church service reform in Article 3 represents one such standard. As Nerland (2012a) indicates, standards may pave the way for energised professional learning dynamics. The same standards may create the need for control and to put them at a certain distance. Moreover, standards can bring about full confusion and a state of limbo. Thus, standards do bring about professional learning dynamics, but they still do not have one kind of outcome: They have the potential for leading to both settling and unsettling learning processes.

On the other hand, the analyses show the reactions to the standards are not the only things that vary in the different pastor networks. In Article 3, the standards themselves become transformed and are enacted in various ways. The analysis shows that standards can be created differently from network to network. In Article 2, standardisation is established as one of many modes of learning. In that context, the standards may appear as referring to ‘God’s order’ and describing how professionals relate to the deceased people. The analysis in Article 2 shows that standards can contribute to closing off a whole arena of actors. Thus, standards may lead to learning circuits, but they do not act as predictive intermediaries – quite the opposite. For teachers, standards can bring associations to outward control and thus react similarly to the pastors in Omega, who felt ‘strangled’. A standard does not function as an ‘intermediary’, transporting knowledge from one place to another. Standards are rather ‘mediators’ and ‘actants’, establishing multiple practices (Latour 2005). Standards represent a networked process that denotes one of many possibilities for both settling and unsettling learning in a changing society.

What kind of learning processes do different knowledge sources entail?

As I see it, one consequence of a focus on particular objects as a premise for professional learning is the danger of excluding a number of other resources for learning. The learning communities of teachers are described as either individual or ‘horisontal’ (Nerland 2012: 42). A widening of professional expertise occurs along both vertical (across institutions) and horisontal dimensions (other teachers in local community) (Nerland 2012: 30). The teacher’s knowledge is characterised as horisontal, inwards and typically mediated by human interaction (Nerland 2012: 38, 40, 46). Nerland claims that together with the lack of standardised procedures and with the horisontal and multidimensional organisation of
knowledge, there may be a lack of clear directions for learning (Nerland 2012: 42). Klette and Carlsten (2012: 80) conclude that teachers ‘lack the appropriate and relevant knowledge provisions to invoke the looping dynamics that Knorr Cetina considers a crucial driver for persistent learning’.

These are interesting findings. A classification of learning towards the scale of vertical, research-based engagement certainly brings forth important findings about this activity among teachers. Aspects of these findings could very well fit in with pastor’s learning. However, in the empirical analyses in, for instance, Articles 2 and 3, the limits between local and global actors or horizontal or vertical domains were fluid. Different kinds of actors took part and were made present in the interactions I analysed. These actors could involve other professionals, volunteers, a doll, deceased people, the bishop, the pastor education institution, a computer, a spouse or even a dog. An inclusive approach to actors can be counted as a weakness, because it does not distinguish actors from non-actors. This is discussed in chapter 6. On the other hand, an inclusive view of actors has brought forth important findings about the knowledge sources and processes that actually are part of professional’s everyday lives. More important than classification, the crucial part is what the different actors bring into an interaction and how they negotiate it. The small-scale negotiations might also be one of the signatures of teacher learning, as Nerland (2012: 43) acknowledges.

In this thesis, the negotiations and interactions between actors lie at the heart of the understanding of professional learning. Thus, the case of pastors can show how a value-oriented profession may have its strength not only in the defined orders and standards, but also in the negotiations and processes between the many actors. Through the analysis of these negotiations, a range of learning approaches, networks and dynamics appears. It would be interesting to study how the analytical tools of this thesis could bring forth the trajectories of teacher learning. For instance; such an analysis could bring forth other settling and settling dynamics than in this thesis and expand the insights of professional learning.

To summarise: The contribution and argument of this thesis foreground that professional learning is a movement and a negotiation between settling and unsettling trajectories. I promote the sources and conditions for professional learning and how they may be distributed among many different actors. The effects of interactions between actors provide a range of processes, such as conditions for professional learning (Article 1), networks between blackboxing and unfolding (Article 2) and different dynamics (Article 3). In the next
section, I discuss and envision some possible implications for analysing and elaborating the conditions of learning in professional education further.

8.3 The learning trajectories of pastors and implications for professional education

This thesis started with describing the conditions for learning in education. Approaching the end of this thesis, I turn back to the field of professional education. Do the findings in this thesis clarify a need for a wholly different knowledge base in education? I hesitate. Learning to be a professional is, like the initial quotation by Shulman spelled out, a changing and complex enterprise. Once a ‘content’ has been settled, it may soon appear less relevant and out of date. Nevertheless, professional knowledge is not entirely an unsettled, free or fragmented enterprise (Young 2009). Instead, professional learning is a movement between settling and unsettling trajectories. The results of this thesis can function as sensitisers for future practices.

Amongst many fields of implications there is one important activity of education to look into, namely curriculum development. The findings in Article 1 display that professional learning can be approached in different ways. In the pastor education in Norway, there is a clear emphasis on learning as acquisition, valuing ‘core’ knowledge to be acquired. There are reasons to believe that pastor education in Norway is not the only context maintaining this learning logic. For instance, Rasmussen (2008) describes similar features in Scandinavian teacher education\(^9\). Seeing professional learning as settling and unsettling processes can challenge singular views of knowledge and learning, and expand them into triangulating classroom practices. The Dutch curriculum provides some possibilities of how such triangulating can happen. In this concluding part, I understand ‘triangulating’ in the light of the overall findings of this thesis. ‘Triangulating’ approaches in curriculum design can make facilitate multiple learning practices, it can bring forth new enactments of learning and foreground the movements and negotiations between different contexts of professional education. This is clearly a field for further research and development. In the following I will still briefly outline how such triangulations can happen. In curriculum planning, there are two important fields for planning; namely the organisation of internship placements and the framing of knowledge.

\(^9\) Rasmussen (2008) discusses teacher education in Scandinavia. One of the challenges of pedagogy in these institutions, he holds, is a view of content as separated from processes.
On the one hand, a triangulating approach to professional education may involve the organisation of internship placement. In the Dutch the Norwegian curriculum, there are different internship periods during the course of professional education. The main difference in organisation is that the Dutch students are connected to their very own internship congregation in addition to other internship placements. Such an internship model can have different consequences. First, different and aligned internship placements can establish multiple and parallel courses of learning during education. A new internship organisation represents not a call for more practice but take into account that learning processes of future pastors are not singular and separated. Second, a triangulating internship model may present different ways of obtaining ‘new’ knowledge. ‘New’ may be created and enacted as broader than only innovation and radical change. Problem solving can occur in the intersections between variegated traditions, existing and settled practices on the one hand and new, unfolding practices on the other. Third, by triangulating internships, there might be an increased focus on the negotiation and movement between different knowledge contexts. These negotiations may also involve an increased awareness and acknowledgement of what the students can bring into education. Internship can be approached as more than an ‘out-there’ experience and instead bring practice experiences actively into use in the classroom.

On the other hand, the insights about learning of pastors may represent a challenge for how to frame the ‘content’ and theoretical knowledge of professional education. The analyses of the Dutch education may indicate a fruitful alternative. First, a consequence of a triangulating approach to education is not a devaluation of academic knowledge. However, theoretical knowledge must be acknowledged as one of many practices in education. Furthermore, the category ‘theoretical’ is not one practice (Schatzki 2000: 3-4). Subsequently, there is a need for bringing different theoretical accounts into play. In a curriculum planning process, this means that theoretical knowledge is not treated and described as singular and ‘core’ knowledge basis. Instead, it is important to bring forth how theoretical knowledge is produced in the clashes between theoretical and methodological approaches (Law 2004a: 3). Theoretical knowledge, then, is not singular but a multiple practice. Second, the organisation of internship placements might have significant consequences for creating new knowledge. In the Dutch curriculum texts, internship placement is intertwined with specific classroom practices. For instance, it might be fruitful to see the internship as more than ‘practice stories’. Instead, students may present themes and dilemmas and particular experiences. These experiences might be the starting point for researching and discussing different theoretical accounts. The clashes between the practices of internship and theory may bring other and
more relevant knowledge fields than those of a constructed case. Conversely, the Dutch curriculum also provides with some key words for the use of theoretical approaches in the internship placement. For instance, academic knowledge can be developed in an internship placement, such as the pastor’s interpretation of texts. The internship placement may also be a context for engaging different theoretical discussions, for instance between the staff, or, as the Dutch curricula suggests, discussions with the congregation and with people in the local environment. ‘New’ occurs not only as the knowledge nobody has ever thought of before; it may rather appear in exploring available settling and unsettling knowledge practices. Third, a triangular model may show possibilities for seeing disciplinary power as other than inherent qualities of knowledge itself. Rather, knowledge for future pastors may appear as movements and connections different knowledge contexts and practices.

The actual interactions and the problems of the triangulating practices in classrooms are yet to be seen. It would be of great interest to expand the analyses of this thesis with such classroom studies. However, within the scope of this thesis, I point out the possibilities of seeing learning in curricula as more than acquiring disciplinary knowledge and professional boundaries. I also emphasise that learning is more than just a flurry brought about by the new and unknown. Instead, in curriculum development, there are opportunities to establish professional learning as triangulations of powerful movements between settling and unsettling.

8.4 Professional learning for a changing society

The insights of the analyses of this thesis can finally be summarised as follows: The professional learning trajectories are characterised by heterogeneous movements between settling and unsettling. The findings of this study point out what characterises pastor’s learning trajectories in the many challenges they face in today’s society. Professionals do not necessarily tend towards either settling or unsettling learning practices, but must navigate and negotiate in the matrix of spaces and times. These matrixes are making up trajectories – and as Nespor (2003: 97) holds, they establish specific meanings for professionals. Pastors deal with a vast range of actors; members of congregations, babies, God, church buildings, volunteers, graveyards, visions, believers and nonbelievers, ‘societal representation’, traditions and rituals, families, routines, technology and new religion. The insights I gain from this study are that pastors establish professional learning trajectories between numbers of practices. Figuring out how to act, to interact, to communicate and what to believe is a hybrid and complex task. It demands multiple learning processes at once. Doing justice to all the learning processes of pastors is impossible, as they occur through curriculum texts, in
everyday practices and the processes I had the opportunity to follow through the reform. The many challenging and exciting, troublesome and routinised interactions invite nuanced tools for analysing the negotiations of the hybridities in which pastors take part. For now, these hybridities demand professional learning trajectories that move between settling and unsettling’.
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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Request and information letter for participation in the Letra project
Appendix 2: Consent of congregational participation in the Letra research project
Appendix 3: Project approval of the Norwegian Social Science Data Service
Appendix 4: Information letter about the project for the thesis about pastor’s learning
Appendix 5: Interview guide, introductory interviews in fieldwork
Appendix 6: Individual consent of pastors for participation in the research project
Appendix 7: Declaration describing the independent research contribution of the candidate
Part II Articles of the thesis

Article 1

Article 2

Article 3
Learning for future complex tasks: Learning approaches in Norwegian and Dutch curricula of theological education

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Introduction

In this article, we will forefront and analyse different approaches to learning in higher theological education. The material of this analysis is curriculum texts from the education of Protestant pastors in MF Norwegian School of Theology (MF) and from the Protestantse Theologische Universiteit (PThU) in the Netherlands. We argue that different learning approaches can establish different trajectories for how future pastors learn and handle knowledge.

In a changing knowledge society, professional education of pastors is a challenging task (Jarvis 2005; Goodburn 2012; van Oudsthoorn 2013). Through history, pastors have been one of the pillars of the academic professions in society, and they have played a significant role as stakeholders of societal authority and conveyers of knowledge. Now pastors must relate to increasing pluralisation and democratisation in society, and take on other tasks like care and welfare (Slagstad 2011). Therefore, the main challenge for pastors may be to maintain an expert role of increasingly mobile knowledge fields (Jarvis 2005; Donskov Felter 2012).

Theological education represents a pluralistic discipline of theoretical and practical fields. It follows both an academic track and the course towards a profession (Ford 2005: 13). Theological education is not only pluralistic but is also in a state of change (Henriksen 2007). Thus, theology finds itself as a hybrid culture between traditions and innovative thinking (Kristiansen and Rise 2008: 23). This hybrid landscape demands a more specific examination of a constitutive feature of future clergy, namely the enterprise of learning.

Learning, though, is not a singular phenomenon (Jarvis and Hirji 2006). It is a field with many sub domains creating a wide range of theories and entries to research. One way of understanding learning is to go into texts that two theological educational institutions have produced about themselves, namely their curricula. Curriculum documents
represent important tools and language practices for learning and knowledge trajectories in education (Edwards and Usher 2003). Through a comparative analysis of contemporary Norwegian and Dutch curricula, we will develop an analytical tool for exploring learning in education of theologians and ask:

*What characterises the learning approaches in Protestant theological education in Norway and the Netherlands today?*

The findings show that theological education in the two countries establishes quite different learning profiles. We argue that different learning approaches in professional theological education can establish variegated conditions for how future pastors learn. For pastors, the different learning profiles create conditions for central enterprises of professional expertise. For pastors this expertise can be summarised as ‘theologising’ (Schlauch 1995).

**Literature review**

Within research on theological education, there are few other analyses of learning approaches in curricula. We can distinguish two main themes of importance for how different learning approaches establish conditions for professional knowledge trajectories:

On the one hand, there is a discussion of fruitful learning methodologies in theological education. Many have raised theological education as an interactive process between teachers and students, opposing a view of students as ‘empty bottles to be filled’. (Raja and Rajkumar 2010; Buhrman 2011). Instead, theological seminaries require a complex body of theological knowledge to develop people of faith and vocation (Fuller and Fleming 2005; Calahan 2011). This complex theological knowledge is conditioned by for instance experiential learning and reflective practice. Experiential learning provides a fruitful context for integrating affective, performative as well as intellectual perspectives of religion (Oldstone-Moore 2009; Heywood 2013). According to Sng takes this one step further, and argues that *inquiry* is one way to acquire quality in theological education. Through following a specific method of inquiry-guided learning, students can develop skills, attitudes and habits of independent thinking (Sng 2011). Wickett (Wickett 2005) bring elements from all these approaches together. He frames how new models of learning are taken into use in different traditions of theological education, including self-directed, experiential and transformative learning.

On the other hand, many have thematised the learning as an existential enterprise and creating conditions for theological knowledge that expands traditional education frames. As Jarvis and Hirji (2006) underline, religious learning is existential – and demands moving past the frames of cognitive learning theories. Learning should be an extensive term and include knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses. All these elements can be framed as ‘experiences’, establishing traces of lifelong learning (Jarvis 2006:6). Harkness (2012) has conducted a survey of learning
approaches in theological education. He emphasises how metalearning and critical thinking can enable life-long personal growth and professional development. In our project we show how learning can be approached in quite various ways. In our project we will follow up this logic and demonstrate how different learning approaches condition learning and knowledge processes for future clergy.

Prior to this study we conducted a pilot analysis of learning approaches in the curricula of two of the main theological institutions educating pastors in Norway\(^1\) (Reite 2011). In the present study we frame theological education from the angle of three different learning approaches, forming an interesting basis for discussing the conditions for learning and theologising.

**Analytical tools: Three approaches to learning**

There have been many attempts to give an overview of and to categorise the theoretical flux in the field of learning. Sfard (1998) divides learning theories into two main categories: learning as ‘acquisition’ and learning as ‘participation’. She calls these categories ‘metaphors’. We have supplemented these metaphors with a third category, called the ‘knowledge creation metaphor’, by Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005) We frame the three metaphors as learning approaches, which serve two purposes in this article: they give a brief theoretical introduction to learning and they offer a fruitful analytical basis for studying learning in theological education and curricula.\(^2\)

**Learning as acquisition**

The term ‘acquisition metaphor’ assembles behavioural learning theories, cognitive learning theories and social-cognitive learning theories (Sfard 1998: 5) and has three main features:

First, learning as acquisition is primarily based on the idea that knowledge can be seen as an individual property (Sfard 1998:6) and that the *individual*, the ‘student’ is the basic unit of analysis in the study of curriculum. Learning can therefore be seen as ‘monological’ (Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005:537-538).

This makes way for a second feature, namely the one that favours knowledge as an ‘essence’. This presupposes that knowledge is seen as a fairly constant property and possession with clear boundaries as schema or facts that can be ’grasped’. (Sfard 1998, 5-6; Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005, 537). In the curriculum of theological education,

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\(^1\)The results showed that the two institutions had approximately similar approaches to learning, fuelling our curiosity of how an international comparison would elaborate on different learning trajectories of future clergy.

\(^2\)’It could be pointed out that the analytical use of three learning approaches differs from other analyses of curriculum, such as analysing taxonomies from lower to higher order thinking or employing learning-outcome models. In this article, however, we develop a tool for acknowledging how learning can enacted differently. Learning is not analysed as outcome or as a process from lower to higher order thinking. Instead, curriculum categories of content, relations and methods can create widely different forms of learning.’
this can mean defining encyclopaedic or ‘core knowledge’ or selecting certain competencies that the students are supposed to attain in order to prepare for professional life.

