



**How do leaders, in a multiple leader context, give sense to the  
same strategic change?**

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## **Abstract**

For organisational leaders, managing change is a primary management activity (By, 2005). Reflecting this significance as a management function, there is now a substantial body of literature and many dynamic models and ‘recipes’ advising managers how to deal with change. While models and recipes abound, there is little research that examines the micro processes at work when leaders engage in organisational change initiatives. This study directly addressed that gap. Utilising novel methods, it digs deep into one vital aspect of organisational change; that is how leaders give sense to strategic change. The study is set in a multi-leader context where leaders compete to give sense to the same change.

Theoretically, the investigation is grounded in sensegiving (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991) which is recognised as an effective lens for the investigation of leadership behaviour during change. The sensegiving literature is rich in describing what leaders do when they attempt to give sense, but this still evolving field holds many gaps in our understanding of how leaders go about giving sense. This study presents a unique contribution to address the imbalance and offers advancements in sensegiving theory, method, and practice.

The study adopts a critical realist stance (Bhaskar, 1979) which facilitates the examination of underlying tendencies of generative mechanisms at play during leader sensegiving. It uses a case study (Eisenhardt, 1989) approach to conduct an inductive and retroductive qualitative data analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994) of naturally occurring data. Moving beyond traditional framing analysis the study draws on argument theory (Toulmin, 1958) and extends this to incorporate the structure of Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals. In doing so it allows for an in-depth micro level analysis that unpacks the sensegiving behaviour of leaders and exposes the generative mechanisms in a multi-leader context as they attempt to give sense to the same strategic change.

This is an innovative approach in this field and its novelty has yielded dividends. The study makes five important contributions. 1. It demonstrates the potential for advancement of knowledge through the adoption of a critical realist stance to sensegiving research. 2. It presents a unique research method to unpack multiple leader sensegiving and moves beyond the repetition associated with framing

analysis. 3. It identifies how proponents and opponents of the same strategic change use different argument and rhetorical strategies when attempting to give sense. 4. It presents an original theoretical model which conceptualises sense, not as a cognition that is given as the name suggests, but a cognition that emerges from episodes of meaning giving to environmental cues, sense creation for common sensegiving targets and articulation. 5. It identifies that these processes are underpinned by patterns of behaviour which can, because they can be exercised differently by proponents and opponents, create a myriad of meaning and sense creation possibilities.

For the academic community these findings contribute to both method and theory. For leaders of organisational change it provides a useful model to enable them identify how their sensegiving attempts, and those of their opponents, are constructed thus enabling the design and implementation of more effective change strategies.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines aspects of my professional career which led me to this field of study. It then presents the study's review question and considers organisational change as the primary theoretical lens to underpin the study. The limitations of this broad theoretical approach are identified and discussed. The chapter proposes that a sensemaking perspective "or concept, approach, lens or theory" (Brown et al., 2015: p 266) and particularly its counterpoint, sensegiving, offers a more fine grained approach to reveal the features of leadership and organisational change that the study is seeking to uncover. This perspective is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

### **1.2 Thesis structure**

The structure of this thesis corresponds with Eisenhardt's (1989) 8-step approach for building theory from case study research (Figure 1-1).

Chapters 1 to 3 introduce the study and present its literature review. This represents the first in Eisenhardt's (1989) 8-step process; 1. Getting Started.

Chapter 4 outlines the study's novel research methodology and method, and Chapters 5 and 6 outline the case study selected, the development of the study's data reduction method and the application of this method to the data set. These three chapters mirror steps 2. Selecting Cases, 3. Crafting Instruments and Protocols and 4. Entering the Field.

Chapter 7 displays the findings from data reduction using a series of data displays, proposes a model to explain how leaders, in a multiple leader context, attempt to give sense, and tests and confirms this model. This represents steps 5. Analysing Data and 6. Shaping Hypothesis.

Finally, Chapter 8 discusses these finding with reference to the relevant theory. This chapter concludes with an outline of this study's contribution, its limitations

and future research opportunities. These chapters represent steps 7. Enfolding Literature and 8. Reaching Closure Activity phases.

*Figure 1-1: The structure of the thesis mirrors Eisenhardt's (1989) 8-step process for building theory from case study research.*

Thesis structure	8 step process
Chapter 1 - Introduction and overview Chapter 2 - Literature review I (Search) Chapter 3 - Literature review II (Synthesis)	1. Getting started 
Chapter 4 - Research methodology and research method Chapter 5 - Development of data analysis method - Part I Chapter 6 - Development of data analysis method - Part II	2. Selecting cases 3. Crafting instruments and protocols 4. Entering the field 
Chapter 7 - Data analysis and model development	5. Analyzing data 6. Shaping hypotheses 
Chapter 8 - Discussion and conclusion	7. Enfolding literature 8. Reaching closure activity

### 1.3 The journey to this study

To date my working life has been dominated by my 25 years' experience as a communications professional, who enables organisations, and particularly their leaders, to influence others to take a particular course of action. I have experienced the challenge of exerting this influence in areas ranging from factory floors to corporate boardrooms. I have witnessed at first hand that exerting influence to precipitate actions or indeed inaction, through whatever medium, is highly complex, and frequently uncontrollable and unpredictable. What might work in one context may backfire in another.

In August 2005 I joined a small team of professional advisers appointed to support the CEO of the Health Service Executive (HSE) in Ireland, who was then

implementing one of the largest public sector reform programmes in Europe. One change implemented within this reform programme is the focus of this study.

### **1.3.1 Reforming health and social care in Ireland**

In 2003 the Irish Government announced what it described as the most extensive reform programme of the Irish health system in over 30 years. Drawing on the recommendations of two reports, The Brennan Commission Report (2003) and The Prospectus Report (2003), the Government signaled that the programme would impact on every element of the health system (Department of Health and Children, 2003).

A key part of this reform programme was the establishment of the HSE. The HSE's primary role was to take responsibility for the delivery of all health and social care services provided to the public on behalf of the Government. Prior to the establishment of the HSE these services were delivered by 14 separately managed health agencies, all of which had their own staff, resources and infrastructures and were accountable directly to the Department of Health and Children. All of these agencies and resources (110, 000 staff and a combined budget of approximately €10 billion) were subsumed into the HSE on its establishment on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005. A key objective of the reform programme was to increase the influence of evidence based health care strategies and reduce the impact of local politicking on how services were designed, developed and delivered and

The first CEO of the HSE was appointed in July 2005. I commenced my assignment two months later. My designated brief was strategic communications and I worked side by side with the CEO on a daily basis. I was part of an advisory team which provided expertise in areas such as performance measurement and management, primary care, hospitals and corporate governance.

This was a unique opportunity for my colleagues and me. Not only did we have the opportunity to work with highly motivated and capable individuals across the organisation and Government, we had unique access to all levels within the organisation and a bird's eye view of the inner workings of a major

organisational change programme. This ranged from helping upset staff deal with the impact of organisational changes to ‘selling’ politically controversial change initiatives with national implications to the Taoiseach and Minister for Health and Children. Mediums of communication ranged from addressing Cabinet Sub Committee meetings to communicating the change to the general public through the national media. We were at the coal face of major organisational change and witnessed every day the human dimension, the messiness and sheer hard work and slog required by all participants, aspects that the literature can struggle to capture.

In 2007 the HSE’s Transformation Programme 2007-2011 was published. It summarised and formalised many of the changes that were underway and provided a road map for the future. It consisted of 6 Transformation Priorities underpinned by 13 Transformation Programmes, each of which consisted of a series of sub projects. In addition to the changes that were outlined in this programme, the HSE was attempting, and in many instances succeeding, to change practices in relation to funding models, work practices and procurement. These changes were to have a far reaching impact on staff, suppliers and patients.

Compounding the challenge in delivering this Transformation Programme was the fact that staff were being asked to implement the programme, while at the same time continuing to deliver their ‘business as usual’ responsibilities to thousands of patients every day. Encouraging staff to prioritise the Transformation Programme when they had very busy day jobs was naturally challenging. This was particularly so when the long term implications of the transformation was not always clear, or beneficial to them. For different reasons, many stakeholder groups questioned and challenged aspects of the programme that were requiring them to do things differently. Contentious areas included changing work practices, reporting mechanisms or giving up resources and control. Resistance to the change manifested itself in various forms. Passive aggressive resistance was one form, characterised by what I call the nodding dog syndrome; people at meetings would nod compliantly in relation to a change initiative or change tactics but have no intention of supporting them and in some instance were intent on undermining them. Others involved open and public resistance and resulted in stand offs, service withdrawal and industrial disputes.

Towards the end of my assignment with the HSE I looked back on the skirmishes that regularly broke out. They generally got resolved or melted away. Whether the skirmishes lasted for weeks or years, the solutions seemed to arrive relatively suddenly. I reflected on whether there was some common ingredient that brought these skirmishes to a conclusion. I decided to focus on one particular issue for clues.

In 2009 I was deeply involved in a funding issue in relation to Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin, Dublin. The hospital was experiencing a reported €10 million budget shortfall. It engaged with the media to highlight the difficulty it was facing as a result of this shortfall and to put pressure on the political system and the Department of Health and Children, to in turn pressurise the HSE to provide more funding. The hospital's campaign successfully caught the attention of the Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children. The Committee visited the hospital to inform members of the detail of the issue, which in itself was an unusual move by an Oireachtas Committee. Following this visit the HSE was invited by the Committee to attend an Oireachtas Committee meeting to explain how it was addressing the hospital's funding shortfall. Having previously worked as a paediatric consultant in Our Lady's Children's Hospital for many years, the CEO of the HSE suspected that the full story was not being told. In preparation for this meeting, and to determine the root source of the funding shortfall, the HSE appointed an accountant to review the hospital's finances. The hospital cooperated fully with this review. The outcome of the review revealed poor commercial and financial management in some of the hospital's processes, which if addressed would yield more than the highlighted shortfall. Examples of the poor financial management included how the hospital was charging health insurers for private beds occupied by patients at rates below the rates the insurance companies had agreed to pay. Some nurses who were on part-time contracts were working full time and because they had part-time contracts were getting paid overtime rates for half their working week. Significant savings on blood purchases could be made through co-operation with other hospitals. We decided not to use this information to respond to the pressure that was building up through the media, which was calling for the hospital to receive increased public funding. A decision was made to wait and present it first to the Oireachtas Committee meeting. This meeting was open to the media and when the results of

the review of the hospital's commercial management were revealed, they acted like a fire blanket. During the subsequent days the issue was washed off the media agenda and replaced by another from the many available from within the health service. Reflecting on this unfolding issue at Our Lady's Children's Hospital and the Oireachtas Committee meeting, I wondered whether there existed a common ingredient to resolving resistance to organisational change initiatives, such as the strategic use of information, data and evidence. This speculation marked the start of the academic journey that has culminated in this thesis.

When starting out on this journey I believed my 5 years at the apex of an organisation that was implementing large organisational change had provided me with the valuable practical and relevant experience needed to enable me bring a unique perspective to the investigation. However I was also aware of the need to mitigate against the potential for insider bias and "researcher arrogance" (Gioia et al., 1994: p. 363). After reflecting on what I was seeking to find out, a series of discussions with academic colleagues and an initial review of relevant literature I set the following review question.

*How do CEOs and/or executives at an organisation's strategic apex use data, information and knowledge when giving sense to a change their organisation is facing or dealing with, to their direct superiors and subordinate reports?*

#### **1.4 Organisational change and leader behaviour**

I consulted with the literature on organisational change to explore a theoretical framework upon which to build this investigation.

Like leadership, interest in organisational change has a long history. Jansson (2013) draws on the duality approach of the Han Dynasty in China and the early days of Taoism to suggest that paradox is central to organisational change; the co-existence of opposing elements. Successful organisational change brings these elements into balance. The 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian diplomat and political theorist Niccolo Machiavelli (1469 – 1527) articulated the challenges of achieving this balance in a style that would fit comfortably into an introduction to a modern day handbook on organisational change management; "It must be remembered that

there is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than a new system” (The Prince, 1532).

Again like the literature on leadership, the literature on organisational change is vast and “abounds with complexities, including multiple and conflicting theories and research findings and a good bit of inconclusiveness” (Fernandez and Rainey, 2006: p. 168). By (2005) suggests that “it is difficult to identify any consensus regarding a framework for organisational change management” (p. 370).

In modern management scholarship the early models focused on planned change and described its various stages (Burnes, 1996). These included Lewin’s (1947) three stage model, Lippitt et al.’s (1958) seven-phase model, Cummings and Huse’s (1989) eight-phase model and Bullock and Batten’s (1985) four-phase model. This focus on a planned model came under criticism in the 1980s. One of the criticisms relevant to this current study was the presumption inherent in these models that those involved in the change were co-operative and conflict and politics was overlooked “or at least assumes they can be easily identified and resolved” (Burnes, 1996: p. 13).

The emergent model of change came to the fore in the 1980s and viewed organisations as having to constantly adjust to the changing environments in which they operated. To survive, change had to be viewed as a continuous process. This view was succinctly captured in Weick and Quinn's (1999) suggestion that “change never starts because it never stops” (p. 381). This characterisation of change did not dent the emergence of many more models during the 1990s which each prescribed a “one best way” (Burnes, 1996: p. 11). These included Isabella (1990), Judson (1991), Kanter et al. (1992), Jaffe et al. (1994), Kotter (1995), Galpin (1996), Armenakis et al. (1999) and Luecke (2003).

Many of these models are highlighted in Armenakis and Bedeian's (1999) review of the organisational change literature between 1990 and early 1998. Following Van de Ven and Poole (1995) and Weick and Quinn (1999), Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) organised their research into four themes; content, context, process and outcomes. They highlight that a key component of these models was

that change involved a series of sequential steps and “efforts to bypass steps seldom yield a satisfactory result” (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999: p. 303). They also highlight that “mistakes in any step can slow implementation, as well as “negate hard-won progress” (p. 303). What stands out from the various models is (i) the requirement for change leaders to encourage “individuals to enact new behaviors so that desired changes are achieved” and (ii) the role of meaning creation and meaning selling in achieving this; that is, communicating the change (Judson, 1991); creating a vision and communicating the vision (Kotter, 1995); and developing and disseminating a vision of a planned change (Galpin, 1996). The findings of Bryman's (2004) comprehensive review of qualitative leadership studies prior to 2004 support this dimension of the change models.

*There is a recurring theme in these articles of the need for leaders who are leading a change process to: secure commitment to the change process, address multiple constituencies (external and internal), convey a sense of the need for change, and instil a vision of how change should be implemented and/or what the future state of the organization will look like. (Bryman, 2004: p. 751)*

Sharing many of the elements common to the linear mechanistic process models of change, Fernandez and Rainey (2006) offer a model with eight factors and propositions which act as a compass for change agents, rather than a step by step approach. Following the models of Judson (1991), Kotter (1995) and Galpin (1996), Fernandez and Rainey (2006) also highlight the requirement for change agents to “verify the need for change” (p. 169) and “persuasively communicating it” (p. 169).

While based on experience rather than empirical evidence, Kotter's (1995) eight-step model attracted considerable attention when first published and “remains a key reference in the field of change management” (Appelbaum et al., 2012: p.765). The popularity of Kotter (1995) continues despite the fact that the review of the relevant empirical and practitioner literature by Appelbaum et al. (2012) highlight's the absence of studies which validate the full eight steps; “Integration of all eight steps in an orderly fashion is an important part of Kotter's model, but the importance of maintaining this order remains under investigated in empirical

literature” (p. 776). Interestingly Appelbaum et al. (2012) found that most of the evidence “points to data that has been compiled by Kotter himself in his book titled *The Heart of Change*, which is a 2002 follow-up to the book *Leading Change*; “In essence Kotter validated Kotter” (p. 776).

The organisational change literature has attracted criticism. In their review of the debate on the soundness of organisational change research Weick and Quinn (1999) refer to one of the popular books on change management, *The Witch Doctors* (1996), in which the authors suggest that empirically questionable theories of organisational change abound because business people are more comfortable with the term guru “because they can’t spell the word charlatan” (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 1996: p. 11 in Weick and Quinn, 1999: p. 363).

In a withering critique of the state of organisational change research, Wetzel and Van Gorp (2014) argue that organisational change as an area of management attention “seems to thrive on boredom and repetition” (p. 116). Drawing on Sturdy and Grey’s (2003) claims that organisational change research has a pro-change bias, neglects organisational behaviour and emphasises controlling change, Wetzel and Van Gorp (2014) describe organisational change research as being in “a state of helplessness” (p. 132). Their study examined selected organisational change articles, published in 2010 in particular journals, and tested their links with the pre-selected classic and modern organisation theories. The findings show that 80% of organisational change research relies on just four organisational theories; organisational learning (37.6 per cent), cognition and sensemaking (35.3 per cent), organizational culture, symbolism and discourse (32.9 per cent) and neo-institutionalism (25.9 per cent) (p. 126). They argue that (i) the temporal dimension of change is still rooted in Lewin’s (1947) three-step approach, (ii) enquiries into the social dimension of change are shaped by the organisation development movement of the 1960s, and (iii) the contents of change are underpinned by Frederick Winslow Taylor’s (1911) focus on formal structure. Popular change models such as Kotter (1995) “represents only very limited variation on these themes” (Wetzel and Van Gorp, 2014: p. 116). They argue that research has held on to its rationalistic views and not kept up with developments in organisational theory which underpin organisational change research. They use colourful language to describe this relationship.

*Therefore, although OT provide more than “50 shades of grey” to describe organizations and to shape different pleasuring practices of organizational change, we are seemingly limited to “vanilla sex” when it comes to current change concepts. (Wetzel and Van Gorp, 2014: p. 117)*

Balogun and Johnson (2005) highlight the shortcomings of the linear approach by providing an explanation for the high failure rate of organisational change programmes: “Organizational change is a context-dependent, unpredictable, non-linear process, in which intended strategies often lead to unintended outcomes.” (p. 1573). Pettigrew et al. (2001) describe the organisational change research as “far from mature” (p. 697) argue that the literature is “underdeveloped” (p. 697) in relation to six interconnected issues.

1. Multiple contexts and levels of analysis.
2. Time, history, process, and action.
3. The link between change and performance outcomes.
4. International and cross-cultural comparisons.
5. Receptivity, customisation, sequencing, pace, and episodic versus continuous change processes.
6. The partnership between scholars and practitioners.

Pettigrew et al. (2001) call for a more pluralistic approach which can link research to practices and deliver not just “what is” knowledge but also “how to” knowledge. Similarly Van de Ven and Poole (1995) highlight the shortcomings of the staged approach and argue that while “a theoretical pluralism” (p. 510) has developed from the application of “concepts, metaphors, and theories from other disciplines” it has also led to “compartmentalization of perspectives” (p. 510). In a veiled criticism of the process approach they suggest that it can be self-fulfilling; “when a researcher expects a certain number of stages of development or a certain process; it is too easy to find evidence in complex processes for whatever one expects” (p. 512). They suggest that integration among the theories is possible and propose four basic process theories, or what they call “motors”; life-cycle, teleological, dialectical, and evolutionary theories (p. 511) which can operate like cogs engaging the various process theories depending on their applicability. They contend that “all specific theories of organizational change

and development can be built from one or more of the four basic types” (p. 511). For example they suggest that Weick’s (1979) theory of organising which they describe as an “ambitious attempt to explain organizing in dynamic fashion” (p. 531) involves the interaction of the life-cycle, teleological, and evolutionary motors.

- Life-cycle motor: The three stages of equivocality reduction cycle, (enactment, selection, and retention) can be driven by the life-cycle motor.
- Teleological motor: As these repetitive cycles can be influenced by individuals they can be influenced by the teleological motor as “a shared grammar” (p. 531) is created.
- Evolutionary motor: An evolutionary motor influences what organisational forms are selected and retained over others.

Ironically “there is relatively little research into what does lead to successful change” (Higgs and Rowland, 2005: p. 128) and “the linkages between leadership behaviours, change models and change effectiveness” (p. 128) have not been fully explored. By’s (2005) study involved a critical review of theories and approaches to organisational change using Senior’s (2002) three categories of change as a focal point; rate of occurrence (i.e. incremental, strategic, bumpy, smooth change, etc.), how the change comes about (planned, emergent, contingent, and choice), and the scale of the change (fine-tuning, incremental adjustment, modular transformation, and corporate transformation). He concludes that current theories and approaches are “contradictory and confusing” (p. 378). They “are mostly lacking empirical evidence and often based on unchallenged hypotheses regarding the nature of contemporary organisational change management” (p. 378).

Jansson (2013) suggests that the taken-for-granted practices in organisational change could be a contributory factor in their low success rates as they are leading scholars and practitioners down a narrow path. From a review of literature she presents three examples of taken-for-granted assumptions in the current organisational change literature.

These taken-for-granted assumptions are:

1. Organisational change practices are universal in nature.
2. Change resistance is about resisting the planned changes.
3. Change practitioners act upon their organisational hierarchy groupings.

She argues that certain taken-for-granted assumptions overlook “the central role of sociality in organisations and the particularity of context it generates” (P. 1014). By approaching organisational change through practice theory we can see that “what is commonly treated as universal, is, in fact particular” (p. 1013), resistance may not just be about resisting the actual change, but could also be about “resisting human action, power, or practitioners holding the power of change” (p. 1011). Grouping change practitioners based on the organisational hierarchy may limit the way practitioner behaviour is viewed, for example it may overlook the impact of organisational identity.

Supporting Jansson's (2013) proposition, is the interesting debate in the literature on the characterisation of resistance to change. This suggests that traditional change models are myopic when it comes to discussions on resistance to change. Isabella's (1990) research suggests that resistance could be interpreted “not as obstacles to overcome, but as inherent elements of the cognitive transition occurring during change” (p. 34). For example “what has been labeled [sic] self-interest may simply be personalization of an event” (p. 34). Ford et al. (2008) challenge the “one-sided view of resistance that is treated as received truth, even though this view is both theoretically and practically limited, overly simplistic, and perhaps even misguided” (p. 363). Thomas and Hardy's (2011) study on the importance of power and resistance also confirms the limitations of this taken-for-granted view of resistance to change. They argue that demonising and celebrating resistance to change “fail to address power relations adequately” (p. 321) and present an alternative approach which positions power and resistance at the heart of organisational change. This is supported by Hardy's (1996) seminal work in which she suggests that power provides the energy for strategic change during both formulation and implementation, and Drori and Ellis (2011) who demonstrate that power games can have “profound implications for an organization's ability to undergo change” (p. 15).

#### **1.4.1 A more granular approach to leadership and change**

These theories and models of organisational change seek to put order on what is a complex, but vital management task. While they highlight the role of leaders in communicating with stakeholders to mobilise support and acceptance of change (Battilana et al., 2010: p. 424) they provide inadequate depth into this behaviour for this study. They do not for example take adequate account of the social, cultural and contextual forces which fuel “the local users and local narratives, which persist despite attempts to produce “top-down” and authoritative renderings of the change management process” (Collins and Rainwater, 2005: p. 19).

Those that envision change as having universality and predictability are unable to account for the factors which influence actor meaning making (Weick, 1995), the unpredictability of the way actors interact and behave (Plowman et al., 2007: p. 342), the nature of resistance Jansson (2013) and the messiness of change (Rowland and Higgs, 2008). For example Kotter’s Steps 3 and 4 prescribe that change agents (i) create and (ii) communicate the vision for the future that will ensue from the change. This conceptualises a vision as something that can be created, presented to stakeholders in a neat fashion and assumes there will be acceptance. Bartunek et al. (2006) suggest that change studies primarily focus on change agents which implies that “the way recipients of a change understand it [change] is or ought to be similar to the way change agents do” (p. 183). Gray et al. (1985) suggest actual practice is different. The meaning created by powerful organisational leaders will only be perceived to be legitimate and acceptable “as long as they create meanings which are consistent with and supportive of the tacit values to which organisational members subscribe” (p. 89) and “satisfy the perceived interests of subordinates” (p. 91).

Maitlis and Christianson's (2014) very comprehensive review of the development and current state of sensemaking support this position.

*Yet, even in more top-down processes, when organizational leaders engage in sensegiving, organizational members are not simply passive recipients of meaning but instead engage in their own sensemaking*

*and adopt, alter, resist, or reject the sense they have been given* (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991; Gioia et al., 1994; Pratt, 2000; Sonenshein, 2010). (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014: p. 78)

Likewise, Dunford and Jones (2000) argue that the concept of a vision “only touches the surface of what is implied” (p. 1208) when actors are engaged in making sense and giving meaning to an organisational change.

Weick’s (1995) perspective, which addresses the “cognitive side of organizational life” (Isabella, 1990: p. 7) views change as highly complex and unpredictable. It recognises that actors are participants in an on-going interpretive process through sensemaking, rather than being passive recipients of neat rationalisations of change. His approach opens a new theoretical window by avoiding the trap of offering a simple but limited solution to managing a complex process which has not yet been adequately deciphered. Gioia et al. (1994) support this, suggesting that “the processes involved in promoting cognitive understanding, acceptance, and institutionalization” (p. 364) during change have not been adequately considered. They present findings which find that “sensemaking and influence emerged as fundamental processes in the instigation of strategic change”. This followed Gioia and Chittipeddi’s (1991) seminal work which introduced sensegiving and posits that sensemaking and sensegiving are “the essential processes used during the instigation of the strategic change” (p. 444).

This perspective is supported by Ford (2006) who challenges the rationalistic view and sees the task of the leader not as having the organisation and stakeholders align with the preferred reality, but “rather to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct existing realities so as to bring about a different performance” (p. 480). He argues that new organisational realities are created through conversations. For change to occur new conversations need to be brought into existence and sustained to replace current conversations; “Rather than being simply a tool, conversations are the target, medium, and product of organisational change.” (p. 498). This is in contrast to the models such as Kotter’s (1995), which suggests that change communication in itself is sufficient, and is silent on the sensemaking and sensegiving interactions that need to transpire in order for

essential cognitive shifts (Foldy et al., 2008) to occur. Consistent with this emphasis on meaning construction, Ericson (2001) argues that to understand organisational change “it is necessary to understand the meanings that prevail among the organisational members, as well as the processes whereby these meanings change and coincide” (p. 109). His study highlights that the communication of a vision as part of a change programme can yield a result which linear change models cannot account for. While the hospital manager in the hospital that was at the center of Ericson's (2001) study presented the vision for the change which was a more patient-oriented organisation, a shared meaning for this vision did not develop among the management team “due to their heterogeneous cognitive profile” (p. 121) and “low bracketing” (p. 121). In their study of the relationship between dialogic communications and resistance to change, Marque et al. (2014) see communication during change not as the transmission of meanings but as “the joint construction of meaning” (p. 325), with this meaning culturally and contextually sensitive. They argue that when meanings converge communication begins; “the possession of something in common” (p. 325). While this view is somewhat naïve in that it suggests that convergence is a natural outcome, it does highlight the role of meaning construction as an important feature of change.

While organisational change theories and models emphasise the role of leadership and communication during organisational change, the influence of discerning recipients has not been delved into sufficiently. The implication that participants are passive recipients of reality, and not active participants in reality creation does not enable adequate account to be taken of the relationship between the change initiative and participating actors and how they affect each other; “people’s talk influences the change and the change influences people’s talk” (Jansen 2004: p. 1009). The literature (Gioia et al., 1994; Jansen, 2004; Ford, 2006; Maitlis and Christianson, 2014) supports this position. During organisational change stakeholders are active participants in their own meaning making which is highly influenced by a variety of social, cultural and contextual factors; they are not a blank canvas onto which change leaders can imprint their preferred meanings at will. To explore meaning giving by change leaders in this context it is necessary to probe more deeply than organisational change theories and models permit. Sensemaking (Weick, 1979) and sensegiving (Gioia and

Chittipeddi, 1991) perspectives provide a lens through which to view leadership communication during organisational change as a complex process of meaning giving and meaning making, which is mediated by a range of contextual factors to which all participants are subject.

### **1.5 Addressing the gaps with sensemaking and sensegiving**

Sensemaking and sensegiving are cognitive processes that actors use to make sense and give sense to environmental stimuli. While there is “no single agreed definition of ‘sensemaking’” (Brown et al., 2015: p. 266) one widely accepted definition is “the process through which individuals work to understand novel, unexpected, or confusing events” (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014: p. 53). Sensegiving is the process actors use to influence the sensemaking of others.

Sensemaking and sensegiving have a symbiotic relationship with each other; “the boundaries of each are permeated by the other” (Rouleau, 2005: p. 1415). They also touch on many aspects of individual and collective cognition, social construction and organisational behaviour. While Weick et al. (2005) see sensegiving as a sensemaking variant, other scholars have wedged space between the two processes to highlight their unique features (Hill and Levenhagen, 1995; Maitlis, 2005; Rouleau, 2005 and Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007).

Maitlis and Christianson (2014) provide a thorough introduction to the history of the development of sensemaking. While references to sensemaking extend back to the last century, sensemaking in the context of organisational development was championed by Karl E. Weick and first mentioned in Weick’s (1969) *The Social Psychology of Organizing*. His seminal book, *Sensemaking in Organizations*, was published in 1995 and it “summarized the state of sensemaking research up to that point and derived a theoretical framework for understanding core aspects of sensemaking” (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014: p. 61). Weick’s approach was counter to rational approaches to organisational research and stemmed from his interest in how actors, in a social context, dealt with and made sense of sometimes contradictory inputs. This stance was refined further in Weick et al. (2005) and has become widely accepted in management research as a valuable theoretical framework through which to observe the complex, unpredictable and

sometimes ambiguous behaviour of actors in organisations when experiencing uncertainty. While sharing many conceptual similarities, Sense-Making as proposed by Dervin (1998, 1999) focuses on “sense making and sense unmaking in the fields of communication and library and information science” (Dervin, 1998: p. 36). The development of this particular approach began in 1972 and is built on the premise that “the dominant models used in formalized communication, education and information systems do not work either efficiently or effectively” (Dervin, 1999: p. 729). It applies a central metaphor which positions “human beings traveling through time-space, coming out of situations with history and partial instruction, arriving at new situations, facing gaps, building bridges across those gaps, evaluating outcomes and moving on” (Dervin, 1998: p. 39). In this context “knowledge is the sense made at a particular point in time-space by someone” (p. 36).

Sensemaking starts with “disruptive ambiguity” (Weick et al., 2005: p. 413). Actors engage in sensemaking when they notice contradictions and ambiguities in their environment and find it is not possible “to take things for granted” (Weick, 1995: p.14).

When faced with equivocality actors make deliberate efforts, consciously or subconsciously, to create understanding of what is before them in order to reduce equivocality. This is counter to the linear organisational change models which see participants as passive interpreters of change. They suggest that if a vision is created and communicated relentlessly (Kotter, 1995) it will eventually be accepted. Viewed through the sensemaking lens actors create their own meaning using available environmental stimuli, which may include the sense given by others.

Because sense is “uncertain, fluctuating and hard-to-locate” (Corvellec and Risberg, 2007: p. 321) sensemakers adopt an oscillating stance between bracketing environmental cues and stimuli, interpreting them and revising their accounts. This on-going and evolving feature of sensemaking is underscored by Isabella (1990) who identified that interpretation consists of “rhythmic shifts in a construed reality as an event unfolds” (p. 31). Thomas et al. (1993) describe the

process as “the reciprocal interaction of information seeking, meaning ascription and action (Chittipeddi, 1991: Weick, 1979)” (p. 240).

Accounts generated through sensemaking are therefore not permanent. They are provisional as meaning making is “intangible and slippery” (Foldy et al., 2008: p. 525) and “one never makes finite sense of a situation because things are always changing” (Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010: p. 565). Sensemaking is therefore “gradual and cumulative rather than immediate and final” (Weber and Glynn, 2006: p. 1648). Daft and Weick (1984) illustrate what would appear to be the innate-like gravitational pull among actors towards sensemaking regardless of the completeness of the cues before them or their understanding of them.

*People in organizations are talented at normalizing deviant events, at reconciling outliers to a central tendency, at producing plausible displays, at making do with scraps of information, at translating equivocality into feasible alternatives, and at treating as sufficient whatever information is at hand (Weick & Daft, 1983) (Daft and Weick, 1984: p. 294)*

In organisations that are undergoing organisational change the distinction between accuracy and plausibility has important implications. During organisational change equivocality is rife. The gap between equivocality and plausibility creates the need for sensemaking. Given the tendency of actors in such environments to develop accounts from “scraps that consolidate and inform other bits and pieces of data” (Daft and Weick, 1984: p. 294) these types of change environments can leave sensemakers more welcoming and receptive to the sensegiving of others (Fiss and Zajac, 2006) than they would be during period of stasis or incremental change. Coupling the social dimension of sensemaking and the potential of plausibility to outweigh the need for accuracy suggests that sensemaking episodes are underpinned by dimensions more complex than accuracy and rationality.

Sensemaking is frequently accompanied by sensegiving which seeks to influence the sensemaking of others. It is well documented that while many organisational actors are involved in scanning, bracketing, processing and interpreting environmental cues, “upper managers bring together and interpret information for

the system as a whole” (Daft and Weick, 1984: p. 285). Organisation leaders can therefore take on the role as chief sensegivers. Drawing on Barnard (1935) and Pfeffer (1981), Gray et al. (1985) highlight the significance of this role and suggest that one of the most important tasks of leadership is to define organisational reality for others, (sensegiving), and to “engineer its consensual acceptance” (p. 89). Smircich and Morgan (1982) also stress its importance and see “defining reality in ways that are sensible to the led” (p. 259) as an important aspect of leadership. They argue that leaders, “are provided with a distinctive opportunity to influence the sensemaking of others” (p. 269) using language, ritual, drama, stories, myths and symbolic construction.