Third, learning as acquisition establishes a specific focus on the learner. Knowledge is grounded on a Cartesian division between an inner subjective knowledge in contrast to outer ‘independent’ knowledge (Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005: 538). Such a view can in education have the consequences that one speaks of reception, internalisation and appropriation of knowledge, where the emphasis is put on how the single student takes in or construct their own knowledge (Sfard 1998: 5-6).

Learning as participation

However, learning does not only happen according to the traditional school model. It can also be part of pragmatic models of everyday life learning, referring to ‘situated learning’, ‘apprenticeship learning’ and ‘communities of practice’ (Sfard 1998:6). Participation learning has some key features:

First, according to learning as participation one does not speak of knowledge but of knowing. Instead of having, one pursues doing (Sfard 1998:6). This implies that one does not deal with inner mental schemes, as in acquisition learning, but that shared learning tasks shape cognitive activity (Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005:538-539).

Second, learning activities are never considered separately from the cultural context in which they take place, such as in a congregation, a hospital or an institution (Sfard 1998:6). Knowledge is according to such a view the mediated by cultural signs and tools (Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005: 539,544). In a curriculum this can be formulated as descriptions of practice, communication and practices rather than settled competencies.

Third, preparing for professional life is a process from being a newcomer to becoming an expert and towards ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (Sfard 1998: 6). Participation learning is ‘dialogical’, and in education this learning approach favours a vocabulary such as ‘identity’, ‘integration’, ‘dialogue’, ‘interaction’ and ‘negotiation’ (Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005: 539-541).

Learning as knowledge creation

Paavola and Hakkarainen argue that there is a need for addressing the processes of creating new knowledge (2005: 535,538). The third approach is labelled ‘knowledge creation’ and has some main characteristics:

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2 Selecting ‘core’ competencies can also be described as part a political rationale, for instance by the project ‘Definition and Selecting of Competencies (DeSeCo)’ (Rychen and Salganik 2003). Perhaps the most prominent manifestation of this rationale is found in international comparative studies, such as OECDs programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Biesta 2009). These political logics of learning are seen as parts of the acquisition learning approach.
First, learning as knowledge creation addresses the need for knowledge advancement and innovation (Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005: 535, 544-545). Material tools and knowledge objects play increasingly important roles in this process, bringing forth a ‘trialogical’ approach (ibid: 535,539). In education, this means for instance valuing the generation of new ideas and conceptual knowledge (ibid: 551).

Second, objects of work are often not clearly defined, but are instead emergent problems (Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005: 536). Preparing for work in a knowledge society In education, this could mean that the students are encouraged to make a problem more complex by drawing in new theories or experimenting in practice (ibid: 538,542).

Third, developing new objects is associated with creative ‘chaos’ and includes multiple actors (Paavola and Hakkarainen: 538, 551). In education, knowledge creation learning places less emphasis on instructional control. Students are given the role and responsibilities of expert-like learners (ibid: 542).

**Bringing the three metaphors into analytical terms**

In order to operationalise the three theoretical learning metaphors, we have worked out an analytical concept map in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Methods/tools</th>
<th>Relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acquisition</strong></td>
<td>‘Monologic’</td>
<td>Main teaching method: lectures and/or individual work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A ‘package’ of knowledge, described as fixed content or ‘core’ knowledge</td>
<td>A fixed procedure or method Assessment to ‘check’ on right understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course describes competencies and goals that the student should have obtained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
<td>‘Dialogic’</td>
<td>Conversation, discussions, reflections about how to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less formulated: roles, identity, ways of acting, interacting, being and speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tacit knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adopting existing practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge creation</strong></td>
<td>‘Trialogic’</td>
<td>Collection of various resources and knowledge bases to be used as tools to create something new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course describes a need for new knowledge and innovative learning</td>
<td>Solving problems Critical discussions Lectures described as resource lectures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Either theoretical new knowledge or new knowledge in life-world experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Analytical concept map for analysing curricula
Table 1 has one vertical axis with the three theoretical learning approaches. On the horizontal axis, we have placed three empirical pedagogical categories. ‘Content’ includes aims, competencies and knowledge descriptions in the course descriptions. The ‘methods’ category includes tools, activities and organisation of courses. The ‘relations’ category describes student and teacher participation, and includes a notion of ownership of knowledge and activity. The body of the analytical table includes generalised phrases from the course descriptions. Before we move on to the analysis, however, we need to describe the empirical material that caught our interest and how we conducted the analysis.

*Curriculum, sampling and analytic strategy*

A curriculum text can be counted in general as an inscription of social and historical practices (Latour 2007:108). As Wertsch (2007: 112) claims, language and material-semiotic tools are constitutive elements of learning and professional practice (2007:112). We therefore understand and analyse curricula not as separate from ‘actual’ learning, but as inscriptions of space and time that help us analyse how learning approaches establish specific trajectories of for future theologians.

Making an international comparison implies a sampling process whereas cultural and conceptual differences are thoroughly considered (Crossley and Watson 2003; Blömeke and Paine 2008). The Netherlands has valued the freedom and plurality of religion for centuries.5 Protestants are a minority compared with Roman Catholics (they total about 20 per cent).6 Dutch theological education, however, is influenced by British and American pragmatic traditions as well as German academic traditions (Visser, den Hollander et al. 2010: 662). In Norway Protestantism was the state religion in Norway until 2012, and 82 per cent of the population are members.7 Theological education is mainly a part of the German academic tradition (Elstad 2011). The PThU is the only institution educating pastors for the Dutch Protestant Church, whereas MF is the main Norwegian institution offering it.8

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4 Relations is established between the methods and content categories. It is both theoretically and empirically inspired and indicates ownership and agency of knowledge and activity, for example by a focus on a singular student, on collectives and on what kind of role the students and the lecturers play, etc.


6 http://www.indexmundi.com/netherlands/religions.html Date: 13.12.12


8 The Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo and MHS School of Mission and Theology at Stavanger also offer theological education for pastors of the Norwegian Church.
Sampling is also about making measurement equivalences (Crossley and Watson 2003: 41). Theological education in both countries follows the European standard credit point structure of bachelor levels and higher degree levels. They offer a six-year theological study with a master’s degree leading towards the professional title “pastor”. They also have largely comparable course categories and many overlapping courses. Furthermore, the course descriptions have many common headings and concepts, such as ‘content’, ‘goals,’ ‘competencies,’ ‘methods’ and ‘assessment’, from which we elaborated the analytical concept map for analysis.

We analysed mandatory part of the higher degree courses of the theological professional education in Norway and the Netherlands. In both countries, the graduate level extends over three years. To elicit texts of the same detail level, we chose to analyse Dutch course descriptions and Norwegian course descriptions supplemented by specific semester descriptions (‘Emneark’). We organised all courses into corresponding course categories. We established a third language, English, as our language of analysis. As far as possible, all course descriptions have been analysed word for word. Understanding the Dutch and Norwegian theological education in their contexts, of their structure and the details of the documents have required collaborative work on precision and sustained dialogue with representatives from the PThU and MF.

In this study, we have identified themes in all course descriptions and coded them into the three learning approaches (Silverman 2010: 159). During this process, we adjusted some of the structures in Table 1. We have not analysed single words, but we looked for semantic units like paragraphs or phrases. We read the course descriptions collaboratively, testing the interpretations repeatedly. To identify the principal patterns, we used certain quantitative coding strategies and counted the representation of each learning approach in every course category. The quantitative part was also important for challenging and questioning our own interpretations. Additionally, the quantitative are elements that offer a clearer presentation, such as colour codes and numbers.

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9 In Norwegian, the title is ‘prest’. Anglicans being both Catholic and Reformed also retain the threefold ordination orders of deacon, priest and bishop while their “deacon-priests” have the function of vicar/rector. Generally it is the non-episcopally led reformed churches that use minister/pastor in addition to those Lutherans whose bishops do not follow apostolic succession. As the CoN is an Evangelical Lutheran denomination with an episcopal, synodical and congregational structure ‘pastor’ may be a plausible term.

10 Two course descriptions draw on documents from the national program, The Road to Pastor Ministry (‘Veien til prestetjeneste’ - VTP). This program is therefore also analysed.

11 The curricula were translated from Norwegian and Dutch into English with the help of experienced translators, and particular parts were discussed with the representatives of the Dutch education. We are aware that the translation into a third language has certain effects on the analysis. The consequence of such a translation is that particular conceptual and cultural meaning can be lost and other meanings added (Blomeke and Paine 2008). In the analysis we have paid much attention to this, by general discussions with peers and selecting particular phrases and passages to discuss with the representatives from the PThU. However, such translations are also due to general problems of intersubjectivity, becoming part of our selective contextualization and mediated meaning (Lemke 1995).
Multiple approaches to learning: What dominates the Norwegian and Dutch curricula?

In the following section, we offer an overview of the main analytical trends of the learning approaches in the curricula of Norway and the Netherlands. Table 2 presents what we have recognised as the dominant learning approaches, the challenging learning approaches and the inferior learning approaches in the curricula of the two countries.

The courses are categorised into ‘sources’, ‘beliefs’ and ‘practices’. ‘Sources’ describe courses of historical disciplines, exegesis, the application of the Bible, whereas ‘beliefs’ are represented by dogmatics and ethics. ‘Practices’ are characterised by practical theological subjects and sociological subjects. ‘Integrative courses’ include communication matters, performance and leadership etc. The course descriptions are analysed by the categories of pedagogical content, methods and relations. ‘Content’ includes aims, competencies and knowledge descriptions. ‘Methods’ includes tools, activities and organisation of courses. The ‘relations’ category describes student and teacher participation, and it includes a notion of ownership of knowledge and activity.

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Table 2 Dominants, inferiors and challengers: Different learning approaches in Norwegian and Dutch curricula

Table 2 shows dominant learning approaches in the two curricula. These have many references in the curriculum (‘dominants’: dark grey). The analysis shows also that most courses and course categories did not only fit into one learning approach. Many courses reference more than one learning approach (‘challengers’: light grey). There are also
some learning approaches with few references (‘inferiors’: white) and thus seem to be losing ground.

In the following section, we aim to display the main tendencies in each country. We will not give a complete analysis but rather give small examples of how different learning approaches appear and make patterns in selected courses in the Norwegian and the Dutch curricula. Each finding is organised according to the pedagogical categories content, methods and relations.

**Overall tendencies: Dominant learning approaches in the two countries**

In Norwegian courses, the major approach is acquisition learning. It occurs in all course categories and plays a dominant role more often than the other learning approaches do. The ‘sources’ category is the clearest course category, bringing acquisition learning repeatedly to the forefront when it comes to content, methods and relations. We interpret the course descriptions as acquisition learning when the content is described as ‘central matters’ or ‘clear learning statements’, for example. There are repeated formulations, such as that the student is supposed to have ‘thorough knowledge about’. This can show an understanding of knowledge as set, as a definite package with an essence or a kernel.

In the courses analysed as acquisition learning, methods are often not mentioned. This can be read as giving the teacher freedom to teach how he or she likes or simply seeing pedagogical methods as unimportant. What is often specified, however, are required readings. Courses in the Source category often have individual written exams with grades. Such features do not automatically lead to the conclusion learning as acquisition as such. Nevertheless, holding the combination of methods, readings and assessment together, there are many indicators of the acquisition approach to learning.

When it comes to the relations category, ‘the student’ is mentioned many times in relation to program requirements, and displays a view of students as individual learners. In addition, formulations like ‘the student shall...’ can show that the students are being directed and instructed, rather than participating or creating. In other words, we can say that learning as acquisition seems to portray the relations of this course.

In the Dutch curriculum knowledge creation is the dominant learning approach. The ‘practices’ course category gives a quite clear picture of how knowledge creation appears. The ‘Learning to Believe’ course is one example. The content is introduced in terms of ‘...the challenge of dedicating new generations to a church community, but also to help with the questions of the Christian faith of groups outside the church’. Words like ‘challenge’ and ‘help with questions’ indicate that there is a problem to be solved. It

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12 The examples and citations refer to ‘Church History 1: History of Theology and Dogma’ (Kirkehistorie 1’)

13 The examples and citations from the Dutch curricula refer to the ‘Learning to Believe’ course (Leren Geloven/Catecethiek).
also points towards something new and changing by thematising ‘new generations’. Furthermore, many Dutch course descriptions bring in sources from other contexts, not only within church but also relates to groups outside the church.

The methods in the courses with a dominant knowledge creation profile have a collective focus that includes a number of lectures, group discussions and internship periods. This becomes salient when the curriculum describes e.g. explanation and group discussions during lectures. During the internship periods, the student is supposed to formulate ‘two learning questions for this module about his/her own lifespan of spiritual development’. The students are supposed to read ‘literature on the background of learning processes in a congregation’, perform learning activities and ‘evaluate and reflect on it’. The internship is described as a space for learning activity, evaluation and reflection, having an emphasis on questions and the initiative of the students.

In the Dutch courses analysed as knowledge creation learning, student-teacher descriptions can imply that the student is part of a collective, reflective and triangulating approach. One example of this is ‘together with other students, and led by the teacher, they are helped from this practical exercise from their internship to use various concepts from the theories...’ The teacher is characterised as ‘leading’ and ‘helping’. Thus, there is an asymmetrical relationship between the students and the teacher. In other words, this can be a quite clear example of a course that is knowledge creating when it comes to content, methods and relations.

**Nuancing: The dominant learning approaches do not lack challengers**

The analysis shows that most courses are split between different learning approaches. In these courses content, methods and relations represent different learning approaches. Examples of this are courses from ‘Practices’ in Norway and ‘Sources’ in the Netherlands. We will pick one course from each country where both the knowledge creation and the acquisition learning can be recognised.

An example from the Norwegian curriculum is the course ‘Leadership in the Church’. 14 This course presents content competencies, such as ‘good knowledge about different theories’ and ‘good knowledge about the organisation...’. The course has a short written final exam. This short exam is held ‘to test that the required literature is read and understood’. This seems to point in the direction of standardised knowledge and learning as acquisition. The description of the method and relations of a problem based learning process (PBL), however, takes a contradictory position. Knowledge is described as something new and collective by formulations like ‘the knowledge of the group is critically analysed’ and ‘new knowledge is now connected to former knowledge...’.

Examples of methods are when student groups are supposed to ‘formulate needs of learning, learning goals and objectives’. The students elaborate commonly understood tools, ‘[to form] the basis of a common starting point and a common interpretation... It is

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14 ‘Leadership in the church’ (‘Ledelse i kirken’).
a prerequisite that everyone can talk [about the problem] 'in the same language'. The relations are described as a collective group process. We see these tendencies in group organisation and in saying ‘everyone in the group... shall come up with ideas... thoughts, knowledge’. The lecturer does not only give lectures, but also participates in groups through the semester. This gives the lecturer a more symmetrical position. Evaluation seems also to be a student activity. The course description says that 'the student groups assess and give feedback to one other group PBL-paper'. The PBL process can to a large extent be understood as knowledge creation in its methods and relations.

For comparison, some of the pedagogical categories in the Dutch courses show also more than one learning approach. When it comes to the content, the course 'The Application of the Bible'\textsuperscript{15}, which is about Bible exegesis, has some phrases that indicate acquisition, in which the students are supposed to obtain ‘...the ability to cover the discussion’ and ‘the ability to use a clear method to grasp the meaning of a text in its original context...’. It presents a view of knowledge as something that can be held on to, 'grasped' or 'covered'. The course has also some phrases that describe new possibilities of the use of knowledge, like outlining 'the role the Bible plays and could/should play in contemporary religious and social discussions'.

The methods and relations show also mixed learning approaches, like for instance in describing 'the student' in singular. However, there are also formulations that put the single student into a collective context, saying that the students shall conduct an 'analysis of the application of the bible in specific discussions'. The exegesis includes even the internship place and the students shall give 'an introduction into the topic and lead the discussion (preferably on a night event or similar activity)'. In the description of the portfolio assessment, there is a dual learning apparatus; some parts give descriptions of individual work and 'independent' analyses. The independent analyses of the student, however, are part of collaborative student discussions and the discussions in the congregation. Additionally, the portfolio assessment includes the teacher’s feedback, which places him or her in a more or less symmetrical position.

\textit{The inferiors also have a say in this}

The white spots in Table 2 are also of interest. They form non-findings. Learning as participation seems to be largely absent in both Norwegian and Dutch course descriptions. One exception is Integrative courses, which includes communication issues, performance, leadership, etc. These courses are dominated by participation learning in both countries.