While not using the specific term, this process of giving sense was described in the literature (e.g. Smircich and Morgan, 1982 and Daft and Weick, 1984) before Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) seminal study identified it as the second dimension in the sensemaking-sensegiving dyad. That study presented a new way of thinking about the role of leadership in strategic change initiation and implementation. They had found that the traditional descriptors of the CEO “as formulator and implementer of strategic change” (p. 433), which was common among organisational scholars at the time, were inadequate to capture the depth of the role. They defined sensegiving as “the process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organizational reality” (p. 442). While the literature discusses what leaders do when they attempt to give sense, details on the processes which underpin how leaders go about giving sense in a multiple leader context are scarce.

## **1.6 Summary**

In this Chapter I have outlined the context for this study and introduced the review question which focuses on how leaders give sense to the change their organisation is facing.

I considered theories and models of organisational change to underpin the study’s theoretical framework. The subsequent discussion highlighted that these theories and models are general in nature and are unable to provide the level of depth required to explore the complexities of meaning giving by leaders during

organisational change where recipients “play active roles in organizational change processes—making sense of them, having feelings about them, and judging them” (Bartunek et al., 2006: p. 203). The sensemaking-sensegiving perspective sees leaders of change as active sensegivers and recipients as active sensemakers, subject to forces present in their social environment. I contend that this theory can provide a framework to enable leader communication during change to be viewed as part of a wider process in which the actors they are seeking to give sense to are grappling with equivocality which leads them to “extract and interpret environmental cues and to use these in order to ‘make sense’ of occurrences and to enact their environment” (Brown et al., 2015: p. 267).

Using a systematic literature search, Chapter 2 identifies the sensemaking-sensegiving literature relevant to the review question to enable this proposition to be explored in depth. Chapter 3 synthesises this literature, identifies gaps in the field and defines the context to be studied. From this discussion the review question is refined and the research question presented.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review I (Search)**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Chapter 1 set the context for the study, outlined its review question, and proposed the sensemaking-sensegiving perspective as the main theoretical framework underpinning the study.

Chapters 2 and 3 outline the study's literature review. Chapter 2 is divided into two sections. Section 2.2 discusses the literature on the systematic approach to literature reviews; its genesis in evidence-based health research and its application in management research. It argues why a hybrid approach involving a systematic literature search and a qualitative synthesis of the literature identified during the systematic search is supported. Section 2.3 outlines in detail the various steps involved in the execution of the study's systematic literature search. Each step is interconnected, each provides a platform for the next and ensures the completed search is transparent, rigors and repeatable. From this literature search 94 articles were identified and are the focus of the second part of the literature review which is outlined in Chapter 3.

### **2.2 Systematic literature reviews and management research**

The value of this study will be judged primarily on the contribution it makes to confirming, extending or providing new insights into method, theory and practice. Its starting point must therefore be a review of existing literature in the field. This review should interpret the literature, elucidate key dimensions of their contributions and identify opportunities to develop the field further. Ultimately this review should function as a solid platform on which to locate the study's "contribution to knowledge and to construct reasoned, logical and substantiated arguments" (Denyer and Tranfield, 2006; p. 216).

Literature reviews in management research have been criticised as subjective and unreliable and lacking thoroughness (Tranfield et al., 2003). They are said to "lack both rigor and evidence" (Tranfield et al., 2003: p. 219) and "in many cases are not undertaken as genuine pieces of investigatory science" (p. 207). They can also be dominated by the researcher's biases and preferences and as a result

contribute little to policy and practice (Denyer and Neely, 2004). For example, deciding which “studies are to be included in the review and the appraisal of study quality can be subjective” (Denyer and Tranfield, 2006: p. 216). The absence of what are considered thorough literature reviews is contributing to fragmentation and disconnection within the field and is an increasing challenge (Denyer and Tranfield, 2006). To address these shortcomings “more formal approaches and systematic methods for locating, selecting, appraising, synthesising and reporting evidence” (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009: p. 673) have emerged. Denyer and Tranfield (2009) suggest that the model developed from within the evidence-based health sciences has valuable application in management research. It can improve practice and reduce bias by prescribing the processes to be followed, make decisions transparent and replicable and “allow reasonably clear conclusions to be reached about what is and what is not known” (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009: p. 673).

Central to the systematic literature review approach is a methodology for selecting and analysing literature that is relevant to a research question, practice or policy issue being addressed which is:

- Transparent; it enables readers to “determine for themselves the reasonableness of the decisions taken and the appropriateness of the conclusions” (Denyer and Neely, 2004: p. 133).
- Rigorous; it follows a procedure that minimises the researcher’s bias or predisposition towards literature they are familiar with or which confirms their views.
- Repeatable; if other researchers follow the same methodology they should get similar results.

Systematic literature reviews should not be viewed as traditional literature reviews with a more rigorous scientific or ordered approach tacked on. They can be stand-alone self-contained research projects designed to address specific questions “usually derived from a policy or practice problem” (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009: p. 671). They do not have to be part of a wider study.

Associated with systematic literature reviews is meta-analysis which is a statistical procedure to synthesise the findings of a systematic literature review

and provide a statistical perspective on the evidence that emerges from the review. In the medical field this may involve setting out, using the findings of the review, the probability of certain outcomes occurring if particular treatments are administered.

The systematic approach offers a number of benefits. It forces the researcher to set clear boundaries around the field being investigated. It reduces the chances that important literature that is relevant to the field of investigation is overlooked. It provides confidence to both the researchers and other scholars that the search is comprehensive. From a practitioner's perspective the systematic approach can provide an appealing bridge between research and practice. It can provide researchers, particularly those with a practice bias, to counter balance the digressions which curiosity and enthusiasm can energise.

However, applying the systematic literature review approach to management research is not seamless. Compared with evidence-based medical research, management is in its infancy and for this reason is "divergent and fragmented" (Tranfield et al., 2003: p. 212). As a result "studies in the field rarely address identical problems and share a research agenda or, more importantly, ask the same questions" (Tranfield et al., 2003: p. 212). Unlike those working in medical research, who predominantly adopt a positivist approach, management scholars can adopt very different ontological and epistemological stances. Huff (2009) highlights this complication.

*Attempts to systematically review qualitative studies, especially from varied paradigmatic positions, are less amenable to rigid guidelines and more difficult for others to assess because they involve much more interpretation by the scholar undertaking the review. (Huff, 2009: p, 171)*

Others argue that the positivistic and quantitative inclinations of systematic reviews are not suited to social sciences. Its lens is narrow and insufficiently flexible to accommodate perspectives that are not visible when a positivistic epistemology (Denyer and Tranfield, 2006: p. 217) is adopted but are important dimensions of social science research.

*Indeed researchers from an interpretivist or phenomenological position may suggest that systematic reviews, with their positivist leanings, should not be adopted in the social sciences.* (Tranfield et al. 2003: p. 214)

The meta-analysis aspect of the systematic approach also has difficulty accommodating the variations in management research. Its positivist approach could result in literature being shoe horned into numerically driven frameworks which could lead to important social dimensions, which statistics can be blind to, such as context, being overlooked (Denyer and Tranfield, 2006: p. 217). Underscoring these impediments are the sometimes contrasting approaches medical science and management researchers adopt when developing research questions (Tranfield et al., 2003). Medical science researchers generally arrive at a “definitive review question” (p. 215) developed during the planning stage which can involve extensive consultation, whereas the management researcher can approach a study with “a statement of the problem's significance rather than a defined research question” (p. 215). This latter approach can grapple with the positivist roots of systematic literature reviews. In addition, Denyer and Tranfield (2009) point out that it is generally recognised in the social science literature that “professional judgment and interpretation play an important role and cannot be eliminated or replaced by proceduralization” (p. 675) which is a feature of systematic literature reviews.

Acknowledging that both traditional and systematic literature reviews have received criticism, Arksey and O'Malley (2005) “contend that there is no single 'ideal type' of literature review, but rather that all literature review methods offer a set of tools that researchers need to use appropriately” (p. 20).

Noting Tranfield et al's. (2003) concerns, Denyer and Tranfield (2009) offer four alternative principles to guide systematic literature reviews in management research; transparency, inclusivity, explanatory and heuristic rules, which when applied generate the following steps:

1. Question formulation.
2. Locating studies.
3. Study selection and evaluation.

4. Analysis and synthesis.
5. Reporting and using the results.

This approach enables many of the wrinkles that emerge when applying the systematic literature review approach to management research to be ironed out, although it is not a panacea. Steps 2 and 3 involve the search process which can be carried out in a systematic and transparent manner. These steps are less dependent than steps 4 and 5 on the content of the literature located and therefore the complications associated with applying the systematic approach to fragmented and divergent management research, with its varying ontological and epistemological stances, is minimised. When applying Steps 4 and 5 to management research, the systematic approach requires a more flexible interpretation of the term systematic. The fragmentation, associated with different models, methodologies, methods and frameworks, requires that management researchers engage with the literature and make judgments which may not be statistically or procedurally driven. If they do not have the flexibility to make these judgments as the literature reveals itself, and the flexibility to pursue alternatives, important contextual contributions, not captured by a statistical analysis, may be overlooked. Practically therefore, in management research, it is not possible to adopt a strict systematic approach to steps 4 and 5. Management researchers must strike a balance between systematic rigor and maintaining the facility to explore concepts, insights and phenomenon that are not visible from statistical analysis.

To address this issue Denyer and Tranfield (2006) highlight that the increasing contribution that qualitative research can make to policy and practice has led to the development and testing of “a wide range of techniques to qualitatively synthesise research” (p. 218) which is what step 4 sets out to achieve. They suggest three approaches; narrative synthesis, meta-ethnography and realist synthesis.

- Narrative synthesis summarises studies which address different aspects of the same phenomenon and provide a bigger picture of that phenomenon.
- Meta-ethnography involves comparative textual analysis of qualitative studies.

- Realist synthesis involves the development and testing of theoretical ideas.

Considering the benefits of systematic literature reviews (boundary giving, transparency, repeatability and their ability to reduce bias and steer researchers away from irrelevant academic cul-de-sacs) and the features of management research which do not lend themselves to statistical interpretation, this current study adopted the hybrid approach of Denyer and Tranfield's (2009) 5 step approach to systematic literature reviews. It carried out a systematic approach to the literature search (Steps 2-3) and a synthesis of the output of this search (Steps 4-5). The result of the literature search (Steps 2-3) is outlined in the remainder of this chapter with the detailed results included in Appendices 1-5. The results of Steps 4-5 are outlined in Chapter 3.

## **2.3 Systematic literature search**

The systematic literature search (Steps 2 and 3) involved the following.

1. Confirming the review question as set out in Chapter 1.
2. Conducting a scoping study to loosely map the field.
3. Developing a search string to identify relevant literature.
4. Using this search string to execute an electronic search of two of the main academic databases and filter the results using inclusion and exclusion criteria.

### **2.3.1 Confirming the review question**

For this literature search no changes were made at this stage to the review question presented in Chapter 1.

*How do CEOs and/or executives at an organisation's strategic apex use data, information and knowledge when giving sense to a change their organisation is facing or dealing with, to their direct superiors and subordinate reports?*

### **2.3.2 Scoping Study**

Arksey and O'Malley (2005) suggest four reasons to undertake a scoping study.

1. To examine the extent, range and nature of the research activity.
2. To determine the value of undertaking a full systematic review.
3. To summarise and disseminate research findings.
4. To identify research gaps in the existing literature.

The purpose of this current study's scoping study comes under the first of these; to examine the extent, range and nature of research activity. Arksey and O'Malley (2005) suggest "this type of rapid review might not describe research findings in any detail but is a useful way of mapping fields of study where it is difficult to visualize the range of material that might be available" (p. 21). This scoping study was completed in three steps; preliminary identification of relevant articles, identification of the citation history of key authors and articles and cross checking results.

#### **2.3.2.1 Step 1: Preliminary identification of relevant articles**

As the purpose of the scoping study was to get an overview of the extent, range and nature of research activity relevant to the review question this preliminary search focused on three of the four key dimensions of the review question; (i) the use of data, information and knowledge, (ii) giving sense and (iii) change (Figure 2-1). As this was an exploratory step in the literature review and to avoid limiting the results references to the subjects of the study (CEO, superior and subordinates) were excluded. Using words which reflected these three dimensions, the search started with the electronic database Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) for articles published in scholarly journals in English which had the following words in their titles; change, strategic change, strategy, data, knowledge, information, communication, sensemaking and sensegiving.

*Table 2-1: Search words used in the scoping study reflected three of the review question's four dimensions.*

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Review question</b>	<b>Search words used</b>
	How do	
<b>1*</b>	CEOs and/or executives at an organisation's strategic apex	
<b>2</b>	use data, information and knowledge	data, knowledge, information
<b>3</b>	when giving sense	communication, sensemaking, sensegiving
<b>4</b>	to a change their organisation is facing or dealing with,	change, strategic change, strategy,
<b>1*</b>	to their direct superiors and subordinate reports?	

*\* The subjects of the study were omitted from the preliminary searches.*

Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) is a restricted access database. It promotes itself as the most valuable and comprehensive scholarly, multi-disciplinary full-text database, in the world with full text for nearly 9,000 journals, including more than 7,700 peer-reviewed journals. This database also offers indexing and abstracts for nearly 13,000 journals. I selected Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) as the primary database because:

- It was available online through the institution I was studying in.
- In the absence of literature which ranks academic databases, the online commentary suggested that the database is highly regarded.
- It covered a broad range of disciplines.
- It was recommended by academic colleagues.
- It had a user-friendly online interface.

This decision was confirmed during the study as, on a number of occasions, when articles were not found in searches of other data bases such as Web of Science they could be found on Academic Search Complete (EBSCO). In addition to using this database, the citation facility within the Web of Science database was

used to establish the citation history of literature identified, which can be an indication of its significance within the research community.

Based on their rankings and interest in management research, articles identified in the following journals were considered as having particular relevance.

- Academy of Management Journal
- Administrative Science Quarterly
- British Journal of Management
- European Management Journal
- Journal of Change Management
- Journal of Management
- Journal of Management Studies
- Journal of Organizational Change Management
- Organization
- Organization Science
- Organization Studies
- Strategic Management Journal
- The Academy of Management Journal
- The Leadership Quarterly

Twenty five searches were performed and 32 articles were identified from these initial searches (Appendix 1).

#### **2.3.2.2 Step 2: Identification of the citation history**

These 32 articles were reviewed and their citation history established. This involved searches of the Web of Science database, which is part of the ISI Web of Knowledge, using the titles of these articles. This database, which indexes over 5,900 major journals across 150 scientific disciplines from 1945 to present, was selected as it enabled:

- The citation history of each article to be identified.
- The citing articles, which had the following key words in their titles; strategic change, strategy, change, data, knowledge, information, communication, sensemaking and sensegiving, to be identified.

- The leading scholars in the field to be identified based on their citation history.

From this review I identified six additional articles (Table 2-2) that may have relevance and the following scholars as key contributors in the field: Balogun, Barr, Bartunek, Chittipeddi, Clark, Ericson, Fiss, Ford, Ford, Gioia, Glynn, Humphries, Johnson, Krim, Lawrence, Maitlis, Necochea, Obstfeld, Rouleau, Sonenshein, Sutcliffe, Thomas, Weick, Werber and Zajac.

*Table 2-2: Additional articles identified.*

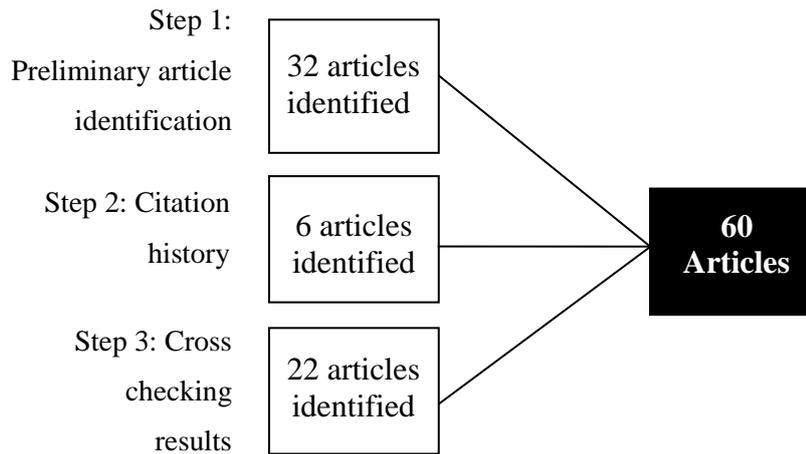
No	Details
33	Weick, K.E., Sutcliffe, K.M. and Obstfeld, D. (2005) Organizing and the Process of Sensemaking. <i>Organization Science</i> , 16(4), 409–421.
34	Maitlis, S. (2005) The social processes of organisational sensemaking. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> , 48(1), pp.21–49.
35	Maitlis, S. & Lawrence, T.B. (2003) Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark: Understanding Failure in Organizational Strategizing. <i>Journal of Management Studies</i> , 40(January), 109–139.
36	Maitlis, S. & Lawrence, T.B. (2007) Triggers and enablers of sensegiving in organizations. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> , 50(1), 57–84.
37	Weber, K. & Glynn, M. A. (2006) Making Sense with Institutions: Context, Thought and Action in Karl Weick’s Theory. <i>Organization Studies</i> , 27(11), 1639–1660.
38	Ford, J.D., Ford, L.W. & Angelo, D. (2008) Resistance to change: the rest of the story. <i>Academy of Management Review</i> , 33(2), 362–377.

### **2.3.2.3 Step 3: Cross checking results**

To ensure that the key articles by these scholars were captured during Steps 1 and 2, searches were carried out in both the Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) and Web of Science databases using their names. These searches identified a further 22 articles considered to have relevance (Appendix 2).

As systematic literature reviews are “not linear but iterative, requiring researchers to engage with each stage in a reflexive way” (Arksey and O’Malley, 2005: p. 22) before proceeding further, I carried out an exploratory review of the 60 articles identified (Figure 2-1) to enable me identify and become familiar with the themes, concepts and terminology associated with the research field.

Figure 2-1: Results of Steps 1-3.



This involved the following:

- Reviewing the titles, abstracts, introductions and conclusion of the 60 articles.
- Carrying out a word search of each article using the words strategic change, sensemaking and sensegiving to identify and review specific references.
- Preparing a summary of the unique feature(s) of each article and the main arguments presented.
- Identifying new academic terminology related to the review question which may be considered for use in future searches.
- Reviewing the bibliographies to identify articles which may be relevant.
- Consultation with colleagues.

### 2.3.3 Search string development

Following this exploratory review of the 60 articles, four potential search categories emerged and from these categories, words suitable for incorporation into a search string were identified.

#### 1. Subject – CEO

A number of studies (Snell, 2002; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2003; Ravasi and Zattoni, 2006; Scroggins, 2006; Sonenshein, 2006, 2010; Lines, 2007; Vlaar et

al., 2008) investigate the sensegiving strategies of executives across and between different organisational levels. This study concentrates on how CEOs or their equivalents give sense to their immediate subordinates (top management team) and superiors (Board). The following words were selected to capture this dimension.

Search category: Leaders  
Variants: CEO OR chief executive officer OR president OR  
managing director OR top management team OR  
corporate apex OR leadership

### *2: Behaviour – sensegiving*

Sensemaking and sensegiving have been used by scholars as theoretical lenses through which to examine the behaviour of senior managers in organisations during periods of uncertainty (e.g. Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991; Bartunek et al., 1999; Ericson, 2001; Snell, 2002; Ravasi and Zattoni, 2006; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007; Vlaar et al., 2008; Erkama and Vaara, 2010)

Due to the close relationship between sensegiving and sensemaking (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991; Rouleau, 2005) I decided to include both terms and their spelling variants: sense making, sense-making, sense giving and sense-giving. Two additional terms were identified during the review of the 60 articles and were included; issues selling and impression management.

Search category: Sensegiving  
Variants: Sensegiving OR sense giving OR sense-giving OR  
issues selling OR impression management

Search category: Sensemaking  
Variants: Sensemaking OR sense making OR sense-making

### *3: Environment – organisational change*

According to Maitlis and Lawrence (2007) sensegiving is triggered “by the perception or anticipation of a gap in organizational sensemaking processes” (p.

58). This gap exists in situations where there is a “meaning void” (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006: p. 196). This creates a demand to “render the subjective into something more tangible” (Weick, 1995: p. 14) in order to draft “an acceptable account of what is going on” (Raes et al., 2007: p. 363).

These conditions are most likely to exist in “times of change” (Dunford and Jones, 2000: p 1208) when members of an organisation will want to “construct an interpretation of events” (p. 1208). There are many different types of organisational change referred to in the literature such as crises, strategic change, organisational transformation, discontinuous change, disruptive innovations and environmental jolts. While the development of a more precise definition of the environment in which sensegiving behaviour will be studied is discussed in detail in Chapter 3 the following broad search terms were selected.

Search category:           Organisational change  
Variants:                   Strategic OR transformation OR  
                                  transformational OR strategic OR disruptive

#### *4: Tools – data, information and knowledge*

While this study’s review question was initially interested in the use of data, information and knowledge by leaders, this exploratory review of the literature raised doubts about the appropriateness of including this dimension in the review question. Sensemaking is driven by plausibility rather than accuracy (Weick, 1995). Supporting this view Weick et al. (2005) point out that while accurate information is important for determining alternative actions “organizations do not fit this conception” (p. 415). Due to the primacy of plausibility over accuracy in sensemaking, a literature search restricted to sensemaking and sensegiving articles relating to data, information and knowledge could result in important articles being excluded, with no obvious benefit. To avoid limiting the study’s field these terms were excluded.

From this analysis it was decided that the literature search should concentrate on three fields of research; leadership, sensegiving-sensemaking and organisational change (Figure 2-3).

*Figure 2-2: The literature search concentrated on the point of intersection of the three fields of research.*



### **2.3.3.1 Identifying additional search terms**

To ensure that all possible search terms (words and phrases) were identified and available for consideration the following additional three reviews were undertaken.

#### **Review 1**

The "Subject Terms" and "Author supplied key words" in the online summaries of the 60 articles so far identified were reviewed and words and phrases which may have relevance to the search categories were identified (Table 2-3).

#### **Review 2**

The summary notes taken on the 60 articles identified (Section 2.3.2) were reviewed. Words and phrases from these notes that were considered relevant to the four search categories were identified (Table 2-4). Words and phrases previously identified during Review 1 were not repeated.

Table 2-3: Results of Review 1.

<b>Search Category</b>			
<b>1. Leader</b>	<b>2. Sensegiving</b>	<b>Sensemaking</b>	<b>3. Org. Change</b>
Middle managers	Impression management	Environmental interpretation	Strategy execution
Leading change	Meaning materialisation		Unfamiliar environmental events
Top managers	Persuasion		Strategic change
Chief executive officers	Narrative		Strategic management
CEO	Influence tactics		Strategic planning
			Momentum
			Strategic organis(z)ational development
			Resistant
			Conflict
			Decision making

### Review 3

Other words and phrases were identified through general consideration of the topic, the literature and consultation with colleagues (Table 2-5).

Table 2-4: Results of Review 2.

<b>Search Category</b>			
<b>1. Leader</b>	<b>2. Sensegiving</b>	<b>Sensemaking</b>	<b>3. Org. Change</b>
Strategists	Sensegiver	Sensemakers	Dramatic change
Upper echelons	Meaning construction		Cultural change
Change agents	Management of meaning	Make sense	Large-scale change
Top managers	Meaning ascription	Collective meaning	Environmental events
Top team	Subversive, handed down & transformational meaning	Misperceptions / flawed perceptions	Performance decline
Top management team	Shaping reality	Reconstruction	Political change
Leadership team	Creating order	Organis(z)ational understandings	Strategic decision making
Top management's perceptions	Construction of events	Environmental perceptions	Rational decision making
	Issues selling	Conflicting interpretations	Strategic actions
	Managing impressions	Managerial interpretation	Organis(z)ational adaptation
	Narrative(s)	Strategic interpretations	Unsettled
	Progressive, stability & managerial narrative(s)	Collective expectations	Troublesome situation

	Discourse		Radical change
	Frame/framing		New direction
	Schemas		Instability
	Bracketing		Ambiguity
	Symbolism		Uncertainty
	Knowledge grafting		Strategic conversations
	Tacit/rational knowledge		Unexpected
	Legitimis(z)e		Environmental change
	Sensebreaking		

*Table 2-5: Results of Review 3*

<b>Search Category</b>			
<b>1. Leader</b>	<b>2. Sensegiving</b>	<b>Sensemaking</b>	<b>3. Org. Change</b>
Chief executive	Strategic issues management	Issues interpretation	Discontinues change
President	Issues management	Strategic issues interpretation	Transformation
MD	Issues diagnosis		Transformational change
Managing director	Strategic issues diagnosis		change
TMT			Major change
Corporate apex			Restructuring
Senior management team/SMT			Reorganisation
c level			Disruptive
c-level			
c suite			
Corporate team			
Corporate leader			
Leader/s			

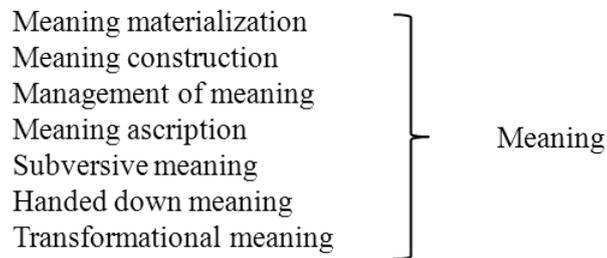
### **2.3.3.2 Editing output of Reviews 1-3**

The results of Reviews 1-3 were considered in totality and edited. This involved the following:

1. Similar phrases were clustered together (Appendix 3) and common words were selected to represent all variants in the cluster. For example a number of different variants of the word ‘meaning’ were identified (Figure 2-3). These were captured using the single word ‘meaning’.

2. Some phrases identified for inclusion were edited to broaden their search potential. For example the term ‘chief executive officers’ was changed to ‘chief executive’ as this term would capture articles with references to chief executive officers and chief executives.

*Figure 2-3: Example of clustering.*



3. Possible variants of words identified were also considered and included as search terms. An example of this is the word ‘sensegiver’. Variants sense-giver and sense giver were included.

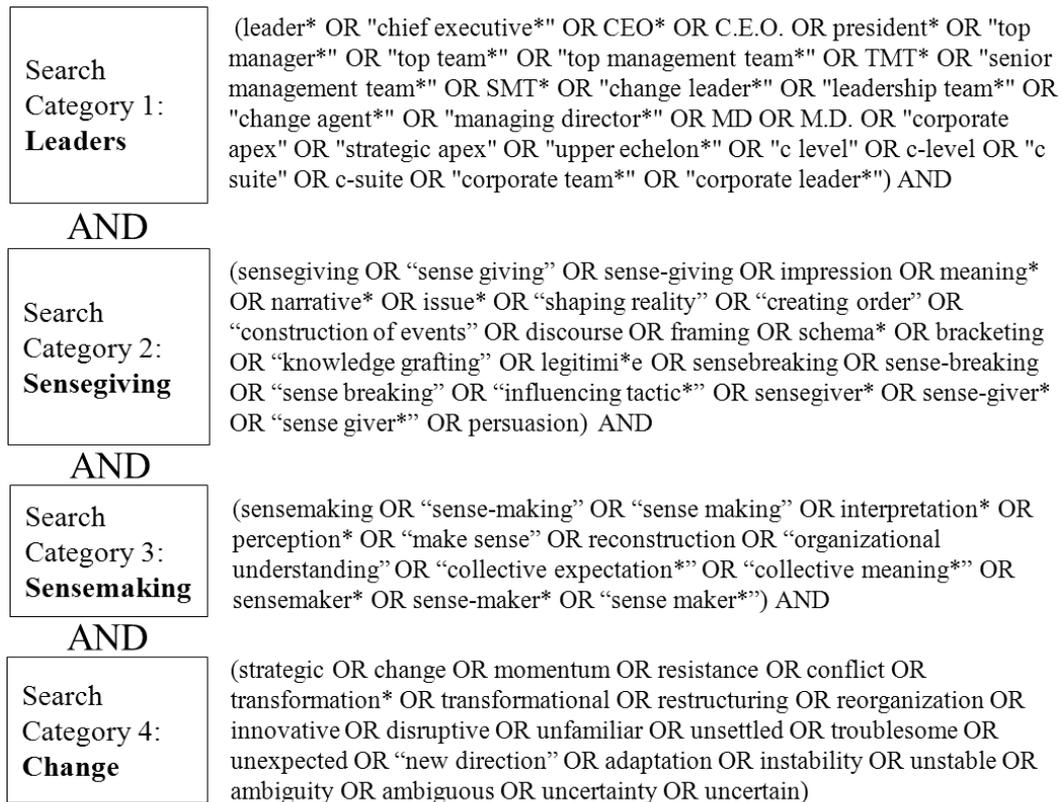
4. Some words and phrases were rejected as they were, on reflection, not relevant to the study such as tacit/rational knowledge.

#### **2.3.4 Executing the data base search**

From these three reviews and editing of their output a search string was developed (Figure 2-4) and pilot tested. The pilot test involved using the search string to search the Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) database for articles published in scholarly journals in English. This search yielded 929 articles which reduced to 812 when duplicates were removed.

These results were reviewed, and as a way to measure their comprehensiveness of the search, a check was carried out to verify if it had captured the articles authored by some of the key writers in this field who were identified during the scoping study (Section 2.3.2). This review highlighted that some of the key articles from scholars such as Weick, Sutcliffe, Maitlis and Clark, previously identified, did not appear in the results. This suggested that the search string was flawed.

Figure 2-4: First search string developed.



This search string was refined and the AND limiter between Search Category 2 and Search Category 3 was changed to OR as the AND limiter was restricting results to articles which contained both terms, and their variants, and could therefore be unnecessarily omitting articles which focused on just one of the dimensions.

Table 2-6: Results of search of Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) using search string and various filters.

Search No	Search Cell	Filter	Search Cell	Filter	Search Cell	Filter	Result
1	1	None	2	None	3	None	15233
2	1	Abstract	2	None	3	None	14042
3	1	Abstract	2	Abstract	3	Abstract	8585
4	1	Title	2	Abstract	3	Abstract	946
5	1	Title	2	None	3	None	1614

The revised search, which was unlimited other than to articles in English in scholarly journals, yielded 15,233 results. Limiting the search to abstracts and / or titles, produced between 946 and 14,042 results (Table 2-6).

The volume of results from the unlimited search (15, 233) was unmanageable and too broad to be effective. Restricting the searches to titles and/or abstracts in order to produce a manageable volume of results could not be justified.

#### **2.3.4.1 Alternative search strategy**

To address the shortcomings identified during the pilot testing of the initial search strings a broader multi-dimensional search strategy was developed and adopted.

This involved 5 steps.

1. Simplifying the search string.
2. Using the search string to search two databases; Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) and Web of Science.
3. A pilot review of selected results and identification of further articles from their bibliographies.
4. Setting inclusion and exclusion criteria.
5. Classifying articles.

#### **2.3.4.2 Simplifying the search string**

Search Category 1: Subject – Leaders

As the labels used for personnel at an organisation's apex can vary, this aspect of the search string remained broad to capture a variety of descriptors used in the literature. The term management was removed as the study is concerned with personnel at senior management level and above and not personnel at management level. Inclusion of this term could yield irrelevant articles. Apart from this adjustment, the initial search string for Search Category 1 remained intact.

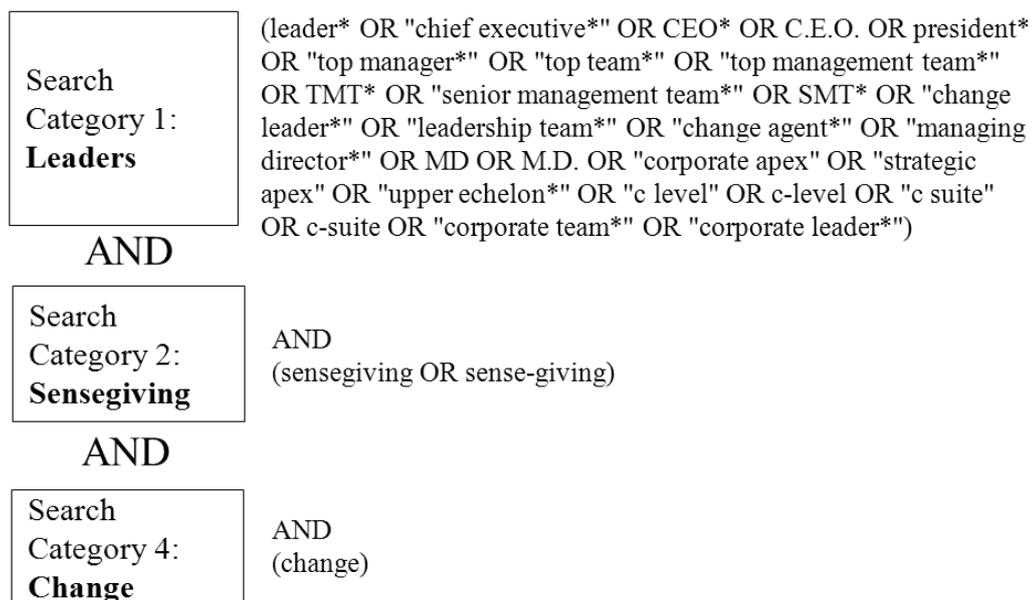
## Search Category 2: Behaviour – Sensemaking-sensegiving

The pilot searches of the Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) and Web of Science databases highlighted that the use of the terms sensegiving and sense-giving also produced articles which were preceded or followed by the word sense such as sense giving, sense makings and make sense. As sensegiving is the specific theoretical lens through which the study is being conducted, coupled with the revised multi-dimensional search strategy, it was determined that a more narrowly defined search string, without references to sensemaking, would be sufficient to identify articles of relevance to this dimension of the study.

## Search Category 3: Environment – Organisational change

At this stage the study's environment had not been defined. It was intended that this definition would be informed by the literature. It was decided to limit this aspect of the search to 'change'. It was believed that, combined with the multi-dimensional approach, this term would be sufficiently narrow to identify relevant articles. From this analysis a simplified search (Figure 2-5) string was prepared:

*Figure 2-5: The simplified search string.*



### 2.3.4.3 Searching two databases

To broaden the reach of the search, the simplified search string was used to search two databases. Within Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) the following databases were searched; Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, Communication and Mass Media complete and UK/EIRE Reference Centre as they were considered to be the most relevant databases.