\textsuperscript{15} ‘The Application of the Bible’ course (‘Het gebruik van de Bijbel in kerk en samenleving’).
In Norway, the participation metaphor is dominant when it comes to methods and content. One example is the course 'Pastoral Internship and Liturgical Training'. To frame the content the course description says: ‘...the students are supposed to have the ability to reflect about their own pastoral practice, identity and belief and the ‘ability to pursue social interaction in formal and informal situations.’ One of the competency goals is to gain the ‘ability to cooperate on planning, performance and evaluation of services, and to lead a church service workshop.’ This course establishes knowledge as ‘a practice’, reflecting general themes like 'identity' or 'belief'. More than framing a knowledge package, it is a knowledge goal to cooperate.

The methods in the MF course description are internship, seminars, and exercises with instruction in smaller groups and individual instruction and counselling. ‘The counselling conversation sets the participant in the centre: His/her personal maturation and growth.’ This recalls methods treating the students as a novice with the primary tasks of adjusting and maturing. The students are assessed according to ‘suitability’. The relations reinforce the associations to participation learning. For instance, the supervisor ‘leads the participant into the life of the congregation ...’ The student ‘adjusts[himself/herself] to the immediate supervisor when it comes to [the] organising and distribution of tasks.’ ‘Suitability’, adjustment and being led into the congregation suggests can be seen as comparable to enrolment or communities of practice, as the participation learning approach implies.

In Netherlands, the participation metaphor seems to be dominant only in the use of methods. The participation learning approach has a different emphasis in the Dutch integrative courses. Some courses are knowledge creation-oriented when it comes to content and relations. In many ways, the Integrative 'Ministry and Leadership' (‘Ambetlijk leidinggeven’) course suggests an approach of knowledge creation in its content: ‘The Master’s level course ... seeks to lead its students to an independent and creative exercise of the ministry at an academic level, adapted to a changing society and culture’. The methods of the Dutch Integrative courses, however, indicate a rather participation-oriented approach. This course is about training and exercising a certain practice and repertoire. ‘...During the training the students will experiment with different liturgical repertoires, various forms of expressions and do reflections on this...’. The relations of the integrative courses, however, suggest a rather symmetrical position. One example is the formulation about the teacher 'leads his/her students to an independent and creative exercise of the ministry...'. In this case, the teacher can be seen as a facilitator rather than an expert, which we would find in a knowledge creation learning approach.

The analysis of Norwegian and Dutch theological education curricula shows three main features: First, the curricula in these two countries have often more than one learning approach. Many courses had at least one challenging learning approach. One could say

16 The 'Pastoral Internship and Liturgical Training' course is the basis for this interpretation.
that the curricula of theological education in Norway and in the Netherlands are multidimensional or ‘multi-voiced’ (Bakhtin 1981). Second, the curricula in the two countries have different dominant patterns. Learning as acquisition dominates the theological education at MF in Norway while learning as knowledge creation dominates the theological education at PThU in the Netherlands. Third, participation learning was seldom part of the picture in either country, and had the tendency of keeping separate spaces in the two curricula. In the next concluding section we will discuss some implications of these findings.

Concluding remarks: How do different learning approaches in the curricula create trajectories of theologising in pastor education?

In this article we have done two things: We have analysed the curriculum texts of Dutch and Norwegian theological education. Our assumption has been that the bits and pieces in a curriculum are not arranged arbitrarily. They represent specific practices and logics of education. Curriculum exists as ways of thinking of learning and knowledge (Usher and Edwards 2003). Thus, curriculum elements can be described as semiotic mediated practices. However, the arrangements in curriculum do not only refer to a practice. We hold that curriculum elements also constitute and create learning practices. This empirical analysis shows that the combination of learning approaches and course categories bring forth widely different learning profiles in the curriculum texts of the two countries. What appears as one profession, one discipline and a comparable theological education do not necessarily lead to one kind of learning.

The challenges of education in a changing society make the frame for examining learning approaches in the curricula of theological education. The empirical analysis has implications for a theoretical discussion about the consequences different learning approaches in education have for professional practices. We hold that the different learning profiles from each country establish specific courses of direction for the practices of future pastors. As Schlauch (1995: 28) holds, ‘doing theology presupposes prior practice and informs future practice’.

Taking a closer look at learning as acquisition and knowledge creation, we will shortly sketch different some challenges and possibilities the different learning approaches entail. One important practice of clergy is theologising. According to Schlauch (1995: 32), theologising is an ‘interdisciplinary conversation [that] involves the synthesis of ideas and methods from diverse communities of inquiry’. Such a view of theologising brings forth two important features of education worth to discuss, namely the view of knowledge and the view of the students in education.

When the Norwegian curriculum emphasises learning as acquisition, this represents a way of theologising that bears on specific challenges. One is treating knowledge as a
‘package’ or emphasising ‘core’ knowledge, often with minimal notions of methods. Sullivan claims that knowledge of this kind has become a much-valued end in itself in theological education (Sullivan 2005: 3-4). A challenge of acquisition-oriented knowledge is that it can remind technical way of theologising, giving primacy to a theologising that put ‘theoretical’ disciplines above the practical (Miller-McLeMore 2007). As Schlauch (1995: 31), puts it, theologising is an open activity of exploration more than a closed system of explanation.

The Dutch curricula comprise some fruitful possibilities that may challenge acquisition-oriented educations, According to a knowledge creation approach to theologising, there is no ‘core’ disciplinary knowledge and traditions. Instead, such knowledge has a changed role and is now used as one source among many. As Bergman holds, ‘traditions are interwoven with changing contexts’ (Bergmann 2004: 152). Theologising is about the *tradere*, the process of making, sharing and changing’ (Bergmann 2004: 152). Learning as knowledge creation does not demand a language of theory and practice as knowledge elements but establishes knowledge as a productive ‘distributed network’ (Nespor 1994: 10). In the curriculum, this means that ‘practice’ is not just forming the background to learning. Instead different practices are valued as equal and even as crucial in framing knowledge. However, this understanding of theologising is not a simple task. One problem might for example be to relate varied resources in consistent and coherent ways (Schlauch 1995:32).

When it comes to the view of student, the acquisition approach to learning represents can lead to fragmented theologising that puts the questions about social interaction, public responsibility and the meaning of professional work in the background (Sullivan 2005: 4). An individual view of the theologian establishes what Donskov Felter describes as a theological crisis: it ‘misses the fundamental fact and underestimates the extreme complexity that characterises the professional situations of pastoral work’ (Donskov Felter 2012: 82).

A knowledge creation approach can *expand the notion of the student*. In the Dutch curriculum, there were many examples of real-life problem solving tasks. Tasks like these draw on many actors. In addition to the student, their peers and the teacher are involved. The internship congregation is involved as actual discussant partners, as is the congregation and people of the local community. The student is not a recipient, an observer or a novice. He or she is given another role, another agency. Through this activity, students become co-partners in religious knowledge (Afdal 2013: 229). In addition, the student is also an actor among different social and material actors. This means that students deal and engage with objects, things, materials and problems from different times and different spaces. Education methods in the curriculum are not about making lectures more engaging to make students remember or engage in a certain
practice. In Nespor’s words, it is rather about ‘mobilising their spaces’ and using their collective resources (Nespor 1994: 15). Theologising, as Donskov Felter presents it, should allow ‘all voices to be heard’ (Donskov Felter 2012: 93).

The comparison of Norwegian and Dutch curricula shows that learning is much more than a method making knowledge easier to acquire. An expansion and a multivoicedness of learning in curricula also imply more than that a curriculum is written with many authors and at different points of time. We assert that the analysis shows that learning theology in the curricula represents existential variables (Harkness 2012). This means that there are different and multiple realities existing at the same time (Law 2002b). Learning, then, becomes a profound ontological project. As Sclauch (1995:31) points out, all theologising is done to make sense of what is happening in order to negotiate one’s way in the world. With Sullivan (2005: 6) we say that the challenge of future clergy is to deal with the hows; how the world works, how to work in it, but also how to be in the world.

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In this article I will analyse professional learning of pastors. Pastors can be an example of a value-oriented profession being both a keeper of traditions and an innovator facing the challenges of globalization and secularization. The analysis of pastor networks is therefore an interesting case of professional learning in a changing society. I present an ethnographic study of five pastors from the Church of Norway doing their everyday work. I ask: What characterize the professional learning networks of pastors between blackboxing and unfolding? The analytical perspectives of Actor-Network Theory and Bruno Latour (1987) are employed, as I argue that professional learning is a process of moving between “blackboxing” and “unfolding”. Thus, I bring a socio-material perspective into the value-oriented field of education. The case of pastors can contribute to elaborate the tools for analysing professional learning. The findings illuminate the challenges many professionals have today, namely to handle different modes of learning.

Keywords: Workplace learning; actor-network theory, professionalism, socio-material approach, education, knowledge society

"The professions dominate our world. They heal our bodies, measure our profits, save our souls". Andrew Abbott

Introduction

Professional learning is considered to be among the most important factors in a changing knowledge society (Jensen, Lahn, & Nerland, 2012). Being a professional does not necessarily mean to be in control of an expert domain or to be competitive in a market (Freidson, 2001; Friedmann & Phillips, 2004; Jensen et al., 2012; Mulchahy, 2012). To many professionals, learning is more than acquiring standards or developing individual and cognitive achievements. Instead, professionals have to handle and negotiate challenges in a materially and socially complex everyday life. They often work in networks across expert fields. However, these networks create different conditions for knowledge construction and learning. In some situations it means to frame existing knowledge, like for instance developing standards and routines. In other situations it means to handle the innovative and new. Professional learning, then, can be seen as network processes between what I will call ”blackboxing” and ”unfolding”.

In this article I will examine professional learning using the case of pastors from the Church of Norway (CoN). Pastors attracted me because pastors in Norway play a specific role in the welfare system for a large part of the population (Kulturdepartementet, 2013; Slagstad, 2011). Pastors baptize a large part of the children, conduct funerals and they are often part of a public

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1 This article has been published in paper format in IJANTTI. The electronic version is soon to be published. The paper version has placed one section different from the manuscript. Here I present the article as it will appear in the electronic version.
Many congregations offer the churches as a shelter for illegal immigrants, making pastors take part in both political and interreligious dialogues. Through centuries pastors have had an established role with a public “license” to deal with life and death (Freidson, 1994; Hughes, 1993). In times of extraordinary events and accidents, the churches function as a public gathering place. Even though the church has got this central place in the Norwegian society, very few of the population actually attend weekly church services (3%). A changing knowledge society and new ways of collaborating seems to challenge former practices with secularization and diversified roles of church and religion (Afdal, 2013; Heelas & Woodhead, 2005). Facing people in extraordinary situations is part of their daily tasks, as well as communicating with believers as well as “less-believers” and non-believers. Pastors have ended up with a status of being “in between” – and professional learning might be at the core of their challenges.

Research within the church context often sees professional pastor learning as individual processes of a reflective practitioner and knowing-in-action (Burns & Cervero, 2002; Campbell-Reed & Sharen, 2011; Olson, 2009). Many studies describe learning of pastors also as entering communities of practice (Hess, 2007; Mercer, 2006; Naidoo, 2010) An analysis of Norwegian and Dutch curricula explores three different learning approaches to learning in protestant pastor education (Reite, In press) showing how some courses allow a triangulating “network” of knowledge sources, actors and sites and facilitate for learning new knowledge. An ethnographic socio-material analysis of pastor learning, however, has not been conducted before.

Professional learning seen as networks is a vast field of largely diverse approaches within research. “Professionalism” will here be seen as a cultural phenomenon, not as essential characteristics (Freidson, 1983; Iedema, Degeling, Braithwaite, & White, 2004; Larson, 1977). Learning among pastors can then not be seen as straightforward processes into becoming “a professional”, but must be seen as negotiations conditioned by interchanging social and historical frames (Adler, Kwon, & Heckscher, 2008, p. 366). In this context “learning” is not about education, but about how professionals develops and copes through work. The question is what kind of learning processes pastors and their networks go through. The last decade education and learning has been an emerging field of Science, technology and society (STS) and in particular Actor-Network Theory (ANT). An increasing number of ANT accounts address matters such as professional learning and change (Ceulemans, Simons, & Struyf, 2012; Fenwick & Edwards, 2012b; Fenwick & Landri, 2012; Fox, 2005; Gherardi, 2006; Hamilton, 2012; Mulchahy, 2012).

The socio-material approach and ANT makes the starting point for analysing professional learning networks in this article. ANT perspectives bring in two important attributes to the understanding of learning: One the one hand, an ANT approach does not conceive learning as individual attributes or “in the head” of people. Neither is it a process just between people. On the contrary, ANT approaches stresses that things and people involved in practices must be studied together. These form “heterogeneous networks”. Networks are complex clusters of space and time. The material is embedded with social meanings and functions (Nespor 1994, p. 15). This does not mean that humans and non-humans are not different. However, it can be hard to divide the human and the material in analysing interactions and the effect of relations (Nespor, 2012, p. 2). Human subjects, material and symbolic objects not only affect pastor learning but also are intermingled and form learning (Fenwick & Edwards, 2012a; McGregor, 2004; Mulchahy, 2012; Sørensen, 2009). Compared to cognitive learning theories a socio-material emphasis on learning implies a shift of focus towards the process, towards the “in
between” negotiations in a network. As Mulcahy holds, professional learning can be conceived as a matter of seeing double (Mulcahy 2012, p. 125).

On the other hand, an ANT approach also challenges the usual conception of learning as results and outcome. Policies and standards point towards complex and non-linear learning processes of professionals (Fenwick, 2010; Hamilton, 2012; Mulcahy, 2012; Nespor, 2002). They are done and enacted into being. Studying learning processes as enactments might illuminate particular patterns and forms of practices (Fenwick & Edwards, 2011; Mulcahy, 2012; Sørensen, 2009). This means for instance that new contexts and time frames can be included in an analysis. However, these contexts are not just accounted for but are working together and make a space. This making of space is what many ANT approaches treat as translation into “networks” (Nespor, 2002, p. 376). Learning is an effect of network processes of humans and non-humans (Fenwick, Edwards, & Sawchuk, 2011, p. 6). The elements in a network affect each other and establish a pattern. Professional learning, then, can be seen a matter of looking for textures of relations (Gherardi, 2006).

Professional learning can be seen as enacted and be seen as networks. In this way I will avoid giving a static definition. Latour’s notions of networks can be a maneuver for opening up the challenges of learning (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 119). In this article I will take these insights further. I turn towards the empirical frames of pastors and their daily work. I also engage some of Latour’s approaches to knowledge construction, arguing that professional learning can be analysed as a complex process between what I will call “blackboxing” and “unfolding”.

To specify, in this article I ask: What characterize the professional learning networks of five pastors in-between blackboxing and unfolding? I will answer this question in three steps: First, in order to analyse learning as networks, I employ the analytical perspectives of Actor-Network Theory and Bruno Latour (1987) on how the process towards “closed” facts happens. These make a theoretical basis for my empirical operationalization of network processes between “blackboxing” and “unfolding”. Second, through the case of five protestant pastors from the Church of Norway, I will develop a tool for analysing professional learning as network modes. These networks create movements, between the facts, routines and the innovative and new - between blackboxing and unfolding. Third, I will discuss how the findings illuminate the challenges many professionals have today, namely to handle different modes of learning.

**Analytical perspectives**

The analytical tools for professional learning have a lot to do with my initial expectations to pastors and learning. At first, I was intrigued by the everyday life of pastors. I thought that a great deal of their professional learning was about handling clashes of tradition and beliefs versus secularization and globalization. I thought that much of their work was negotiating challenges, bringing forth the new, the edgy and the innovative. During the ethnographic fieldwork of following pastors in their daily work, I was frustrated. Even though the pastors were in situations I would see as challenging, many of the pastors spoke and acted like these situations were more like a routine. Following pastors revealed a lot more than the “highlights” and the peak points of pastor practices. Instead, it brought forth the small, detailed and the mundane. I asked myself what professional learning is when many situations are characterised by the everyday bits and pieces, the routines and not necessarily the overt clashes and the innovative change?
In order to answer these questions, the insights of Bruno Latour and his book about knowledge construction, *Science in action* (Latour, 1987) brought fruitful analytical tools. Latour offers a philosophical and methodological framework for socio-material performances and interactions. Latour follows scientists and analyses how scientific facts come into being. Using the notion “network”, he describes the changing qualities of interactions and transformations – as he calls “translations”. They can be analysed as openings and closures in what he calls “science in the making” and “ready-made science”. I will present Latour’s conceptualization of “ready-made science” and “science in the making” as well as the notion of “network”. Afterwards, I operationalize these into network categories of “blackboxing” and “unfolding”, heading to frame the empirical analysis of professional learning networks. “

In *Science in Action* Latour provides a critical analysis of how scientific facts and technology come into being. His unit of analysis is the *actions* and *processes* in scientific and technological practices. Latour characterizes science like a two-faced Janus: The Janus is at the same time “one that knows, the other that does not know yet” (Latour, 1987, p. 7). One side of the Janus is described as “ready made science”, which he calls a “black box”. The other side of this Janus is labeled “science in the making”, which represents the open controversies in science (Latour, 1987, p. 4).