This search was carried out using the ‘All Text’ filter which searches all text in each paper; title, abstract, the article and bibliography. The only limiters were paper published in scholarly journals in English. This search produced 350 results which yielded a net 335 when duplicates were removed (Table 2-7).

The same search string was used to search the TOPIC fields of articles in Web of Science. This filter limits searches to the abstracts. This search produced 239 results. The first 100 subject areas covered by these publications were reviewed and the subject areas considered irrelevant were excluded such as medicine and subjects within medicine, but not subjects relating to general health matters and policy, construction and engineering, biological, chemical, physical and environmental sciences. A full list of excluded subject areas is included at Appendix 4. This filtering reduced the number of articles identified by the Web of Science search to 189 (Table 2-7).

In total, the scoping study and the search of the two data bases, Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) and Web of Science, using the simplified search string yielded 584 articles.

*Table 2-7: Cumulative output of database searches.*

1	Articles identified during scoping study.	60
2	Articles identified from Academic Search Complete (EBSCO).	335
3	Articles identified from Web of Science Search.	189
	Total	584

#### **2.3.4.4 Exploratory review of literature identified from searches**

As a precursor to filtering the 584 articles, the first 55 articles of the 335 articles produced from the Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) search were reviewed. I considered this volume a sufficiently representative sample at this point as the main purpose of this review was to form a view on the effectiveness of the search string. The secondary purpose was to assist in determining the development of inclusion – exclusion criteria.

Notes were taken on each article to extract relevant information using the following headings.

- Title/Author/year of publication.
- What does it do?
- What is the main finding?
- What is the context?
- Relevance of study?
- Type of study?
- What's interesting?

This review highlighted the following:

- Sensemaking and sensegiving studies have investigated environments which have involved strategic change such as mergers, spins off, major external market changes, reorganisation of services and new ventures.
- Due to the “sequential and reciprocal” (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991: p. 423) nature of sensemaking and sensegiving, one scholar's sensegiving could be another's sensemaking. This can result in articles identified as concerned with sensemaking, including insights into sensegiving.
- Sensemaking dominates the literature and sensegiving frequently appears secondary to sensemaking rather than its equal. Insights on sensegiving can sometimes therefore be obscured by the shadow of sensemaking and careful scrutiny of these shadows is needed.
- A number of articles look at how organisations respond to the challenges of changing environments and in particular the cognitive and social processes associated with addressing this change. The cognitive processes

tend to look at meaning construction, discourse, narratives, framing and decoupling, identity maintenance and change, and legitimacy. While not always explicitly stated, many of these processes involve some level of sensemaking and sensegiving.

- From a review of their titles and abstracts, some articles appeared to have little relevance. However, closer examination suggested otherwise which highlighted that titles alone did not always reflect relevance. The literature review should remain open to considering articles that emerge during the study and look beyond their titles for clues of relevance.
- Inclusion criteria should aim to identify environments where change is occurring that may result in strategic change for organisations and staff but may not be labelled as such by the authors.
- Few articles deal specifically with CEO sensegiving. As a result, limiting the literature review to articles which involve CEO sensegiving could limit its thoroughness.

A review of the bibliographies of these 55 articles identified an additional 30 articles (No 4 on Table 2-8) which may have relevance. This brought the total number of articles which may have relevance to the area of study to 614.

*Table 2-8: Cumulative output of scoping study, pilot review of literature and electronic database searches.*

1	Articles identified during scoping study.	60
2	Articles identified from Academic Search Complete (EBSCO).	335
3	Articles identified from Web of Science Search.	189
4	Articles identified during pilot review of literature of 55 articles.	30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>614</b>

This review confirmed that the safeguards incorporated by adopting a multi-dimensional approach were justified. It confirmed that articles by authors identified during the scoping study (Section 2.3.2) were now appearing in the electronic database search results. There were also justifiable reasons why it produced articles that were not relevant to this area of study, such as the presence

of an article with sensegiving in the title of an article in the bibliography of an irrelevant article.

#### **2.3.4.5 Setting inclusion and exclusion criteria**

From this initial review the following inclusion – exclusion criteria (IE1) and traffic light categorisation was developed.

##### **Gold**

Articles based on empirical data and/or theory exploration/building which provided insights into sensegiving by personnel at an organisation's corporate apex.

Articles concerned with organisational change.

Seminal articles by recognised scholars in the field.

##### **Green**

Articles which included empirical data and/or theory exploration/building which provide insights into sensemaking by personnel at an organisation's corporate apex and/or environments involving strategic change such as mergers, spins off, major external market changes, reorganisation of services and new ventures, transformation, restructuring, reorganisation, innovation, unexpected events, environmental jolts, unstable, ambiguous, or uncertain environments.

Articles which included empirical data and/or based on theory exploration/building which provide insights into how CEO/senior management give meaning to organisational change.

Articles which provided background on developments in the sensemaking and sensegiving fields which were considered helpful in providing context for the research question.

Articles which were based on data gained by authors who gained access to an organisation's management team during or after a significant change.

## Amber

Articles which included empirical data on interpretation, issues selling, meaning construction, meaning giving, narrative or dialogue, discourse, framing, bracketing, schema, knowledge grafting, influencing, perception or persuasion.

Articles which may provide insights into the design of the study's research methodology and related fields

## Blue

Articles which emerged during the administration of the inclusion – exclusion criteria (IE1).

## White

Articles which were considered not relevant to the study as they did not provide relevant information or insights.

### 2.3.4.6 1st round of literature filtering

Using these criteria all articles were reviewed and classified. The depth of these reviews was determined by how much of an article needed to be considered in order to form a view on its relevance. This could range from reviewing an abstract or reading a complete article. Of the 614 articles 414 were rejected and 200 set aside for further review (Table 2-9).

*Table 2-9: Output of 1st round of filtering.*

<b>GOLD</b>	Articles critical to the development of the research question.	22
<b>GREEN</b>	Articles which may assist in informing the development of the research question.	58
<b>AMBER</b>	Articles which may provide background on the field and inform the design of the research methodology.	120
<b>WHITE</b>	Articles which were deemed not relevant to the study as they did not provide any relevant information or insights.	414
	<b>Total included</b>	<b>200</b>
	<b>Total excluded</b>	<b>414</b>

#### 2.3.4.7 2nd round of literature filtering

After reviewing approximately 10% of the 200 articles identified during the 1<sup>st</sup> round of literature filtering (Table 2.9) I gained a greater understanding of the research field. Based on this understanding I determined that the original review question required revising.

- The decision to remove the references to “data, information and knowledge” as previously discussed (Section 2.3.3) was confirmed.
- The term which limited the study to “direct superiors and subordinate reports” was excluded as it was obvious that leaders giving sense would be doing this anyway so this reference was superfluous.
- The phrase “giving sense to strategic change their organisation is facing or dealing with” was cumbersome and lacked sufficient precision. It was simplified to “during periods of change” which provided a greater emphasis on the environment being studied rather than the nature of the change occurring.
- As earlier discussed, I intended to define ‘a period of change’ based on a detailed study of the literature.

The revised review question was:

*How do CEOs and/or executives at an organisation’s strategic apex give sense during periods of change?*

This refinement of the review question did not warrant revising the search strings already developed, the search procedure followed or the filtering process employed. It did however facilitate the development of narrower inclusion – exclusion criteria (IE2) Appendix 5.

These revised inclusion-exclusion criteria were applied to the 200 articles produced by the first round of literature filtering (Table 2-9). This resulted in the deletion of a further 116 articles (Table 2-10).

Table 2-10: Output of 2nd round of filtering.

		Result from 1st filtering	Non-compliance with IE2	Result from 2nd filtering
<b>GOLD</b>	Articles critical to the development of the research question	22	7	15
<b>GREEN</b>	Articles which may assist in informing the development of the research question	58	28	30
<b>AMBER</b>	Articles which may provide background on the field and inform the design of the research methodology.	92	62	28
<b>BLUE</b>	Articles which emerged during the administration of the inclusion – exclusion criteria (IE1).	28	9	21
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>94</b>

## 2.4 Summary

Management research is unlike evidence-based health research. Researchers can adopt different ontological and epistemological stances, models, methods and frameworks (Section 2.2). Following a discussion of the literature on the benefits of applying the systematic literature review approach, commonly used in evidence-based health research, to management research, this chapter argued for a hybrid approach; a systematic literature search followed by a synthesis of the literature identified. It set out in detail the steps followed and the decisions made in relation to the execution of this study's systematic literature search. This search started with a scoping study from which a search string was developed, tested and refined. The output of a series electronic database searches using the search string was classified using a traffic light system and filtered using inclusion - exclusion criteria.

These searches occurred in a moment in time. Because data bases are being continually updated and the lapse in time which generally occurs between a study's literature search and its completion, it was recognised that the results could become outdated. It was essential therefore that as the study progressed it

remained alert to articles published after the completion of the systematic search which may have relevance and account taken of their findings.

Chapter 3 sets out the results of a synthesis of key aspects of the 94 articles identified by the systematic literature search as relevant to the review question. From this discussion the study's research question is presented.

## **Chapter 3: Literature Review II (Synthesis)**

### **3.1 Introduction**

As outlined in Chapter 2, Denyer and Tranfield (2009) propose a 5-step process for systematic literature reviews which is hybrid of systematic and traditional literature reviews. This study adopted this process.

Chapter 2 outlined steps 2-3 which involved a systematic literature search that identified 94 relevant articles. This chapter outlines steps 4-5 which involve a synthesis of the key dimensions of the literature relevant to the review question. Steps 4-5 do not strictly observe the evidence-based health science approach to systematic literature reviews. They have an allegiance to the traditional approaches “which involve much more interpretation by the scholar undertaking the review” (Huff, 2009: p. 171). The synthesis outlined in this chapter follows a narrative approach (Denyer and Tranfield, 2006) which sets the context for the research question and research design.

This chapter is set out in three sections. Section 3.2 synthesises aspects of sensemaking and sensegiving literature relevant to the review question, with a particular emphasis on leader sensegiving. It identifies the features of sense that reflect its complexity; the intangibility and slipperiness of meaning and sense (Foldy et al., 2008: p. 525), the influence of social factors (Weick et al., 2005), and the supremacy of plausibility over accuracy (Weick et al., 2005). It introduces sensegiving and highlights a scarcity of research into its deep structures. It discusses the dimensions of sensegiving behaviour, identified from the literature, that need to be taken account to explore these deep structures. Section 3.3 sets out a working definition of the type of environment the study is concerned with, which is a strategic change environment. Section 3.4 summarises the gap in the literature in relation to leadership sensegiving during periods of strategic change and sets out the study’s research question.

### **3.2 Setting the scene for sensegiving**

Sensemaking and sensegiving are cognitive processes that actors activate when faced with equivocality and uncertainty in order to make sense of and give sense

to what is before them (Daft and Weick, 1984; Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991; Weick, 1995). As this is a relatively new field of management research, the literature is predominantly focused on what occurs when actors engage in sensemaking and sensegiving. It has not yet reached the stage where it offers comprehensive models and theories that explain the deep structures which underpin these behaviours.

Sensemaking involves actors addressing uncertainty by constructing “rational accounts of the world” (Maitlis, 2005: p.21) which are given life through linguistic processes. It addresses the question *What’s the story here?* (Weick et al., 2005: p. 410). It involves, among others, “observing, reasoning, analyzing, contemplating, anticipating and imagining” (Vlaar et al., 2008: p. 240). To construct plausible answers, actors make retrospective sense of selected cues “situations, organizations, and environments” (Weick et al., 2005: p. 409). To distinguish between bracketing cues and making sense of them, Weick (1995) emphasises the pre-interpretation aspect of sensemaking; the scanning sequence which he suggests involves a higher level of engagement by actors than simple interpretation (p. 14). During pre-interpretation actors construct and bracket (Weick, 1995: p. 8) the cues they propose interpreting. In other words they select from the available cues which ones they will give meaning to. They are active authors of the situations in which they are “embedded and are attempting to comprehend” (Brown, Colville and Pye 2015).

Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) conceptualise sensemaking as “meaning construction and reconstruction” and introduce sensegiving as “the process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organizational reality” (p. 442). They found that both take place in an “iterative, sequential, and to some extent reciprocal fashion” (p. 442).

The approach adopted by many scholars to the study of sensemaking and sensegiving suggests that separating the two concepts presents difficulties. Using the data from Gioia and Chittipeddi's (1991) seminal study (from which the concept of sensegiving as an important dimension of leadership and organisational change emerged), Gioia et al. (1994) highlighted that sensemaking

and sensegiving (they refer to the latter as an influencing process) were frequently coincident, interdependent processes that were difficult to distinguish from each other (p. 363). However, this has not prevented them from being investigated as separate processes (Hill and Levenhagen, 1995; Maitlis, 2005; Rouleau, 2005; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007). Corvellec and Risberg (2007) highlight the distinction between the two by suggesting “the cognitive stages of understanding (sensemaking) alternate with active stages of influencing (sensegiving)” (p. 307).

From the literature I have identified three qualities of sense which reflect the complexity of the phenomenon.

*(i) Sense is a moving target during uncertainty*

Sensemaking is activated when actors encounter “an ambiguous event or issue that is of some significance to them” (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014: p. 77) and find it is not possible “to take things for granted” (Weick, 1995: p.14).

*Often this involves a threat to taken-for-granted roles and routines, causing those in organizations to question fundamental assumptions about how they should act. (Maitlis and Christianson, 2013: p. 77)*

Organisational change can create these types of environments. Actors make deliberate efforts, consciously and subconsciously, to create understanding of what is before them in order to reduce equivocality. Sensemakers move between bracketing environmental cues, interpreting these cues, assigning meaning and revising accounts. These accounts are created retrospectively. They are provisional as meaning making is “intangible and slippery” (Foldy et al., 2008: p. 525) and “one never makes finite sense of a situation because things are always changing” (Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010: p. 565). Sense is “uncertain, fluctuating and hard-to-locate” (Corvellec and Risberg, 2007: p. 322). Sensemaking is therefore “gradual and cumulative rather than immediate and final” (Weber and Glynn, 2006: p. 1648).

During change sense is not made and then set aside. It is continually being adjusted and shaped as new and changing cues are interpreted and reinterpreted. It is a fluid process and for researchers sense represents a moving target.

*(ii) Sense is socially constructed*

Sensemaking does not occur in a vacuum. Sense is not a gift that can be given, received and absorbed in a predictable fashion (Corvellec and Risberg, 2007). It is slippery – its shape is subject to change and influence by social, cultural and political factors and the disposition of its givers and makers. It is a socially grounded process where “members interpret their environment in and through interactions with others” (Maitlis, 2005: p. 21). It is influenced by, among others, the identity of actors (Weick et al., 2005), their desired future images (Thomas and Gioia, 1996), their “organizational positions, histories, and personal backgrounds” (Maitlis, 2005: p. 21) and their organisation’s culture (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006).

Weick et al. (2005) highlight that, particularly in organisations, the social context is crucial for sensemaking because “it binds people to actions that they must justify, it affects the saliency of information, and it provides norms and expectations that constrain explanations” (p. 53). Vaara (2003) highlights the social dimension by suggesting that “the processes of figuring out what is going on and what should be done is based on who the sensemaker is and his or her background” (p. 863). These influences can lead sensemakers to take on different roles in the sensemaking processes (Dutton et al., 1997) and favour one subjective interpretation over others (Ericson, 2001) which is no less ‘true’ or ‘real’ than the interpretation of another. Sense is therefore socially dependent and can be socially specific.

*(iii) Plausibility supersedes accuracy*

The third quality is counter intuitive to our understanding of the components necessary for persuasive behaviour. It is the relationship between plausibility and accuracy. Sensemaking is not about drafting and redrafting a story that is based on accuracy and “getting the story right” (Weick et al., 2005: p. 415). It is driven by “plausibility rather than accuracy” (p. 415). Drawing on Weick and Daft

(1983), Daft and Weick (1984) illustrate the proclivity of actors to make sense of their environments regardless of the completeness of the cues before them or their understanding of them.

*People in organizations are talented at normalizing deviant events, at reconciling outliers to a central tendency, at producing plausible displays, at making do with scraps of information, at translating equivocality into feasible alternatives, and at treating as sufficient whatever information is at hand.* (Daft and Weick, 1984: p. 294)

Mills et al. (2010) highlight that plausibility refers to a “sense that one particular meaning or explanation is more meaningful than others” (p. 189). They point out that “there is no specific definition of what makes a particular explanation plausible” (p. 189). In a further twist which links plausibility to the social context, Weick et al. (2005) highlights that different actors can make different sense from the same inputs and “what may be a plausible account for one group such as managers maybe implausible for another group such as employees” (p. 415).

In organisations that are undergoing strategic change the concept of plausibility has important implications. In uncertain environments, a feature of strategic change, ambiguity is widespread. For actors the gap between equivocality and plausibility creates the need for sensemaking. Given the tendency of actors in such environments to develop accounts, from “scraps that consolidate and inform other bits and pieces of data” (Daft and Weick, 1984: p. 294) these types of change environments can leave sensemakers more receptive (Fiss and Zajac, 2006) to the sensegiving of others, particularly if they are unfamiliar with the change (Barr, 1998).

This brief discussion illustrates three qualities of sense that make investigating sensemaking during organisational change both exciting and challenging; sense is a moving target, its construction is influenced by multiple social factors and its essence is plausibility which can be in the eye of the beholder, rather than accuracy. The literature points to dimensions of sensegiving which present similar challenges for researchers which are discussed in the next section.

### **3.2.1 The challenges of leader sensegiving research**

While receiving proportionately less attention than its counterpart, sensegiving is an “omnipresent activity in organisational and managerial settings” (Corvellec and Risberg, 2007, p. 308) and has become recognised as a key process in the management of strategic change (Dunford and Jones, 2000). Foldy et al. (2008) describe it as “a critical leadership task” (p. 514).

The literature search identified studies which investigate leader sensegiving (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991; Bartunek et al., 1999; Ericson, 2001; Snell, 2002; Maitlis, 2005; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007; Foldy et al., 2008) but none which focused on an environment where multiple leaders at industry level, each representing different stakeholders, were competing to give sense to the same strategic change. This is supported by Maitlis's (2005) contention that “there is relatively little known about the dynamics of sensemaking when different parties engage simultaneously or reciprocally in sensegiving” (p. 22).

Most sensegiving studies (see Appendix 6 for examples) concentrate on change (planned or imposed as a consequence of a crisis) within organisations and changes occurring as a result of mergers. These studies adopt a linear hierarchical view of the organisational relationships between actor groups; top management teams, middle managers and frontline staff. Sonenshein (2006) points out that with the exception of Maitlis (2005) “sensegiving and issue selling research primarily represent theories of unidirectional influence” (p.1169); downward in the case of sensegiving and upward in the case of issue selling.

Middle management has been an active area of sensegiving scholarship. The subject has been approached from a number of perspectives; middle managers as mediators between top and lower level employees (Balogun and Johnson, 2004; Balogun and Johnson, 2005) shaping change from below through upward issues selling (Dutton et al., 2001); the use of politics by middle managers when sensegiving (Hope, 2010) and middle manager sensegiving to customers (Rouleau, 2005).

Studies of sensemaking and discursive legitimation during organisational change (Vaara, 2003; Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Vaara et al., 2006; Vaara and

Monin, 2010; Erkama and Vaara, 2010; Brown et al., 2012) have parallels with the focus of this study; they involve multiple actors making sense and vying to have their sense prevail with a particular focus on legitimising rhetoric. For example Vaara et al. (2006) looked at how the media made and gave meaning to a global industrial restructuring. Erkama and Vaara (2010) investigated the legitimising strategies used by various actors who proposed and opposed the shutdown of the bus body unit of the Sweden-based Volvo Bus Corporation in Finland and Brown et al. (2012) examined the rhetorical strategies used in the Australian Senate Community Affairs Committee Report into Quality and Equity in Aged Care (2005). They suggest that further attention should be given to the role of rhetoric in processes of institutional change. In a similar vein Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) investigated the use of rhetoric by proponents and opponents as they contested the legitimacy of a new organisational form which proposed that accounting firms could also provide legal services. The primary data source for the study consisted of the transcripts of testimony provided by witnesses to two US commissions; American Bar Association Commission to Study Multidisciplinary Practice and the Securities and Exchange Commission Public Hearings on Auditor Independence.

Despite its significance “we still know comparatively little, however, about what sensegivers actually do when they are involved in sensegiving” (Corvellec and Risberg 2007, p. 308). Fiss and Zajac (2006) confirm this by their calls for greater understanding of sensegiving to complement previous theories of sensemaking (p. 1173). Perhaps the reason for this gap is how the field has been approached. As text (speech, written, symbolic) is the sine qua non of sensegiving, scholars have looked to the discourse of sensegivers, and its offshoots, such as storytelling, framing, narratives, metaphor, as the gateway to proposing explanatory frameworks and theories. The emphasis has been on what Heracleous and Barrett (2001) call the “communicative actions” (p. 775); they have not delved into the “deep structures” (p. 775). A brief review of key sensegiving studies confirms this.

Gioia and Chittipeddi's (1991) study involved inside-outsider researchers observing the behaviour of a university president implementing a change programme. Bartunek et al. (1999) in their study of change in a city government

also adopted an insider-outsider approach and made extensive use of the insiders' journal notes and public documents. Dunford and Jones (2000) studied the change narratives in three organisations using semi-structured interviews supplemented by corporate written material such as annual reports, press releases and internal memoranda. Snell (2002) looked at top down sensegiving using data collected from audiotaped structured interviews. Rouleau's (2005) study of middle manager sensegiving was an ethnographic type study and included participant observations, semi structured interviews and document analysis.

Fiss and Zajac (2006) used framing analysis of annual reports to investigate how organisations present organisational change. Corvellec and Risberg's (2007) qualitative study was based on extensive field material; interviews, observations and written documentation, which was analysed in successive stages (p. 309).

Maitlis and Lawrence's (2007) investigation into what triggers and enables sensegiving involved intensive data collection over a two-year period which included interviews, observations of meetings, rehearsals and tours coupled with documentary analysis. The study by Vlaar et al. (2008) on the sensegiving, sensedemanding and sensebreaking among geographically distributed workforces uses unstructured and semi structured interviews, documents and e-mail exchanges.

Foldy et al. (2008) examined the emergence of cognitive shifts as the desired outcome of leaders sensegiving using data gathered from group and individual interviews with a wide range from people within 20 different organisations. Hope (2010) also investigated middle manager sensegiving using a single case study and data from interviews, personal diaries, informal conversations with the researcher and company documents.

This focus on communicative actions has left the deep structures of sensegiving behaviour unexplored. Insufficient attention has been paid to deconstructing sensegiving behaviour into its components to identify underlying patterns and trends in the deep structures. A contributory factor is the absence of an agreed methodology to deconstruct sensegiving behaviour. I have distilled from the literature four dimensions of sensegiving which require particular attention when

designing multiple leader sensegiving research that seeks to explore these deep structures. These dimensions are detailed in the next section.

### **3.2.1.1 Sense must be offered before it can be given**

The work of Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) and Vaara and Monin (2010) highlight that sensegivers are free to give meaning and use this as a platform to offer sense, relatively independently of sensemakers. While the ‘giving’ part of the term sensegiving suggests that sense can be given, there are no guarantees that the sense will be accepted (Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007).

In a study of a strategic change process, carried out over a 5 year period at a large university hospital, Ericson (2001) noted that the hospital manager tried to give sense to the changes ahead to the management team by presenting a vision of a more patient-oriented hospital. A shared vision among the management failed to emerge because different managers made different sense of what the vision meant depending on their own leadership positions. Drawing on the results of a case study of three New Zealand firms, Dunford and Jones (2000) support this notion, while sense might be given it cannot be assumed that it will be accepted.

In a similar vein Balogun and Johnson (2005) argues that the role of the leader in giving sense to organisational change “is less about directing and controlling and more about facilitating recipient sensemaking processes” (p. 1596) which has parallels with Plowman et al. (2007). In their qualitative study they found that the leaders of a Mission Church, that went through radical transformation, played a key role in the change that occurred, "not by specifying it or directing it but by creating conditions that allowed for the emergence of such change" (p. 353). They did this by disrupting existing patterns of behaviour, encouraging novelty, and making sense of emerging events for others (sensegiving). The authors argue that theories of leadership which would suggest that leaders direct and control future outcomes, "need to be re-visited in light of more recent understandings of organizational behavior offered by complexity science" (Plowman et al., 2007: p. 353).

Corvellec and Risberg (2007) are explicit in their suggestion that sensegiving is less about giving something to another and more about creating the conditions

that lead sensemakers to make sense in the manner desired by the sensegiver. They challenge Gioia and Chittipeddi's (1991) "sender-centred view of sense" (p. 322). The original definition of sensegiving, they suggest, assumes that sense can be produced without intervention from an audience; it is not "owned" by actors they argue and then "given" to another in the fashion of a gift (Corvellec and Risberg, 2007: p. 321). Corvellec and Risberg (2007) argue that "under no circumstances can sense be controlled" (p. 322). This stance is in contrast to that of Bartunek et al. (1999) who suggest that sensegiving can be used to "attempt to inculcate a particular point of view" (p. 41). In an effort to define what sensegiving achieves Corvellec and Risberg (2007) suggest the concept of *mise-en-sens*, a process similar to sensegiving which focuses on "stage setting and direction-providing" (p. 322) which is a more nuanced position which sees sense as something that is offered rather than given.

The discussion in this section shows that 'giving' in sensegiving suggests that sense can be given. Corvellec and Risberg (2007) argue that sense cannot be given, but offered. Weick et al. (2005) highlight that this can be the case as different actors will make different sense from the same sense that is offered which Ericson (2001) confirms.

### **3.2.1.2 Meaning giving and sense creation precedes sense offering**

Before sense can be offered it must be created. To investigate how multiple leaders give sense, as opposed to investigating what they do when they give sense, the focus needs to be on what occurs before sense is offered. The work of Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) and Vaara and Monin (2010) provide guidance. Weick and Sutcliffe (2001), in their review of events surrounding Pediatric Cardiac Surgery at the Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI), highlight how BRI surgeons engaged in meaning creation and used this meaning to create plausible sense. They gave meaning to the excess deaths of children following cardiac surgery primarily on the basis of the complexity of the case load in order to generate acceptance of (give sense to) the status quo. Sensemakers accepted this sense because it was plausible, even though the meaning given to the excessive deaths was ultimately found to be inaccurate. The Report of the Public Inquiry into children's heart surgery at the Bristol Royal Infirmary 1984–1995 (2001)

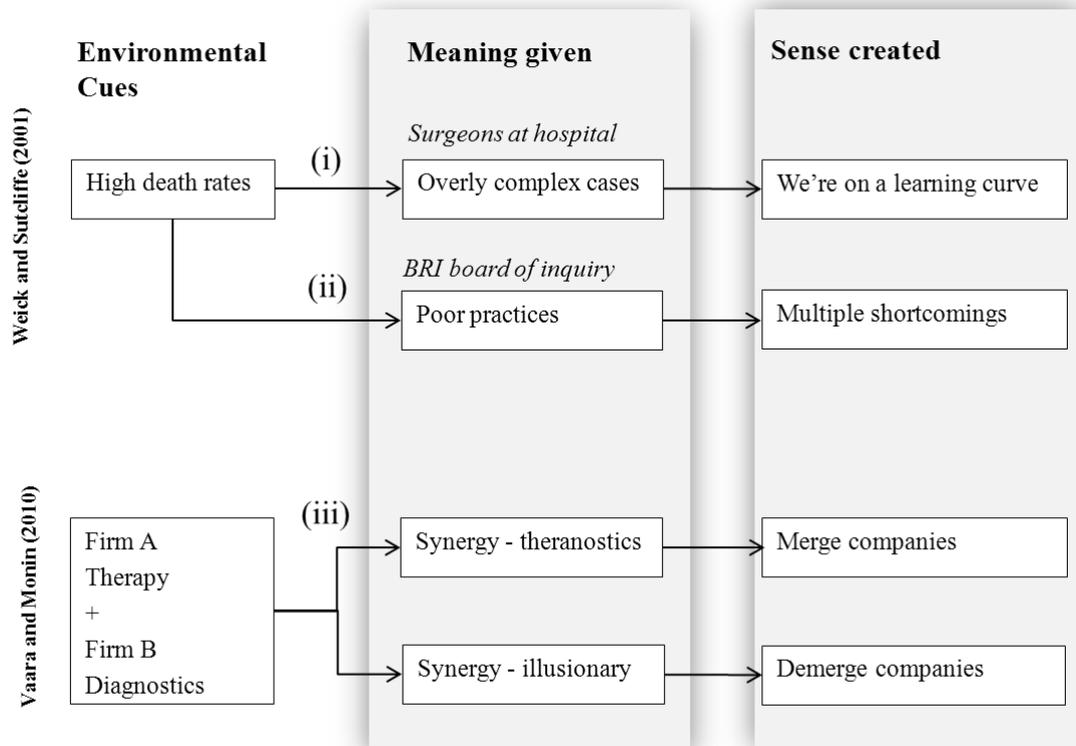
found that rather than case complexity being the source of the high death rates they were the result of multiple shortcomings; problems with paediatric open-heart surgery services being split between two sites, the absence of dedicated paediatric intensive care beds and a full-time paediatric cardiac surgeon and too few nurses trained in paediatrics. The meaning given by the BRI surgeons, while inaccurate, was an important ingredient in their sensegiving. In this instance, by giving plausible meaning to environmental cues, sensegivers could use this meaning to influence sensemakers to accept their sense of why there was no need to change practices. Vaara and Monin's (2010) study support this contention but from a different perspective. They show how meaning can be varied in order to give variable sense. They found that the same actors can give, and have accepted by the same audiences, different meanings for the same environmental cues at different times and using the backdrop of these different meanings can offer different sense.

Both studies illustrate that giving meaning to environmental cues is a tool available to sensegivers. The relationship between the meaning given and the sense created can be variable because it relies on the potency of plausibility, which is subject to contextual factors, rather than factual accuracy. These processes are illustrated in Figure 3-1.

(i) Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) found that the surgeons at the BRI gave meaning to the high death rates (environmental cues) as being the result of a complex caseload (meanings given) to give sense to the notion that the facility was on a learning curve (sense creation) and therefore there was no need to change the status quo.

(ii) The BRI Board of Inquiry also gave meaning to the high death rates (environmental cues) but this was different to the meaning given to these cues by the surgeons. The meaning the Board of Inquiry gave was that they represented poor practices (meanings given) and from this created sense for its conclusion that there were multiple shortcomings in the practices operated in the facility (sense creation).

Figure 3-1: Illustrating meaning giving and sense creation from Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) and Vaara and Monin (2010).



(iii) In Vaara and Monin (2010) a similar pattern was observed. They observed that two merging companies gave different meaning and created different sense for the same subjects at different times. The companies gave meaning to the merging of two companies (one that concentrated on therapeutics and one that concentrated on diagnostics) to create a sense that the merger would create synergies. When this did not work as planned, 21 months later the companies gave different meaning to the joining of the two companies (there were no synergies) to create sense for the demerger.

To be open to processes that may be occurring when leaders are engaged in sensegiving this study conceptualise sense as something that is offered, not given, and follows meaning giving and sense creation.

*Figure 3-2: Sensegiving is conceptualised of meaning giving and sense creation, from which sense is offered.*

## **Sensegiving**

Meaning giving + Sense creation → Sense offered

### **3.2.1.3 Power influences meaning giving and sense creation**

Smircich and Morgan (1982) argue that the study of leader sensegiving, particularly in situations where radical new realities are presented and negotiated such as those which can feature during organisational change environments, must recognise that leadership “is a process of power-based reality constructions and needs to be understood in these terms” (p. 270).

Using an experimental design Sonenshein (2006) identified how an actor’s power can influence their sensegiving strategies. That study found that those with lower-power used “public economic language to increase the perceived legitimacy of an issue” (p. 1162) and avoided “softer normative language that could decrease the perceived legitimacy of the issue” (p. 1163). They highlight Gioia and Chittipeddi’s (1991) finding that for those with more power, issue crafting is less prominent because they can use their power “to coerce others to adopt issues and can also use more direct sensegiving tactics, such as resource allocations and personnel changes” (p. 1163). Lines (2007) who studied the relationship between power and influence tactics, found similar results; change agents with a high amount of position power can rely less on rational persuasion. They can make simple implementation requests that recipients have a duty to obey or they can use more assertive influencing tactics such as “setting deadlines, expressing impatience and anger, ordering and demanding compliance (Bass and Burkhart, 1993)” (Lines, 2007: p. 166). An actor’s power and access to power therefore influences the sensegiving strategies they use.

Drawing on Hardy’s (1985, 1994, 1996) third dimension of power, the power of meaning, Balogun et al. (2005) points out that exercising the power of meaning “involves the use of symbols, rituals, language and co-option, for example, to

shape perceptions, cognitions and preferences” (p. 263). Political behaviours include building networks, using ‘key players’, befriending power brokers, bending rules, self-promotion, using misinformation to confuse, spreading rumours to undermine, and keeping ‘dirt files’ to blackmail others (Buchanan, 2008). Despite the self-interested nature of some of these tactics, Buchanan (2008) suggest that most managers see no ethical impediments to the use of political tactics and this type of behaviour is not necessarily seen as damaging.