Latour refers to the word “blackbox” as used by cyberneticists whenever a piece of machinery or a set of commands is too complex to describe. It is then replaced by a little box about which they need to know nothing but its input and output (Latour, 1987, pp. 2-3). Similarly, Latour says that this is also the process of established facts. A “fact” is a set of knowledge that appears like having “vis inertia of their own” (ibid, p. 133). Latour’s project is to follow the trajectories before something becomes a fact. Establishing a fact is a process of reification where all its contributors become invisible (ibid, pp. 91; 133-134). Once a scientific fact is agreed upon and once a computer works, they appear as cold, unproblematic and certain. They become routine choices, or can be described as a “black box” (ibid, p. 3). In the case of professionals, the “blackbox” can represent the facts and routines that seem certain and appear unquestioned.

However, a black box is never just “black” from the beginning. Prior to the establishments of facts there are processes and movements. This means for instance “uncertainty, people at work, decisions, competition, controversies” (Latour, 1987, p. 133). Controversies are described as initial driving forces of opening up former facts. One way to open a “black box” is to start questioning who and what its contributors are. One makes a distance between a fact and who is saying it – and thus placing seeds of doubts (ibid, p. 14). One switches from saying “get the facts straight” to asking “look for a weak point” and “choose who to believe” (Ibid, p. 8). “Science in the making” is described as multifaceted. It reveals passions, deadlines, headquarters and decisions. It becomes a situation of chaos; it is something unlimited, an open “Pandora’s box” (ibid, p. 3). These doubts, alternatives and states of chaos are parts of for instance innovation processes of professionals.

In other words, Latour argues that there is a need for exploring the way *between* a blackbox and science in the making. Between “ready made science” and “science in the making” lies what Latour call as a network. A “network” is not a thing or an element, but movements or sets of process relations (Latour, 1987, p. 89). A process is a kind of transformation. Latour argues that these transformations do not “just happen”. Both people and things bring resources or constraints to a situation. They define each other and act upon each other. Thus, Latour includes new the participants in this process. Both humans and non-humans can be part of this process. They are therefore both called “actants” in a network (ibid, p. 84). This
duality of actants creates heterogeneity in a network (ibid, p. 29). The analysis, however, does not stop there. Latour analyses what the actants do to each other (ibid, p. 180). In order to transform a claim into a matter of fact, one needs to enroll and include as many actants as possible toward specific interests (ibid, pp. 108-110). Latour outlines this enrolment process a “translation” (ibid, p. 4; 108). Translation is a described as a movement of gathering people and things towards specific interests. This means that the more actants that agree or support a fact, the more powerful this fact becomes.

From the observation that professional learning of pastors can be both the innovative and what appears as unquestionable facts and routines, there is a need for an analytical tool for taking in these differences. Latour’s notions of enrolment and translation can be fruitful for this task. While Latour describes what happens when knowledge move towards a fact/”ready made science”, I will explore the range professional learning networks. Like Table 1 shows, I establish two categories, which are “blackboxing” and “unfolding” (vertical categories). The processes pastors go through cannot be placed either in one category or the other. The analysis therefore expands Latour’s one-way process into a two-way relation. My assumption is that translation happens both as enrolling and disenrolling. Networks can move both towards blackboxing and unfolding.

Blackboxing and unfolding are parts of a process of translation. I will turn this it into three analytical questions, which make the horizontal categories in Table 1: what is the actants enrolling towards, who are enrolling and how are they enrolling?

**What is the actants enrolling towards?** In order to transform a claim into a matter of fact, networks are aligned towards explicit interests. Interests are what lie in between actants and their goals, creating a tension (Latour, 1987, p. 108). It can be analysed as moving in the same direction or having different interests, “dis-interests” (ibid, pp.116-117). Latour holds that human and conscious interest can be changed during their course of direction. In the assembly of different actants, interests may no longer exist as “intentions”. In the analysis, I will therefore not describe what the pastors want or intend. Instead, I will describe in what degree the pastor networks can be analysed as creating facts, specific methods, routines or rules, or if their activity can be characterized as challenges, change and chaos.

**Who are enrolling?** Latour asserts that the construction of facts is a collective and heterogeneous process (Latour, 1987, p. 108). Latour proposes that humans and non-humans both can have agency. “Both people able to talk and things unable to talk have spokesmen. I propose to call whoever and whatever is represented actant” (ibid, p. 84). In the analysis of pastor networks I will include different analytical components, like for instance pastors, volunteers, children, dogs, copy-machines or books. I aim follow Latour’s suggestion of making a list order of all the actants involved in a situation. In other words, I will analyse “those who do the work” in the pastor networks (ibid, pp. 141; 259).

**How are the actants enrolling?** “Enrolling” can be seen as binding forces and binding the actants together. It can, however, also mean to cut off and diminish agency. Latour says that networks can be studied by “the number of points linked, the strength and the length of the linkage, the nature of the obstacles” (Latour, 1987, p. 201). In the analysis of pastors I will examine how the different actants connect or disconnect by for instance instructing, convincing, supporting and agreeing to an activity. I also examine the obstacles, doubts, questions and disagreements in the everyday situations of pastors.
Table 1 serves two intentions; it summarizes my theoretical operationalization of Latour’s analysis of networks. It also points towards an empirical operationalization of the professional learning networks of pastors. Before I go on to the analysis, I must make a note on methods and on the approach to the material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Networks</th>
<th>Enrolling towards</th>
<th>Enrolling whom?</th>
<th>Enrolling how?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blackboxing</td>
<td>Facts, methods, routines, rules</td>
<td>Human/non-human actants, Few actants</td>
<td>Instructs, is “expert”, Convinces, Supports, agrees, reassures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfolding</td>
<td>Challenges, change, chaos</td>
<td>Human/non-human actants, More actants</td>
<td>Make controversies, doubts, questions, obstacles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A note on methods**

In this article the unit of analysis the learning networks in-between blackboxing and unfolding of five protestant pastors. The present study is part of a larger project, “the Letra project”. I do not conduct a comparative study, but I analyse the five pastors as one ethnographic case, consisting of four men and one woman from three congregations in the Church of Norway (CoN). Ethnography” can be described as a “qualitative method that can articulate other ways of knowledge creation to produce a valid social portrait of the post-human condition” (Madden, 2011, p. 185). My main research technique was shadowing an ethnographic technique, designed for studying collective learning, role of informants in and paths through an organization (Czarniawska-Joerges, 2007; McDonald, 2005). This means that I followed the pastor at their work from early morning until evening, with small go-along interviews between some of the activities. I supplied with introductory semi-structured “getting-to know” interviews and observations and final in-depth interviews. The research documents consists of different sets of sources, such as observation notes, transcriptions of audio files, interview transcriptions, e-mail prints and documents produced by the pastors during the fieldwork. The material has been transferred to data files in the qualitative analysis program Hyperreasearch. Through this coding process I explored the challenges of pastors, the way the networks were elaborating and negotiating different activities. During this coding process I tested out how blackboxing and unfolding could bring new understandings of professional learning. This resulted in nine empirical categories, called “learning modes” (Table 2).

There are three aspects worth noting about the relationship between sampling and generalization. First, an important premise for sampling was to establish a material that could bring thick descriptions of professional co-working, interaction and complexity of networks (Yin, 1981:59; 2009, 59). The criteria of sampling were to find three relatively large congregations, each with two pastors, many groups of professionals and an extensive program of activities for church members. I aimed at minimizing the differences between the case congregations (Madden, 2011, p. 33).
Second, generalization and validity of the case study of pastors is analytical control and transparency (Yin, 2009, p. 114 ff.). More than doing “objective” research, transparency has to do with making clear the sampling of which perspectives I choose as the focus for observation, for reporting and for theorizing. During the observations, the ideas of ANT worked as a sensitizing frame, which is elaborated during analysis. Findings, analysis and theoretical implications were themes of continuous critical and analytical discussion with the Letra project researchers and others, functioning as “peer auditors”. With the theoretical and methodological threads in hand, I will use the operationalizing in Table 1 to show the empirical results of pastor learning networks in-between blackboxing and unfolding.

Third, the sample of pastor networks produces a generalization for conceptualizations and clarifications of phenomena (Andersen, 1997, p. 16). Empirical variations are compared to the theoretical framework of Latour, aiming at displaying a theoretical variation (Andersen, 1997, p. 11). The empirical observations of pastors establish specific enactments of the phenomenon of learning networks. Theoretical concepts can be seen as another “enactment”, aiming at bringing back other enactments of learning agencies from the field. Generalizations are instead semiotic mediated and indicative rather than representative (Hislop, 2007, p. 193).

**Results: The networks of blackboxing, unfolding and in between**

Before I present the results, I introduce the main characters of this case analysis: Ole and Omar from Omega church, Alvin and Alf from Alpha church, and Tara from Tetra church. In the following analysis I use the operationalization of Latour’s framework to analyse how the networks of pastors can be processes of blackboxing and unfolding. The analysis shows first pastor learning as blackboxing and then learning as unfolding. Blackboxing and unfolding have three “modes” of learning networks each. However, through the empirical analysis it becomes clear that another category has to be established, a category in-between blackboxing and unfolding; namely learning as “tinkering”. Altogether this analysis will characterize the professional learning between blackboxing and unfolding with nine learning network modes.

In the following I bring in the results of the analysis of the professional learning networks of pastors. I do not categorize any of the pastors in one or the other category of blackboxing or unfolding. Instead, I explore how the modes can be more or less a part of professional learning of all the pastors in the selection. This analysis is explorative; it aims at bringing forth the range of different ways of learning. The presentation below shows short quotes or situations and then explains how this can be representative for professional learning of all five pastors.

**When the pastor networks are blackboxing.**

Analysing the material brought up a range of different kinds of blackboxing. Learning can be described as standardization processes, routinization and expertizing.

**Standardizing networks**

I ask the chaplain Alvin if he thinks that funerals are challenging. “We who are professionals in this, we can very well speak about other things on the back room”, says Alvin. “As a psychological strategy I think that it is easier to think about the coffin: It is a box. It is easier to move 20 boxes than to think that one moves 20 grandmothers”.

First, blackboxing among the pastors can be described as enrolling a specific and standardized professional role. Many of the pastors describe their most important work as “being confident” or “communicating confidence” and “knowing what to do”. I had the impression
that they are entering a role – employing an actant - instead of acting individually. This seems also to lead to disenrollment and exclusion. Many of the pastors draw a division between “we” and “them”. When I asked the pastors about what they see as important in funerals, many of the pastors speak unsolicitedly about their lack of feelings as opposed to the relative’s experiences. The division between “we” and “them” seems also to happen during meetings with the relatives in advance of a funeral. The most important about these meetings seems to be that pastors get information about the life of the deceased and made notes for their memorial speech. The relatives get information about how the funeral is conducted. In other words, they follow a kind of a standardized “information exchange” model. In all the funerals the programs, notes and liturgy represent important directives of what to do. People like the relatives, other professionals or even the pastors seem to have less a say in these matters. No one opposes to or have other suggestions than what the pastors propose. The documents seem therefore to have a configurative force; they had the pastors conduct their funerals and communication with few discrepancies. These strategies imply a standardizing and transformation of actants. The introductory quote of Alvin shows how he alters the coffins into “boxes”, and thus giving the dead, possible sorrow, crisis or chaos less agency. In other words, they become reifications in order to keep emotions away and to obtain the standards of “professionalism”. This can represent an example where even the pastors have such little agency that one could say that they are being blackboxed.

Routinizing networks
Blackboxing appeared also as very strong routines of the pastors. The first thing Tara says to me after a funeral is “Puh!”, pausing with a silent smile. She explains that she had started to hesitate in the middle of a liturgical phrase whether she had said it wrongly. All the pastors I observed follow a program and a quite aligned standard for funeral liturgy. One way of blackboxing can be described as the making of routines. To follow up the example of funerals, most of the pastors describe for instance that the most challenging about funerals is that they become routines. One important actant in drawing the pastors towards a routine is the number of funerals during a week. The pastors say that they conduct between 70 and 130 funerals in a year. The number of funerals is referred to as one of the things that make their job busy. Many also say that they feel the dilemma of how funerals are such a routine for them in contrast to how it feels for the relatives. It is thus an explicit distance between “we” and “them”. As Tara puts it, “The nightmare is that you say the wrong name. For the relatives, this is the only funeral. But to us it can be the third funeral in a week”. Another important actant for most of the pastors are their former notes and speeches. All the pastors are working with former programs and speeches from their personal archive or from the computer when they prepared a funeral. Even though they see it as an ideal to write a new speech every time, many of them admit that there is a certain reuse of points and ideas in his speeches. The notes seem to play an important role in offering an easier way out. The number of funerals and the available computer files and former notes are thus inventing the work with the funerals. The pastors therefore seem to be driven and enrolled by some actants at the same time as they also co-work towards routinization. And this happens even though some pastors have some slight ethical objections.

Expertizing “the Message”
A third way of blackboxing can be described as expertizing knowledge. This can be described as situations where the pastor is the enrolled as the “expert”. Some of the pastors hold for instance preaching as a domain for the professional expert. For instance, Alf says that he “must trust that the message is “self-sustained” in communicating hope” when he preaches. Preaching is then a field of enrolling towards expertizing. Similarly, Omar tell me that the
congregation can develop the church services together with the professionals. When I ask whether everyone can preach, however, he enrolls a limit:

“Some things neither professionals nor volunteers have any influence on, that means that ordo is set...locally by the congregation council. You don’t mess with that. Then there is less to discuss”.

“Ordo” means a liturgical mass subsection in a church service. In this case the “ordo” is described as a non-negotiable package and a self-maintaining actant. Thus, the pastor becomes an intermediary, like “channels” to convey “Ordo”. He avoids negotiation about that. Ordo is thus a decisive actant, whom no of the other possible actants can oppose to. Other actants like other people in the congregation are left with little scope for action. The examples also show how the pastors work for maintaining “The message” as blackboxes. They advocate and support them as non-negotiable, and thus strengthen them. A possible consequence of expertizing the Message is that many of the pastors treat preaching only have specific relevant functions. It does not seem to fit in everywhere. “I try to help them coping with life. Then there is the death and resurrection of Jesus, but I cannot talk to everyone about that” (Tara). Many of the pastors express that they cannot preach in all situations, for instance when speaking to relatives before a funeral. The example shows, however, that instead of compromising blackboxes where they do not fit, many of the pastors can rather avoid preaching, leaving “the Message” as something taciturn, but still strong. As opposed to the other modes of blackboxing, this mode displays an awareness of different ways of handling “the Message”, but does not challenge it remarkably.

To sum up, the professional learning networks of blackboxing takes here the forms of standardizing, routinizing and expertizing. The divisions between them are sliding, as they all are characterized by few actants, divisions between a “we” and “them” and establishing and sustaining non-negotiable actants. The modes are also different, as the pastor networks moves from firm reifications to formulating ambivalences.

**Unfolding**

Learning can also be seen as the opposite as blackboxing, namely as unfolding. Many of the pastors find themselves in situations when the result is not given, when something unfold, step by step. In the case study of pastors, unfolding can be analysed as enrolment towards creative solutions, de-expertizing and free spaces.

**Creative solutions**

One way of unfolding can be described as enrolling towards new solutions. For some of the pastors, this means finding situations for new ways of preaching. One example is when Ole worries about a church service for Preschool children. He is asked with short notice, and do not have a plan for it. At this time, however, the printer had been out of order for some months. Ole tells me it made them borrow the private printers of some of the other colleagues and use the copy machine more. It is, however, when standing by the copy machine, he finds out how to solve the problem of the Preschool church service:

Ole folds some papers and goes out of the office to the copy machine. He chatters with the secretary, comes in, goes out, talks and laugh with someone in the hallway. He comes back, saying ”I met the Preschool teacher by the copy machine, just by accident. I had some ideas, she had some”.

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In situations like this, different actants like technical devices, offices, hallways, people from other institutions seem to work together to create a new solution for the sermon for the preschool church service. The non-working printer acts as what I call a “stumble stone”, actants that enters into a situation representing a problem. The printer also functions as an initiator for using other spaces and devices. It creates unusual links across professional boundaries. For Ole it seems to be of less importance to do the sermon himself, and is actually engaging about 15 children and the preschool teacher to make a play for the church service. Furthermore, it also results in a new way of preaching. It is a situation of some stumble stones and tensions, when he cannot be sure of the outcome. Something folds out. “I like this, too. One cannot be 100% sure that everything works out. It should be some uncertainty and tensions” (Ole).

De-expertizing
In line with creative solutions, learning can also be described as enrolling towards de-expertizing. In Tetra church they are about to introduce a church service reform. When I ask Tara the chaplain whether she thinks she knows her job well, she answers: “Yes, we can our job, but now we go into all the choices. What do we choose, and why? What I essentially knew by heart, I don’t know anymore”. In her case a reform initiates for instance regular pastor meetings with the parish pastor. She characterizes these former meeting being “often about organizing”. She then changes the routine by initiating a tour in the church room. She initiates a walk through the church room together with some substitute pastors and brings some documents about liturgy in order to discuss how to enact their solutions to the reform. They ask questions like “what is baptism?” “how to hold the baby?” or “how to communicate with the congregation?” They look for answers in the liturgy documents and discuss different practices. In the case of Tara, the pastor’s feelings of professionalism lead to what can be called de-expertizing. In Tara’s case it results in making a breach with former ways of doing things. She includes substitute pastors, the church room and the liturgy documents as actants. The office, the usual agenda are put on hold. She refers to the former knowledge kept by “I”. The reform seems to enroll a “we” – “we go into all the choices, what do we choose?” Her knowledge is made blank, and the other actants. The reform also seems to enroll productive forces, making the pastors ask questions, both about existing practices, theological questions as well as different solutions. De-expertizing is in other words about professional knowledge unfolding.

Free spaces
Learning as unfolding can also be described as enrollments towards “free spaces”. For some of the pastors, specific church services enroll towards of creativity, play and inspiration. Tara is using a week for preparing a “carnival church service”, including volunteers, children and some of the staff working with children. She explains to me that she does “not spend five hours in her office for preparing the service”. Instead, the work is described as “coordination”, answering e-mails, taking phone calls and rewriting of the program continuously whenever new people want to accompany.

Alf makes “Children’s church services” together with Alice, a volunteer working in the local grocery store. The “Children’s church service” in Alpha involves new actants. One important actant is the doll Bobo. Below Alf describes how Bobo became part of the church services:

Alf: “They’re applauding! Bobo said. So then I used him…at children’s church services…”
I: “What do you say – you say: They’re applauding! Bobo said”
Alf: “Yes…he can comment things that sometimes are not even written in the script, you see…he gets his own life”
I: “He gets his own life?”
Alf: Yes, yes… he was coming out of the closet […] he told that he was afraid of the dark […] but then you open up and let the light in, right, thoughts comes to his mind, even when he sits on that book shelf.
[…] I ask how it is like when he preaches and when Bobo preaches. What is the difference?
Alf: “Bobo says things clearly”

These cases are examples of how many or unusual actants are enrolled. For Tara, the church service seems to be characterized by adding new actants in the church service. For Tara, the church service includes storytellers, stories, costumes (also for Tara and the cantor), magicians, games and music. Alf describes Alice – and Bobo - as his most important coworkers. An important characteristic of these church services is that they add of volunteers, children and activities. It seems like the question of keeping one’s agency or power is a less important question. According to Tara, the task of the pastor is to “listen”, to “coordinate” and “not to destroy” the inputs of the sermon. Thus, she makes an effort in not making limits between inside and outside, professionals and non-professionals. Actants are not just enrolled, they can also be given agency that beyond their own scopes of action. Alf is keeping Bobo the doll for some months before he “comes out of the closet”. It is a literary opposite to being in a box; this doll is described as “alive”. Bobo is described as getting “his own life”, “say things not written in the script” and “saying things clearly”. Elements of adding actants, playing and giving away agency can therefore be important ways of enrolling new actants. They therefore enroll towards something new and something carnivalesque, towards “free spaces”. Like Alf says in an e-mail to Alice: “Play on! Here is more”.

“Unfolding” networks have the modes of creative solutions, de-expertizing and free spaces. They seem all to be characterized by involving new and unusual actants, enrolling a “we” in order to create for instance church services. At the time, unfolding seems to happen as a result of moving beyond former ways of doing things, asking open-ended questions and engage towards the open-ended, towards “play”.

**Tinkering**

In a large part of the everyday life of pastors do not operate towards “black” defined expertized fields or “white” open creative spaces. A third kind of learning has to be developed. It is an empirical category of learning networks finding itself in-between; learning seen as “tinkering” networks. Tinkering can be described as a set of “constantly unfolding and only partially routinised practices for holding together that which does not necessarily hold together” (Law, 2010, 69). In this analysis tinkering appears as empirical modes of “cracking blackboxes”, “cut’n paste” and “mending and bending”.

**The blackboxes crack**

Learning as tinkering can be described as “cracking blackboxes”. There are some routines and practices of pastor’s everyday life that appears as “half-private”, like spiritual life and praying. Praying can be a short part of the staff meetings, before a church service or standardized part of the church service liturgy. There was one important exception, namely the prayer meeting with Alf.

Alf invites me to a morning prayer with an interdenominational group. He describes it as his divine inspiration; his “cannot live without it”. I meet him in the building of an evangelical
denomination where Alf had got the keys. The meeting was framed by actants like the lounge we sat in, the calm music and the Bible. However, there are only the two of us present. During the meeting Alf tells me what they usually do on these meetings, telling me of a routine. I come in as an actant changing this regular setting, which seems to make him hesitate about how to treat me. This results in a series of openings and closures. Openings can be seen when he asks me if I have some prayer requests, willing to actually pray with me. Closing, however, can be seen from telling me that he has “already prayed”. Still, he wants to pray for me. The dialogue is full of breaks, silence, “yes”, chuckling and partly whispering. During the meeting we also read the Bible. He changes between asking “what do you think?” and “It is a matter of fact…” explaining me some of the Bible history. The situation can be described as a “limbo”. He improvises, but still hold on to his routines, is half-private and half-open, treat me as an insider and outsider. Agency is enrolling between his established routine and me as a researcher. In other words, there is a tinkering back and forth between blackboxing and unfolding.

Cut n’ paste
One can describe tinkering as slight negotiation of different blackboxes the pastor networks have to handle. Many times learning networks can be described as “cut n’ paste” activities. During the fieldwork I attended many staff meetings and other meetings among the professionals at the church office. Planning and organizing church services seems to be one of the most important tasks of co-working. However, creating these church services appears as a balance and slight negotiations. A typical example is when Ole and the cantor plan a Christmas church service.

The cantor suggests a specific psalm. Ole says: “Yes, but you should be careful by using too many – we’ll see. ONE New Norwegian psalm can be used here, but it doesn’t work well with the – the…old [people]. And we have to take the most well known [psalms] over there. For remember, at Saniteten” they are very…” They agree on four very well known psalms.

Firstly, this example raises the question of who the actants are. In addition to Ole, the cantor, the many psalm books they brought to this meeting, there are one actant that seems to have a lot of agency, namely “they” or “the old people” and “over there” and “Saniteten”. Secondly, the cantor and Ole are left with little agency of how to shape the Christmas service. They do not mess with having a Christmas service with these women. Thus, one can say that they adapted other people’s agenda and wishes into their church service. It is about what they want. Third, this and similar meetings end with paperwork for the pastors. “What they want” seem to direct the actions of the pastor and the cantor. They use former church service programs and what they have done before, using the copy machine, scissors and glue to recreate church services. Thus, creating a service a situation of “cut n’ paste”. They “cut” “what they want” and “paste” it into new practices, also literally.

Mending and bending
Much activity of the pastors can be described as “mending and bending” the conditions of their everyday work life. One example of this is that many of the pastors spend much time to handle the frustration of lacking administrative support for increasing bureaucratic paperwork and for practical and technical problems. Omar is spending quite some office hours on cost accounting, and he is many times describing the wish for an administrative manager. He tells that this has changed his original agenda of ”pastoral responsibility”, which should be for instance preaching and caring.
"I think that the congregation council could have pushed that if they wanted it. The national church council has said that they can. But the leader of the administrative district council has not set aside funding. If one of the pastors had been placed as an administrative manager, the provost would have protested. But the church law is unclear [...] We are supposed to cooperate with the administrative district council. But we cannot let us be stopped by them. We make what we need for ourselves”.

What characterizes situations like Omar’s is that they are full actants, non-present actants. It seems like a “we” on one side, describing the co-workers and a “them” on the other side. “Them” includes other actants like the congregation council, national church council, churchwarden, provost, funding, church law and the administrative district council. Second, these actants disenroll Omar from what he feels is his original agenda this pastor. Not only that, it changes the very understanding of “pastoral responsibility”. It resulted for instance in engaging much more with administrative paper work and spend time to deal with economic aspects, making what they need for themselves. In other words, it is not just a “blackboxing” process. It displays rather a jungle of controversies and arguments that the pastor negotiates. Learning is then about how to navigate among these and to learn how to mending and sometimes trick the superiors.

Summing up: Analyzing the case of pastors frames nine different modes of professional learning networks, as shown in Table 2. The network processes in the horizontal categories are shown as analytical descriptive categories, remaining the same from Table 1. The analysis of pastor learning, however, establishes an expansion of the original categories of blackboxing and unfolding (vertical column) in which tinkering makes a separate and new learning category. Furthermore, each of the three categories has three different modes of learning. The divisions between the nine learning modes cannot be seen as definite, marked with an arrow, as the nine learning modes may have some features in common.

Table 2: Nine modes of blackboxing, tinkering and unfolding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blackboxing</th>
<th>Enrolling towards</th>
<th>Who are enrolled?</th>
<th>How are they enrolled?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reification, standardization</td>
<td>Few actants</td>
<td>Humans are turned to non-humans, “frozen”</td>
<td>Confirming former patterns, standardizing practices, all agency to standards and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routinization, &quot;being confident&quot;</td>
<td>High number of funerals, notes from former funerals. Strong limits between “we” and “them”</td>
<td>Continuity, reuse of former practices, small ethical tensions are overruled.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertizing</td>
<td>One dominating actor, “ordo” Others become intermediaries, just “channels”</td>
<td>Supporting the one actor. Describing oneself as a “channel”. Avoid negotiation</td>
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<th>Cracking blackboxes</th>
<th>&quot;We” is established and routines vs the researcher/&quot;outsider&quot;</th>
<th>Limbo of openings and closures. Agency not decided</th>
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<td>Cut n’ paste former traditions and practices. Agency is given to “what they want”</td>
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<td>Mending and bending</td>
<td>Establishment of the superiors as “they”, divided from “us” (workers, devices, tasks)</td>
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Professional learning networks in between

In this article I have argued that professional learning is a matter of moving between blackboxing and unfolding. The findings show that professional learning cannot be categorized to be becoming an expert, keeping routines or taking on the innovative and new. Instead, the findings specify that professional learning is a matter of moving “in-between”. The networks of pastors establish modes in-between blackboxing, tinkering and unfolding. The results exemplify a profession with no clear-cut features. Pastors are “in-between” traditions and new practices, between individual and distributed agencies, between the closed boxes and free spaces:

First, the analysis showed that blackboxing networks can be characterized by enrolling towards reification, routinization and expertizing. Some modes showed that there were few visible actants. Sometimes the pastors cut off actants or isolate others by establishing a “we”/“them”. This seems to follow a rationale of a kind of physician-patient exchange of information and cutting off feelings, and thus being “professional”. (Brunkhorst, 2010, p. 400; Parsons, 1968, p. 171). Some modes also show that the pastors were being “blackboxed” by former traditions, rituals, liturgies and routines. The pastor networks fill the role as iconic bearers of “right” practices, as experts controlling and having a “monopoly” on a function that few actants have access to. However, this monopoly is not expressed as a specific knowledge and expertise, but rather as a general “know-how”. The pastors also frame funerals and sermons as doing service and having a kind of “customer” approach to people. In that sense the pastor learning are characterized by a “performative” understanding of professions (Molander & Terum, 2010, p. 19). In blackboxing learning networks expertise belongs to God, history, tradition, the former vicar, other people’s expectations and so on. Then one could say that analysing learning networks illuminates how professional learning becomes a “channeled” agency.

Second, the learning networks described as “unfolding” shows learning modes of creative solutions, de-expertizing and in free spaces. They include a “Pandora’s box” of many and untraditional actants. Children, volunteers and ad-hoc groups of co-workers are involved as more or less participating actants. Agencies seem to be “floating” between the various actants. Furthermore, the unfolding modes involve a matter of “play”. According to Bakhtin, the element of play, the carnivalesque, the opposing to ridicule sacrosanct conventions are essential for cultural innovations (van Oers, 2010, p. 370). Then the pastors are like “actors” or “artists” and are made “independent” professionals (Freidson, 2001, p. 12). However, this is not an individual issue. Instead, one could rather see a kind of “de-expertizing” through theologizing and creating together. “Unfolding” can thus be described as “a special form of free and familiar contact reigned among [actants] who were usually divided by the barriers of caste, property, profession, and age” (Bakhtin, 1984/1964 , p. 10). In other words, the agenda is highly distributed, and professional learning seems to lie in being an equal if not inferior agency.

Third, “tinkering” is established in the analysis as one form of professional learning networks. Mol, Moser and Pols describe this “tinkering” as actions “in a world full of complex ambivalence and shifting tensions (Mol, Moser, & Pols, 2010, p. 14). Superiors, traditions, practices and routines appear as stumble stones in the everyday life of pastors. They give the learning networks the form of tinkering and the modes of “cracking blackboxes”, “cut’n paste” and “mending and bending”. However, tinkering seems not to be defined by individual expertise (Cochran Jr, 2000; Grimen & Molander, 2010, p. 184). Instead, it is a matter of collective agencies, while the pastors establish “we” and “them” or even leave their own agencies, disenroll themselves and adapt to outside practices. Their expertise is bringing out
elements of that of managers, accountants and janitors by coordinating others, doing bookkeeping or practical technician’s work. The learning networks of pastors are characterized by tinkering, not only their tasks, but also who “we” are.

Keeping the parallels between the different modes of learning in pastor networks and other professions do not only point out that pastors are handling many different tasks. The point is that professional knowledge and learning are enacted in different ways by the pastors and that the socio-material networks create widely different learning modes. This can illuminate some of the challenges professionals in a materially and socially complex everyday life. Professional learning is not only interesting in terms of its character of “growth” (Sørensen, 2009, 130), “new knowledge” (Nerland & Jensen, 2012, p. 115-116) or “successful mobilizations” in education (Fenwick, 2012, p. 113). Instead, it should be complemented by a language for how learning also can move towards blackboxing, as well as the ambivalent processes of tinkering.

I have argued that analysing professional learning is a matter of moving in-between blackboxing and unfolding. Latour claims that the empty space in between the networks, those terra incognita are exiting because they show the extent of reserves that is open for change (Latour, 1999b, p. 19). The analytical in-between means here to analyse how learning networks move back and forth between blackboxing and unfolding. This perspective is embodied with many possibilities. The case of pastors show a profession living in unstable conditions of the knowledge society, living with the unstable and “living with the erratic” (Mol et al., 2010, p. 10). The networks are neither only intentional nor unconscious, they are neither just social nor just material and they are not just “flow” or just “growth”. Learning networks is a place for potential imaginaries (Sørensen, 2009) analysed empirically. Thus, professional learning networks can be seen as profoundly semiotic (Latour, 1987; Law, 2005, p. 3), implying that professional learning can be seen as folded processes of potential meanings and practices. With Abbott, one could say that the analysis shows that learning networks of pastors “heal our bodies, measure our profits and save our souls” (Abbott, 1988, p. 1). However, whether the networks of this profession dominates in our changing world, is an empirical question, as they move in-between blackboxing and unfolding.

References


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i For instance, after the shooting of Anders Behring Breivik 22/07/2011, Oslo Cathedral was surrounded by flowers and condolences, and many extra masses were conducted. http://www.nbcnews.com/id/43933511/#.Up3Z4WSYAtA

ii In many ANT contributions, showing the spatial dimensions makes a point of showing that “network” might be a too narrow concept (e.g. Sørensen 2009, Fenwick 2011, 98). A critique by representatives of “after-ANT” is that the network metaphor only shows how a process translates many wills and actors into singular understandings and wills. They point out that processes might have other forms, be more complex and have ambivalent belongings. Translation is seen as the process of establishing this one-way process. I agree with this critique. However, for pragmatic reasons and for the sake of clarity I operate only with “network” as a term for the gatherings of human and non-human actants and “translation” as the process in which these actant affect each other. Through the analysis of professional learning dynamics, I aim to show the ambiguity and complexity of these translation dynamics and networks.

iii Science in Action can be seen as the philosophical and methodological “state of art” of Actor-Network Theory (ANT). ANT can first and foremost be described as a post-structuralist “family” of methods and tools. It is particularly concerned with material-emic approaches for the analysis of the innovation and knowledge creation processes of science and technology (Law, 2009:141).

iv Letra, a research project examining learning and knowledge trajectories among different groups in the Norwegian church, see www.letra.mf.no. The selection of congregations was coordinated in the Letra group.

v See http://www.kirken.no/english/

vi Latour distinguishes between actants as “mediators” and “intermediaries”. Intermediaries take a role as a "carrier" of information without transforming it. Mediators, on the other hand, transform and modify meaning (Latour 2005, 39).

vii A women’s health organization in Norway

viii In Norwegian it is "Kirkevergen"

ix In Norwegian it is "Kirkelig fellesråd"
Pastors and the perpetuum mobile: The dynamics of professional learning in times of reform
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In a changing knowledge society, many workplaces experience a great number of reforms, implying improvement, new ways of working and professional learning. When a reform is introduced, however, does a professional act as an ever-moving machine – a perpetuum mobile – always learning with full energy? In this article I ask the following: What characterises the learning dynamics of pastor networks as they go through a reform? I will follow how a reform is enacted in three different situations amongst pastors in the Church of Norway as a national reform of the church services is carried out. Through a thematic content analysis of an ethnographic fieldwork study of three congregations in Norway, professional learning is analysed as the dynamics between substance, force and time. I argue that introducing something new like a reform does not always effectuate high-powered learning. When professionals experience a reform, socio-material elements energise or slow each other down and generate various professional learning dynamics. The findings pinpoint how professional networks are in constant change, and thus enact new reforms differently. This study can contribute to exploring and nuancing professional learning dynamics, as well as raising questions about reforms as resources for professional learning.