Despite the recognition that an actor’s power can affect their influencing strategy, Maitlis and Sonenshein (2010) point out that calls for more attention to be given to power and politics in sensemaking (Weick et al., 2005) have remained “largely unfulfilled” (p. 571). They suggest that future research could take better account of power and politics by investigating how multiple accounts compete in crisis and organisational change environments, the latter being the subject for this study. Hope (2010) also expressed surprise at the absence of power and politics from the research, pointing out that it was remarkable how little focus has been given to politics in the sensemaking and sensegiving literature “especially when sensegiving has to do with influencing the meaning construction of others” (p.196) and is “at the core of political struggles and the fight for power” (p.199). Suggesting that “sensegiving is politics in action” (p. 213), Hope (2010) took up this challenge. His study of organisational change in a claims handling division of a Nordic insurance company, highlights the tactics used by middle managers to establish resource power and process power as a means of establishing the power over meaning (p. 210).

*Sensegiving processes contain a wide range of political means to gain control over the processes, ranging from a political ploy involving taking control over process and meaning construction in an open process, to the more closed processes where secrecy and manipulation are important means for influence. (Hope, 2010: p. 213)*

While Hope (2010) points out that during organisational change, where there are struggles over which reality will prevail, “the political struggle will be about the power of meaning” (p. 210) “which is about controlling what position will end up as the preferred solution” (p. 210).

*The power of meaning has to do with controlling or shaping perceptions, cognitions and preferences, which is per se sensegiving. This is possible by influencing what information is given, and how, and to whom, it is presented. It has to do with controlling language symbols and rituals.*  
(Hope, 2010: p. 198)

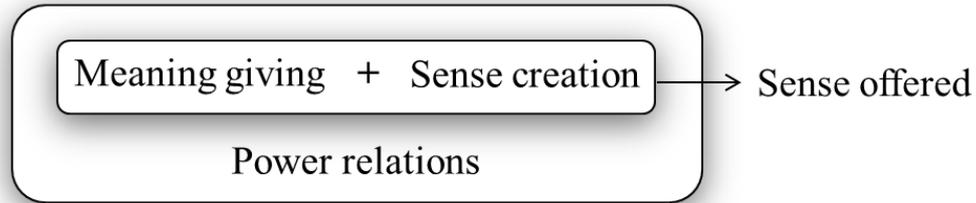
While an actor's power and political skill are important sensegiving success factors, they are not a guarantee of successful sensegiving (Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010). The ability of an actor to make sense and give sense is strongly influenced by whether they have the skills to do so and power does not automatically bestow these skill (Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007). Of note from Hope (2010) is that despite the political activities of middle managers to control the meaning construction of others through activities such as manipulating and controlling what information was made available, the final construction of meaning rested with those who held formal legitimate power – the organisation's leaders.

Four years after Maitlis and Sonenshein (2010) suggested power and politics was being side stepped, Maitlis and Christianson (2014) suggest that sensemaking had moved on and research had become "less politically naïve" (p. 98). It was "much more common" (p. 98) for research to consider competing accounts and the political processes which lead to some accounts being legitimised and others evaporating (p. 98). Perhaps the delay has been the "aversion to discussing power" (Hardy, 1996: p. S14) and its role in the implementation of strategic change "because of the discomfort that this term engenders" (p. S14). Hardy (1996) suggests "pretending that power does not exist, does not make it go away" (p. S14).

This discussion highlights that power relationships that exist between sensegivers and sensemakers can impact on their meaning giving and sense creation episodes (Figure 3.3). How this occurs is likely to be visible where leaders are competing to have their sense prevail which is the focus of this study.

*Figure 3-3: Power relations impact on meaning given and sense created.*

## Sensegiving



### 3.2.1.4 Sensegiving variants are used to enhance plausibility

The literature on how power relations can influence the meaning given and sense created by sensegivers draws attention to the variants on sensegiving available to actors to make the sense they offer more plausible.

Sensegiving variants such as sensebreaking, (Pratt, 2000; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007) sensehiding (Vaara and Monin, 2010), sensedemanding (Maitlis and Christianson, 2013) and sense forcing and sensemanipulation (Venard, 2001) are emerging as frameworks to extend the literature beyond viewing sensemaking and sensegiving as processes grounded in cooperation and collaboration (Balogun et al., 2005).

The process of sensebreaking is not new but labelling it as such is relatively recent. Gray et al. (1985) set out a meaning construction and destruction metaphor which sees meaning as simultaneously created and destroyed. Of relevance is their suggestion that change is likely to occur when accepted interpretive systems are challenged and can precipitate meaning destruction. Their findings suggest this can occur in four circumstances: when the context is changed, when the abuse of legitimate power is challenged, when there is an increase in environmental pressures which can arise through transformations or when insiders and outsiders compete for control, and when the prevailing meaning systems are challenged by giving voice to contradictory views (p. 92-93).

Pratt (2000) opened the recent sensebreaking discussion and based on a study of Amway distributors saw it as having a number of steps centred on identity destruction (sensebreaking) followed by construction (sensegiving). Pratt (2000)

found that the identity of Amway distributors was challenged and devalued and, through dream building, a new very attractive identity which they could attain, was “talked into existence” (Weick et. al., 2005: p. 409). Successful sensebreaking created “a meaning void” (Pratt, 2000: p. 464), between who the distributors were led to believe they were, and who they could be, if they took the prescribed action. Unlike sensemaking, which seeks to reduce uncertainty, sensebreaking accentuates it (Ashforth et al., 2008). After creating a meaning void and associated tension, Pratt (2000) found that Amway stepped in and gave sense to the behaviours distributors needed to engage in to accumulate material possessions which would fill the void. A key insight from Pratt (2000) is that if an organisation emphasises only sensebreaking practices, to the neglect of sensegiving, workers may be alienated and seek meaning about the organisation through negative non-members.

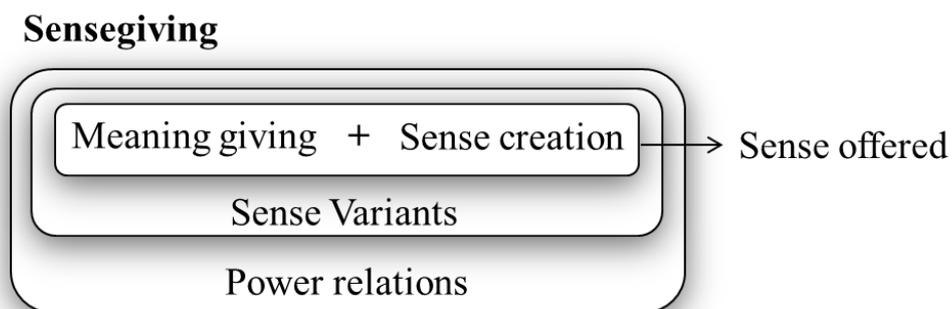
Others adopt a broader perspective on what sensebreaking seeks to achieve Lawrence and Maitlis (2014) see it as an attempt to get actors to “question the basis on which they have been acting” (p. 15). It seeks to change fundamental understandings that guide their on-going sensemaking and actions (Lawrence and Maitlis, 2014). In their study of distributed workers Vlaar et al., 2008 observed sensebreaking as the act of deliberately disrupting the meaning held by other actors. Drawing on Maitlis and Lawrence (2007) they highlight that sensebreaking is used to question existing understandings of others, causing them to experience their views of reality as incoherent, insensible and untenable: “Acts of sensebreaking involve the reframing of previously held conceptions and redirecting other team members’ attention and search for solutions” (Vlaar et al., 2008: p. 241).

Less prominent in the literature are sense forcing (Venard, 2001) and sensehiding (Vaara and Monin, 2010). According to Venard (2001) sense forcing involves two social process; sensegiving and sensemanipulation. Sensegiving is “the communication of meaning given by one actor to others” (p. 87) and sense manipulating “is the creation of specific conditions that are conducive to an actor adopting a specific sense of a situation and acting according to this meaning” (p. 88). Sensemakers are steered in a particular direction by sensegivers who deliberately manipulate meaning and sense. Chreim (2005) provides empirical

evidence of how senior managers in a Canadian Bank draw on the past to construct public narratives which “weave continuity and change” (p. 597). They suggest that these narratives can involve “the selection, manipulation and omission of information, often aimed at influencing interpretation by others” (p. 589). Sensehiding has similarities with sensemanipulation. It involves particular ideas, meaning or sense being hidden in order to promote a specific type of thinking or action (Vaara and Monin, 2010). It can involve actors downplaying or silencing specific information in order to steer sensemakers in a particular direction.

While the literature on these variants is limited, their emergence illustrates the growing interest in investigating the strategies available to sensegivers to make the sense they are attempting to give more plausible. Unpacking these behaviours (Figure 3.4) could contribute to our wider understanding of the processes underpinning sensegiving.

*Figure 3-4: The meaning given and sense created can be influenced by the sensegiving variants used.*



This synthesis of the literature on these four dimensions of sensegiving illustrates that there is more to sensegiving than giving sense; sense must be offered before it can be given, meaning giving precedes sense offering, power relations influence meaning giving and sense creation and sensegiving variants can be used to enhance plausibility. It highlights that researching how leaders give sense requires an approach that can probe deeply into what occurs before sense is offered. The next section develops a definition of the study’s environment.

### **3.3 Defining change**

Because uncertainty and ambiguity are triggers for sensemaking and sensegiving (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991; Weick et al., 2005; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007), organisational settings that enable them (Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007), such as organisations experiencing crises or introducing strategic change, are fertile ground for sensemaking and sensegiving scholarship. To observe multiple leader sensegiving, this study, therefore, needs to be embedded in an organisation or industry experiencing significant organisational change. However, defining change can be problematic. The use of a variety of terms to describe different types of change which have many similar characteristics, such as strategic change, transformational change, frame breaking change, revolutionary change all add to the challenge. This definitional gap is overcome by drawing on the literature, with particular reference to punctuated equilibrium theory and discontinuous change (Tushman and Romanelli, 1985), and defining the features of an organisation or industry that is experiencing the type of change that would trigger its leaders to engage in sensegiving.

#### **3.3.1 Different types of organisational change**

Punctuated equilibrium theory as applied to organisational change, and its associated insights on leadership in continuous (first order) and strategic (second order) (Meyer et al., 1990: p. 94) change environments, provides valuable guidance for this study in defining its environment. It also illustrates the significance of leader sensemaking and sensegiving whether designed to maintain the status quo and implement incremental change, or make sense of and give sense to the need for strategic change.

The punctuated equilibrium theory was developed from within the natural sciences and posits that significant evolutionary change occurs in response to rare and rapid events that can have high impact. In their absence, change is gradual. Drawing on this theory, and based on a review of company histories across different industries, organisation types and countries, Romanelli and Tushman (1994) suggest that the way fundamental change occurs in organisations and industry mirrors what occurs in nature. They advance that transformations occur as a result of “relatively short bursts of fundamental change” (p. 1141) which are

preceded and followed by relatively long periods of stability during which incremental change occurs. Discontinuous change punctuates the equilibrium. It is transformational and involves sharp shifts in an industry or organisation's "strategy, power, structure and controls" (Tushman et al., 1986: p. 585). It relocates boundaries and changes the nature of bases of competition (Scroggins, 2006).

Romanelli and Tushman (1994) formally tested and confirmed the applicability of the punctuated equilibrium theory, first presented in Tushman and Romanelli (1985), to organisational change using data from 25 microcomputer producers between 1967 and 1969. However, aspects of the theory have been challenged. Child and Smith (1987) argue transformations occur through phases which do not necessarily have defined starting and finishing points.

*While in relative terms it may be correct to suggest that firms move between periods of stability punctuated by transformations (Miller & Friesen, 1980) in an absolute sense this is to over-separate temporally the continuities and discontinuities. (Child and Smith, 1987: p. 583)*

Based on the finding of a study of organisational transformation which occurred within Cadbury Limited between 1966 to 1983, Child and Smith (1987) suggests that transformational change is necessary "when incremented adaptation which characterized mature firms becomes insufficient" (p. 568). Importantly the change does not have to be completely new as it can combine the "incremental extension of some existing policies and practices with other features that are more radically innovative" (Child and Smith, 1987: p. 576). Referring also to Pettigrew's (1985) study of ICI, and drawing on its findings, Child and Smith (1987) point out that it can take decades for transformation to be achieved rather than mere years which revolutionary transformation suggests (Romanelli and Tushman, 1994: p. 177).

*This is partly because it [transformation] transcends many levels and both the cognitive and political linkages between those levels must be active if the process is not to stall. (Child and Smith, 1987: p. 583)*

Reger et al. (1994) offer an alternative perspective; tectonic change. They suggest that neither incremental nor revolutionary change provides satisfactory results for most firms in dynamic environments. They argue that trying to introduce fundamental change incrementally will lead to strategic drift and trying to do it through revolutionary change will generate significant internal conflict because “they challenge employees' basic assumptions about the very nature of the firm” (p. 33). Their suggestion, is tectonic change which “describes the magnitude of change that falls within the change acceptance zone” (Reger et al., 1994: p. 37).

*Even though it may seem counterintuitive, fundamental change requires managers to create the equivalent of moderate earthquakes within their organizations. They must be willing to destroy out dated aspects of the organization's old identity while simultaneously building on other, still relevant, elements. (Reger et al., 1994: p. 37)*

Of interest for the sensegiving dimension of this study is this reference to identity destruction which points to the role of sensebreaking (Pratt, 2000).

In contrast to the focus on change in specific organisations, Meyer et al. (1990) argue that discontinuous change at industry level, where the focus is on “emergence, transformation and decline of industries” (p. 96), is an area “strategy theorists have rarely ventured into” (p. 97). Industry level change can create greater ambiguity than organisational change as it can involve structural reform that bridges organisational boundaries as in a merger (Denis, Lamothe, Langley, *et al.* 2009). In a longitudinal study of hospital CEOs reacting to discontinuous change in an industry Meyer et al. (1990) set out a framework to classify theories relating to first (continuous) and second (strategic) order change at both firm and industry level. They equate first order change to “a myriad of small compensatory steering movements that permit a bicyclist to maintain his or her equilibrium” (p. 94) and second order change as that which “transforms fundamental properties or states of the system” (p. 94). They found that stresses had been accumulating among Californian hospitals during 1960s and 1970s due to resistance to change. The introduction of regulations by state and federal governments in 1982 and 1983 to contain health costs and improve competition, while in themselves appeared relatively innocuous, when juxtaposed against the

accumulated stresses from resistance, triggered “discontinuous change that surged through the hospital industry in California” (Meyer et al., 1990: p. 104). This suggests an organisation’s equilibrium can be punctuated following “a gradual accumulation of stress, which a system resists until it reaches breaking point, or until a triggering event precipitates discontinuous change” (p. 103).

In a similar vein to the bicyclist referred to by Meyer et al. (1990), Jansen (2004) provides a theoretical distinction between stasis-based momentum, which describes the energy associated with persisting with or extending the current trajectory, and change-based momentum which describes the energy associated with pursuing a new trajectory (p. 277). Stasis-based momentum is characterised by small efforts, incremental changes, familiar paths and adjusted scripts. Change-based momentum involves large effort, frame-breaking change, new paths and new scripts (p. 277).

Tushman et al. (1986) argue that reversing an organisation’s momentum toward continuity requires “frame breaking change” (p. 583). Unlike convergent change which can be equated to tinkering around an organisation’s edges, frame breaking change leads to change throughout an organisation. These are “revolutionary changes *of* the system as opposed to incremental changes *in* the system” (Tushman et al., 1986: p.589, emphasis in original).

### **3.3.2 Leadership for stability or change**

During incremental or convergent change one of the roles of leadership is to re-emphasise the organisation’s mission and core values. Leaders reinforce patterns of behaviour, norms, and values that are anchored in the past (Tushman et al., 1986). They support the maintenance of the “forces for stability” (p. 587) and discourage “boat-rocking” (p. 590). The change that does occur is guided by “shared understandings that support the continuation of the established patterns” (Romanelli and Tushman, 1994: p. 1143) and while incremental change can create uncertainty for people affected, it can be characterised as moderate and does not create undue instability (Tushman et al., 1986).

When an organisation’s strategy fits well with the prevailing environment this self-fulfilling stability can be an asset, as can the ability of the organisation’s

leadership to reinforce existing behaviour, norms and values. However, when an organisation's strategy is not appropriate for the prevailing environment, these forces and skills can become liabilities and do not meet the fit for purpose yardstick. An example of this is highlighted in Colville and Murphy's (2006) study of Lilly. When Sidney Taurel became Chairman and CEO of Lilly in 1999 (he joined the company in 1971 and was appointed CEO in 1998) he identified that the leadership supported the continuation of the established patterns and was holding it back. That year he published a paper directed at employees entitled 'On Leadership'. In it Taurel challenged the organisation's traditional consensus style of management which he highlighted was "more attuned to deal with stability rather than change, whether this be reflected in a consensual style of management, a relative aversion to risk or simply a tendency to be inward-focussed" (Colville and Murphy, 2006: p. 666). Taurel saw these as "negative cultural traits that retarded the generation and transmission of the new ideas that were paramount to the future of the company" (p. 666).

While accepting that not all frame breaking change is successful, Tushman et al. (1986) argue that when organisational leaders do not see the need to reorient their organisation the change will be less successful than when they can see the need to change and are capable of responding accordingly. This can occur when leaders are unable to correctly interpret the competitive environment (Daft and Weick, 1984), cannot align their belief systems with the demands of their environment (Barr, 1998), do not want to rock the boat or are simply unable to carry through the necessary frame breaking change. Meyer et al. (1990) conclude that industries undergoing strategic change create dilemmas for managers.

*It breaks the frame in which they have been operating, probably have come to take for granted. The events triggering strategic changes can appear so inconsequential, and the onset can be so sudden, that managers often are forced to act before they understand the consequences of acting. (Meyer et al., 1990: p. 108)*

How organisational leaders respond to familiar and unfamiliar environmental events provides an insight into how they deal with change. Barr (1998) found that in the context of an organisation's strategic response to environmental events, top

management interpret and address change events they are not familiar through assembly and creation (sensemaking) and therefore are less encumbered by the past. With familiar events they adopt the more time consuming processes of disassembly of past sense (sensebreaking) and recreation of new sense (sensemaking). This provides additional insight into why significant changes in strategy, especially during periods of performance decline, are most often undertaken by managers brought in from other industries, and why organisations new to industries seem to be able to respond more quickly to changes in the environment (Barr, 1998: p. 665). As change is “intimately linked to the cognitive processes of the CEO and the top management team” (Barr, 1998: p. 645) how they make sense of the environment their organisation is operating in has a major bearing on strategy planning, deployment and implementation.

*Further, firm leaders' interpretations of the organization's operating environments frame and direct the change in organizational actions that take place (Bartunek 1984, Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991, Gioia et al. 1994), and significant change in organizational action does not occur until that new understanding is developed (Bartunek 1984, Barr et al. 1992). (Barr, 1998: p. 645)*

In their discussion on organisations as complex adaptive systems Boal and Schultz (2007) highlight the role of leadership in bridging the past and present with the future. They argue that strategic leadership provides the balance between “complete stability and unmanageable disorder” (p. 412).

In contrast to the leadership required during convergent change, frame breaking change requires “strong, direct leadership from the top as to where the organisation is going and how it is to get there” (Tushman et al., 1986: p. 591). In the absence of this type of leadership, the likely result is a piecemeal approach which will get “bogged down in politics, individual resistance to change and organisational inertia” (p. 590).

A case study of Policing 2000, involving the introduction of a discontinuous change programme in the New Zealand Police Service, exemplifies the emergence of inertia during a major change initiative (Duncan et al., 2001). The study supports the observation that organisations are unable to “instigate or

conclude a fundamental transformation via incremental or gradual changes in organizational characteristics” (Romanelli and Tushman, 1994: p.1159). It confirms that resistance to change can exist among interdependent subunits in organisations as managers seek to maintain “a complex network of commitments and relationships” (Romanelli and Tushman, 1994: p.1144) and overcoming the resistance that can come from “webs of interdependent relationships” (p.1144) requires revolutionary transformation. When considering the suggestion from Romanelli and Tushman (1994) that organisational transformations “typically occur when organisations are facing crises” (p. 1155), the failure of Policing 2000 to take hold was because leadership suitable for a convergent change environment was being used when frame breaking change leadership was needed.

This discussion illustrates the central role of leaders in implementing strategic change and underscores the value of investigating their behaviour in such an environment.

### **3.3.3 Defining a strategic change environment**

The term discontinuous change is closely aligned to terms such as strategic change, transformational change, frame breaking change, fundamental change and revolutionary change. This review has highlighted that discontinuous change involves changes in strategy, power distributions, structures, controls, boundaries and identities in organisations and industries. It also requires a particular type of leadership and new ways of thinking. While accepting that these are features of change which trigger sensemaking and sensegiving, they are not exclusive to discontinuous change environments; they are also present during strategic change. While studying an environment where these features are present, I will label it as strategic change to avoid limiting its applicability.

An organisation or industry will be defined as undergoing or have undergone strategic change if the change was preceded by a period of stability (Romanelli and Tushman, 1994) or the accumulation of stress (Meyer et al., 1990), requires sustained sensegiving by the CEO (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991) and/or top management team and has involved changes to the organisation’s (i) strategy, (ii) power, structure and (iii) controls as suggested by Tushman et al. (1986).

(i) Change to strategy

The organisation/industry's primary strategic direction is changing or has changed in response to its viability and future existence being openly threatened. This can include the significant changes to the business model (changes to product and service range and delivery model) regardless of whether it is imposed or introduced voluntarily in response to changes in the environment.

(ii) Changes to power and structure

The organisation/industry has changed its CEO and/or top management team structures which involve significant change in reporting, governance and accountability changes which manifest themselves at top team and board level.

(iii) Changes to controls

The organisation/industry is attempting to introduce or has introduced structural changes, and business process which change responsibilities, accountabilities and controls in key areas.

### **3.4 Summary**

This synthesis highlights that the veneer of simplicity that the sensemaking-sensegiving dyad engenders disguises its complexity.

At the heart of this complexity is the abstract nature of sense. It is intangible and slippery, (Foldy et al., 2008: p. 525). Given the influence of social factors (Weick et al., 2005) on its construction, it is a moving target. When it comes to accepting sense, plausibility, which is on the eye of the beholder, prevails over accuracy (Weick et al., 2005).

The literature on leader sensegiving highlighted that, apart from Maitlis (2005) and Vaara and Monin (2010), much of the literature concentrates on the leader-follower dichotomy within specific organisations and during mergers.

There is a shortage of empirical data on how leaders give sense to a strategic change where multiple organisations and their leaders (e.g. CEOs, union leaders, political leaders and lobby group leaders) are competing to have their sense prevail. Given the significant changes that are occurring across many industries such as telecommunication, air travel, health, education, finance and which involve sensegiving by multiple leaders (e.g. business leaders, government officials, unions, media consumer and environmental group) this is a significant gap in our knowledge.

Research on leader sensegiving has to a large degree concentrated on the communicative actions and overlooked delving into the deep structures underpinning sensegiving. The discussion on the four dimensions of sensegiving synthesised from the literature, illustrate that sensegiving involves more than giving sense and suggest that investigating the ‘how’ of sensegiving requires deep probing into what occurs before sense is offered; the meaning giving and sense creation episodes, which can, in a competitive environment, be influenced by power relations and the use of sense variants.

The discussion on organisational change environments highlight that they create a “sensegiving imperative” (Corley and Gioia, 2004: p. 178). They open up opportunities for leaders to use sensegiving behaviours to fill meaning voids (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006: p. 196) and give meaning to the past, current and future. The significant role leaders play in implementing strategic change was also highlighted which adds further support to the view that they are ideal environments to observe the sensegiving behaviours of leaders.

This chapter started with the study’s review question.

*How do CEOs and/or executives at an organisation’s strategic apex give sense during periods of change?*

Taking into account the finding that the literature on leader sensegiving in a multi-leader context is scarce and the proposition that to get at the processes underpinning this behaviour it is necessary to delve deep into this behaviour in a focused manner, the review question was refined. Based on the imprecision of the phrase ‘CEOs and/or executives at an organisation’s strategic apex’, which was

likely to draw in a wide variety of different post holders, and therefore be problematic, it was replaced with the generic label 'leaders'. As the study is interested in environments where there were multiple leaders competing to have their sense prevail, this needed to be specified within the question. The term 'change' was too general and vague and more precision was needed. It was replaced with the term 'strategic change'. As the study cannot aim to investigate how leaders give sense to all or a variety of strategic changes the question needed to specify that it was interested in leader sensegiving focused on the same strategic change.

The research question to which this study sought an answer was set as follows:

*How do leaders, in a multiple leader context, give sense to the same strategic change?*

The next Chapter outlines the research methodology and method adopted to seek answers to this question.

## **Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Research Method**

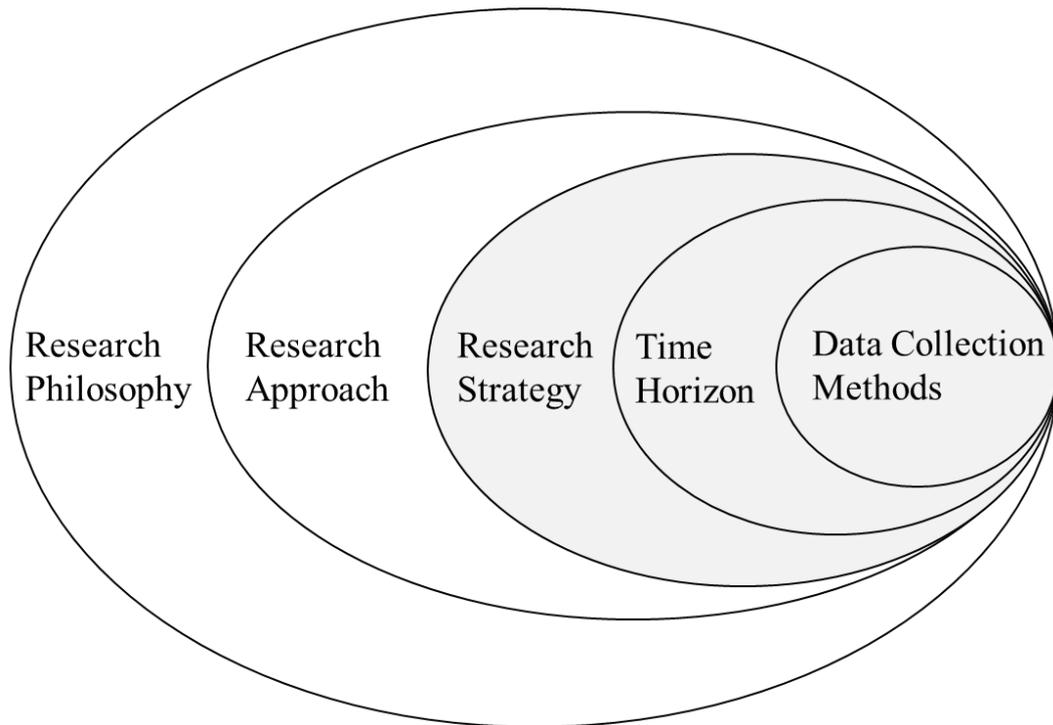
### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter sets out the development of the study's novel research strategy to systematically collect, reduce and interpret data relevant to answering the research question.

Saunders et al. (2007) define research "as something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way" (p. 5). In this context systematic refers to systematic data collection and systematic interpretation of this data. Leedy and Ormrod (2013) also emphasise the systematic dimension of research and define it as a "systematic process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting information (data) to increase understanding of a phenomenon about which we are interested or concerned" (p. 2). A systematic approach aims to increase the chance that the answer to the research question that is ultimately offered contributes to the existing knowledge on the topic and reduces the chance that it is wrong (Saunders et al., 2007: p. 149).

The research methodology (research philosophy and approach) and method (techniques and procedures to obtain and analyse data) for this study have been developed consistent with the principles of Saunders' Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2007: p. 132). The Research Onion enables researchers to focus on the elements that constitute an effective research strategy and view them as interdependent. It depicts a research strategy as having five separate yet interconnected layers, similar to the separate yet interconnected layers of an onion. The two outer layers focus on the study's research philosophy (ontology and epistemology) and research approach (deductive, inductive, abductive or retroductive), which underpin the research method. The research method itself is depicted by three inner layers (shaded in Figure 4-1) which are concerned with research strategies, the study's time horizon, and data collection methods.

Figure 4-1: The Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2007).



I have chosen this model as the framework for this discussion as it enables researchers to make key research strategy decisions in a logical sequence as they move through each layer. It also forces consideration of the relationship between each decision and enables an overall strategy to be clearly presented. I also take account of the warning from Saunders et al. (2007) that while the development of a research strategy may seem like a rational sequence, it is messier than it appears (p. 8). A researcher may have to revisit each stage a number of times as their study unfolds and as they consider emerging issues and ideas. I outline in this chapter the options available in relation to each layer, the decisions I made in relation to each and the justification for each decision.

## 4.2 Research aim

This study's research question is: *How do leaders give sense, in a multiple leader context, to the same strategic change?* In answering this question the study aims to extend existing knowledge on leader sensegiving by developing a model which explains how leaders give sense, in a multiple leader context, to the same strategic change. It is envisaged that this model will create greater understanding among academics and leaders of strategic change of how they, and other leaders,

engage in behaviours which support and/or undermine change initiatives. With this understanding change leaders should be in a better position to encourage supportive behaviour and address disruptive behaviour. This is an area of management research that has received little attention despite the complexity of organisational change, the volume of resources absorbed during change, and the significant implications for leaders who fail to successfully introduce change.

### **4.3 Research Philosophy – Overview**

There is no best way to practice science. Depending on their “assumptions about how the world works” (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 116) researchers can adopt different perspectives on the same phenomenon and use different ways of collecting and analysing data (May, 2001). At the core of these assumptions are a researcher’s ontology and epistemology. In the social sciences a researcher’s ontological stance reflects their beliefs on “the nature of social reality or the aspect of reality that is most important for the attainment of knowledge” (Delanty and Strydom, 2003: p. 6). Their epistemological stance reflects what they believe “does and does not constitute warranted, or scientific, knowledge” (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: p. 3) within the area they are studying. Together a researcher’s ontological and epistemological stance form their research philosophy; their “basic set of beliefs or assumptions that guide their enquiries” (Creswell, 1998: p. 74). This is also referred to as the researcher’s worldview, which is the term I will use during this discussion.

As illustrated by the Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2007), their worldview shapes what data the researcher will seek out, how they will seek it out and how the data will be interpreted and analysed. Having a clear worldview is essential to enable researchers understand and, if necessary, challenge their taken-for-granted assumptions (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 116) about what is reality and what is acceptable knowledge. It also enables the researcher to build their scholarship on a rigorous foundation and engage in a constructive “conversation within a specific, relatively unified community” (Huff, 2009: p. 111) whose members adopt similar worldviews. Ironically, in many studies issues of ontology and epistemology are “often either artfully avoided, taken for granted or ignored” (Partington, 2000: p. 92). A contributory factor to this shortcoming in

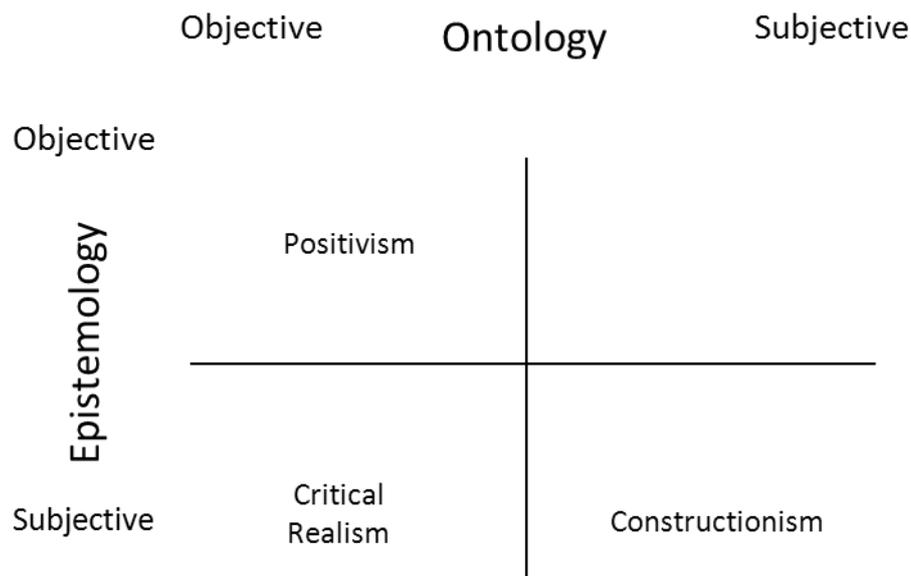
management research is that there is “no single agreed ontological or epistemological paradigm” (Tranfield and Starkey, 2000: p. 345).

*It is a heterogeneous and fragmented field (Whitley, 1984b; Tsoukas, 1994) utilizing knowledge and research methods often drawn from associated disciplines in the social sciences. (Tranfield and Starkey, 2000: p. 345)*

### 4.3.1 The epistemology and ontology spectrum

According to Delanty and Strydom (2003), it is not possible to circumscribe the different and similar philosophies adopted by researchers because of the limitations of language to capture the meaning of the various concepts. At a macro level the different ontological and epistemological stances can each be conceptualised as a spacial continuum where their location is determined by the degree to which the researcher views reality and/or knowledge as objective or subjective constructs (Figure 4-2).

*Figure 4-2: Adapted from Johnson and Duberley, 2000.*



A more fine grained examination reveals that within this framework there are many different stances whose subtle differences are not captured by the bluntness of the objective – subjective dichotomy; they can have relatively subtle variations but ultimately lean towards the subjective or objective side of the spectrum. The

following brief overview does not aim to survey the totality of the continuum's landscape, which can be contested and changeable (Delanty and Strydom, 2003), but sets the scene for a detailed discussion of the rationale behind the worldview adopted for this study.