Keywords: Professional learning, actor-network theory, reform, dynamics, STS

Introduction
In a changing knowledge society, many workplaces undergo a great number of reforms. These are often initiated to ensure that professionals learn and change their practices. A reform comes with an imperative concerning dynamic approaches to working, improvement and professional learning. However, in recent decades, reforms seem to occur more frequently and sometimes even overlap. One could say that reform can dominate the way in which an enterprise works (Hubbard, Mehan, and Stein 2006). Reforms bring forth questions about the dynamics of professional learning. This raises the following question: When a reform is introduced, does a professional act as an ever-moving machine – a perpetuum mobile – always learning with full energy? In this article, I take a socio-material approach as a starting point and analyse the case of pastors. I ask the following question: What characterises the professional learning dynamics of pastor networks in times of reform?

In this article, I examine how new elements like a reform affect the processes of professional learning. Studying learning in reform is part of an ethnographic study of pastors in the Church of Norway (CofN). I argue that introducing something new like a reform does not always effectuate high-powered learning. When professionals experience a reform, socio-material elements energise or slow each other down and lead to various professional learning dynamics. The case of pastors working with a reform can contribute to explore and nuance
accounts of professional learning, as well as to raise questions about reforms as resources for professional learning.

This article is organised into four main sections: First, I give a brief introduction to the relevance of studying professional learning and the case of pastors. I present research accounts of professional learning in the empirical field of pastors, and then socio-material readings of reforms and professional learning. Actor-network theory (ANT) provides the analytical frame for the empirical material. In the second part, I present the empirical context for this study, which is ethnographic fieldwork research on pastors in three congregations in the CofN, along with methodological considerations. I then conduct a thematic content analysis. In the third part, I analyse empirical excerpts from three different pastor networks in the CofN, investigating how they handle a newly introduced national reform related to church services. In the fourth and final part, I discuss the findings and their contribution to socio-material approaches to professional learning dynamics, as well as the implications of the introduction of new reforms.

Being a ‘professional’ is not a matter of identifying settling essential characteristics. Instead, professionalism can be accounted for in relation to interchanging social and historical conditions in society (Adler, Kwon, and Heckscher 2008). In a changing society, professionals are involved in handling knowledge, but in ambiguous ways. On the one hand, professionals are supposed to learn and participate in established knowledge cultures and traditions (Kurummäki 2000). On the other, they are supposed to generate new knowledge to meet the needs of a society in change (Fenwick, Jensen, and Nerland 2012, 3). The profession of pastors can exemplify this ambiguity. Pastors have traditionally been seen as one of the pillars and the ‘archetypes’ of the professions in society (Funck 2012, Slagstad 2011). However, a society in which knowledge is constantly changing challenge this view. Church and religion in the Western world are generally objects of secularisation and individualisation processes. Thus, the former role of the church representing unified religious practices in society can be diversified and even blurred (Heelas and Woodhead 2005, Afdal 2013).

The church is also changing from within. In recent years, the CofN have introduced many national reforms¹. These reforms have established new structures of leadership, delegations to other professional groups and increased influence of volunteers. All of these changes foreground the pastor profession as a hybrid between tradition and innovation, between the strongly academic field and the domains of care, between professional and lay knowledge. These ‘betweens’ of pastors generate questions about the dynamics of professional learning. In this article, I therefore explore these dynamics in relation to pastors, using the example of an(other) reform being introduced.

Research overview and approaches to professional learning dynamics
Research on professional learning amongst pastors is often focused on the dynamics between the individual and the context, such as learning (Olson 2009, Burns and Cervero 2002, Campbell-Reed and Sharen 2011). The learning of pastors is also described as a dynamic between social actors (Mercer 2006, Hess 2007, Naidoo 2010, Driesen, Hermans, and de Jong 2007). Recently, an ethnographic analysis of the learning networks of protestant pastors in the CofN has also been conducted (Reite 2013). The church service reform in the CofN studied in this article has been studied as cultural change (Madsen 2012). However, other socio-material analyses of the dynamics of pastors’ learning have not previously been conducted.
In planning and evaluating reforms, many are interested in why a reform succeeds or fails, and which factors facilitate or constrain its processes. The rationale is that when these factors are taken into account, there is a greater chance that the next reform will succeed. The process of introducing reforms and standards, however, can be complex, and can include multiple of social and material elements. Instead of input-outcome processes, reforms must be accounted for as dynamic processes and negotiations (Fenwick 2010: 118). One approach, which illuminates these factors, is research on science, technology and society (STS) and ANT in particular. In the following, I present some features of ANT readings of reform and professional learning. Brown and Capdevila’s (2005) contribution to ANT works as a resource for analysing the professional learning dynamics of pastors as they experience a reform.

ANT represents the starting point for analysing professional learning dynamics in this article. In the last quarter-century, ANT has emerged through poststructuralist sociological studies of knowledge foregrounded by Bruno Latour, Michael Callon and John Law. In the last decade, there has been an increasing interest in including ANT to conceptualise educational matters such as professional learning and change. (Mulchahy 2012b, Hamilton 2012, Gherardi 2006, Fenwick and Edwards 2012b, Fox 2005, Ceulemans, Simons, and Struyf 2012, Fenwick and Landri 2012). In many of these contributions, there has been a special interest in how learning occurs in the workplace, and especially, how reforms and standards are practiced and affected by different kinds of interaction. I n ANT terms, this interaction is labelled ‘translation’. There are three dimensions which characterise translation in the context of professional learning and reform. These are described below.

First, an ANT translation does not conceive learning in terms of individual attributes or as being ‘in people’s head’ (Fenwick 2012a: 108). Neither is it just a socially constructed process of identity, agency and structure. Instead, ANT stresses a collaborative view of learning. Things and people form what is called ‘heterogeneous networks’. This means that human subjects, along with material and symbolic objects, are analysed as equal participants called ‘actants’. Actants not only affect pastor learning, but are also intermingled and form learning. In ANT terms, the participants change one another through interaction (McGregor 2004, Sørensen 2009, Fenwick and Edwards 2012a, Mulchahy 2012b).

Second, the ANT translation approach also challenges the usual conception of learning as results and outcome (Nespor 2002: 369). For instance, reforms and standards are done and enacted into being (Timmermann and Berg 1997, Mulcahy 2012a, Fenwick and Edwards 2011). This means that reforms are not a pre-existing reality, but are instead created and negotiated amongst their actors. Learning in reform, then, represents a relational effect (Fenwick and Edwards 2012a: xv). The enactment of reforms and policies give examples of how professional learning is ongoing, complex and nonlinear (Mulcahy 2012a, Hamilton 2012, Nespor 2002, Fenwick 2010).

Third, the question often posed in ANT contributions is how translations vary. The very process of change occurs in different ways. Some forms of translation are represented by how a reform assembles allies and is made stable and durable in a professional network (Luck 2008, Clarke 2002). This could mean, for instance, that professionals agree on one practice or one way of handling a reform. However, it is not always possible to sort out one opinion and one strong practice. Instead, professionals often work in a diverse and messy landscape of new reforms, and learning is a matter of navigating between a multiplicity of tasks, aims and
visions. Thus, processes and change can better be described as weaker networks, characterised by more ambivalent and partial translations (Fenwick 2012a).

The context of reform generates some new questions about professional learning dynamics and translation. For example, do reforms always entail energetic professional learning, and how can such dynamics be described? Some ANT readings of professional learning feature the process of reform learning as something energetic and dynamic, as an ‘interplay of force relations’, ‘entailments of energies’, ‘dynamics of change’ and the speeding up or slowing down of change (Fenwick and Edwards 2012a: xvii, Fenwick and Landri 2012, 1, Fenwick 2012a: 100, Nespor 2012). These readings provide some important insights and keywords for studying professional learning. Still, there is a need for a further exploration of these processes as energetic dynamics. I therefore involve one additional contribution on translation, namely Brown and Capdevila’s (2005) article ‘Perpetuum mobile: Substance, force and the sociology of translation’. This article provides analytical resources for the analysis of pastors handling a reform.

Drawing on insights from energetics and philosophy, Brown and Capdevila (2005) argue that ANT translations can be approached by three ‘test signals’, namely ‘substance’, ‘force’ and ‘time’2. In the following, I present the three test signals briefly along with a description of how I will use them in a thematic content analysis of the professional learning dynamics of pastors.

The first test signal, ‘substance’ represents the who and what in my analysis of learning in reform. Brown and Capdevila emphasise actants like nature, materials and people as powerful resources, ‘arbeitsskraft’ and workforce in an activity (Brown & Capdevila, 2005: 32, 34). In reforms, this labels the many wills and potentials at play in a professional learning network. These actants create different kinds of translation processes. In some cases, translation is a matter of organising and uniting specific significations, interests and concerns. This kind of translation builds chains of hard facts (ibid.: 32–34). In other cases, translation is a matter of handling the uncertain, the fragile and complex, and organising a limited order (ibid.: 35–36). In this analysis, I examine how the interactions in pastor networks establish one strong opinion or programme, or whether their actions turn into unstable and multiple solutions or even open up for chaos.

The second test signal is ‘force’. Brown and Capdevila hold that agency and power are not immanent and static features of a network. Instead, the energies and power of a network must be analysed as emerging processes (Brown & Capdevila, 2005: 38–39). In my analysis, force includes the agencies and the what for of a reform. Brown and Capdevila argue that objects, like the reform here, are blank and unpresenting until they are taken into use (ibid.: 40). When a blank actant (for example the reform) is placed in a network, it disrupts the network. This actant provokes an effort to connect and order. This is what Brown and Capdevila call a ‘will-to-connect’ (ibid.: 40). In the analysis, it is of less interest to study what the reform ‘really is meant to be’ than what generates the creative forces when the reform is introduced. I therefore analyse exactly what appear to be the new, blank and unpresenting for the pastors, as well as the strategies and resources the pastors take into use in order to connect and create the meaning of reform.

‘Time’ is a third dimension in Brown and Capdevila’s account of translation. In my analysis, it represents how interactions take place. Brown and Capdevila emphasise that time does not always proceed in a straight line in terms of intention-process-result. Conversely, time is
made in order and ‘folded’ together (ibid.: 43). Brown and Capdevila present three different orders of time. ‘Universal time’ refers to the Western time system. In the analysis, this can mean referring to the calendar, amount of time and so on. ‘Local time’ is a second time order and can mean a series of local practices. In the analysis, local time can include references to what ‘we’ usually do, ‘my’ practice, ‘their’ ways of doing things. Finally, ‘narrative time’ often goes across universal time and local practices and presents a happening or a practice (ibid.: 42). In the analysis, narrative time appears as a way of re-telling incidents and opinions or other things, as well as taking narrative techniques into use and explaining characteristics of others. Brown and Capdevila describe how universal, local and narrative time can clash and create specific rhythms (ibid.: 42–43). In the analysis, these clashes can be presented as different opinions and practices that create possibilities and constraints for interaction.

Altogether, Brown and Capdevila’s account of translation represents a dynamic toolkit for an analysis of the micro-interactions in the pastor networks when a church service reform is introduced. This toolkit foregrounds how different elements work together to create dynamics and energies. Furthermore, the analysis can give a more nuanced picture of what contributes to working at a ‘good pace’. It can generate analyses of learning in reform involving who and what (building agreements and facts or opening up for chaos), and accounts for the what for (introducing something new and the strategies for handling a reform). The analytical tools also involve the how (the clashes between time contexts), and how these are negotiated amongst the pastor networks.

I aim to bring forth something other than a story about reform as a failure or a success, as I believe the process of reform may be more complex. Possibilities and constraints which can be thematised in a reform are not stable matters as factors for success or failure. Instead, they are relational; networks constrain, allow or even aspire new possibilities. Thus, the Brown and Capdevila article can contribute to shift a perspective and even help the three pastor networks tell another story about professional learning dynamics in times of reform.

**Context and methods**

The CofN is an evangelical Lutheran church; it was the established official state religion for centuries until May 2012. About 77% of the Norwegian people are members of CofN. However, only about 100 persons in each congregation, or 3% of the population, actually attend church services (Brottveit and Holberg 2013). Up to the present, the church services in CofN have emphasised standardised national practices on the order of worship (‘liturgy’). However, a new reform was approved by the national executive ‘Church meeting’ in 2011 to increase the focus on local decisions. This ‘worship service reform’ is featured as a course of action to involve more people and create more varied church services. The local congregation is now encouraged to influence the profile of the church service and to be involved in preparing and conducting services. The official starting date for the reform coincides with this period of time. This reform is of special interest because it sets a focus on the process of involvement more than on specific standards or outcome. However, the reform also comprises issues of standards, as its final product must be approved by the bishop of the diocese.

The present study is a qualitative case study that is part of a larger project on learning and knowledge trajectories in the CofN called Letra. Sampling and generalisation rest upon a number of selections. First, the samples for the case study are relatively large, similar congregations in the CofN. Each has two pastors, many groups of professionals and an extensive programme of activities for church members. Thus, I aimed at minimising the
differences between the case congregations (Madden 2011, 33). I do not conduct a comparative study, but rather explore the width of practices amongst five pastors, seeing them as one ethnographic case. This analysis includes three situations from congregations in CofN.

Second, theoretical generalisation of a socio-material approach to learning has also been pursued via the data collection methods. I conducted semi-structured interviews and ethnographic shadowing over a period of nine months from September 2011 to May 2012. Shadowing is a technique designed for studying collective learning, as well as the role of informants in and paths through an organisation (Czarniawska-Joerges 2007, McDonald 2005). This means that I followed pastors in their work from early morning until evening, with small go-along interviews between some of the activities. I supplemented this with interviews that were partly theoretically oriented and partly open questions, as well as final in-depth interviews. An important goal was to establish broad enough material to bring thick descriptions of professional co-working, interaction and complexity of networks (Yin 2009, 59, Payne and Williams 2005, 298, Ponterotto 2006). The findings and analysis were themes of continuous critical and analytical discussion, with the LETRA researchers functioning as peer auditors. This activity contributed to analytical control and transparency in observation (Yin 2009:114 ff). More than describing a complete material, the collection of data has therefore comprised a duplex of theoretical and empirical activities fruitfully generating each other (Nespor 2012, 1).

Third, sampling also includes the choice of analytical techniques. The material has been transferred to data files in the qualitative analysis programme Hyperresearch. During a coding process, the categories of different dynamics and reform soon caught interest as repetitive themes, especially in the observation notes and walk-along interviews. Substance, force and time were eventually included as lenses for exploring the depths of the data themes; thus, a variant of thematic content analysis of micro-interactions was employed (Bryman, 2005: 580). Substance, force and time are not elaborated on as instrumental concepts to be operationalised and transferred to the material; rather, they function as indicative and explorative resources in the analysis of the dynamics of professional learning. Although all of the empirical material has been analysed, I have chosen one excerpt from each congregation which pinpoints three different dynamics of the church service reform. With these considerations clarified, I move on to the actual analysis.

**Analysing the professional learning dynamics of pastors**

First, I will introduce the pastors involved, who were as follows: a) Tara from Tetra church, b) Alvin and Alf from Alpha church and c) Ole and Omar from Omega church. One situation from each network is presented and analysed to show how the dynamics between different actants unfold. The selected situations are all examples of working with elements of the church service reform; they are collaborative, and they all take the material objects imposed by the Church council into use. These objects include suggestions for liturgies (a thick liturgy binder), suggestion for church music (a similarly thick binder) and suggestions for Bible texts. In analysing the dynamics of pastor networks undergoing reform with the signals of ‘substance’, ‘force’ and ‘time’, one striking finding evolved: In each of the congregations, three widely different dynamics of professional learning became apparent, namely energising dynamics, slowing-down dynamics and the dynamics of limbo. In the following, I will analyse the micro-actions in three excerpts from the empirical material and show how they establish different dynamics of professional learning.
Tara is the chaplain of Tetra church. She is mainly responsible for the youth church services and family church services, while the parish pastor has responsibility for the other ones. While I was shadowing Tara, the parish pastor had a study leave for a period of six weeks. Meanwhile, Tara took on the parish pastor’s responsibilities in addition to her own. During this period, Tara initiated many meetings with different groups of people. She repeatedly stated that she needed to ‘figure out what the church service reform is’ and use the situation ‘to ask questions’. In the following section, Tara invites two vicar pastors into the church room. In advance, Tara and two vicars have briefly discussed the reform and other practical matters in an office. Now, they say they want to explore reform with new eyes and that they will discuss the reform in terms of how to conduct a baptism during a church service. They bring in a thick binder sent from the Church council with liturgy suggestions and orders concerning the church service reform.