A researcher's ontological stance reflects their view on the nature of reality. In general this view can be described as objectivist or subjectivist. An objectivist ontology views reality as existing externally to and independent of human cognition of it. It is not concerned with social processes and how actors use cognitive processes to effect meaning generation and reality construction. What exists, and therefore what we can have knowledge of, is limited to what we can observe and measure with objectivity. An objectivist ontology can be underpinned by a positivistic or interpretivist epistemology. A positivistic epistemology presupposes that "it is possible to access the world objectively" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: p. 12). This stance requires research methods which ensure that the "research is undertaken, as far as possible, in a value-free way" (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 104) which "prevent human contamination of its apprehension or comprehension" (Guba and Lincoln, 2005: p. 203). The researcher is considered a neutral independent observer "capable of discovering the 'truth' about the world" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: p. 181) without impacting or contaminating the 'truth'. Researchers adopting a positivistic epistemology are concerned with cause and effect and discovering, testing and confirming "fundamental laws that explain regularities in human social behaviour" (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991: p. 23). They seek to predict rather than explain phenomena. In general, but not exclusively, it lends itself to a deductive or theory testing research method using quantitative data gathering and analysis methods. On the other hand, an interpretivist epistemology views knowledge as socially constructed. Critical realists adopt an objectivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology. Researchers who adopt this stance view reality as independent of our knowledge or experience of it while believing that knowledge we do have of it is socially constructed. This worldview is discussed in more detail below.

A subjectivist ontology accepts the existence of multiple realities which are constructed by actors through the social interaction with others and the

environment in which the construction occurs. In contrast to the objectivist ontology, there is no ‘true’ reality; “there are multiple realities, none having precedence over the other in terms of claims to represent the truth about social phenomena” (Andrews, 2012: p. 42). This stance is often associated with the term social constructionism (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 180). Rather than reality being external, *out there* to be observed, measured and recorded, it is “an output of human cognitive processes” (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: p. 181). Through these cognitive processes actors can interpret the world differently depending on, for example their social, historical and political circumstances. Discerning the various realities can therefore be complex and create challenges in data collection, analysis and pattern identification. A subjectivist ontology is exclusively underpinned by an interpretivist epistemology as a subjectivist ontology and a positivistic epistemology would “seem incoherent” (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: p. 180). An interpretivist epistemological stance does not see knowledge as limited to what can be observed and measured objectively and reduced to fundamental laws. Researchers who adopt this approach are interested in the social world and seeing it from the perspective of the subjects, not just through measurable observations. They see human action as meaningful and integral to the process of reality creation. They seek knowledge by understanding this action and the context in which it occurs to reveal how and why things happen in the way that they do. To understand human action, the researcher must “grasp the meanings that constitute that action” (Schwandt, 2003: p. 191). These meanings are determined by “the context and the intentions of the actor” (p. 191) and to get at them requires subjective interpretation by the researcher of what actors are doing. The researcher is therefore part of the process of investigation rather than being a value-free participant. Knowledge produced from enquiry is therefore socially constructed. How this subjective interpretation is exercised defines the particular interpretative approach adopted. Researchers who adopt a subjectivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology are considered constructionists and social constructionists. They are generally concerned with theory building which requires qualitative research methods.

Central to this study’s research question is sensegiving which, as discussed in detail in Chapter 3, involves influencing the sensemaking of others; the way actors, through interaction with others, make sense of environmental cues when

faced with equivocality. Inherent in this behaviour is the construction of reality by actors, both the sensegivers and the sensemakers. It is widely accepted that this reality construction is influenced by factors such as the social, historical and political context, the relationships between actors, and their wants and needs, and their need for plausibility over accuracy. As reality is socially constructed there is no one 'true' reality; reality is what individual actors construct it to be. There are as many equally valid realities as there are individual actors. To apply a research philosophy which adopts an ontological objective and epistemological positivistic stance to investigate this reality construction behaviour would limit the study's potential to reveal insights into understanding or explaining this behaviour. The role of social context, and the lens of the sensemaker in determining what is plausible rather than accurate (Weick, 2005) underscores the social construction dimension to the process and why adopting a positivistic approach to sensemaking research would be problematic. For example it would have difficulty accounting for the different meanings given to the same environmental cues discussed in Chapter 3 (Weick and Sutcliffe, 2001 and Vaara and Monin, 2010) and the different realities created from these meanings by different actors as witnessed in Corvellec and Risberg (2007). It would be limited to acquiring knowledge based on what was empirically observable and measurable and would deny the researcher the opportunity to make judgments on what may be occurring. It is not surprising therefore that sensemaking-sensegiving scholars (e.g. Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991; Ericson, 2001; Maitlis, 2005; Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007), who investigate the sensemaking and sensegiving of actors, adopt a social constructionist perspective.

Following in these footsteps, the next section discusses the suitability of applying a social constructionist worldview to address this study's research question. It argues that because this study is concerned with the process of sensegiving and particularly *how* leaders give sense in an organisational context, rather than how actors make sense, a social constructionist worldview has limitations.

#### **4.4 Sensegiving, sensemaking and social constructionism**

Social constructionism is a world view which sits at the subjective side of the objective-subjective continuum. Pioneered by Berger and Luckmann (1966) it sees reality and knowledge as socially created through human interaction, and

mediated “historically, culturally and linguistically” (Willig, 2001: p. 7). Reality is not *out there* to be discovered, which is the stance of positivists. Instead “we construct or make it” (Schwandt, 2003: p. 197). Reality is mediated by the lens through which the actor views it and its context; “what you see depends on where you stand: perspective is all when it comes to knowing and knowledge” (Yanow and Ybema, 2009: p. 39).

As discussed, social constructionism is widely used in sensemaking-sensegiving scholarship. Sensemaking is a social process where “members interpret their environment in and through interactions with others” (Maitlis, 2005: p. 21). The reality constructed during sensemaking, through interpreting and meaning giving, during sensemaking is influenced by “who the sensemaker is and his or her background” (Vaara, 2003: p. 863) and the social context in which it occurs which “provides norms and expectations that constrain explanations” (Weick et al., 2005: p. 53). Sensegiving, which “focuses on leaders’ attempts to influence the meaning construction of others” (Sonenshein, 2006: p. 1158) is also grounded in the worldview that sees reality as socially constructed by actors. The sense that sensegivers attempt to give to equivocality and uncertainty involves constructing a reality which is heavily influenced by language and discourse, the context and the stance of the sensegivers and sensemakers.

No worldview is perfect and social constructionism has attracted its critics. One significant criticism of social constructionism is its inability to privilege the truth of one reality over another. Critics argue that this leads to an inability to distinguish between “better or worse interpretations” (Schwandt, 2003: p. 198) or what constitutes “legitimate knowledge” (p. 198). Burr (1998) argues this produces “a bewildering array of alternative (and, it could be argued, equally valid) realities in themselves” (p. 14) and it is not possible, for example, to make value judgments on the rights and wrongs of a particular type of behaviour. Elder-Vass (2012) concurs and suggests that the extreme view of social constructionism, which sees everything as a social construction “undermines the critical potential of constructionism, as it deprives us of any basis on which to make judgments between alternative constructions” (p. 9). Johnson and Duberley (2000) support this position and suggest that with a postmodernist approach, of which social constructionism is a part, there is no possibility of “adjudicating

between different realities because there is no independent criteria upon which to judge” (p. 112) and this removes our ability to critique the status quo.

Burr (1998) also argues that social constructionism’s side stepping of the role of agency is problematic. Agency is a prerequisite for the existence of the concept of influence and meaning giving which are critical dimensions of sensegiving. For the concept of influence to exist, she argues that actors must be able to distinguish between alternatives. This in turn suggests the existence of some form of reality *out there* from which to choose.

*If we abandon all attempts to theorize human beings in ways which allow room for some notion of the ‘choosing person’, then it is hard to see what the point of our attempts to persuade each other can possibly be. (Burr, 1998: p. 14)*

Newton et al. (2011) challenge the critics of social constructionism. They suggest that social constructionists acknowledge the existence of phenomena, such as climate change, while arguing that the meaning that is given to such phenomena is socially constructed and therefore open to variability. Andrews (2012) adopts a similar position and argues that social constructionism accepts that an objective reality exists and, referring to the work of Burningham and Cooper (1999), notes that strict constructionists “do not deny the existence of reality; they maintain that the meaning of reality is socially constructed” (p. 43). He argues the problem is that there is a fundamental misunderstanding of the philosophy that underpins social constructionism’s epistemology and ontology.

*The idea that disease can and does exist as an independent reality is compatible with the social constructionist view. The naming of disease and indeed what constitutes disease is arguably a different matter and has the potential to be socially constructed. This is not the same as claiming that it has no independent existence beyond language. (Andrews, 2012: p. 42)*

While these criticisms of social constructionism warrant attention, their relevance varies with the nature of the enquiry to which this worldview is applied. Sensemaking scholars are interested in unpacking the behaviour of actors and it

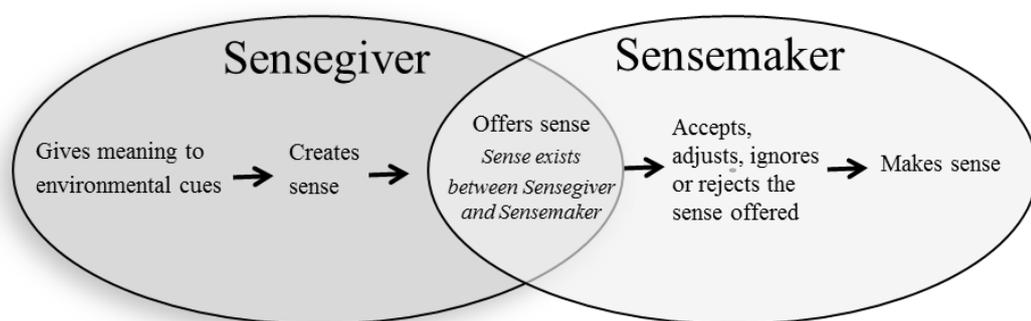
would be counterproductive to limit the scope of this unpacking by specifying what realities were truthful, that one reality should be privileged over another or that it should be possible to pass judgment on different realities. In addition sensemaking is not about influencing but understanding, so the need to take account of agency is less pronounced than Burr (1998) suggests.

However when sensegiving is considered, particularly the type that this study is investigating, leader sensegiving in a multiple leader context during strategic change, limitations of the social constructionist worldview emerge. Inherent in the sensegiving-sensemaking dyad, is the notion that sensemakers can choose from the reality offered by sensegivers. They can accept the reality offered or parts of it, they can reject it or simply ignore it and create their own. If it is accepted that sensemakers can choose between one reality and another, or even elements of realities offered, when making sense, we can assume that they are privileging one reality over another. This is at odds with a tenant of social constructionism which has difficulty accounting for one reality being privileged over another and the existence of agency.

Gioia and Chittipeddi's (1991) seminal work on sensemaking and sensegiving in organisational change supports this argument. Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) conceptualised the organisational change process introduced by the president of the university they studied as “sensemaking-for-self and sensegiving-for-others” (p. 444). The sensemaking-for-self involved the president and top management team ascribing meaning to “strategy-relevant events, threats, opportunities, etc,” (p. 444). The sensegiving-for-others included verbal and non-verbal activities of the president, such as personnel changes at the top levels, restructuring some programmes, meeting frequently with important stakeholders and espousing his vision to many groups. Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) suggest that “the clear intent [of these activities] was to provide a viable interpretation of a new reality and to influence stakeholders and constituents to adopt it as their own” (p. 443). This “viable interpretation of a new reality” (p. 443) suggests that the reality which the actions of the president created, and he was attempting to influence others to adopt, existed independently of the sensemakers. This concept of reality existing between the sensegiver and sensemaker casts a shadow on the capability of social constructionist worldview.

Social constructionism requires all realities to be accepted at “face value” (O’Mahoney and Vincent, 2014: p. 5) and denies any one reality being privileged over another. While social constructionists see all reality as equally valid, sensegiving hinges on the premise that sensemakers can privilege realities offered by sensegivers. As noted, while a social constructionist worldview is a valuable construct through which to investigate the social construction of reality by sensemakers, it has limitations for investigating sensegiving in organisational change as it is blind to the reality that is created by sensegivers and subsequently offered and exists between the sensegiver and the sensemaker, before the sensemaker decides to accept or reject it (Figure 4-3).

*Figure 4-3: A social constructionist stance could not account for sense being available to accept, adjust or reject.*



If social constructionism cannot acknowledge that a reality exists independently of sensemakers, from which they can choose, it must also be blind to what occurs before the existence of this reality, other than acknowledging that sensegiving occurs. Given this study’s concentration on the sensegiving process that occurs prior to sense being offered it is necessary to adopt a lens which can see this reality as existing independent of the sensemaker.

While a social constructionist worldview may confine the study’s scope to investigating the sense created by sensemakers, as this would be considered the only reality to exist, it is acknowledged that there is no best paradigm. Indeed Houston (2001) suggests that we should “hold onto the insights of social constructionists whilst also taking account of ‘structure’ in shaping social meaning” (p. 848). Weick (1995) alludes to this in his comments on enactment

which is an important dimension of sensemaking. While his writings explicitly acknowledge the social constructionist nature of sensemaking, he suggests that enactment “has a touch of realism in its emphasis on bracketing and punctuating” (p. 35); “In other words people act in such a way that their assumptions of realism become warranted” (p. 36).

The next section discusses critical realism as an alternative approach. It has similarities and differences with social constructionism. It too accepts that knowledge is socially constructed but also acknowledges that there is a reality that can exist independently of our knowledge of it.

#### **4.5 Critical realism**

Critical realism, championed by British philosopher Roy Bhaskar in the 1970s and 1980s, makes a clear distinction between the world and our knowledge of it. It argues that to understand science, ontology and epistemology need to be clearly separated and not conflated as in social constructionism. This is achieved by envisaging the world as consisting of intransitive and transitive objects which are related to ontology and epistemology respectively and together constitute a stratified reality.

Intransitive objects exist in the material and social worlds and are things that we have, or do not have knowledge of; “they are the real things and structures, mechanisms and processes, events and possibilities of the world” (Bhaskar, 1978: p. 22). These objects do not depend on human activity for their existence; they “exist and act independently of their identification in human knowledge” (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: p. 152). Intransitive objects do not stop being or stop having an impact just because we do not have knowledge of them; the earth was an oblate spheroid even when our knowledge of it was that it was flat.

When we engage with the world we activate cognitive processes which make sense of the sensations we experience of the world. The output of these engagements are transitive objects; theories, metaphors, and explanations of events and processes “which can change according to socio-historical variations in human understanding” (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: p. 153). Transitive objects are “artificial objects fashioned into items of knowledge by the science of

the day” (Bhaskar, 1998: p. 16). They exist only in the social world. Transitive explanations represent our knowledge of the structures and mechanisms of intransitive objects which we construct through human action. The transitive nature of these explanations is reflected by the fact that different people can experience the same entity differently and reach different conclusions and explanations, but the entity or mechanism does not change. Knowledge is therefore socially constructed rather than neutral; it is mediated “by a pre-existing stock of conceptual resources (which often includes discursive resources), which we use to interpret, make sense of, understand what it is and take appropriate action” (Fleetwood, 2005: p. 199).

Critical realism can be positioned on the continuum between positivism and interpretivism (Figure 4-2). A key feature is that it adopts a realist ontology and a relativist epistemology and avoids the “epistemic fallacy” (Fairclough, 2005: p. 922) associated with social constructionism where the nature of reality is tied in with our means of generating knowledge of reality; the only reality that exists is the one we are capable of having knowledge of. It allows us to acknowledge that reality and our knowledge are independent; they are not one and the same.

Houston (2001) argues that Bhaskar’s approach:

*...builds on the constructivist insight that all knowledge is a product of its social context, but has overcome the relativist trappings of naive or ‘strict’ constructionism (Payne, 1999) by taking account of the effects of objective reality (Delanty, 1997). (Houston, 2001: p. 852)*

While critical realism adopts a relative epistemology, which sees the selection of explanations “mediated by historically and culturally partial processes of interrogation” (Al-Amoudi and Willmott, 2011: p. 30) Bhaskar adds the concept of judgmental rationality which is contrary to the absence of truth and objectivity which prevails within social constructionism. This judgmental rationality dimension makes up the third element (along with ontological realism and epistemic relativity) of what Bhaskar calls the holy trinity of critical realism (Bhaskar, 2014). Judgmental rationality posits that different knowledge, explanations, claims to truth, and theories compete for our judgments and determinations on which provide better explanations. They are provisional. In

addition knowledge and explanations are fallible. This concept of judgmental rationality adds the ‘critical’ to critical realism.

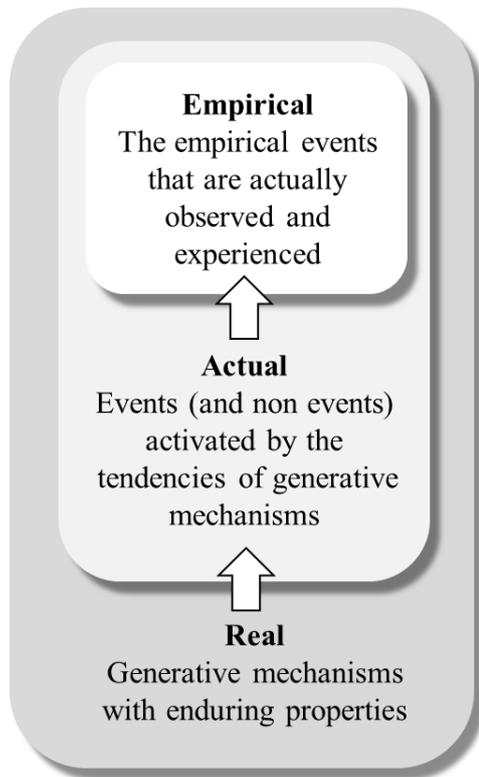
Critical realists view the world as an open system which is “usually complex and messy” (Sayer, 2000: p. 19) as opposed to a closed system where the environment is regulated by human intervention. It views the reality that exists in open systems as stratified into three domains; the empirical, the actual and the real (Figure 4-4).

The real is “whatever exists, be it natural or social” (Sayer, 2000: p. 11). This could be a chair or a family. The real is also where the generative mechanisms (which may not be visible), or the generative mechanisms that are inherent in these natural or social objects, reside. Related to mechanisms are structures, powers and tendencies. Mingers (2014) points out that Bhaskar is quite vague in explaining these terms. Fleetwood (2001) suggests that the term mechanism represents “the ensemble of structures, powers and relations” (p. 211) which, when combined, generate a tendency which “is akin to a force: it drives, propels, pushes, thrusts, asserts pressure and so on” (p. 212). The tendencies of generative mechanisms cause events, outcomes, behaviours which are manifest in the empirical and the actual (O’Mahoney and Vincent, 2014: p. 11) domains. They are “inherently multi-faceted and complex” (Houston, 2001: p. 852) and do not generate events and our experience of them in isolation.

*These mechanisms exist on multiple levels from the basic components of matter (subatomic particles, atoms, molecules) to biological systems (cells, physiological systems, and organisms) to social systems (languages, institutions, societies). (Ayers, 2010: p. 348)*

In addition generative mechanisms can combine to create new powers and mechanisms which only emerge from their combination. This concept is called emergence. The actual domain consists of events and actions that occur in space and time and result from the tendencies of the generative mechanisms. They are not always visible or experienced by actors and can exist independently of whether they are perceived in the empirical domain. The empirical domain is the domain of experience and perception; they are the result of our human sensory experience and perceptions.

Figure 4-4: The three domains of reality (Bhaskar 1978).



The true objects of scientific understanding for critical realists is accessing the generative mechanisms, which underpin the actual and the empirical domains, to explain what they cause and “how they work, and discovering if they have been activated” (Sayer, 2000: p.14). However, while these mechanisms “underlie and govern events of experience and hence explain why regularities occur” (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: p. 155), they are not directly observable. Instead “their presence can only be deduced from the processes and experiences which they have made possible” (Sims-Schouten et al., 2007 p. 105).

The objective of a critical realist researcher is to “penetrate below the surface to identify underlying social mechanisms or generative processes” (Ackroyd, 2009: p. 534) which lie behind transitive explanations “while recognizing the inevitably fallible and contextual nature of that knowledge” (Mingers, 2014: p. 4)

#### 4.6 Which philosophy is more ‘real’?

The literature on the various philosophical approaches to management research is energised by the lengths that scholars go to justify their stance and critique alternatives. Critical realists and social constructionists have engaged in

considerable debate on the flaws of each others' positions. Not all of this debate has been constructive and "a fair amount of talking past each other has occurred, not least because of a tendency to invoke caricatured pictures of the other side" (Holt and Mueller, 2011: p. 67). These debates create the impression that scholars are more interested in validating their stance by juxtaposing it with shortcomings of alternative perspectives "rather than engagement" (Al-Amoudi and Willmott, 2011: p. 27) or highlighting the benefits of the different approaches relative to areas of enquiry. The debates "often end in a stalemate, the arguments seeming intractable" (Burr, 1998: p. 20). Newton et al. (2011) look positively on these debates given the "increased pressures on researchers to justify their scholarship, or obtain 'practitioner-relevant' research funding" (p. 8) and the potential for "machine-like" (p. 8) research to overlook arguments that may question its validity.

In their call for contributions to a Special Issues of Organization Studies, Deetz et al. (2007) summarise succinctly the main criticisms of social constructionists and critical realists. Social constructionists have been criticised because "they conflate structure and agency, collapse ontology into epistemology, practice 'ontological oscillation', and generally place too much emphasis on discourse in the creation of organizational reality" (p. 429). Critical realists have been criticised for their use of language of causation and their "contention that a pre-existing social reality provides a basis to analytically distinguish structuring processes from human agency" (p. 430).

In their discussion on "boundary-transcending contributions" of "multi-perspectivists" (p. 50), Yanow and Ybema (2009) suggest that the stance of critical realists is one that "appears to want things both ways – an ontological realism coupled with an epistemological constructivism" (p. 52). They give consideration to joining different perspectives within an overarching framework and point to Martin (1992) who "advocated for a multi-perspective approach" (Yanow and Ybema, 2009; p. 51).

While critical realism and social constructionism, respectively tilt towards the positivist and interpretivist sides of the ontological continuum, particularly in relation to structure and agency, Hales (2007) suggests they are compatible and

*...they can be used in conjunction with one another as complementary perspectives from which to view and understand different aspects of a social phenomenon rather than commensurate, in the sense of being dissolved into a transcendent meta-theory. (Hales, 2007: p. 169)*

Elder-Vass (2012) concurs and argues that to be plausible social constructionism needs to connect “with our understanding of the material world of which we are part” (p. 21) and suggests that it “must be combined with a critical realist social ontology if it is to offer a coherent approach to developing critical social theory” (p. 21).

While advising against working with more than one worldview, Huff (2009) points to Weick (1995) and his notion of an oscillating ontologically and suggests that an open mind is called for.

*People who study sensemaking oscillate ontologically because that is what helps them understand the actions of people in everyday life who could care less about ontology. (Weick 1995: p. 34-35 in Huff, 2009: p. 123-124)*

However the warning from Guba and Lincoln (2005) requires attention. While they suggest blending is possible, it should not be done “among the axioms of positivist and interpretivist models, because the axioms are contradictory and mutually exclusive” (p. 201).

#### **4.7 The case for a critical realist worldview**

The discussion in this chapter so far has led to a question which requires a decision: *Which worldview is suitable to underpin the development of the study’s research method?*

Sensemaking is acknowledged in the literature as a social process which involves actors making sense in and through others. For sensemaking enquiry, the argument that social constructionism treats all realities equally and is unable to account for agency has no relevance. In fact social constructionism offers scholars an unencumbered worldview to unpack sensemaking behaviour and treat all realities that they create equally. The application of a worldview which would

require realities to be privileged over others and account for agency would impose limiting boundaries.

When it comes to sensegiving this argument is not sustainable. The aim of this study is to investigate how leaders give sense in a multi-leader context. It is less concerned with how sensemakers socially construct reality during sensemaking. I argue that because sensegiving involves sensegivers trying to influence sensemakers to accept a sense, a reality, and have them use it during their sensemaking, this assumes that reality can exist, in some shape or form, independently of the sensemaker. It suggests that sensemakers can privilege some realities over others. It also suggests the presence of agency. If sensemakers did not privilege one reality over another sensegiving would serve little purpose. A social constructionist world view would be limited in its ability to take account of these factors. As a specific aim of this study is to move beyond describing what occurs to investigating how it occurs, a social constructionist worldview is inadequate.

While novel in its application in sensemaking-sensegiving scholarship, I contend that a critical realist worldview provides a more appropriate perspective. Given the study's objectives, its ontological realist and epistemologically relativist positions can accommodate the existence of realities that are independent of sensemakers and reside between the sensegiver and the sensemaker. While it recognises the socially constructed nature of knowledge it does not accept that all explanations are treated equally, nor that they are all infallible. The concept of judgmental rationality highlights that explanations compete and actors make rational choices to privilege one explanation over another. Social constructionism cannot do this. The existence of the concept of judgmental rationality is significant for this study as it is interested in the sensegiving behaviour of multiple sensegivers in relation to the same strategic change. It accepts that multiple realities for the same objects can be offered. From the realities offered, sensemakers are free to decide which, if any, reality provides the most plausible explanation and is consistent with their the identity (Weick et al., 2005), desired future images (Thomas and Gioia, 1996), their position and background (Maitlis, 2005: p. 21) and their organisation's culture (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006).

The concept of generative mechanisms also has relevance. Sensemaking and sensegiving together form a reciprocal process which I contend involves more than offering sense and making sense. It was noted in the literature review that it is a complex and messy process which belies the simplicity of the sensemaking-sensegiving label. In addition our understanding of this messiness is limited. To get behind the label it is necessary to investigate what occurs prior to sense being offered and accepted, modified, rejected or ignored. A critical realist approach offers the prospects of novel insights, as it will enable exploration of the intransitive generative mechanisms underpinning the behaviour that can be seen in the empirical world.

#### **4.8 Research Approach**

The second layer in the Research Onion concerns the research approach which influences the data collection and analysis, and methods used. The two most common approaches are deduction and induction which are grounded in formal logic and use contrasting reasoning; deductive reasoning moves from the general to the specific and inductive reasoning moves from the specific to the general. However, scientific enquiry underpinned by a critical realist worldview seeks to reveal the mechanisms which generate or cause a social phenomenon. These mechanisms are not always directly visible and are sometimes accessible only through what is visible in the empirical domain and sometimes in the actual domain. Accessing them requires a more creative approach. Critical realist researchers attempt to unveil these mechanisms by moving from the empirical observation of events to the real domain where generative mechanisms reside using abduction and retroduction. I briefly discuss these different reasoning approaches.

At a general level deduction is concerned with theory and hypothesis testing and induction is concerned with theory development. Deduction is generally aligned to positive philosophies and induction to interpretivist philosophies although Saunders et al. (2007) suggest that such labeling in this way is “potentially misleading and of no practical value” (p. 117).

Deduction is useful when a body of literature on the subject has been developed which can inform theory and hypothesis testing. It is the dominant approach in

natural science where the emphasis is on proving and disproving theories and hypotheses that predict causes and effects. As this approach is based on formal logic, for a conclusion (a theory or hypothesis) to be valid, it must follow the premise in a logically rigorous fashion. It is generally associated with quantitative data analysis; variables and concepts are clearly defined and where possible controlled; data collection and analysis methods are rigorous, repeatable and enable observations to be quantified and used to validate or refute fundamental laws. With the deductive approach samples need to be large enough to enable statistically valid generalisation and predictions to be made. The deductive approach is limited in its ability to look beyond the theory or hypotheses being tested.

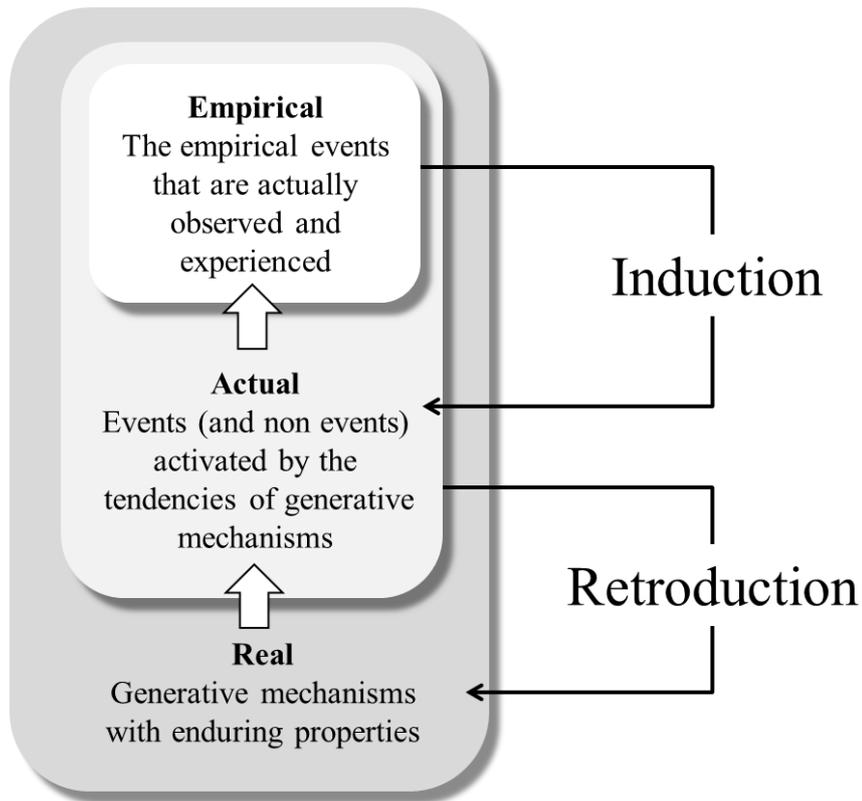
The inductive approach is more exploratory and open ended. It has utility in the social sciences, as it is open to taking account of context and the social interactions between actors and their circumstances and needs. Its starting point is not bound by theory or hypotheses as is the case with the deductive approach; it starts with “relatively unprejudiced observations of reality without being bound to a specific theory” (Danermark et al., 2002: p. 82). While the inductive approach is also based on formal logic, it seeks to extend the conclusions beyond the premise with the addition of new knowledge of specific observations which enable empirical generalisations. This approach is generally concerned with exploring and creating understanding for elusive and complex social phenomenon which may be difficult or impossible to observe, or have not yet been observed. This makes the development of reliable data collection and analysis methods challenging. With induction, the imperative to establish causes and effects is demoted in favour of the exploration of alternative explanations that may not be apparent from a rigid deductive approach.

Attributed to C.S. Peirce in 1903, abduction is built on a foundation of “creativity and the ability to form associations” (Danermark et al., 2002: p. 93) and see meanings and connections that are not obvious or perhaps invisible in order to generate new ideas. It is compatible with deductive and inductive approaches. It looks for “exceptions or surprises” (Ryan et al., 2012: p. 305) by looking at things in a new way to see data that may exist beyond the theoretical framework underpinning a study. It is an approach which facilitates researchers to “identify

unintended artefacts of empirical data” (Meyer and Lunnay, 2013: p. 2) and reveal “a more comprehensive understanding of the theoretical frame, while pursuing quality empirical outputs” (p. 2). This is fundamental to critical realist research. It provides access to the creative reasoning necessary to explain the relationships between what resides in the real and the empirical domains of reality. This can involve reinterpreting and recontextualising an observed phenomenon using alternative theoretical frameworks drawn from the literature. Retroduction is closely related to abduction and is also fundamental to critical realist research. It differs from the other three approaches in that it is not based on formal logic, which involves the researchers moving from a premise to a conclusion. It is an instinctive form of inference recognising that not all knowledge is reduced to observable events. Unlike abduction, the theoretical frame is the starting point and, combining their existing knowledge and assumptions, the researcher seeks to reveal the circumstances that create a social phenomenon the way it is experienced. It involves adopting a similarly creative approach to that used in abduction by proposing “hypothetical mechanisms that, if they existed, would generate or cause that which is to be explained” (Mingers, 2004: p. 94) by asking questions such as “What must be true in order to make this event possible?” (Easton, 2010: p. 123), “What are the conditions under which X occurs? What makes X possible?” (Meyer and Lunnay, 2013: p. 3).

Consistent with the study’s critical realist stance and the absence of empirical evidence in the field being investigated, it will apply both inductive and retroductive reasoning (Figure 4-5). This approach is consistent with (Eastwood et al., 2014). The study will use an inductive qualitative method to explore the data set visible in the empirical domain to identify patterns and relationships and reveal the events occurring in the actual domain. Using these findings, retroduction will be used to access the generative mechanisms by asking the question “What must be true in order to make this event possible?” (Easton, 2010: p. 123).

Figure 4-5: Induction and retrodution will be used to access the actual and real domains of reality.



#### 4.9 Research Design

Sayer (2000) suggests that critical realism “is compatible with a relatively wide range of research methods” (p. 19). But she warns that the method selected should be consistent with the nature of the research and what the researcher is seeking to find out. Zachariadis et al. (2013) support this position: “CR does not commit to a single type of research but rather endorses a variety of quantitative and qualitative research methods” (p. 864).

Research strategies used in research which adopts a critical realist worldview can range from case studies, comparative case studies, generative institutional analysis, studies involving large scale data sets and action research to comparative and general policy evaluation (Ackroyd, 2009). Others strategies available include: experiments, surveys, case grounded theory, ethnography and archival research. Hybrid strategies are also available which may for example combine a case study with surveys and the application of grounded theory.

Case studies are suitable for studying complex social phenomena and are the preferred strategy when addressing “how” and “why” questions (Yin, 2003). Importantly, Yin (2003) points out that the case study is not just a data collection tactic, but a comprehensive research strategy covering “the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis” (p. 14). He defines it as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13).

Eisenhardt (1989) supports the use of the case study approach “when there is little known about the phenomenon” (p. 548).

*In these situations, theory building from case study research is particularly appropriate because theory building from case studies does not rely on previous literature or prior empirical evidence. (Eisenhardt, 1989: p 548)*

The case study approach is consistent with this study’s worldview and fits well with organisational sensemaking and sensegiving research. It is the method most frequently used in this field as it enables scholars to get close to naturally occurring behaviour in its social context. Case studies have been used by researchers to investigate the sensemaking and sensegiving behaviour of individuals within organisations (e.g. Bartunek et al., 1999; Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991), individuals within companies (Rouleau, 2005), individuals within units of organisations (Maitlis and Lawrence, 2003), individuals within merging companies (Vaara, 2003; Vaara et al., 2006; Erkama and Vaara, 2010), and companies engaging externally (Fiss and Zajac, 2006) (See Appendix 6). While these studies adopted the case study approach, securing access to sensemaking and sensegiving behaviours as they occurred was possible in a limited number of cases. Researchers mostly relied on a variety of mediated data collection methods such as interviews, access to semi-formal documentation such as internal memos and emails, to access to more formal externally available material such as annual reports, leader speeches, press releases, and transcripts of public meetings. Not having direct access to sensegiving behaviour has meant that most researchers have been one step removed from capturing the richness

that naturally occurring data can provide. I have only identified one relevant study which used an experimental setting (Berente et al., 2011).

Criticisms of the case study approach have been set out by Yin (2003):

- The basis of the selection of the case can be arbitrary or subjective.
- There can be difficulty in making valid generalisations from a single case study.
- The presence of researcher bias.
- The absence of a systematic method of handling the data.

Access to companies and naturally occurring data is an important consideration when selecting a case for management research. For confidentiality reasons companies are naturally reluctant to allow external researchers access to their inner workings. Overcoming this difficulty can involve a tradeoff between a researcher relying on their own network and contacts and the associated subjectivities to secure access and having no access. On generalisation, Flyvbjerg (2006) rejects the notion that being able to form generalisations is the only “legitimate method of scientific enquiry” (p. 394) and suggests that formal generalisations can be overvalued. Following on from Yin’s (2003) rejection of the notion that case studies are only appropriate for the exploratory phase of a research project, Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that they are useful for “both generating and testing of hypotheses, but is not limited to these research activities alone” (p. 395).

All research is vulnerable to researcher bias and the case study is no exception. On the criticism that the case study approach contains a bias towards verification, Flyvbjerg (2006) suggest that the case study “contains no greater bias towards verification of the researcher’s preconceived notions than any other methods of enquiry” (p. 399) and is more likely to adopt the opposite position. Inherent in the research tactics must be actions which can mitigate against the potential for unidentified research bias. Again, the need to have rigorous and systematic data handling strategies is not unique to case studies and is a requirement for all research strategies. This potential for bias in case study based research is not an adequate justification for their avoidance.

I consider that a single case study, which focuses on the verbatim and concurrent sensegiving of multiple leaders in relation to the same strategic change, the most suitable research strategy for this study.

- It is consistent with this study's critical realist stance.
- Single case studies are widely used in the sensemaking and sensegiving research.
- It will provide rich data as it will enable direct access to verbatim sensegiving to study the behaviours directly.
- While a single case study can have a narrow lens, it will provide depth to the phenomena and enhance the application of a retroductive approach.
- Saunders et al. (2007) suggests single case studies provide the opportunity "to observe and analyze phenomena that few have considered before" (p. 140).

Section 5.2 discusses why the case study selected addresses some of the key challenges associated with case study research highlighted by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007).

#### **4.10 Time horizon**

The study will investigate one strategic change over which multiple leaders contest to have their sense accepted by sensemakers over a fixed period. Comparing and contrasting behaviour in relation to more than one change would be beyond the resources available for this study.

#### **4.11 Data collection methods**

The verbatim transcripts of leaders engaging in sensegiving behaviour in a multi-leader context in relation to a strategic change are available publicly. The use of this type of data offers considerable benefits. One of the most significant of these is that it removes the requirement for the researcher to interview participants and decipher their retrospective interpretations of their own behaviour and the behaviour of others. The method used to collect this data is outlined in Section 5.5.

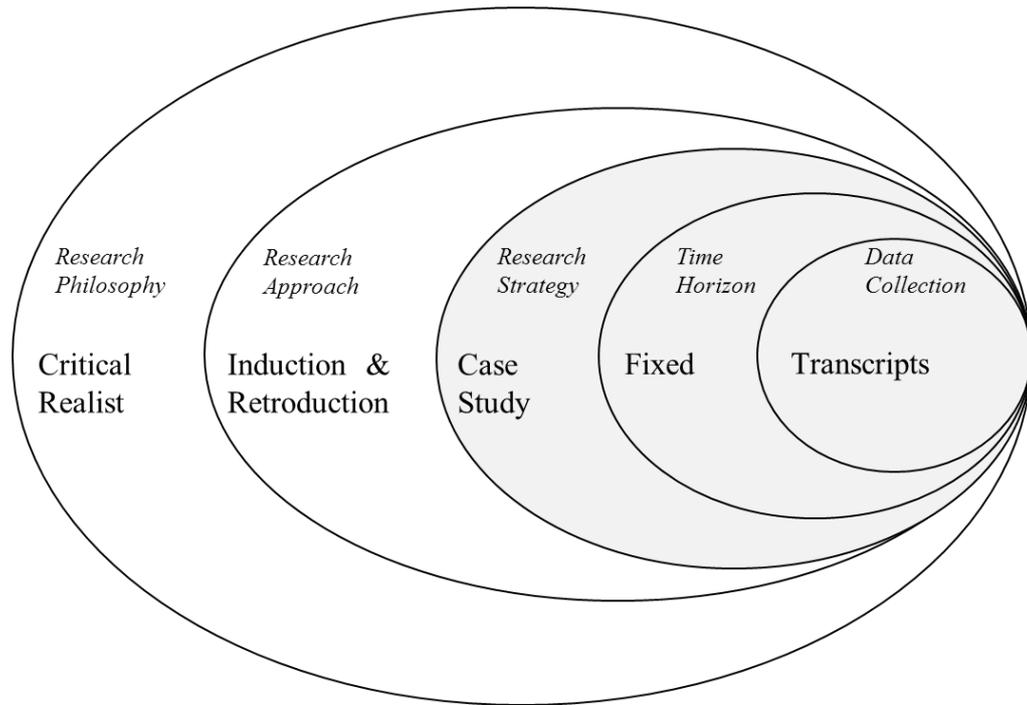
#### **4.12 Summary**

Most sensemaking-sensegiving research adopts a social constructionist worldview. Because this study is investigating what occurs before sense is offered by sensegivers the chapter argues that a social constructionist approach would be limiting. A critical realist worldview offers a broader perspective and is more open to exploring hard to access domains of reality and the forces underpinning them, which may be invisible. Delving into these deep levels of reality may offer clues to the deep structures which explain how leaders give sense beyond what a social constructionist perspective might offer.

Given the absence of empirical data in the field being investigated, and therefore the study's exploratory nature, inductive reasoning is appropriate to find unidentified relationships and patterns within the data set. Similarly, as it is adopting a critical realist stance, retroductive reasoning is also appropriate as it facilitates the creativity necessary to make links between these relationships and patterns and the invisible forces underpinning them, without the manacles of formal logic. The use of a case study covering a fixed time period, while providing access to naturally occurring data, enables leader sensegiving to be analysed at first hand and removes the potential for error associated with interpretation of mediated and reported sensegiving. It also facilitates the development of a data analysis framework which has applicability in other similar contexts. The research strategy outlined in this chapter (Figure 4-6) is consistent, coherent and transparent. It also makes a valuable contribution to research methodology by cogently arguing for the appropriateness of applying a critical realist worldview to sensegiving research. This is a novel approach and reflects the study's ambition to provide new insights into leader sensegiving.

Chapter 5 outlines the first stage in operationalising this research strategy. It introduces the study's case study and reports on two exploratory studies undertaken to develop a method to analyse the case study's data set in a manner that is rigorous, transparent manner and easy to repeat. Chapter 6 builds on this work and presents the development of a novel and theoretically sound method of unpacking sensegiving behaviour.

Figure 4-6: The research strategy.



## **Chapter 5: Development of data analysis method (Part I)**

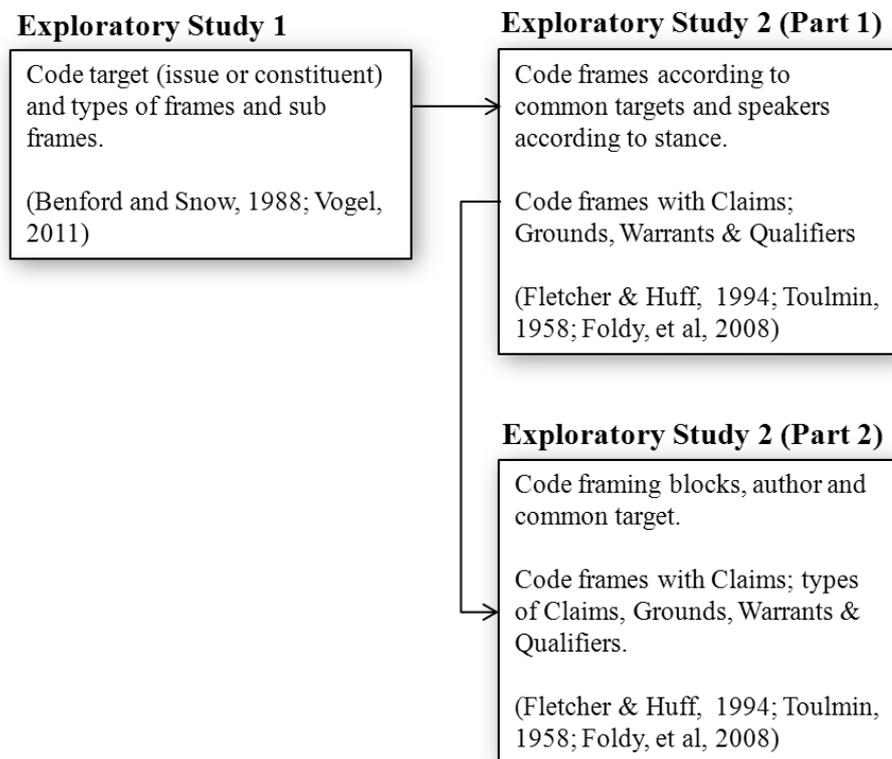
### **5.1 Introduction**

Chapter 4 outlined the study's research methodology and method. As the study's objective is to investigate the deep structures underpinning how leaders give sense, and not just what they do when they give sense, I argued for a critical realist (Bhaskar, 1978) worldview. This is a novel approach within sensegiving research which typically adopts a social constructionist worldview. The selection of a critical realist research methodology is the study's first substantial contribution. Consistent with this worldview, I concluded that a combination of inductive and retroductive reasoning would be the most effective approaches to enable progressive examination of the stratified domains of reality from the empirical to the actual and the real. There is little known about how leaders give sense in a multi-leader context and because case studies are suitable "when there is little known about the phenomenon" (Eisenhardt, 1989: p. 548) I choose this research strategy. I argued that using a case study over a fixed time horizon using naturally occurring data would enable sensegiving behaviour to be observed at first hand without mediation by a third party such as interviewees, documentation or the media.

This chapter introduces the study's case study and highlights its suitability. It sets out its data analysis method (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and reports on two exploratory studies (Figure 5-1) undertaken to develop a coding protocol to enable the case study's data set to be analysed in a rigorous, transparent and repeatable manner. While these two exploratory studies did not ultimately yield a suitable coding protocol, they make a notable contribution to method. They stretch the capability of framing analysis to move beyond describing what sensegivers do when they give sense to providing insights into how they go about doing it. While they highlight the value of framing analysis to identify and categorise sensegiving behaviour, they also importantly highlight its limitations to reveal the mechanisms which underpin leader sensegiving, which is this study's primary objective.

The first exploratory study examined the use of social movement framing (Snow and Benford, 1988; Benford and Snow 2000; Vogel, 2011) as the foundation for the coding protocol. This involved developing and testing a protocol to code the targets (issue or constituent) of the sensegiving behaviour observed and the frames and sub frames used by sensegivers. The second exploratory study had two parts. Part one concentrated on developing a coding protocol which concentrated social movement frames which made Claims (Toulmin, 1958) and identifying their Grounds, Warrants and Qualifiers. Part Two developed a coding protocol to categorise these Claims in more detail. Chapter 6 presents the development and testing of a novel data analysis method which overcame the limitations identified during these two studies.

*Figure 5-1: Outline of exploratory Studies 1 and 2 (Part 1 and 2).*



## 5.2 Case study selection

As discussed in Chapter 4, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) highlight some of the challenges of building theory from case studies. These include (i) justifying a theory building approach, (ii) case selection, (iii) minimising bias, (iv) presenting rich qualitative data and (v) writing the theory. Here I address the first three of

these challenges and highlight why the case study approach and the case study selected overcomes these challenges. The latter two challenges are discussed in Chapter 7.

*(i) Justifying a theory building approach*

This study's literature review identified the complexity of sense, aspects of sensegiving which present research challenges and the substantial gap in sensegiving literature; the absence of a theory of how leaders give sense to the same strategic change in a multiple leader context. The existence of this gap justifies this study's case study theory building approach.

*(ii) Case selection*

Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) point out that the selection of case studies for theory building should not be based on random or stratified sampling but on their ability to illustrate and reveal the phenomenon being investigated. This is counter to the argument used by positivist quantitative researchers who criticise the case study approach claiming it is unrepresentative and therefore their findings cannot be generalised. The case study selected for this study is “unusually revelatory” (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007: p. 27) and meets their requirement. It consists of meetings of the Irish Government's Joint and Select Committees on Health and Children and its Public Accounts Committee<sup>1</sup> between July 2005 and December 2010 when the committees discussed a strategic change being introduced by the HSE. This change involved significant changes to its medicine supply chain that would reduce costs by €100 million annually. The leaders of the relevant stakeholder groups used their attendance at these government committee meetings as opportunities to attempt to give sense to the change. As this is a public forum, attended by the media and broadcast live online, leaders would also have been aware of the opportunities to give sense to audiences outside the immediate committee meeting including their own constituents. The use of transcripts of government committees is supported by Creed et al.'s (2002),

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<sup>1</sup> Background on the role of Government Committees is outlined in Appendix 7.

Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) and Brown et al. (2012). This is a suitable case study for a number of reasons. The change satisfies the criteria set out in Section 3.3.3 for it to qualify as a strategic change; it was preceded by a period of stability and involved changes in strategy, power, structure and controls. Because of its ramifications, the change triggered considerable sensegiving by the leadership of the various stakeholder groups involved at a national level. This occurred through various different types of activities such as direct engagements with the HSE and IPU, meetings and briefings with politicians, local and national media, public meetings, and service withdrawals. Observing these sensegiving episodes as they occurred would have been problematic and reflect the challenges facing sensegiving researchers in accessing naturally occurring sensegiving behaviour over an extended period. While snapshots of the sensegiving of leaders in these various settings was reported by the media, these reports did not reflect the real time sensegiving behaviour of the stakeholders as it was mediated by the sensemaking and sensegiving of the journalists. As verbatim transcripts of these committee meetings are publically available, they provide accessible real time examples of multiple leader sensegiving behaviour consistent with Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007). They also enable the phenomenon to be studied in its context which Gibbert and Ruigrok (2010) state differentiates case study research from other methods.

*(iii) Minimising bias*

The case study selected also minimises the potential for researcher bias which is an issue used by positivist quantitative researchers to challenge the efficacy of the case study approach. It reduces the potential for the data set to be contaminated by the presence of the researcher or biases that may arise if participants are aware that their sensegiving behaviour is being studied. It also removes the need to interview actors to record their retrospective recollection of their sensegiving behaviour and the sensegiving behaviour of others. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) point out that the use of interviews, commonly used in sensegiving research, can lead to bias due to “impression management and retrospective sensemaking” (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007: p. 28). The case study approach also removes the need to use archival data which can provide limited and

mediated access to a phenomenon in everyday use and requirement to use pseudonyms which can interfere with a study's transparency and authenticity.

There is another area of potential bias that requires acknowledging and managing. Patton and Appelbaum (2003) point out that "the researcher's subjectivity does intervene" (p. 68) and it is "crucial that the case study researchers make their identity known up front in very explicit terms" (p. 69). I outlined in Chapter 1 my relationship with the proponent of the change, the HSE. When these meetings were taking place I was working for the proponent of the change and advising the participants. This preunderstanding, which includes not only knowledge but attitude, commitment and personal experience (Gummesson, 2000: p. 60) "can be a serious threat to the objectivity of a study as it introduces bias on the part of the researcher" (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003: p. 68). I acknowledge that without realising it, I could have approached this research in a way that confirmed biases which I developed as the events studied unfolded. Given the richness of the data set and my insights to the events this was a risk worth taking. As outlined in Chapters 5 and 6 I took counter measures to minimise the potential for my past position in relation to the change to influence the findings. This included the development of a transparent, rigorous and repeatable coding system and the execution of a dual coding system. In addition I did not start this study until after I stopped working for the proponent and approximately four years had elapsed from when the meetings occurred and when the detailed data analysis started.

While preunderstanding "may block innovative thinking" (Gummesson, 2000: p. 64) it can also "open to new possibilities and new explanations" (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003: p. 69) which may otherwise be left unidentified. Because of my previous relationship with the subject matter of the case study, and in line with best practice case study research, I acknowledge that my position in relation to the change could impact on my selection and interpretation of the data and findings but incorporate criteria (Section 5.4) into the data analysis processes to counterbalance the influence this relationship may try to assert.

Having established the suitability of the case study approach and the case study selected to address three key challenges of case study based research identified

by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) I now provide more detail on the case study itself.

### **5.3 Background to the case study selected**

The Irish Government funds a number of schemes (operated by the HSE) to provide free and subsidised prescribed drugs, medicines and certain appliances to the public. Most of these items are provided under the auspices two schemes, the General Medical Card Scheme (GMS) and the Drugs Payment Scheme (DPS). The GMS provides these items free to people whose income is below a specified threshold. More than 40% of the population qualifies under this scheme. The remaining citizens pay the first €144 (as of Jan 2015) worth of items they receive each month. Items they receive over this amount are paid for by the State under the DPS. Some drug, medicines and appliances are excluded from both schemes and patients must pay the full commercial price for these excluded items. Before the establishment of the HSE, the Department of Health and Children reimbursed pharmacists, on foot of a monthly claim, for the items they supplied under these schemes. The pharmacists in turn reimbursed the wholesalers and they in turn reimbursed the manufacturers. Following the establishment of the HSE in 2005, the CEO appointed a team to reduce the costs to provide drugs, medicines and appliances under these schemes which had been rising at a significant rate; €300 million in 1997 to €1.2 billion in 2004. The team developed a strategy that involved addressing separately the cost charged by each group involved; the manufacturers, wholesalers and pharmacists. In 2005 the team commenced a process to engage directly with each supplier to reduce the overall costs.

In mid-2006 the HSE reached a four-year agreement with the manufacturers through the Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association (IPHA) and the Association of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers of Ireland (APMI), to reduce manufacturing costs by an estimated €250 million over four years. Following completion of this agreement with manufacturers, negotiations then commenced with the Pharmaceutical Distributors Federation (PDF) in relation to the margin its members were paid to provide wholesale services. This body represented the three main wholesalers in the Irish market who supply approximately 90% of all drugs, medicines and certain appliances to community pharmacies and hospitals. Early in the discussions the PDF indicated that, based on legal advice in relation

to Competition Law, which had been brought to its attention by the representative body for pharmacists (the Irish Pharmaceutical Union), it would not be able to negotiate wholesale margins with the HSE. The HSE sought its own legal advice which confirmed that the negotiations with the PDF to determine wholesale distribution fees would be contrary to the Competition Act 2002. This was endorsed by Ireland's Attorney General.

In order to determine new margins for wholesale services and remain in compliance with competition legislation, the HSE began a public consultation process which included calls for submissions (the deadline for submissions was January 2007) on the issue. This consultation included meetings with a range of stakeholders. It also commissioned what became known as The Indecon Report, an independent detailed analysis of the market. This report showed that the wholesale margin in Ireland was double the EU average.

After considerable data collection and consultation with stakeholders, the HSE made the decision to reduce the margin it would pay to wholesalers to receive and deliver the items supplied under the various schemes from 17% to 8% and then to 7%, which was in line with recognised wholesale margins in Europe. These new rates would save the public health system, funded by taxpayers, €100 million per year. On 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007 the HSE announced that it would introduce the new rate which would apply from the period of December 2007 / January 2008.

However there existed a custom and practice, not endorsed by the HSE, between wholesalers and pharmacies that involved a large portion of the 17% margin paid by the HSE to cover wholesale services being given by wholesalers to pharmacists (larger pharmacies received a higher per cent than smaller pharmacies) in the form of discounts, rebates and free products. The change would therefore impact on this arrangement and reduce the overall income pharmacists would receive under the GMS and DPS schemes. Naturally pharmacists strongly resisted the introduction of this change. The Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children took an interest in the change being introduced by the HSE and held a series of public meetings to discuss the matter with the leaders of the stakeholder groups involved. These meetings represented

sensegiving opportunities for the leaders of these stakeholder groups. The transcripts of these meetings are publically available and form the basis of the data set for this study. The study concentrated on meetings held between February 2007 and March 2008 (Table 5-1) as most sensegiving by stakeholders during committee meetings occurred during this time. While the lifecycle of the change extended beyond these meetings, the committee's interest reduced significantly after 1st March 2008 when the HSE introduced the change.

In April 2008 the HSE and IPU threatened legal action against each other. In September 2008 the HSE lost The Hickey Case which was an action taken by a pharmacy group; the Minister (who was legislatively responsible for introducing the change) should have consulted with pharmacist before introducing the change. As a result of this judgment the HSE had to reverse the change and reimburse pharmacists for withheld fees. In June 2009 the Minister reintroduced the change using the Financial Emergency Provisions in the Public Interest (Fempi) legislation. In August 2009 a significant number of pharmacists withdrew from the scheme and the HSE established alternative supply arrangements. On 7th August the HSE secured an emergency injunction forcing 35 pharmacists to resume dispensing under the schemes. Pharmacists resumed dispensing during the following weeks. On 9th September the HSE dropped its court action. The change remained in place.

#### **5.4 Development of the case study's data analysis method**

While theories built from qualitative case studies have been “ground breaking” (Gibbert et al., 2008: p. 1465) and can have an “impact disproportionate to their numbers” (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007: p. 25), a “key weakness” (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010: p. 710) of case study based research is the perception that they do not have the “precision, objectivity and rigor” (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003: p. 60) associated with quantitative research. This is partly due to the fact that rigor can be “in the eye of the beholder” (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010: p. 710) and determining what represents a rigorous approach can be open to interpretation and guided by the researcher's epistemological stance. This is endorsed by Miles and Huberman's (1994) declaration that “no study conforms exactly to a standard methodology” (p. 5).

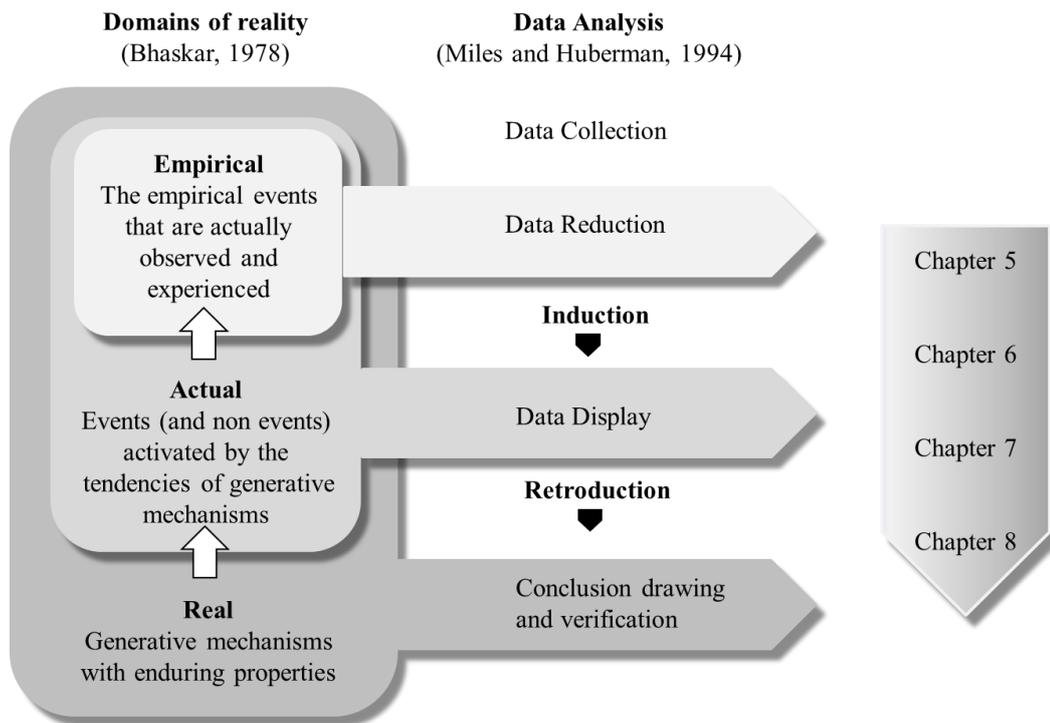
Patton and Appelbaum (2003) suggest that “the ultimate goal of the case study is to uncover patterns, determine meanings, construct conclusions and build theory” (p. 67). Despite data analysis being central to case study research, and critical for revealing patterns and relationships between constructs, Eisenhardt (1989) argues “it is both the most difficult and the least codified part of the process” (p. 539) and there are “probably as many approaches as researchers” (p. 540). The challenge when dealing with a large volume of qualitative data is to employ a rigorous process to identify these patterns and meanings while guarding against “information-processing biases” (Eisenhardt, 1989: p. 540).

Given my association with the selected case study as discussed above and the absence of a standard approach to case study data analysis, I set three criteria for the development of this study’s data analysis method, which if met, could reduce the potential impact of these factors.

1. The method should enable relevant chunks of the data set to be labelled, categorised and organised in a way that is meaningful, relevant to the research question and retrievable (Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 57).
2. The method should be transparent and this transparency should be achieved through the “documentation and clarification of the research procedures” (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010: p. 715).
3. The method should be repeatable; if another researcher carried out the same data analysis on the same data set they should achieve similar results (Yin, 2003).

To support the development of a rigorous data analysis method I relied on Miles and Huberman's (1994) data analysis framework which consists of “three concurrent flows of activity” (p. 10); data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. These three data analysis activities, which are preceded by data collection, “form an interactive, cyclical process” (Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 12). This framework corresponds with the journey between three domains of reality; empirical, actual and real (Figure 5-2).

Figure 5-2: The stages in the data analysis framework (Miles and Huberman, 1994) correspond with the domains of reality (Bhaskar, 1978).



### *Data Collection*

As highlighted above, the data set consisted of transcripts of Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children and Public Accounts Committee meetings which discussed a strategic change being introduced by the HSE with the leaders of the various stakeholder groups. The process used to select the relevant meeting transcripts which formed the study’s data set is set out in Section 5.5.

### *Data Reduction*

Data reduction involves, through coding, sharpening, sorting focusing, discarding and organising (Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 11) reducing the totality of the field data compiled by the researcher. This data could include interview data, archival material, field notes from observations, audio, video or pictures. This data is what is available in the empirical domain. As this study’s data source consisted of 80,000 words of transcripts of government committee meetings, and in line with the three criteria outline above, its reduction required the development of a protocol to enable the specific episodes of sensegiving

behaviour to be identified, labelled and organised in a way that enabled patterns and relationships to be revealed. The development of this protocol is set out in Section 5.6 and continued in Chapter 6.

### *Data Display*

A data display presents data that has been distilled from the full data set in a systematic fashion to “permit careful comparisons, detection of differences, noting of patterns and themes, seeing trends, and so on” (Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 92). This transition from data reduction to data display, using induction, has parallels with movement from the empirical domain to the actual domain where events and non-events which are manifest in the empirical can be explored. The data displays are presented and discussed in detail in Chapter 7 and 8.

### *Conclusion drawing and verification*

This is where the researcher draws meaning from the data that is “valid, repeatable and right” (Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 245) to propose conclusions and verify these conclusions.

## **5.5 Data collection**

Between July 2005 and 2010 the Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children and the Public Accounts Committee held 149 meetings (Table 5-1). The meetings identified as relevant for this study were selected using the following procedure.

- The title and subtitle of each meeting was reviewed for evidence to suggest that it may have dealt with the change.
- Titles that suggested clearly that the meeting dealt with unconnected matters were labelled as ‘Not relevant’.
- Those which indicated clearly that the meeting was concerned with the subject were labelled ‘Relevant’.
- Where it was not obvious whether a meeting dealt with the subject the following screening process was used.

(i) A word count was carried out on the text of meetings that had generic labels such as ‘Health Issues: Discussion with Minister for Health and Children and HSE’ or if it was not clear whether the change had been discussed. Using [www.wordcounter.com](http://www.wordcounter.com) the top 100 most frequently repeated words in the text were identified to see if they related to the change under review. These included words such as drug, pharmacist, pharmacy, wholesaler and costs which were identified as among the most frequently used words during the meeting held on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> November which was concerned exclusively with the change.

(ii) This process provided a strong indication whether the change was discussed extensively during a particular committee meeting, but it did not identify occasions where the subject was briefly discussed. To address these occurrences an additional screening process was used. Where it was not clear from a meeting’s title if the subject was discussed, an individual word search was carried out using the words, pharma, drugs, wholesaler and cost, using the word search facility built into Microsoft Word – the word processing package used to store the text. If these words did not appear in the text of a meeting it was reasonable to assume that the change was not discussed. Where some or all of these words were used the specific sections of the text where they were used were reviewed to identify if their use related to the change. From this a determination was made as to whether the transcript of the meeting should be included in the study’s data set.

This procedure identified that 19 of the 149 meetings made references to the change. The most detailed discussion took place during the 13 months between 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007 and 19<sup>th</sup> March 2008; 11 of the 19 meetings were labelled ‘relevant’. Eight further meetings were labelled ‘small references’ as the change was referenced but not discussed (Table 5-1). These references were small, involved points of information rather than participant engagement, excluded the IPU group and were spread over two years after the main meetings. For these reasons they were not included in the data set.

Table 5-2: Result of data collection from all Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children and Public Accounts Committee meetings.

Date	No of meetings held	Relevant	Small references
		<i>(Included in data set)</i>	<i>(Set aside)</i>
2005	13		
2006	36		
2007	14	15th Feb, 1 <sup>st</sup> March, 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 14th Nov & 22nd Nov	
2008	35	7 <sup>th</sup> Feb, 12th Feb, 13th Feb, 14th Feb & 6 <sup>th</sup> March, 19 <sup>th</sup> March	18th June, 4th Dec & 22nd Nov,
2009	22		24th March & 11th June.
2010	29		9th Feb, 13th July & 25th Nov
	<b>149</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>

## 5.6 Data reduction

Data reduction involves the application of codes, or labels, to chunks of data to enable them to be organised and retrieved in a manner relevant to the research question. This process begins with a fundamental question: *What codes should be applied to what chunks of data?* To find the answer to this question I undertook three exploratory studies.

### 5.6.1 Exploratory Study 1: Coding using social movement framing

The sensegiving literature references many language based devices used by actors to give sense. These include discourse, metaphor, narrative, rhetoric and framing, many of which share common features, have overlapping definitional boundaries and frequently share common tactics and objectives. Here I discuss some of these devices before suggesting framing as a device through which to investigate sensegiving behaviour.

The ‘doing’ of discourse analysis involves the researcher collecting text and immersing themselves in it. Through an iterative process, which involves “reflectivity and reflexivity” (Wood and Kroger, 2000: p. xv) the researcher oscillates between the text and existing theory to identify patterns, develop explanations and develop new theory. Broadly, discourse scholarship ranges from analysis of the use of language, “what people are doing with words” (Wood and

Kroger 2000: p. 9) to analysis which views language as an instrument through which dominant power is exerted. While Phillips et al. (2004) describe discourse analysis as the “systematic study of texts” (p. 636) there is an absence of data analysis conventions within the realm of discourse analysis. This opens opportunities for researcher creativity, but also exposes discourse analysis to criticism for a lack of rigor (Phillips and Di Domenico, 2009). Alvesson and Karreman (2000) argue that the word discourse is “used to cover up muddled thinking” and “sometimes comes close to standing for everything, and thus nothing” (p. 1128). These differing positions (Phillips et al., 2004 and Alvesson and Karreman, 2000) are understandable given that discourse analysis incorporates many different approaches. How some researchers employ discourse analysis has contributed to the accusations that anything goes in discourse analysis. Antaki et al. (2003) highlight six ways that researchers can give the analysis of talk the sheen of discourse analysis without the substance.

*Writers are not doing analysis if they summarise, if they take sides, if they parade quotes, or if they simply spot in their data features of talk or text that are already well-known.* (Antaki et al., 2003: p. 10).

Hill and Levenhagen (1995) investigated metaphors as sensegiving device and suggest they help focus an actor’s attention on salient cues thus preparing them to receive relevant information in a particular fashion. In the context of introducing new market categories Navis and Glynn (2010) suggest that metaphors, as a linguistic device, frames the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar to make it “more understandable and often more attractive” (p. 443). Sonenshein (2006) takes a more granular stance and states that the importance of language in sensegiving has been assumed and, while sensegiving research has identified discursive acts such as expressing opinions it has “not focused on the *language* contained within these acts” (p. 1159: emphasis in original). While sensegiving research has identified important discursive and symbolic tactics individuals use to shape the meaning of issues it has not adequately explored how specific language forms the very foundation of these behaviours (Sonenshein, 2006: p 1168). Sonenshein's (2006) focus on issues crafting sought to rectify this by identifying how, and when, individuals use language (words and sentences) to “advance meaning claims to alter others’ views of (Fairclough, 1989) and responses to (Dunford and

Jones, 2000) reality” (p. 1160). In a later study Sonenshein (2010) identified how managers use ambiguous narratives during strategic change to support the meaning employees have about the organisation and also suggest new meaning which employees use “to make sense of and narrate responses to change (resisting, championing, and accepting)” (p. 477). That study highlighted the contradictions that can exist when superiors attempt to give sense to subordinates by the simultaneous use of narratives that both preserve meaning and introduce transformational meanings. To explain this bridging the past with the future, he put forward the concept of “strategic ambiguity” (p. 500) “which allows employees and managers to have multiple interpretations of a change while believing that they agree on meaning” (p. 500). This in turn enables managers to be “proactively equivocal” (p. 501) in order to exercise greater control over the interpretations of employees. This reflects the importance of plausibility over accuracy.