…We go into the church room. There are no other people there. Tara brings the liturgy binder. She holds it while they scroll it together, and she takes out some pages and puts it back on the altar rail. Vicar 1 stands in the middle in the front of the room, directed towards the church room. They discuss how they want to stand before and after the baptism. Vicar 1 says he feels a little distant from the other people [the congregation] during the sermon of baptism. Vicar 1 says that he therefore stands in the middle before the altar speaking to the congregation, and he shows how he does it. He asks: ‘Are we allowed to do this?’ They scroll through the liturgy binder together and ask each other if it says anything about where to stand. Vicar 2 also says that she stands in the middle in a similar way [to Vicar 1], and that she also places herself there after the baptism session. Then, they all move to the baptismal font placed in the right corner in the church room, beside the altar, close to the wall. Vicar 1 says that he has received ‘strict orders to stand here’. He stands on the right side of the baptism font towards the wall. Vicar 2 and Tara say that they are used to standing more in the middle behind the font. They scroll through the binder again to see if there is anything about the position of the pastor during the baptism session […] Then Tara asks about the baptism candle: ‘What does it mean?’ she asks. They scroll the liturgy binder. Vicar 2 says that she thinks it is important. That it is originally a burning light that comes directly from Jerusalem. Vicar 1 asks if the baptism light really means anything. They scroll through the liturgy binder. Tara asks then about the light globe, what that means. They all ask short questions, but do not answer them. Vicar 2 describes some things she knows about the globe, and says that ‘now she realised that she was a little more orthodox than she thought’. Tara says that she does not have a special opinion. They see in the liturgy binder that the baptism light is mentioned, and they read out loudly together: ‘It does not have to be there…’.

In this excerpt, there are two movements to consider. First, the church room does not only exist as an objective site for human interaction. The empty church room and the spot in the front seem to be important actants which initiate a series of uncertainties and questions. For instance, Vicar 1 goes to the front of the room and immediately poses the question about where to stand in the church room; he reveals that he feels distant from the congregation during the baptism ritual. The other pastors do not answer directly. Instead, this action of Vicar 1 seems to open up a session where all the pastors ask questions. The questions they raise are not only respond to Tara’s initial aim to find out about ‘what the reform is’ or what
the reform says about baptism. Instead, the church room and the way they move their bodies seem to displace any clarity about the reform, instead opening it up as a ‘blank field’.

The second movement in this session can be described as stronger or weaker clashes. The pastors do not only ask questions; rather, they connect to their own questions by describing their own practice and their own local time in conducting a baptism. One practice description is followed by another. For instance, in the discussion about where to position themselves besides the baptism font, all the pastors present different ways of doing it, but without correcting each other or favouring one solution. Thus, the interaction shows slight clashes between different practices. However, there is one actant that evidences a quite powerful clash in this interaction, namely, the liturgy binder. For instance, Vicar 1 interrupts himself by asking, ‘Are we allowed to do this?’ The liturgy binder makes them interrupt their activity to turn around to the altar rail, pick up the liturgy binder and read it together. Using the word ‘allow’ reveals a strong and clashing local time, namely that of a superior, but unnamed instance, like the Church council or the bishop. The liturgy binder thus represents a local and quite forceful time, as it offers standards and guidelines for the baptism liturgy. However, the liturgy binder does not seem to close off any of the energetic dynamics amongst the pastors. In contrast, the liturgy binder represents a clash that makes the pastors ask each other new questions.

When they explore where to stand during the baptism session, a similar dynamic occurs. They compare their different ways of doing things, and thus establish different local times. Again, they interrupt the activity and search for answers from the liturgy binder, and again they compare their ways of solving the issue. In this way, the different actants create a process that exceeds the Tara’s agenda, which was to ‘ask questions’. The church room, the liturgy binder, the ways the pastors move their bodies as though in tentative experiments, all seem to lead not only in one, but in many directions, and many practices are made visible.

The result of these actions can be described as a new circulating and energising dynamic. The pastors ask, compare and turn together to the binder, and again ask, compare their views and move around the church room. This process cannot be described as a translation into one opinion, nor can it be described as all chaotic. Rather, the activity can be seen as generative, explorative and energised ways of collaborating. During the session in the church room, the initial idea to figure out ‘what the church service reform is’ is displaced by another aim, namely, developing a new way of collaborating. More than coming to agreements or negotiating one solution, this network is built up and energised by ways of maintaining differences and negotiating clashes, as well as framing future possibilities for meaning and practical activities. Thus, it is as if the pastor network in Tetra creates a reform that involves pushing forward and that *is to come.*

**Omega: Dynamics of slowing down**

Although the reform has just been introduced in an official sense, the church service reform is repeatedly referred to as something they are ‘done with’ by Ole and Omar; they do not want ‘them to strangle the process’. ‘Them’ is an frequently used expression, referring to the superiors in general. The reform was seldom part of the conversations in any of the situations I took part in; it was as if I came *after* the reform. In the following situation, Ole and Omar are gathered with the cantor in order to set the programme for a church service. They sit around a table in Omar’s office with many documents. Omar has hymnbooks, the newly arrived liturgy binder with suggestions for new liturgies and a book with suggestions for Bible texts for different church services. They briefly talk about the church service programme from
the year before. During the meeting, the cantor leaves for a while (for practical reasons, he says) and then comes back later.

Omar: No, maybe we should just let it be and not bother to copy it, but simply just let it – forgetting what we did last year?
Ole: Yes, I think so.
Omar: Yes, because now we have a slightly different system.
Omar: Yes, yes…
Cantor: ‘Oh come all ye faithful’, number 49 – as the first hymn?
Omar: Yes, let us – let us now just look at the texts first, then, so we – we because it is – since there are a few new translations and such now. Should we not just read…the prophet of Jesiah…first, in order to see if we get any associations here…Thus, there is…[Reading in a declaring manner from the book of Jesiah, chapter 9]…Is this the same passage as it was before?
Ole: No, no!
Omar: It feels different?
Ole: It feels different. They have included something prior to [the text], as far as I remember –
Omar: Yes.
Ole: The first verse is a bit different, I think…
Omar: Yes, (reading) ‘it will be no darkness for her’.
Ole: Yes.
Omar: THAT I haven’t dealt with before.
Ole: No. No, actually, suddenly there was a connection –
Omar: Yes.
Ole: …which they have chosen to – oh, that is funny! (turns towards me)
Me: Yes.
Ole: Funny.
[…]
Omar: Yes – but it has also – it gives also a little perspective on – on – when we think about the choice of hymns and such.
Ole: Yes.
Omar: If we –actually, when THEY think like this, we can also…think about these things and see if there is something that…that corresponds better to this[…].

This excerpt shows quite different movements from the ones in Tetra. The first action can be described as assembling actants into one direction. Omar starts out this meeting by announcing that ‘we should let it [the former church service programme] be’, ‘not bother to copy it’ and ‘forgetting what we did’. By these statements, Omar does three things: He says the same thing in three different ways, establishing distance from the former practice, between a former local time and the present local time. By saying this three times, there is a fortifying and almost rhetorical effect. Omar also gathers the present actants by using ‘we’ and ‘us’. Additionally, Omar establishes a normative direction, using laden words like ‘should’, ‘bother’ and ‘forgetting’. Pastor Ole is soon confirming, saying ‘yes, I think so’ and ‘yes, yes’. Omar becomes a strong actant, incorporating the others into one direction fortified by Ole’s affirmations. In this way, Omar establishes a distinct clash with other local practices and takes rhetorical techniques into use; thus, one could say that he creates a new and quite narrative practice. In the beginning, there is no negotiation, and the rules and the processes of collaboration and knowledge seem to be set. In other words, the network and its many differences are displaced and translated into one direction in this excerpt.
The other movement in this excerpt involves dealing with one new and blank actant, namely ‘the text’. There is a small clash when the cantor gently suggests a hymn. Omar quickly disregards this by introducing the text. After this, the cantor does not say anything, becoming an absent actant; this is reinforced by his departure in the middle of the meeting. The liturgy binder and the hymnbooks are not in use in this passage, and are left as passive actants. The Bible textbook – and how the pastors read it – establishes a new ‘blank field’. The textbook establishes a certain clash and a new dimension, maybe even a revelation to Ole and Omar. Thus, the textbook seems to be one of the few actants that has the power to challenge otherwise strong opinions. The textbook generates a certain energising rhythm in Omar’s question, ‘is this the same text as before?’ and the confirming responses from Ole. Ole not only agrees, but is partly repeating the things Omar says, like ‘it feels different?’, after which point Ole states, ‘It feels different’. The passage reaches its peak when Omar claims: ‘THAT I haven’t dealt with before’. After this moment, the interaction calms down; Ole also uses enthusiastic and approving words like ‘funny’, and looks to me for confirmation. In quite a short time, a clash between former local practice and the new Bible textbook as a new local practice have resulted in a new ‘fact’ which seems to bring new insights for Ole and Omar. However, the questions are soon ‘cooled off’, they come to a quick agreement and a series of confirmations of each other’s statements and there are no further questions about the text.

This excerpt shows some elements of energising dynamics, but perhaps even more, how the dynamics are slowed down. The new insight that the text brings and how the two pastors connect to it represent an energising element. Not only the definite hold Omar takes at the beginning of the meeting, the creation of distance from the former choices of hymns and how the text is given agency, but also the narrative time rhythm, seem to create a strong, quick generation of facts, along with controlling the energy of the collaboration.

**Alpha: Limbo dynamics**

In Alpha, the reform is barely referenced. I attended staff meetings, meetings between the cantor and the pastors and meetings with the pastors and the children and youth workers. Moreover, I observed informal conversations the pastors had on each other’s doorsteps. The reform was commented on in terms of a big liturgy binder and its many pages, a waterproof baptism liturgy folder and so on. This was the second week after the church service reform period was effectuated in Alpha church. In the church service the week before, one pastor, Alf, introduced the reform with balloons and the playing of ‘Pomp and Circumstance’. Now, the other pastor, Alvin, must figure out what to do as he and the cantor plan the next church service.

When I arrive, Alvin stands by the copy machine taking some copies, which is also the activity at the end of the meeting. The cantor sits in Alvin’s office with some papers. Alvin comes in, telling me that they will ‘just decide about the hymns for the church service’. On the table there are some traditional hymnbooks, some newer hymnbooks, a document from the last church service, a huge sheet of A3 paper with suggestions for hymns, and the recently arrived liturgy binder.

Alvin: No, should we just...(browses the liturgy binder) Hymn...(browses) Shall we take the hymns first and the liturgy afterwards, or shall we…
Cantor: (browses the liturgy binder)]
Alvin: Hum?
Cantor: We can take...just take it chronologically (browses back and forth in the liturgy binder)
Alvin: Yes...(browses the liturgy binder)
Cantor: From the top and such, and then we go…
Alvin: I think when it comes to the liturgy, shall we – It will be (browses) a mix…from the last time, from different styles and such, and that – that gives a taste of a bit various and – I suggest that we use it at least one more time –
Cantor: Yes.
Alvin: Because then – then people get to practice the melodies.
Me: Yes, those from the last [church service]?
Alvin: Yes.
(Both browse the liturgy binder for a while in silence.)
Alvin: Yes. We will have – we have made a – we have had that for many years, a church service committee, but we have got some new members in it now, and we will go through these new liturgies that we have got, and then – and then choose a mix or follow some series or – yes – and we have also got a – some newly produced material down in Axoy [parish nearby] – that is indeed interesting –
Cantor: Yes.
Alvin: He who was the cantor here before…has written some new melodies to some liturgical parts.
Cantor: Yes.
Alvin: So – so we have indeed very much to choose from then.
Cantor: Yes.
Alvin: But in order not to cause full confusion, I think that it was a nice variant that was chosen the last time – if we will use that as a basic fundament, then. And then we choose new hymns –
Cantor: Yes.

The major movement in this excerpt can be described as disruption. Before the meeting between Alvin and the cantor, I have the impression that this meeting represents a routine task. Like Alvin says, the agenda of the meeting is ‘just to decide about some hymns’. The meeting about the forthcoming church service starts out with many involved resources and actants with the many hymnbooks, documents and the same liturgy binder as the one in Tetra and Omega churches. However, the routine is soon disrupted by one important actant, namely the liturgy binder. The browsing seems to interrupt the meeting from Alvin’s first utterance: ‘No, should we just…(browses the liturgy binder) Hymn…(browses)’. Thus, it is not the reform, but a routine task of choosing hymns which now seems to represent a blank, ‘white’ field.

The next movement can be described as a near total lack of ability to connect. Both Alvin and the cantor spend quite some time during this meeting browsing this liturgy binder. They browse it back and forth, which actually takes quite some time in the meeting. They attempt to make suggestions, but browsing the liturgy binder interrupts most of their utterances. They speak in half sentences or stop halfway through a sentence, and there are silent pauses. The situation seems to put the two professionals in a vulnerable situation of hesitation, indecisiveness and confusion. The first strategy mentioned by the cantor is to ‘take it chronologically’. However, this does not lead far. After more browsing and increased tension, Alvin suggests that they cut off the liturgy binder. The further conversation has the rhythm of Alvin making suggestions and the cantor cursorily confirming with regular ‘Yes’ responses. The liturgy binder is still browsed, but seems to lose its dominance. They also seem to cut off
other resources from Alpha, including a hymn from a nearby parish and the suggestions from newly formed church service committee. This is explained with statements like, ‘in order not to cause full confusion’.

The reform with its liturgy binder therefore contributes to establishing a rhythm and a dynamic focused on a stagnant present time and cutting off local practices and local time. Instead, Alvin and the cantor cling to the straw of the former Sunday’s church service programme without discussing its content or aims, or comparing how this fits in with their former practices. This appears to be the dynamics of limbo. The direction and dynamics of this situation come to a standstill with no clear solution. The quick and pragmatic solution they choose strengthens this interpretation. Thus, they avoid possible clashes. Alvin’s suggestion, the approval of the cantor, the programme from the last church service and the copy machine therefore help them to come to solution, dissolving the tensions. They just do it without discussing it, making the copy machine an important and the most productive actant of the dynamics of this meeting.

Together, the examples from the Tetra, Omega and Alpha churches illustrate how the dynamics of professional learning can be energised in three widely different ways. In the Tetra church, they connect to the reform by asking, comparing practices, experimenting and seeking advice from the reform repeatedly, creating a circulating and energizing dynamic. The reform does not lead into one, but many directions, and a plurality of practices are made visible. The Omega network shows that introducing the reform makes them cut off a number of actants. New insights are quickly turned into ‘facts’, leading them into one, clear direction. The case in Omega thus shows how energies of professional learning networks can be slowed down. The reform in the Alpha network seem church narrows the spaces for action, as the reform seem to take up all space, creating a no-way direction and a limbo, to which very few actants and practices are employed. Thus, one reform can establish widely different ways of learning. As a summary, I present an overview of the findings in Table 1. This table is comprehensive; it gives examples of how the analytical categories of substance, force and time can be enacted as dynamics of energising, slowing down and limbo. At the same time, it sketches a meta-perspective and a passage towards the final discussion.
Energizing | Limbo | Slowing down
---|---|---
**Tetra** | **Alpha** | **Omega**
**Substance** | The Tetra network has many strong actants, Tara, the liturgy binder, the vicar pastors, and the church room. The actants bring in many possible directions. | Substance in the Alpha network is characterized by listing actants, although not really choosing either of them; a no-way direction, a limbo. | The Omega network is characterized by opting out actants and leading actants in a one-way direction/one single solution and singular facts
**Force** | The white, blank field in Tetra is how to conduct church services, for example how to conduct a baptism. The liturgy binder creates a disruption for all the actants. They initiate a will-to-connect by comparing their practices and asking questions | The white, blank field of the reform is handling the choice of psalms. A will-to-connect is seen in tentative attempts to list some actants, and the solution from last week is copied. | The white, blank field/the challenge in Omega is to establish distance from the reform and the superiors. Instead, the will-to-connect lies in how they establish a distance to other ways of doing things and how they see their own practice as a parallel.
**Time** | There are circular movements between clashes of local times and the liturgy binder. Local times are presented openly, abstract and concrete issues are addressed. | There is a tendency to avoid clashes. Versions of reforms are interrupted by a non-version of reform. They seek pragmatic solutions and agreement. | The networks in Omega slow down the dynamics by narrative time. They describe different local times, but make them appear as distant and parallels.