Green Jr., (2005) suggests that rhetorical theory provides “a unique analytical framework for the study of organizational issues” (p. 664-665) yet has been underutilised in organisational studies. Studies which look at rhetoric and sensemaking and sensegiving (although these theoretical frameworks are not always explicitly referenced) include Appelrouth (1999) who explored how social movement activity “construct meanings and, in the process, make sense of events both for their supporters and for wider audiences” (p. 329) which are grounded in rhetorical frames. Mueller et al. (2004) identified rhetorical strategies used by protagonists to justify (give meaning to) implementing New Public Management (NPM) in a UK hospital. Holt and Macpherson (2010) investigated how three small firm entrepreneurs used rhetorical methods (logos, ethos and pathos) to continually legitimise their businesses. Zbaracki (2012) examined how rhetoric was used to distort the technical reality of total quality management in five organisations. Other studies involving rhetoric in sensemaking and sensegiving include Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Symon, 2005; Erkama and Vaara, 2010; Brown et al., 2012.

Frames and framing feature significantly among sensegiving studies which involve strategic change and have been recognised in the literature as powerful sensegiving devices to hide and highlight (Vogel, 2011: p. 4) meaning. The

literature on framing analysis is well developed and the close relationship between sensegiving and framing is confirmed by Kaplan (2008): “Framing allows people to suggest what is going on to others” (p. 732) which is in effect sensegiving. Kaplan presents a model of framing contests as a means of describing the underlying mechanisms underpinning how actors compete to have their frames, their sense of what is going on, prevail. She highlights that “the framing contests model represents cognition as a dynamic, purposive, and politically charged process of meaning construction” (p. 730). When sensegiving is conceptualised as a framing contest it therefore has the potential to enable researchers to move beyond description of the empirical to uncover what is occurring in the actual. Johnston (1995) supports this proposition.

*Framing analysis, implicitly or explicitly, is about cognitive processes; and while we cannot see the brain synapses firing, we can approximate the organization of concepts and experience that indicates how a situation is to be interpreted. (Johnston 1995: p. 234)*

Framing analysis also provides the rigor which Alvesson and Kärreman (2000) believe is frequently absent in discourse analysis and Yin (2003) argues can be absent from case studies. A widely used definition of framing comes from Entman (1993):

*Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in the communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. (Entman, 1993: p. 52)*

Frames set boundaries and involve choosing “one particular meaning (or set of meanings) over another” (Fairhurst and Sarr, 1996: p. 6).

*They selectively punctuate some aspects of social life deemed as important or problematic, defining them as part of reality and placing them in time and space, while at the same time singling out other objects, situations, relationships, events, and so on. (Benford and Snow 1992). (Vogel, 2011: p. 4)*

Glaser et al. (2011) looked at why some frames resonate with the familiar while others do not. They found that framing strategies “resemble what rhetoricians call casuistry, a case-based mode of reasoning in which actors use case details and analogy to establish a situation’s legitimacy”. Entman (1993) provides another perspective on this theme and draws attention to the fact that interpretations that are excluded from frames can be as significant as what they include.

*Most frames are defined by what they omit as well as include, and the omissions of potential problem definitions, explanations, evaluations, and recommendations may be as critical as the inclusions in guiding the audience. (Entman, 1993: p. 54)*

This discussion suggests that framing analysis is a potentially useful framework to unpack sensegiving behaviour. However the use of framing analysis is not a flawless solution. Despite the fact that framing analysis is widely used in political science, sociology and media studies, “a widely accepted methodological approach” (McLeod and Hertog, 2003: p. 139) has not yet emerged. This is “both a blessing and a curse” (p. 139). As a result most studies present “a new unique set of frames” (Koenig, 2006: p. 63) and has resulted in what Benford (1997) argues “has been a trivialization of the framing perspective” (p. 414). Given my relationship with the data and the environment this could be problematic as McLeod and Hertog (2003) suggest.

*In the absence of a disciplined approach to analyzing and interpreting their data researchers are too easily led to find the evidence they are looking for, to discount negative evidence, and to perceive relationships that support their contentions. (McLeod and Hertog, 2003: p. 151)*

One area where the strategic function of frames is treated explicitly and offers methodological guidance is in the study of social movements. Within social movements, frames are used to mobilise others into action through collective action frames (Benford and Snow, 2000: p. 614) which inspire and legitimate social movement activities and campaigns (p. 614). Social movement framing research (Snow and Benford, 1988; Benford and Snow, 2000) sees actors as “signifying agents actively engaged in the production and maintenance of

meaning for constituents, antagonists, and bystanders or observers (Snow and Benford 1988)” (Benford and Snow, 2000: p. 613). Zald (2005) points out that there has been “a miniboom in work that uses concepts drawn from social movement and collective action theory to analyze change in organizations and industries” (p. 164). What makes this approach attractive is that social movements openly develop frames designed to mobilise others into action and therefore the frames used are more visible (Baden, 2010) than in other settings.

Fiss and Zajac (2006) argue that social movement framing “provides an attractive approach for understanding the process of sensegiving, particularly when such change may be highly controversial” (p. 1174). Kaplan (2008) points out that framing analysis and social movement theories “call attention to the purposeful efforts that skilled actors take to shape the frames of others and how those interactions can lead to coalition formation and conflict” (p. 731). In addition to identifying the counter framing efforts actors used to “rebut, undermine, or realign the diagnostic and prognostic frames held by the opposing coalition” (Kaplan, 2008: p. 738), Kaplan (2008) identified that actors are likely to engage in legitimacy battles to mobilise support for their frames. Foldy et al. (2008) also draw on social movement framing to examine how organisations present strategic change to key stakeholders and what factors determine the choice of different framing approaches. Data for the study was drawn from interviews with multiple stakeholders in 20 award winning social change organisations which were separately tackling “tough and critical social problems with effective, systematic solutions” (p. 516). The study identified “the particular legitimating strategies that organisations use to try and instill these [cognitive] shifts” (p. 525). This distinction between changing the way audiences understand elements of an organisation’s work as it relates to the issue or the constituent involved is an important contribution of this study. It enables “a more fine-grained analysis of sensegiving” (p. 517) by distinguishing between frames which are focused on aspects of the issue, which is the subject of the framing, and frames directed as the constituents involved.

Snow and Benford (1988) set out three core framing tasks employed by social movement actors to hide and highlight (Vogel, 2011; p.4) aspects of the issue they are addressing. They label them diagnostic framing (frames the problem),

prognostic framing (frames the solution) and motivational framing (frames what needs to be done). These three core framing tasks are central to social movement framing analysis and have been used as foundation stones for a number of studies which involve framing analysis and meaning making (Fiss and Zajac, 2006; Foldy et al., 2008; Kaplan, 2008 and Vogel, 2011). Vogel (2011) examined a body of text related to public sector transformation in Germany using social movement framing to “extract the various components of frames” (p. 5). In addition to diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing, Vogel (2011) identified counter framing strategies: diagnostic counter framing and prognostic counter framing. Within these five framing tasks he identified 17 sub framing tasks (Table 5-2) which are “are thoroughly intertwined both within and between the competing frames” (p. 15).

Anchoring this study’s data reduction coding protocol in the social movement framing literature is supported by the systematic analysis of framing in peer-reviewed journal articles between 1997 and 2007 (Borah, 2011) which found that more than half of the framing research used unique frames—“frames that are specific to the particular issue under study” (p. 256). Borah (2011) cautions against this; “the propensity to develop only unique frames could result in the development of very specific frames unable to make any connection to the broader theoretical or conceptual issues of framing” (p. 256). However Borah (2011) also advises that when using an approach based on generic frames, flexibility should be considered; “there are several such unique frames that cannot be explained within the generic frames and these may have their own significance” (p. 256). Borah (2011) also draws attention to the fact that Entman (1993) argues for a single paradigm for framing research whereas D’Angelo (2002) suggests this is not possible. It has also been suggested by Johnston (1995) that the identification and interpretation of frames generated by actors is vulnerable to researcher subjectivity which Borah (2011) concurs with. In addition, Benford (1997) cautions that the popularity of framing theory within social movement literature does not imply that the analytic methods have been fully developed. Taking account of these shortcomings, social movement framing provides an analytical framework which is supported by the literature and has the potential to take data analysis beyond description associated with generalised discourse analysis. It also reduces, but does not eliminate, the potential for the

analysis to produce an unconnected laundry list of frames which Benford (1997) cautions against.

*Table 5-3: The 17 framing tactics identified by Vogel (2011).*

<p>Diagnostic framing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Praising bureaucracy</li> <li>2. Declaring a crisis</li> <li>3. Blaming bureaucracy</li> </ol>
<p>Prognostic framing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Defining a meta-trend</li> <li>5. Proposing the solution</li> <li>6. Discrediting alternatives</li> <li>7. Creating a metaphor</li> <li>8. Re-defining professionalism</li> </ol>
<p>Motivational framing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Stressing personal advantage</li> <li>10. Praising proponents</li> <li>11. Criticising opponents</li> </ol>
<p>Diagnostic counter-framing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Praising bureaucracy</li> <li>13. Downscaling change requirements</li> </ol>
<p>Prognostic counter-framing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Challenging transferability</li> <li>15. Doubting substance</li> <li>16. Questioning practicability</li> <li>17. Discrediting/favouring alternatives</li> </ol>

To test the viability of using social movement frames to guide this study’s coding protocol I selected a sample of the data set and coded instances where actors used one of Snow and Benford's (1988) three core framing tasks (prognostic, diagnostic and motivational framing) and Vogel’s (2011) two counter framing tasks (diagnostic counter-framing and prognostic counter-framing) (Table 5-3). The targets of the framing tasks were coded by issue or constituent as proposed by Foldy et al. (2008).

*Table 5-4: The coding taxonomy used during Exploratory Study 1.*

Target of Framing		Issue	Constituent
Core Framing Tasks	Diagnostic framing		
	Prognostic framing		
	Motivational framing		
	Diagnostic counter-framing		
	Prognostic counter-framing		

Consistent with Vogel (2011), and taking guidance from scholars such as Weick (1995), Bartunek et al. (1999) and Kaplan (2008), codes were also applied to sub-frames identified, which could be classified within the five core framing task groups. Application of the coding protocol involved three steps set out in Figure 5-3.

### Step 1

The complete text of the longest meeting, the Joint Committee on Health and Children held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (approximately 30,000 words) was read three times over a period of three weeks. Politicians, representatives from the Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU) and the Health Service Executive (HSE) were participants in this meeting. (Before the explanatory studies commenced the full data set had been read.)

### Step 2

An extract of the text of the meeting was selected. The extract consisted of the Opening Statements from Mr Michael Guckian, CEO of the IPU, (1400 words), and Mr Sean Hurley, a National Director of the HSE (2200 words). This text was coded using the coding taxonomy set out in Table 5-3.

The types of frames used by speakers were identified; diagnostic, prognostic and motivational, diagnostic counter-framing and prognostic counter-framing, and the targets of the frames used by actors were identified; issue and constituent.

### Step 3

Following Vogel (2011) a series of sub frames (Table 5-4) were developed to “extract the various components of frames” (Vogel, 2011: p. 5). During the following week, and in an iterative fashion, the codes applied were reviewed. Some codes were revised, deleted or added. This process was repeated until saturation (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) was achieved and no further refinements were considered necessary (Appendix 8).

Figure 5-3: Coding protocol developed for Exploratory Study 1.

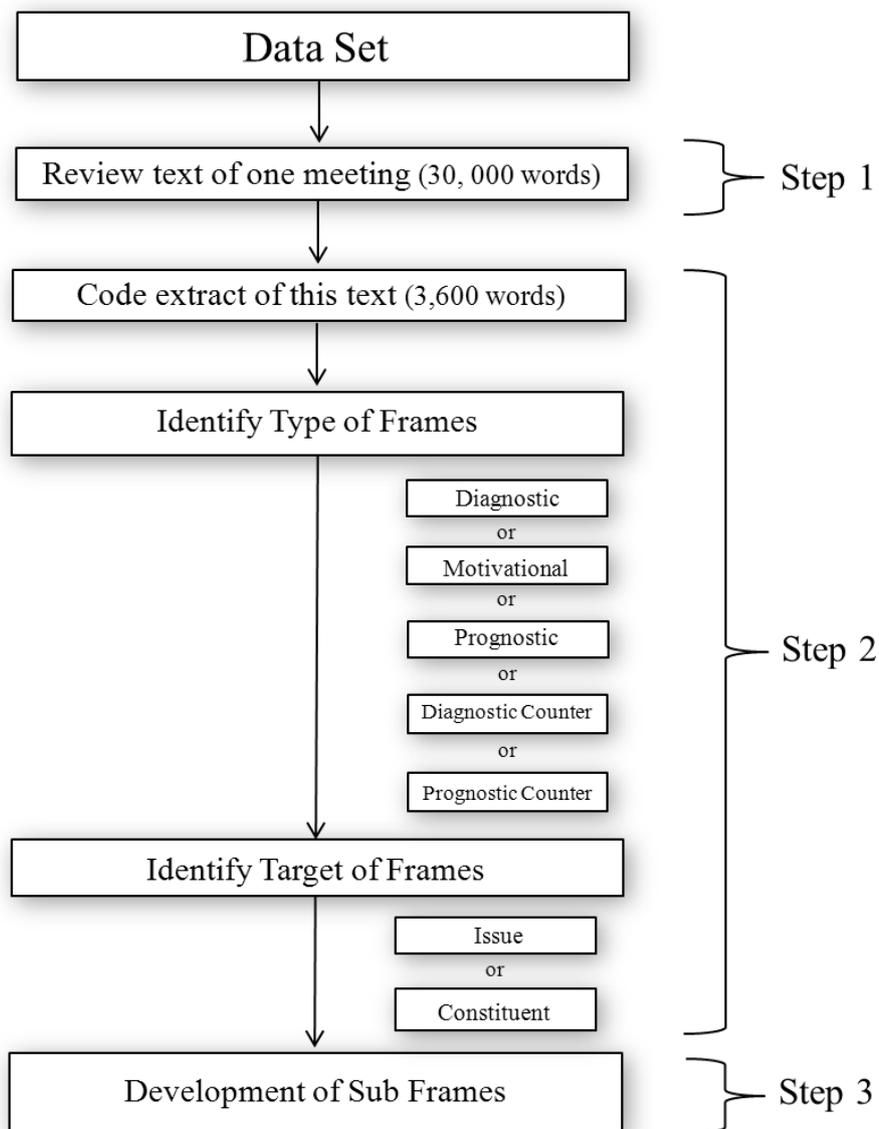


Table 5-5: Sub frames developed during Exploratory Study 1.

<b>Diagnostic</b> (problem identification and attribution of blame)
Justifying the change JC (Credibility of Claimsmaker - Kaplan 2008) Not in our control NoC
<b>Diagnostic counter framing</b> (Opponents challenging problem identification and attribution of blame)
Highlight injustice IJ (Gamson, et al 1982) Highlight impact on vulnerable IV Give meaning to the change GM (Chreim, 2005) Discredit proponents DP (Credibility of Claimsmaker - Kaplan 2008) Discredit opponents DO Praise opponents PO Highlight negative consequence of change NCC (Weick, 1995). Direct challenge DC Coalition building CB (Kaplan, 2008)
<b>Motivational framing</b> – call to arms “rational for engaging in ameliorative collective action” (Bedford and Snow, 2000: p. 617)
Severity S Urgency U Efficacy E Propriety P (These socially constructed vocabularies provided adherents with compelling accounts for engaging in collective action and for sustaining their participation: Bedford and Snow, 2000: p. 617)
<b>Prognostic</b> (the proposed solution)
Explaining the situation ETS (Bartunek et al., 1999) Give meaning to the change GM (Chreim, 2005) Praise proponent PP (Credibility of Claimsmaker - Kaplan 2008) Acknowledge opponents AO Addressing concerns AC Consequence of change CoC Barriers to change BC
<b>Prognostic counter framing</b> (Refutation of logic of opponents (Bedford and Snow, 2000: p. 617)
Maintain the status quo MSQ Discredit change DC (Credibility of Claimsmaker - Kaplan 2008) Favouring alternative FA Proposing an alternative PA (Vogel 2011)

### 5.6.1.1 Review of Exploratory Study 1

This data analysis method proved problematic for four reasons.

1. The use of social movement framing to inform the coding protocol imposed boundaries which made it unreliable. For example some frames could not be consistently classified with certainty as one of the five core frames; diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing, diagnostic counter-framing and prognostic counter-framing. This meant that on occasion frames were classified not based on their fit with one of the core

framing tasks but based on the absence of more suitable alternatives. This is consistent with Borah (2011) who highlighted the limitations of the generic approach.

2. From a relatively small portion of the data set (approximately 2% of the data set) 34 different frames and sub frames (Table 5-4) were identified. This volume was likely to increase significantly as more data was coded and result in the emergence of an unwieldy list.
3. Combined, both findings (limitations of five core framing tasks and emerging volume of sub-frames) suggested that this method would not meet the study's requirement for a data analysis method that was rigorous, systematic and repeatable.
4. In addition no evidence emerged during this exploratory study to suggest that this method would enable a deeper analysis of the data set and revelation of generative mechanisms which may underpin the sensegiving behaviour. This was a primary objective of the data analysis method and because it was not being achieved alternative approaches were explored.

### **5.6.2 Exploratory Study 2 (Part 1): Coding frames with claims**

To address these methodological shortcomings I returned to the literature for guidance. Kaplan (2008) suggests that actors engage “in framing practices to make their cognitive frames resonate at the collective level and to mobilize action in favour of a desired decision outcome” (p. 736). Framing practices therefore aim to persuade others to accept or act on the reality bounded in the frame. As argumentation is a means of persuasion I posited that argumentation may underpin framing behaviour and the identification and analysis of arguments presented in frames may reveal the generative mechanisms underpinning sensegiving behaviour.

The traditional approach to argumentation analysis dates back to Aristotle and is based on formal logic. Central to this approach is the syllogistic argument which consists of a major premise, minor premise and conclusion. The relationship between these elements is determined by the method of reasoning being deployed; deduction, induction or abduction. A related construct is the enthymeme. It is an informal syllogism and has either one of its premises or its

conclusion silent. This formal approach to deciphering arguments reduces them to their components without taking account of the additional layers of meaning that context can contribute to arguments. A weakness of relying on this formal approach to unpacking arguments underpinning frames is that it could limit their identification to those grounded in formal logic. Toulmin (1958) challenged the limitations of the formal approach to studying argumentation and offers a wider lens to unpack arguments in everyday use. While appreciating its attraction, albeit slightly cynically, because it “fit in nicely with some other influential prejudices” (Toulmin, 1958: p. 136) he considered the application of formal logic to argumentation an over simplification.

*From the time of Aristotle logicians have found the mathematical model enticing, and a logic which modelled itself on jurisprudence rather than geometry could not hope to maintain all the mathematical elegance of their ideal. Unfortunately an idealised logic, such as the mathematical model leads us to, cannot keep in serious contact with its practical application. (Toulmin, 1958: p. 136)*

He suggested that formal logicians “had reached their conclusions only by a series of mistakes and misunderstandings” (p. 136) and asked whether the simplicity of formal logic had “been bought too dearly?” (p. 89). Toulmin's (1958) book *The Uses of Argument* marked a turn away from the formal or narrow approach, to argument analysis, towards a more informal approach, or broader approach, to investigate arguments which do not meet the criteria of formal logic. Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation, which he refers to as “the Toulmin model” (Toulmin 1958: p. vii), is based on “informal logic or reasoned discussion, treating arguments as rhetorical acts intended to persuade others” (Pawlowski et al., 2008). It has its roots in “empirical observations of communication processes in courtrooms” (Geiger, 2010: p. 294) and seeks to lay out the complexities of arguments which formal logic cannot see and which, as Blair (2011) notes, are not always grounded in rationality.

The Toulmin model sees arguments as having six components which fit evenly into two groups. The first group consists of Claims, Grounds and Warrants. The second group consists of Backing, Qualifiers and Rebuttals. While the use of the

three components in the second group (Backing, Rebuttal and Qualifiers) can strengthen an argument, and provide more detail on an argument's construction, their presence is not necessary to make an utterance an argument. For Toulmin (1958) practical arguments must contain Claims (conclusions), Grounds (supporting evidence, data, and facts) and Warrants (which license the Grounds to the Claim). If they do not contain these three components they are not practical arguments. While the Claims, Warrants and Grounds framework has parallels with the major premise, minor premise and conclusion in formal arguments, Warrants bridge rationality with context. They explain why an utterance may be a practical argument in one context but not in another. They "explain the apparent similarity of arguments in terms of form (across the spectrum of contexts and uses), while recognizing that they must be evaluated locally" (Keith and Beard, 2008: p. 38). It therefore provides an opportunity to provide deeper insights into argument structure in the context in which it is present than the formal Aristotelian approach.

Keith and Beard (2008) point out it is the paradox of Toulmin's approach which "presents so many problems for his interpreters" (p. 24): "He wants a rationality that is general and systematic, while being at the same time locally and historically contextualized" (p. 24).

While the Toulmin model is well recognised as an effective model for investigating argumentation, Keith and Beard (2008) argue its application can be potentially problematic. Its abstract quality has similarities with the concepts associated with Bhaskar's (1978) real domain of reality discussed in Chapter 4; mechanism, structures, powers, relations and tendencies. There is for example confusion among scholars on what exactly a Warrant is and how to identify them.

*This confusion also allows scholars and students seeking to articulate implicit Warrants to generate connections that look like Frankenstein's monster, pulling a phrase from the Claim and a clause from the grounds, and yoking them together. (Keith and Beard, 2008: p. 25)*

Despite this confusion there is consistency among scholars in relation to three important qualities of Warrants.

- Warrants link Claims and Grounds.
- Warrants are typically implicit and may have to be supplied by the interpreter of the argument.
- The strength of a Warrant (or lack thereof) gives the Claim its strength.

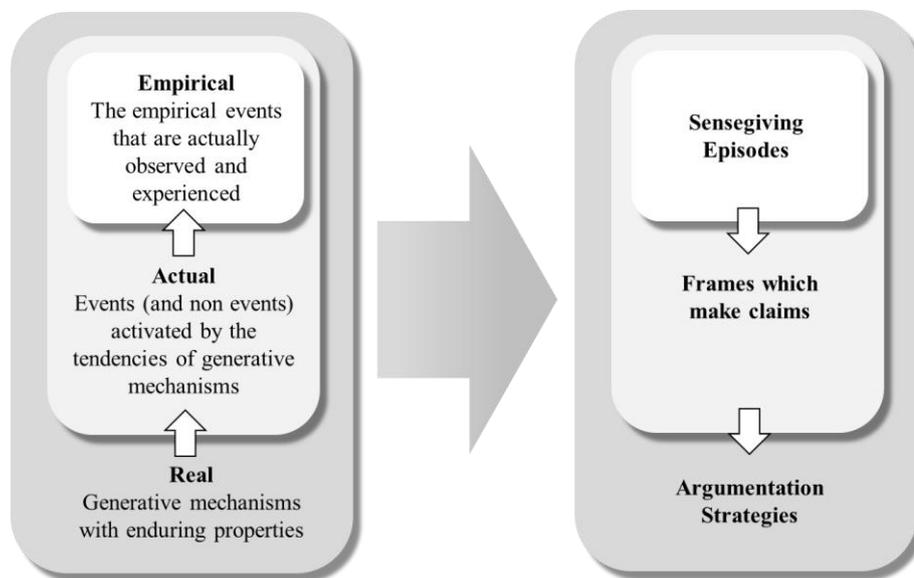
Toulmin's (1958) concepts are "constantly discussed in the argumentation literature" (Wangerin 1993: p. 203) and used as a data analysis framework in content analysis. Brusckhe and Wiseman (1992) used a Toulmin-like coding system to identify differences in the use of Warrants and data selection by different nationalities participating in debates of the World Health Organization, United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Education and Social Organization, and the Council of Europe in 1985. They point out that since extended arguments can continue over many paragraphs "an analysis of those sub-components should capture the richness of the extended argument" (p. 19). I have found Toulmin's model used in just one sensemaking-sensegiving study; (Berente et al., 2011). While Berente et al. (2011) were predominantly concerned with sensemaking, their study is theoretically close enough to sensegiving for it to support the use of Toulmin's model in this study. They used Toulmin's model and suggest that "the Toulminian lens offers a methodological tool that is theoretically neutral" (p. 703).

*The structure of practical reasoning (Toulmin's claim-ground-warrant) provided us with a tool whereby we could rigorously capture and code the sensemaking activity, without stripping it of its richness and without fitting the results into preformed assumptions about human rationality.*  
(Berente et al., 2011: p. 704)

The first exploratory study, discussed in Section 5.6.1, showed that revealing how sensegivers go about giving sense, as opposed to describing what they do when giving sense, is challenging. What is required is a method to unpack behaviour visible in the empirical domain in a fashion that will enable access to the actual and the real domains in a systematic and transparent manner. Toulmin's model of argumentation and its focus on arguments offers a theoretically sound framework to achieve this. It enables the structure (Claims, Grounds and Warrants) of practical arguments underpinning frames to be laid

out. This progression from sensegiving episodes, to frames underpinning these episodes to argumentation underpinning these frames is consistent with the study's critical realist stance (Figure 5-4) which seeks to uncover the generative mechanisms underpinning sensegiving behaviour.

*Figure 5-4: Relationship between data reduction framework and domains of reality.*



The application of this method is supported by Berente et al. (2011) and its utility in sensegiving research is strengthened by Toulmin's belief that the structure of practical arguments (he does not use the phrase persuasive arguments as is often cited) should remain more or less the same regardless of the subject. This enables it to be used across different sensegiving settings. This would enable the application of the same coding protocol to be used across different settings which is a gap in the sensegiving literature. In the next section I outline the process involved in applying the Toulmin model to the analysis of frames.

### **5.6.2.1 Application of the Toulmin Model**

As outlined above according to Toulmin (1958) a practical argument must include a Claim, Grounds and a Warrant. The application of the Toulmin model of argumentation to dig deeper into frames to investigate their persuasive dimensions should therefore focus on frames which contain these three elements.

Given the difficulty identified above in identifying Warrants and my requirements for a transparent, rigorous and repeatable data analysis method, I looked to Fletcher and Huff's (1994) argument mapping model for guidance. This argument model was developed primarily as a "rigorous and replicable method of content analysis" of text produced by decision makers, but has application in many different settings exemplified by Pawlowski et al. (2008) who used it to analyse group discussions in an experimental setting. Application of the model "involves dividing documents into topic blocks, subdividing these blocks into discrete arguments, and then identifying the components of each argument" (Fletcher and Huff, 1994: p. 356); Claim, Grounds, Warrant and Qualifier.

- Claims

Claims are utterances which set out propositions, assertions, arguments or points of view which an actor wants an audience to believe. Fletcher and Huff (1994) importantly point out that Claims are always potentially controversial, disputable or likely to be challenged. While Fletcher and Huff (1994) suggest that it may be sufficient to just identify Claims they highlight four categories of Claims from Brockriede and Ehninger (1960); designative, definitive, evaluative and advocative.

- Grounds

Grounds is the umbrella term for data and evidence which supports a Claim and is visible in the text. These can come in the form of facts, common knowledge or opinion. Depending on the context of the utterance, Grounds can also be a Claim and a Claim can also be Grounds.

- Warrant

Warrants are what link the Grounds to the Claim. Warrants "authorize the logical jump between the Claim and its Grounds" (Fletcher and Huff, 1994: p. 360). They answer the questions "What have you got to go on?" and "How do you get there?" (Toulmin, 1958: p. 91). Like Keith and Beard (2008), Fletcher and Huff (1994) highlight the difficulty in dealing with Warrants. Many Warrants are implicit; they are not visible from the text and have to be inferred by the coder. Warrants can also be categorised by type; substantive, authoritative and motivational.

- Qualifiers

Qualifiers identify the force underlying a Claim and the speaker's belief in it. This belief can be indicated by whether the Claim is presented as a definitive, absolute position, or whether it is presented as a probability. Qualifiers can "convert the terms of arguments from absolute terms to probabilistic terms" (Wangerin, 1993: p. 207).

Using Fletcher and Huff's (1994) argument mapping framework I tested the applicability of the Toulmin model of argumentation as a data coding method by coding a sample of the data set using the following three steps (Figure 5-5).

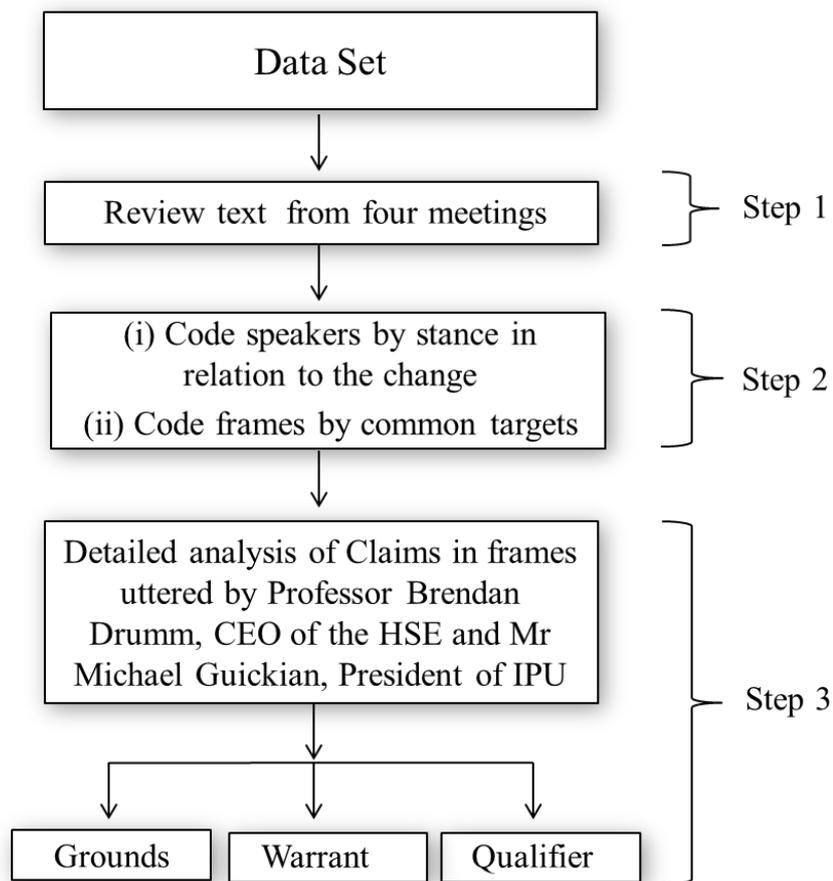
Step 1

For this test I used different data to that used in the first exploratory study. I used data from the meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007 and 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2007 where the change was one of a number of matters discussed. I also used data from the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, which dealt exclusively with the change.<sup>2</sup> These meetings preceded the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2007 deadline to introduce the change, which was announced by the HSE on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007. This deadline was subsequently deferred to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2008. In order to capture changes in framing strategies that may have emerged as a result of the deferred deadline, I extended the study to include the 2 opening Statements delivered during the next meeting which was 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2008. I began by reading through the selected text a number of times, as suggested by Fletcher and Huff (1994), to familiarise myself with the content and identify general framing tactics employed by the various actors.

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<sup>2</sup> The gap in time between the meetings held on 15th February 2007 and 14th November 2007 was due to the General Election held in Ireland for the election the 30th Dail Eireann (Irish Government). The Committee of the 29<sup>th</sup> Dail held its last meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2007 and the new Committee, established by the 30<sup>th</sup> Dail, met for the first time on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2007. The 30<sup>th</sup> Dail was constituted from the same political parties as the 29<sup>th</sup> Dail.

Figure 5-5: Coding protocol developed during Exploratory Study 2 (Part 1).



## Step 2

(i) Individual speakers<sup>3</sup> were coded as members of one of three speaker groups identified based on their stance in relation to the change.

- Proponents of the change (HSE); speakers who were justifying and defending the introduction of the change: representatives from the HSE, Department of Health and Children and the Minister for Health and Children.
- Directly affected opponents of the change (IPU); speakers who were directly objecting and criticising the change and its proponents; representatives from the Irish Pharmacy Union (the organisation

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<sup>3</sup> From the complete data set 54 speakers were identified; (6 HSE, 8 IPU and 38 Politicians).

representing pharmacists) and individual pharmacists active within the Union.

- Indirectly affected opponents of the change (Politicians); speakers who opposed the change and the way the HSE was going about introducing the change; TDs, elected deputies and Ministers and Senators.

(ii) It emerged from this detailed reading of the text that the frames uttered by speakers were directed at 11 common targets. These targets fitted Foldy et al.'s (2008) issue or constituents classification (Table 5-5). Frames were coded according to which of these targets they were directed.

*Table 5-6: Targets of frames.*

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Constituents</b>
1. The current situation	1. Pharmacists
2. The change	2. Irish Pharmaceutical Union (IPU)
3. The proposed solution	3. Department of Health and Children
4. The negotiations process	4. Health Service Executive (HSE)
5. The Indecon Report	5. Politicians
6. Methadone withdrawal	

### Step 3

From the text of the four meetings a sample of the text was analysed in detail to identify frames used by the speakers and the practical arguments underpinning them. This sample consisted of the utterances of Professor Brendan Drumm, CEO of the HSE, who was a proponent of the change and Mr Michael Guickian, President of IPU, who was an opponent of the change.