**Table 1: Three dynamics of professional learning in pastor networks**

**Concluding remarks and implications**

In this article, I have asked what characterises the professional learning dynamics of pastors in times of reform. Are professionals like a *perpetuum mobile*, always learning with full energy? The answer to the first part is yes, professional learning represents ongoing dynamics. The learning networks of pastors must be seen as involving ongoing movements and drift (Nespor 2002: 368, Brown and Capdevila 2005: 29) The networks constantly change and put knowledge and learning into action. However, the answer to the second part is that new elements of a reform do not necessarily entail high-powered learning. Instead, substance, force and time show how different professional learning dynamics can emerge. For some of the pastors, the learning processes are highly energised, revealing a rich potential for new knowledge. For others, the reform creates distance and slowing-down processes, showing limited and controlled knowledge developments. For the pastor network in Alpha, the reform causes confusion and a state of `limbo’.

I hold that implementing a reform does not necessarily bring high-powered learning dynamics. Instead, one must take into account the various dynamics that heterogeneous elements in pastor networks create. The question is not how many or what new elements are added. What matters is how the elements are put into play and negotiated and what new elbowroom for action that new learning can offer. In the last section I will summarise the findings of analysing the reform and discuss what implications such analysis can have.
First, in a professional network, a reform becomes part of an already ongoing and dynamic activity. Different socio-material elements, along with the reform, change and form each task in which the pastors are involved. Thus, reforms cannot only take into account singular factors of success or failure, or constraining and facilitating factors. The findings show that professional learning networks are constituted by heterogeneous elements. This means that new elements, like a reform, result in radical changes, and there is a need to take into account the range of effects a reform creates.

Second, a reform does not only affect professional learning dynamics. Rather, professional learning dynamics also change the reform. In the analysis, the main issues related to what the reform is appeared very differently. The Tetra pastor network worked to figure out what baptism was about and how to conduct it. In Omega, the Bible text was carefully selected as the new, blank actant, while the task of choosing hymns caused full confusion in the Alpha network. These analyses show that it may be hard to treat reforms as unifying standards of professional practice. The receivers of a reform are not adjusting to it, but recreating it, ignoring it, replacing it – the networks are translating it. Thus, a reform is not implemented; it is enacted into being (Fenwick 2010). Each workplace therefore changes the reform (Cuban 1998).

Third, the success of implementations of reforms may be determined by how specific, consistent and authoritative a reform is (Desimone 2002). An important finding in this analysis was that energetic dynamics of professionals do not necessarily emerge in workplaces with strong leadership or where the reform seems to be clear about every means and ends. Instead, professional learning dynamics seem to be energised where there is room for experimentation and where multiple practices are allowed to exist side by side. Thus, the different notions of time, and the allowance of clashes between local time, seem to work as a decisive energising factor. In the case of Tetra, for instance, the state of not knowing and posing open questions seemed to bring about energised learning dynamics. More important than clarity and consistency are the values of agency and elbowroom given in times of reform.

Fourth, as a counterforce to implement brand new practices, it has also been pointed out that the success of reform lies in building on professionals’ existing knowledge practices. A reform, then, should reflect current professional practices (van Driel, Beijaard, and Verloop 2001). In the Tetra network, reform made a multitude of existing practices visible. However, in Tetra, the reform did not only underline or take former practices into account. Instead, it represented a counter voice to existing expertise. The analysis showed that the spaces between existing practices and the reform are what create energised learning dynamics. Here, a tension emerges between reform and own practices. Thus, this analysis not only ‘builds on’ former practices, but also points out that the clashes and differences with existing professional practices are significant for energetic learning dynamics.

Finally, the analysis also illuminated that the work objectives are not the only things that become transformed in times of a reform. Rather, the very process of learning dynamics changes when a reform is introduced. Using the case of pastors, I can also frame some issues for further ANT readings of professional learning dynamics. On the one hand, there might be a tendency to see the processes of learning as ‘growth’ and ‘accumulation’ (Sørensen, 2009: 135). Such a learning view foregrounds a view of professional learning dynamics as a successful and innovative space of action (Nespor 2012). A consequence of this approach is that a reform can be seen as a failure in situations when ‘growth’ is not the right word to use and innovation does not occur. On the other hand, ANT readings of reform tend to describe
learning as ‘struggles’, ‘force relations’, ‘entailments of energies’ and ‘dynamics of change’ (Fenwick and Edwards 2012a: xvii, Fenwick and Landri 2012, 1, Fenwick 2012a: 100, Nespor 2012, 2002). The three dynamics in the case of pastors presented here call for studies of a more detailed and nuanced picture. As this study shows, professional learning can also be slowed down and even end up in tensional limbos, where there seems to be minimal space for action. There might be many more dynamics to be added. Seeing professional learning dynamics as constituted by socio-material elements can therefore nuance and provide other tools to evaluate professional learning dynamics in times of reform. In further conceptualisations of professional learning dynamics, there is a need to add the less visible stories, such as ambiguities, the less forceful, the less energetic and even what may be seen as the defeats of a reform. In this way, the results demonstrate that not only empirical phenomena like reform, but also professional learning, can be partial and diverse, representing ambivalent belongings and fluid spaces (Fenwick 2012a, 113). Thus, at a time when professionals continually deal with changes and reforms, the insights of the perpetuum mobile are a starting point for detailed descriptions of professional learning dynamics.

References


Olson, J. S. 2009. Lifelong Learning and the Full-Time Minister: Non-Pastoral Clergy and Continuing Education. *Journal of Ethnographic and Qualitative Research* 4: 41-55.


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2 The test signals of Brown and Capdevila are not presented in their fullness as philosophical concepts. In this setting, substance, force and time represent resources and possibilities for elaborating on professional learning dynamics.

3 [http://www.kirken.no/?event=doLink&famID=178213](http://www.kirken.no/?event=doLink&famID=178213) (Retrieved 12.06.13).

4 My study of pastors is part of Letra, a research project examining learning and knowledge trajectories amongst different groups in the Norwegian church, see [www.letra.mf.no](http://www.letra.mf.no). The selection of congregations was coordinated in the Letra group.

INFORMASJON TIL INFORMANTER

Vi vil med dette takke deg for at du har sagt deg villig til å være informant i forbindelse med LETRA-prosjektet i Den norske kirke. Prosjektet gjennomføres foretas av en forskergruppe fra Det teologiske Menighetsfakultet, og er finansiert av Det teologiske Menighetsfakultet og gjennom de statlige bevilgningene til trosopplæringsreformen i DnK.

Opplysningene som kommer fram vil bli brukt i doktoravhandlinger, artikler og bøker. I disse publikasjonene vil menighetens navn og informantene bli anonymisert mht navn/kjønn/alders. Informantenes verv vil bli opplyst.


Vi vil gjerne understreke at det er helt frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Det er når som helst mulig å trekke seg fra prosjektet, uten å oppgi noen grunn.

Forskerne er underlagt taushetsplikt, og data vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Prosjektet er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste.

Har du spørsmål om dette, er du velkommen til å ta kontakt med forskergruppen.

Med vennlig hilsen

LETRA-prosjektet
Til [ansatte, frivillige, konfirmanter, barn og foresatte] i [navn] menighet

Nov. 2011

Vi er en forskergruppe på syv personer fra Det teologiske Menighetsfakultet, Oslo som arbeider med en studie om læring og kunnskap i menigheter i Norge og kalles LETRA (Lærings- og kunnskapsbasert i menigheter). Målet med denne undersøkelsen er å finne ut hvordan læring skjer i trossamfunn og hvordan kunnskap utvikles blant ulike deltagere, frivillige og ansatte. Ansvarlig prosjektleder er undertegnede.

Tre menigheter er valgt ut som casemenigheter, og [navn på menighet] er en av disse.

Vi ønsker å undersøke følgende grupper: Diakoner, katedrer/teologiske pedagoger, presters, 5-6-åringere, konfirmanter og voksne frivillige.


Temaene vi ønsker å belyse i intervjuene er hvordan du selv opplever at du lærer i de ulike aktiviteter du er med på i menigheten, hvilke redskaper som brukes i læringssprosesser og om og hvordan du kan bruke det du lærer i andre aktiviteter du er med på. Intervjuet blir tatt opp ved hjelp av lydbåndopptaker.


Vi ber foresatte for konfirmanter og barn i menigheten om også å undertegne samtykkeklaringen på neste side.

Hvis du har noen spørsmål om undersøkelsen er du hjertelig velkommen til å kontakte undertegnende:

Geir Afdal
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Vennlig hilsen
Geir Afdal
Prosjektleder
Samtykkeerklæring.
Erklæringen leveres til [ navn, adresse og telefonnummer til kirkeverge/kateket (konfirmanter og barn) i menigheten ].

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om prosjektet "Lærings- og kunnsaksplaner i menigheter" og er villig til å delta i studien.

Signatur ...................................... Telefonnummer .....................................

Foresatt ......................................... Telefonnummer .....................................
TILRÅDING AV BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 26.10.2011. All nødvendig informasjon om prosjektet forelå i sin helhet 25.11.2011. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

28558 Learning and Knowledge Trajectories in Congregations
Behandlingsansvarlig Det teologiske menighetsfakultet, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Daglig ansvarlig Geir Sigmund Afdal

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilrådinger forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, eventuelle kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven/-helseregisterloven med forskriver. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.


Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 15.11.2017, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen
Vigdis Namtveld Kvalheim
Kjersti Håvardstun

Kontaktperson: Kjersti Håvardstun tlf: 55 58 29 53
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Plan for feltarbeid – prester i Alfa, Tetra og Omega menigheter

Ulike faser for feltarbeidet 2011-2012

1. Kartleggingsfase
   a. Kartlegging av hver enkelt menighet: August-september 2011
   b. Kartlegging av kontekst (dokumenter, web, besøk i lokalmiljø): August-september
   c. Intervju med hver enkelt prest: Innen oktober 2011
2. Følgе hverdagsaktiviteter. Periode: november 2011-februar
   a. Evt. 1 interвju
   b. Evt. 1-2 gruppeintervjuer
   c. Evt. 1-3 observasjonе

Hva skal jeg spesielt se etter?
Hovedfokus: Betingelser for læring hos prester i hverdagen (ikke vurdering av ferdigheter og kompetanser)

   a) Hverдagsrytmen hos hver enkelt prest
   b) Prestens mange og ulike arenaer. Hva kjennetegner arenaer i og utenfor typisk "kirkelig kontekst"?
   c) Presteprofesjon, relasjonе og samarbeid

Hva med sensitiv informasjon?
Oppstartsintervju med prester
Ingrid Reite

**Intervju med....**

**Bakgrunn:**

| Hvor lenge har du vært prest? |
| Hvor har du vært tidligere som prest? |
| Har du jobbet som noe annet i mellomtiden? |
| Hva var det som gjorde at du gikk til denne jobben? |

**Utdanning**

| Hadd du noen annen form for utdanning? |
| En lang utdanning. Var det noen valg du foretok undervisvis? |
| Hva skjedde da du var ferdig utdannet? Fikk du jobb, var det der du ville, i menighet, organisasjon, noe helt annet? |
| Hvordan var opplevelsen av å bli ordinert? Hva var dine tanker den gang? (forventninger, mål, håp, kall) |
| Har disse målene/håpet endret seg i løpet av årene i yrket? (Har det å bli prest handlet om noe annet enn det du trodde? Hva stemmer med den oppfatningen du hadde?) |
| Kunnskapsbit |
| Hvordan vil du beskrive overgangen mellom utdanning og jobb? (i hvilken grad vil du si at du har utbytte av utdanningen? Er den relevant) |
| Tror du det er noen forskjell i hvordan du lærte i utdanning og har lært av yrkeserfaring? |
| Er det noen/Hvilke hendelser som har gitt deg overraskelser i yrket? |

**Prestens arbeidshverdag**

| Hvis du skulle beskrive en vanlig arbeidsuke, hvordan ville den se ut? |
| Tegn en timeplan for hvordan en arbeidsuke kan se ut, fra morgen til kveld, mandag-søndag, (søndag-lørdag) (intrudusere tanken om å se hjem som en arena også) |
| Hva innebærer det å ha en fridag for deg? |
| Forhold fri/jobb |
| Hvilke av disse oppgavene /arenaene synes du at du trives godt med? |
| Er det noe sted du føler at du må yte ditt ypperste? |
| Er det noe sted der du synes du må holde litt tilbake? |

**Mulige arenaer for læring:** Hvilke av disse arenaene synes du er mer utfordrende?

(gjennomgå planen): Hva synes du at du gjør mye/lite av? (for mye, for lite?)

Agens: Hvem er det som foretar valgene om det du skal gjøre? (Hva tenker du om dette? Hvem finner ut av fordeling mellom prester?

Er det noen av disse arenaene du opplever er vanskelig å kombinere? (eks. hjemme/jobb?,) (konkrete spørsmål – eks. kapellan i Alfa, som drar på fisketur med kirkeverge og tidligere kirkeverge)
Samarbeid på tvers i lokalmiljøet: Er kirken engasjert i oppgaver som ikke er initiert av kirken?
Hvilke samarbeid i lokalmiljøet ser du som viktige?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kunnskapsdannelse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I hvilken grad mener du at du jobber alene som prest? I hvilken grad er det samarbeid? (med andre prester, med staben, med overordnede, med andre prester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Er det noen arenaer hvor du er avhengig av å finne ut av problemer, der løsningen ikke er klar? Eksempel? Har det vært viktig å gjøre noe med dette? For hvem? Hva har vært viktig for å løse dette problemet?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Har dere hatt prosjektsamarbeid med noen utenfor kirken? Fortell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evt. har dere noen prosjekter felles i kirken? Fortell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvordan vil dere si at dere samarbeider med andre utenfor kirkelig kontekst? Hva har vært målsetning med dette samarbeidet?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ved et bestemt prosjekt: Hvordan vil du beskrive denne prosessen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Er det noe sted du opplever tydelige motsetninger? (I såfall hvordan? Er dette din opplevelse, eller er det noe du og andre har snakket om? Evt: hva har vært viktig for å løse opp i dette problemet?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvordan vil du beskrive din egen opplevelse av hva det å være prest handler om?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Forespørsel om samtykke i samtaler/møter med prester

I perioden 2011-2012 er .... Kirke en del av forskningsprosjektet Letra. Dette delprosjektet ser på presters egen læring og kommunikasjon/samhandling.

Jeg spør om samtykke til å delta i samtale/møte mellom deg og presten. Det vil være fokus på hva presten sier og gjør, og ikke det som måtte komme fram av sensitiv informasjon fra andre parter. Alle parter og all informasjon vil imidlertid bli fullstendig anonymisert.

Jeg samtykker i at denne samtalen kan brukes som materiale i forskningsprosjektet Letra.

Dato: 
Underskrift:                          Sted:
Declaration

describing the independent research contribution of the candidate

In addition to the dissertation, there should be enclosed a declaration describing the independent research contribution of the candidate for each paper constituting the dissertation.

The declaration should be filled in and signed by the candidate and the co-authors. Use the following pages to the extent necessary.

The declaration will show the contribution to conception and design, or development and analysis of a theoretical model, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, contribution to drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content etc.

The Research Committee
FU-2012-10-08 Sak 34
Article no. 1
Title: “Learning for Future Complex Tasks: Learning Approaches in Norwegian and Dutch Curricula of Theological Education”

The independent contribution of the candidate:

- Conception and design
- Development and analysis of the theoretical model
- Acquisition of Data
- Analysis and interpretation of data
- Drafting the article
- Revising the article in communication with the journal

Contribution of the co-author:

- Participation in acquisition of data
- Participation in interpretation of data
- Providing information about context
- Supervision

Signature of the candidate
Ingrid Chr. Reite

Signature of co-author
Sverre Dag Mogstad

Article no. 2
Title: “Between Blackboxing and Unfolding: Professional Learning Networks of Pastors”

The independent contribution of the candidate:

- Conception and design
- Development and analysis of the theoretical model
- Acquisition of Data
- Analysis and interpretation of data
- Drafting the article
- Revising the article in communication with the journal

Signature of the candidate
Ingrid Chr. Reite

Signature of co-authors
(None)
Article no. 3
Title: "Pastors and the Perpetuum Mobile: The Dynamics of Professional Learning in Times of a Reform"

The independent contribution of the candidate:

- Conception and design
- Development and analysis of the theoretical model
- Acquisition of Data
- Analysis and interpretation of data
- Drafting the article
- Revising the article in communication with the journal

Signature of the candidate
Ingrid Chr. Reite

Signature of co-authors
(None)