Each frame was examined to determine if it was underpinned by practical arguments (Toulmin, 1958). Where it was determined that a frame made a Claim, it was determined if the speaker had provided Grounds to support the Claim. If Grounds had been provided the text was examined to determine if a Warrant existed, explicitly or implicitly, that linked the Grounds to the Claim. A determination was also made on whether the speaker had qualified the Claim. The results of this analysis are outlined in Tables 5-6 and 5-7. These tables show the practical arguments in the sample of the text coded which underpinned the frames constructed by the two speakers.

Table 5-7: Result of coding of frames and Claims made by Professor Brendan Drumm (CEO of HSE) during his opening Statement.

	<b>Claim</b>	<b>Grounds</b>	<b>Warrant</b>	<b>Qualifiers</b>
<b>Target</b>				
<b>1. Pharmacists</b>	Pharmacists make a lot of money.	The high sale price of pharmacies.	Sale price reflects profitability	
<b>4. HSE</b>	The HSE's strategy of reducing cost sequentially is working.	Savings have been achieved from negotiations with others in the supply chain.	The saving reflect the success of the strategy being followed	
	The HSE is adopting a fair and reasonable approach.	It is adopting a procedure which is visible for all to see.	Transparency equates to reasonableness.	
<b>6. The current situation and 2. The IPU</b>	The IPU has created the current problem.	The competition law issue emerged from the action of the IPU.	The competition law issue may not have emerged if IPU did not take the action it did.	The issue may have emerged anyway.
<b>7. The change</b>	Patients will suffer if savings are not achieved.	Cuts will have to be made in other areas if savings are not realised.	The budget is based on these savings being made.	
<b>8. The proposed solution</b>	Will save money for taxpayers.	Costs will reduce by €100 million annually.	Costs reduced in one area will protect services in another.	If the change is implemented.
<b>9. The negotiation process</b>	A solution is achievable and close.	The confidence of the speaker.	The speaker is familiar with the situation.	

*Table 5-8: Result of coding of Frames and Claims made by Mr Michael Guickian (President of the IPU) during his opening Statement.*

	<b>Claim</b>	<b>Grounds</b>	<b>Warrant</b>	<b>Qualifiers</b>
<b>Target</b>				
<b>1. Pharmacists</b>	Are reasonable and responsible.	Declaration that they are willing to contribute more, willing to talk, and they provide a vital service.	These are responsible actions.	
	Are victims and under attack.	Not able to negotiate what they are paid.	Not being able to negotiate means they have no influence.	
<b>4. HSE</b>	Blocking progress and responsible for current impasse.	Not interested in negotiation.	Negotiation is the solution.	
<b>4. HSE</b>	Ignoring the facts.	Current fees subsidise trade.	Pharmacies unviable without current arrangement.	
<b>4. HSE</b>	Threatening patient services.	Pharmacists may not be able to maintain services.	Service provided costs money.	
<b>6. The situation</b>	It is a national crisis.	Many people will be affected.	Many rely on pharmacies.	
<b>8. The proposed solution</b>	A solution that pharmacists agree to.	Pharmacists have right to negotiate.	Imposed solution is not an agreed solution.	
<b>7. The change</b>	Will damage pharmacists.	They will be unviable.	Current structure makes them viable.	
<b>2. The IPU</b>	Being ignored.	Not allowed to negotiate.	It would be heard if it could negotiate.	
<b>9. The negotiation process</b>	A solution is achievable and close.	It is the opinion of speaker.	The speaker is familiar with the situation.	
<b>11. Methodone withdrawal</b>	HSE reneged on settlement.	It pulled out of what was agreed.	Settlement could not be reached as a result of the HSE's actions.	

### **5.6.2.2 Review of Exploratory Study 2 (Part 1)**

This second exploratory study highlighted that the framing behaviours of speakers were directed at 11 targets common to all speakers and suggested that different speaker groups placed greater emphasis on different targets.

It also confirmed Kaplan's (2008) findings: “proponents and opponents coalesced and then engaged in framing practices aimed at neutralizing opposition and building their own coalitions” (p.739). The proponents of the change used frames (i) to enhanced their credibility (e.g. track record in negotiations) and (ii) the material benefits (e.g. savings to tax payers) of the change. The opponents of the change sought to (i) enhance their credibility by pointing to their reasonableness, (ii) undermine the credibility of the proponents of the change by emphasising the crisis nature of the situation unfolding, the damage that may be caused to patients, and (iii) suggest more negotiation as a solution.

While these are notable findings, three shortcomings were identified with this coding protocol.

1. Completing Steps 2 and 3 separately was problematic. Step 2 was completed with direct reference to the text and Step 3 was carried out with reference to the manual notes and without direct reference to the text. The absence of a direct reference to text when completing Step 3 left room for researcher bias. This occurred because when coding choices were not obvious during Step 3, coding decisions were overly influenced by my insider experience and knowledge of the change and the context rather than what was visible in the text. These three steps should have been completed in sequence and included direct reference to the text.
2. Actors could frame a target using a few words or a number of paragraphs. To assist in identifying potential patterns, relationships and mechanisms, the specific text used by speakers to construct each frame, which made a Claim, needed to be identified using a unique code, rather than coding the section of text in which the frame was contained.
3. The identification of Claims, Grounds, Warrants and Qualifiers underpinning frames did not reveal differences in behaviours between actors.

These issues were addressed in Part 2 of this exploratory study.

### **5.6.3 Exploratory Study 2 (Part 2): Refinement of the coding protocol**

Following consideration of the shortcomings outlined above (Section 5.6.2.2) the coding protocol was refined.

The primary differences between Parts 1 and 2 of this exploratory study were:

- Steps 1-3 were completed in one sequence rather than staggered.
- Where a speaker's utterance attempted to frame a target or targets, this text was labelled a Framing Block. This label draws on and adapts Fletcher and Huff's (1994) term Topic Block which is a section of text which reflects an actor's attempt to make an argument. This label was applied to capture a section of text used to create a frame which could be a sentence, paragraph or number of paragraphs.
- To widen the search for patterns a more detailed analysis of the Claims made by frames was included. In Part 1 I excluded an analysis of the Claims made by type as outlined in Fletcher and Huff (1994); designative, definitive, evaluative and advocative, as I considered that this level of detail would make the coding overly complex. The typology in relation to Grounds which Fletcher and Huff (1994) suggest; facts, common knowledge or opinion (which includes citations from an authoritative source) had also been excluded for the same reason. After reflecting on the results of Part 1 and the absence of patterns, structures or mechanisms emerging, I decided to include these more detailed classifications of Claims and Grounds in the event that this level of analysis could contribute to answering the research question (Figure 5-6). Similarly the more detailed classification of Warrants (substantive, authoritative and motivational) suggested by Fletcher and Huff (1994) was included in the coding protocol

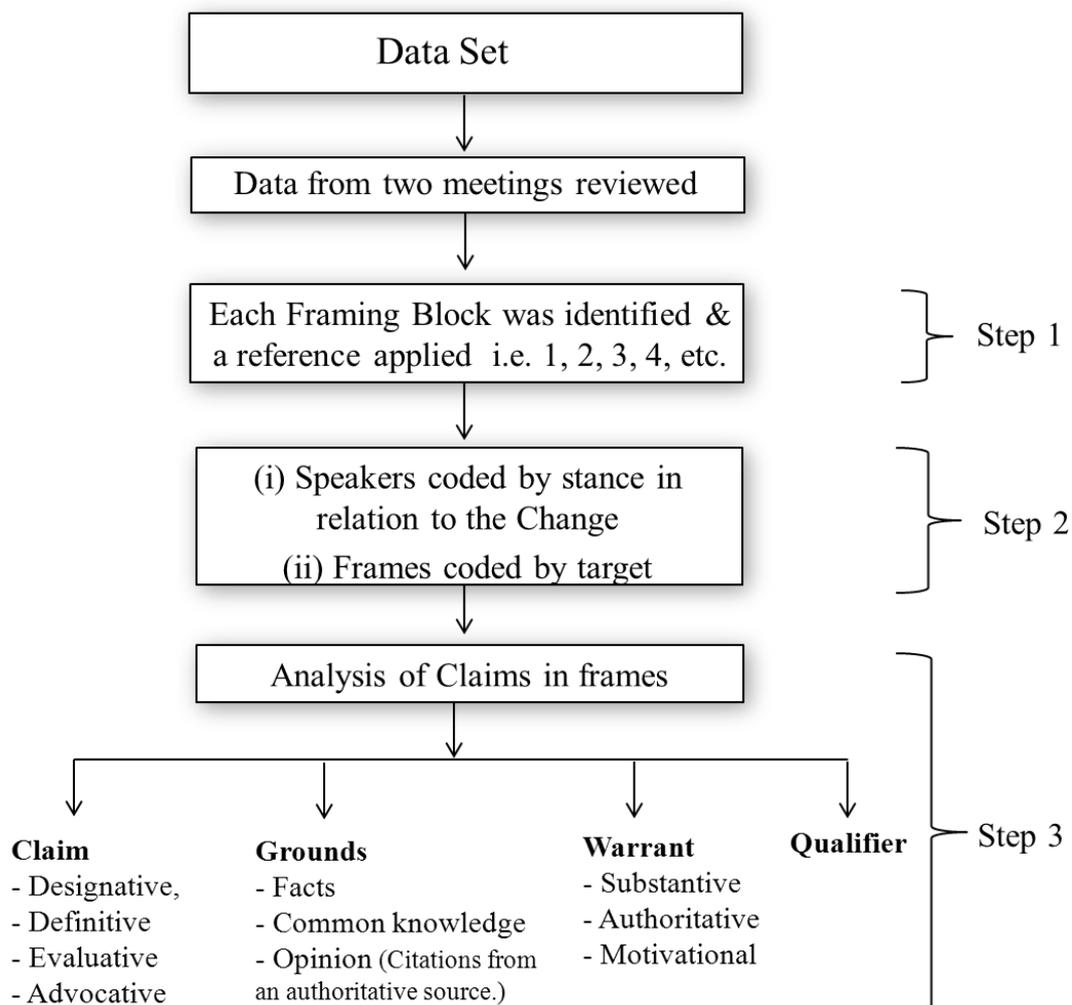
The text used for Part 2 was selected from the transcript of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2007. This meeting dealt with the change issue among many other issues (1000 words of 35,000 words concerned the Change). The first 5,000 words of the subsequent meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, which dealt exclusively with the issue, was also included. This latter meeting involved

speakers from the IPU and Politicians groups but not speakers from the HSE group.

### Step 1

Each Framing Block, which consisted of chunk of text which constructed a frame, was numbered beginning with 1.

*Figure 5-6: Coding protocol developed for Exploratory Study 2 (Part 2).*



### Step 2

Following from Step 2 in Part 1 of this study, speakers were coded to one of three speaker groups based on their stance in relation to the change: HSE, IPU or Politicians. Frames were also coded according to the target at which they were directed.

### Step 3

Each frame was then reviewed and where Claims, Grounds, Warrants and Qualifiers were identified they were coded by type.

The results were recorded using the Coding Form (Appendix 9). After each group of 30 Framing Blocks were coded I inputted the codes recorded on the Coding Forms into an excel spreadsheet. When doing this I cross referenced each code recorded on the Coding Forms with the original text to ensure that I was satisfied with the consistency of my original coding decisions. In many instances I was not and this resulted in changes being made to the codes applied to text.

#### **5.6.3.1 Review of Exploratory Study 2 (Part 2)**

To satisfy myself with the reliability of the codes applied, I reviewed the coded data a number of times during the three weeks after it had been initially coded. During this process I became less confident that the original coding was reliable. This was reflected by the fact that I was motivated to revise many of the original codes applied to the Framing Blocks. Despite these revisions I continued to have reservations in relation to my coding decisions.

- Categorising Claims as designative or definitive was problematic as it was difficult to make a conclusive assessment on whether a Claim was designative or definitive.
- Categorising a Claim as evaluative or advocative was certain.
- Categorising Grounds as facts, common knowledge or opinion (including citations from an authoritative source) was certain.
- Identifying Warrants in the first instance and then categorising them as substantive, authoritative or motivational were both problematic. This created the most uncertainty and doubt at both levels; identifying them and categorising them.

This declining confidence in aspects of the coding protocol over time was reinforced during discussions with academic colleagues familiar with argument mapping who expressed alternative views on how sample Framing Blocks had been coded. When their choice was discussed they became less confident with

their original selection. It became clear that identifying Claims and Grounds was without difficulty. Identifying Warrants was problematic. Classifying the Claims, Grounds and Warrants by type, in the absence of sufficient guidance from the literature was problematic and weakened the overall effectiveness and reliability of this data analysis method.

I concluded that the application of this coding protocol could impact negatively on the integrity of the study and required further attention.

## **5.7 Summary**

This study is investigating a type of sensegiving behaviour about which little is known; the deep structures which underpin leader sensegiving, in a multi-leader context, in relation to the same strategic change. Given its exploratory nature and its objective to investigate how leaders give sense as opposed to what they do when they give sense, considerable attention has been given to developing a coding protocol to maximise the value of its rich data set. This chapter outlines two exploratory studies undertaken to develop this protocol. While these two studies did not result in the development of a satisfactory coding protocol their findings make notable contributions to method.

The first Exploratory Study highlighted the limitations of framing analysis to move beyond describing what sensegivers do when they attempt to give sense, to how they give sense. To overcome this identified limitation, and delve deeper into the persuasive dimensions of frames, the second exploratory study focused on coding frames which made Claims using Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation.

These exploratory studies draw attention to the messiness of sensegiving and confirm the significance of frames as sensegiving devices. They also highlight that confining analysis of sensegiving behavior to the identification of frames involves including some utterances and excluding others, without knowing whether the excluded utterances have a sensegiving function. It highlights that because we are aware of some of the behaviours that have a sensegiving function, does not mean we are also aware of all behaviours that have a sensegiving function.

The focus on frames that made Claims in the second exploratory study also involved imposing unjustifiable boundaries. Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation was used as the theoretical foundation for this analysis. While the identification of Claims and Grounds was unproblematic, the identification of Warrants and classification of the types of Claims, Grounds and Warrants was highly problematic. When faced with coding uncertainty I drew on past experience for direction, not just what was visible from within the data set. This was particularly apparent in relation to identifying hard to see Warrants. As they are generally implicit, I was interpreting information based on my insider knowledge and interpretation and recollection of past events relating to the change which was undermining the integrity of the coding protocol. The literature supports these coding difficulties in relation to Warrants. Keith and Beard (2008) argue "confusion is widespread" (p. 31) and "sometimes they [Warrants] seem like the undetectable solar neutrino of argument theory" (p. 31). Brusckie and Wiseman (1992) point out that because Warrants are often implied and not stated "assigning a Warrant to a speaker where it is not expressed in verbal code would threaten representational validity" (p. 21). This exploratory study showed that, because of their abstract nature and the absence of definitive definitions in the literature, the types of Claims, Grounds and Warrants used by speaker groups could not be identified to the level of precision or reliability required. This could leave the data analysis method exposed to uncontrollable and unquantifiable researcher bias and undermine the repeatability of this data analysis method. This was a significant observation supported by Rothman (2007) who advises that "the more interpretation that is required to generate data from evidence, the higher the chances of introducing additional error" (p. 440).

An additional shortcoming associated with focusing on Claims in frames constructed by speakers, mirrors that identified in the first exploratory study which focused on all frames. It suggests that sense can only be given through practical arguments and all other utterances have no sensegiving function. Given our limited knowledge of the breadth of sensegiving behaviours available to sensegivers this position is not tenable.

The significant function served by these two exploratory studies is that they draw attention to the hazards of focusing on some aspects of behaviour without

confirming that the overlooked behaviour is not relevant and could offer valuable insights.

Chapter 6 presents the development and testing of a coding protocol that overcomes this difficulty and enables this study's complete data set to be coded in a rigorous, transparent and repeatable fashion. Chapter 7 presents the unique insights into leader sensegiving behaviour in a multi-leader environment that that this novel approach enabled.

## **Chapter 6: Development of data analysis method (Part II)**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter 5 set out the case study that forms the basis for this study's data set. It also presented its data analysis framework which consists of three streams of activities; data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles and Huberman, 1994). It mapped this framework on the three domains of reality recognised as central to the study's critical realist worldview (Bhaskar, 1978) (Figure 5-2). It also outlined the two exploratory studies undertaken to develop a coding protocol to reduce the case study's data set in a relevant, rigorous, transparent and repeatable manner. While these two studies did not yield a final protocol suitable to meet this study's objectives, they make a number of important contributions to method. They showed that the use of framing analysis in sensegiving research can produce a list of frames used by sensegivers when they attempt to give sense. This list offers little insight into the deep structures which underpin sensegiving. Identifying the claims-making strategies in frames as a means of accessing these structures was also found to be inadequate. One of the most significant contributions is the finding that both approaches (that is the identification of frames and claims-making strategies used in frames) automatically exclude behaviours from analysis without any evidence to suggest that these excluded behaviours do not add value to our understanding of the sensegiving function. Because of the limited understanding of the processes which underpin sensegiving, this exclusion can limit the capacity of sensegiving research to engage with the potentially rich communication used by sensegivers as they attempt to give sense.

To overcome the significant limitation of excluding behaviours from analysis without verifying if they have a sensegiving function, I undertook a third exploratory study to develop a protocol that enabled all utterances to be coded in a relevant, rigorous, transparent and repeatable manner. This chapter outlines this third exploratory study which involved the following:

- Developing a coding protocol to overcome the limitations of framing analysis.

- Applying this protocol to a sample of the data set.
- Pilot testing the inter-coder reliability of this protocol.
- Dual coding the complete data set.
- Electronically matching the codes to the data set.

The output of this process enabled the second data analysis activity, data display, which is presented in Chapter 7.

## **6.2 Exploratory Study 3: Developing the coding protocol**

The first part of this third exploratory study involved developing a protocol to enable all utterances to be coded. For the reasons outlined in Chapter 5, Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation remained a suitable theory upon which to build this coding protocol.

### **6.2.1 From framing blocks to text segments**

In Exploratory Study 2 the data set was organised into framing blocks (chunks of text which constructed a frame). As an objective for this exploratory study was to take account of all utterances in the data set, not just frames and Claims, organising the data set in this way was no longer suitable. For consistency, the data set was organised into text segments. Initially, each sentence was labelled a text segments, but in some instances, as discussed below, these sentences were divided into two or more text segments depending on their content.

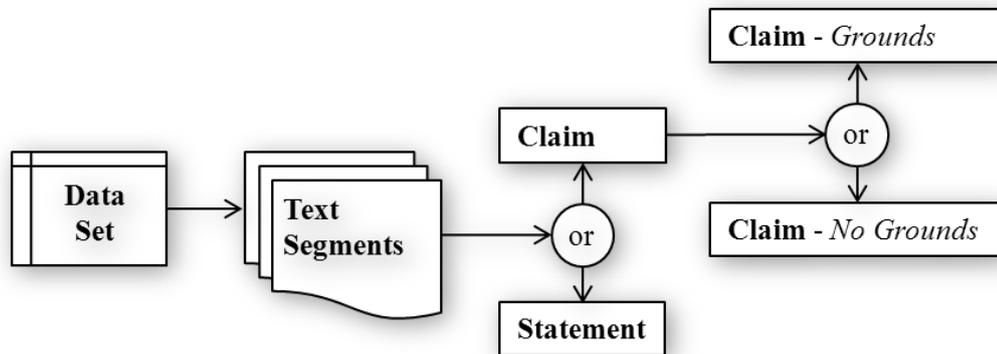
### **6.2.2 Claim – Grounds, Claim – No Grounds or Statement?**

As defined in Chapter 5 Claims are utterances which set out propositions, assertions, arguments, points of information or points of view which are potentially controversial, disputable or likely to be challenged. Grounds is the umbrella term for data and evidence which supports a Claim and is visible in the text. To code text segments which did not meet the Claim conditions, a code called Statement was introduced. A Statement was defined as a text segment which was other than a Claim.

The coding protocol involved applying a code to each text segment depending on whether it contained a Claim – Grounds, Claim – No Grounds or Statement. If a

text segment contained more than one Claim or Statement, it was be divided further into multiple text segments depending on the number of Claims or Statements it contained (Figure 6-1).

*Figure 6-1: Text segments were coded Claim – Grounds, Claim – No Grounds or Statement.*



Due to the potential for coding reliability issues identified during Exploratory Study 2 (Section 5.6.3.1) I did not propose coding Claims by type other than whether they were supported by Grounds or not.

### **6.2.3 Coding the complete data set**

This approach is in contrast to the approach adopted by Berente et al. (2011) which focused only on arguments where supporting Grounds could be identified (p. 693). It enables account to be taken of the complete data set and identification of the proportion of utterances which are not Claim – Grounds which may yield patterns as insightful as their presence. This addresses the important findings discussed in Section 5.7 which highlighted that some methods can result in behaviours being ignored without evidence to suggest that they do not serve a sensegiving function. It also enables two of the three parts of a practical argument (Toulmin, 1958), Claims and Grounds, to be identified and recorded in a transparent and replicable manner. Equally importantly it enabled utterances that did not meet the criteria that would qualify them as a practical argument; Claim – No Grounds and Statement, to be identified and recorded.

#### **6.2.4 Warrants to rhetorical appeals**

As outlined earlier, the third requirement for an utterance to qualify as a practical argument is the presence of a Warrant. Warrants are used to provide the legitimacy to connect Grounds to Claims. They provide the justification and motivation for Claims and Grounds to be accepted. A Warrant gives a Claim its persuasive potency. Despite their influence, Warrants are rarely explicit and identifiable only from what is said, written or illustrated. Warrants are infused with meaning by their social context. Their identification can therefore be highly dependent on the coder's awareness and knowledge of relevant contextual factors. It is this dimension of practical arguments that distinguishes Toulmin's (1958) approach from the formal logic based approach of Aristotelian scholars.

To identify a Warrant, a coder may have to make inferences from information which is not visible from within the text before them. As demonstrated in the second exploratory study, and supported by the literature, this feature of Warrants can create significant coding reliability difficulties. Because of their intangible character their inclusion in this study could result in the coding protocol not meeting the criteria set in Section 5.6.3. Due to these difficulties I developed an alternative method to capture the persuasive underpinnings of Claims and Grounds.

The three rhetorical appeals identified by Aristotle that are available to speakers seeking to persuade others are well recognised and recognisable; ethos, logos and pathos. While emerging from the tradition of formal logic which Toulmin (1958) criticised, rhetorical appeals have parallels with Warrants; they can both be deployed by speakers to give their arguments persuasive muscle. The difference between the two is that formal rhetorical appeals can offer only a perspective on the formal persuasive mechanisms at work while Warrants can disencumber scholars from the limitations of formal logic and explain "the rhetoric of an argument in everyday use (Toulmin, 1969)" (Green et al., 2009: p. 15). But, as discussed, this wider perspective can create method difficulties of such magnitude that a compromised approach is justified.

Aristotelian rhetorical appeals also share common objectives with sensegiving; both use language (although not exclusively) and both seek to create meaning for

cues and influence how others incorporate these meaning into their sensemaking behaviours. The literature on rhetoric in sensegiving environments (Green, 2004; Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Symon, 2005; Brown et al., 2012) supports this commonality; “through rhetoric, speakers shape, justify, rationalize and seek to modify perceptions of what is sensible, right and good (i.e. legitimate) (Green et al., 2009)” (Brown et al., 2012: p. 300).

Watson (1995) argues that “rhetoric is all about using language to persuade” (p. 806). Just as in sensegiving, language is used to “persuade others not just of the validity of specific arguments we wish to put across but also to persuade them of our personal validity, credibility and worthiness” (p. 806).

Rhetoric is also used to persuade ourselves: “it plays a central part in how human beings think as well as how they communicate with others” (Watson, 1995: p. 807) which has parallels with Weick’s sensemaking recipe; “how can I know what I think until I see what I say?” (Weick et al., 2005: p. 416).

Green (2004) suggests that rhetorical theory has been underutilised in organisational studies yet provides “a unique analytical framework for the study of organizational issues” (p. 664-665). In his study of the diffusion of managerial practice Green (2004) elucidates how the three types of rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos and pathos) affect the rate of adoption and rejection of managerial practices; “Specifically, pathos, logos, and ethos justifications shape the rationality underlying both the adoption and rejection of managerial practices” (Green, 2004). Holt and Macpherson (2010) take a differing view and suggest that, when sensemaking (in their study sensemaking behaviour could be interpreted as sensegiving behaviour) small firm entrepreneurs blend the three appeals, rather than engage them in turn as Green (2004) suggests. Holt and Macpherson (2010) suggest that rhetoric “is a practice of sensemaking that brings knowledge Claims and judgments into focus, justifying them to an audience and eliciting responses from that audience” (p. 25) and by using “rhetoric as a theoretical framing of sensemaking activity, we can see that sensemaking is an inherently active and socially-situated process” (p. 33). Suddaby and Greenwood (2005), examined the transcripts of testimony provided by witnesses at two US Government Commissions to reveal the arguments used

by key speakers engaged in a legitimacy contest over a new organisational form, They called for further work into “the role of rhetorical strategies in different forums, different settings, in more backstage as well as highly public contexts, and over different issues” (p. 62). Among the findings was that proponents of the new form praised its economic benefits and used pragmatic vocabularies whereas opponents “used arguments appealing to moral and normative legitimacy (Suchman, 1995)” (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005: p. 48).

*Those trying to legitimate change adopt the mythology of progressive rationality and, logically, choose words that connote practical efficiency and scenarios of change that imply movement toward a goal. Those resisting change adopt the mythology of moral tradition and choose words that evoke a value orientation and scenarios of change that reify the existing order of things. (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005: p. 60)*

Brown et al. (2012) examined the rhetorical strategies used in the Australian Senate Community Affairs Committee Report into Quality and Equity in Aged Care (2005) and found that “where arguments for change based on logos are insufficient, ethos and pathos may assume significance” (p. 315). They also suggest that further attention should be given to the role of rhetoric in processes of institutional change and “the political role of texts such as inquiry reports, policy and strategy documents and letters to shareholders, and to examine how they are embedded in and affect relations of power” (p. 315).

Of particular relevance for this study is Symon (2005) who points out that rhetorical studies can be critical in the sense that they can deconstruct reality (p. 1647) and “help us understand how organizational speakers construct instrumental discourses aimed at moving others’ beliefs, action or behaviour’ (Hamilton 2001: 445)” (Symon, 2005: pp. 1646-1647).

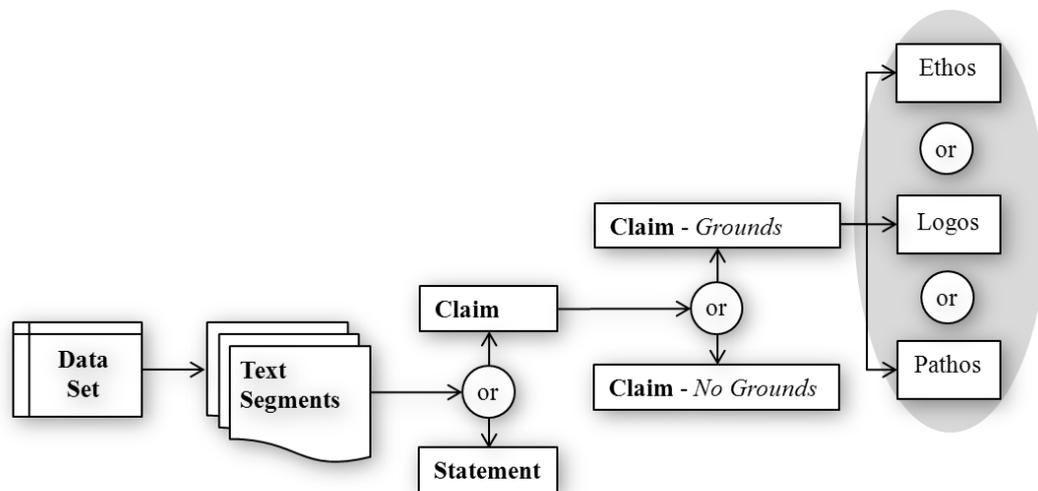
This discussion supports the proposition that the gap left by omitting the identification of implicit and often elusive Warrants can be adequately filled by Aristotle’s three rhetorical appeals. The literature confirms the role of rhetoric in persuasion and change, there is an established relationship between sensegiving and rhetoric and there have been calls for more work in the area. In addition the

definitions of Aristotle’s three rhetorical appeals are well supported by the literature.

This alternative approach involves identifying which of the three rhetorical appeals underpins each Claim – Grounds made by the various speaker groups (Figure 6-2). Coders would not be required to look outside the text to infer the presence or use of Warrants which would overcome the reliability issues associated with their identification.

This is a practical solution to a research method problem. By uncovering (i) the argument strategies used by speakers by identifying their use of Claims and Statements and (ii) the rhetorical appeals underpinning the Claim – Grounds, in a systematic fashion, the events occurring in the actual domain of reality which underpin the observable empirical experiences can be uncovered.

*Figure 6-2: The rhetorical appeals underpinning Claim – Grounds were identified and coded.*



### 6.2.5 Applying the coding protocol to a sample of the data set

A coding manual (Appendix 10) was developed (and subsequently refined) to ensure the coding protocol was transparent and consistent. This details how the data set should be organised and defines the codes to be applied to Claims and Statements.

The following are the key elements of the coding protocol.

### 1. Speakers – proponents and opponents

Each speaker was assigned to a group that best suited the stance they were adopting in relation to the Change. These groups were outlined in Section 5.6.1.

- HSE: Proponents of the change.
- IPU: Directly affected opponents of the change.
- Politicians: Indirectly affected opponents of the change.

Each speaker was coded by their name and group membership.

### 3. Claims

Claims are used when a speaker wants to persuade an audience to believe something about an entity, concept, condition or action. Claims are propositions, assertions, arguments, points of information or points of view which are controversial, disputable or likely to be challenged.

During the coding it became helpful to determine if a text segment was aiming to persuade, and therefore contained a Claim, by putting the phrase “*I assert that .....*” (Fletcher and Huff, 1994) at the beginning of the text segment.

Example:

*I assert that .... “We give advice as trained and experienced professionals [Claim 1] who know their patients well” [Claim 2].* In this text segment the speaker claims that pharmacists give advice and know their patients because they are well trained and experienced professionals. There are two Claims in this sentence which are disputable and could be challenged.

This is an example of a text segment which contained more than one Claim and as a result was divided into two text segments.

There can be two types of Claims; Claims which are not supported by Grounds and Claims which are supported by Grounds.

### *Claims – No Grounds*

These are utterances which make specific assertions which are controversial / disputable but are not supported by Grounds. Grounds for a Claim are not always explicit and may require reflection on the various words and phrases in a text segment or adjacent text segments to identify if it is present. To identify if the speaker had provided Grounds it is helpful to ask this question of the Claim: *What evidence is provided to support this Claim?* (Fletcher and Huff, 1994). In preparing an answer to this question it becomes clear whether Grounds have been provided. If the speaker did not provide Grounds to support the Claim it was coded Claim – No Grounds.

Example:

*The issue concerning us today is that of the cost of the wholesale pharmacy services [Claim] and, in particular, how much ordinary patients and the taxpayer should have to pay for them [Claim].*

This text segment is asserting that the issue being dealt with during the meeting was the cost of the wholesale pharmacy services and how much ordinary patients and the taxpayer should have to pay for them. This assertion is likely to be disputed by others. It is therefore controversial, which makes it a Claim rather than a Statement. But no Grounds were provided to support the Claim.

### *Claims – Grounds*

These are utterances that make specific assertions which are controversial / disputable which are supported by Grounds. When a speaker provided Grounds to support the Claim it was coded Claim – Grounds. The Grounds provided for a Claim may not be visible within the text segment where the Claim is located, but may be provided in an adjacent sentence.

Example

*Following the methadone debacle at the end of last year, some pharmacies have threatened vulnerable patients such as the elderly, those with cancer or*

*suffering with psychiatric illnesses with the withdrawal of services [Claim]. The HSE has been contacted by extremely distressed patients whose pharmacies have informed them that they will not be given any medicines after 1 March [Grounds and Claim].*

In this example the speaker wants the audience to believe the Claim that ‘pharmacists have threatened vulnerable patients’ [Claim]. What evidence is provided to support this Claim? The evidence the speaker is putting forward to support this Claim is the Claim that ‘The HSE has been contacted by extremely distressed patients whose pharmacies have informed them that they will not be given any medicines after 1 March.’ [Grounds]

In this instance the Grounds for the Claim, located in an adjacent text segment, is itself a Claim. So Grounds can have a dual purpose. It can act as Grounds for a Claim and can act as a stand-alone Claim.

#### Rhetorical appeals

Utterances identified as Claims – Grounds were further coded based on which of the Aristotle’s 3 main rhetorical appeals underpinned the Claim: ethos, logos or pathos.

#### Ethos

This approach involves speakers using their credentials, subject expertise and authority, or those of other sources, to persuade an audience that its Claim should be accepted. It can involve implicit and explicit references which suggest that the speaker is qualified and experienced to speak on the subject matter with authority; they know what they are talking about. It can also involve making references to, and quoting, other authoritative sources such as consultant reports, respected agencies and individuals who have socially accepted credibility in the subject area. Its persuasive power relies on the credibility of the speaker and his/her sources.

Example:

*The State determined fair and transparent arrangements for wholesale procurement supply in line with published Competition Authority guidelines. This process included very significant stakeholder consultation, public submissions and an extensive independent economic analysis.*

The author is using references to third parties (stakeholders, public submissions and independent economic analysis) to support their Claim that the State determined fair and transparent arrangements.

Logos

For Claims supported by logos speakers use persuasive appeals based on facts and rational reasoning; if x then y. It is similar to an academic approach with the persuasive appeal relying on facts, figures, data and charts.

Example:

*On the contrary, we fully support it in this endeavour and have been active for the past four to five years putting forward our ideas on how savings can be made. [Claim]. For example, millions of euro are wasted in the sector; there are poor levels of compliance — 50% of patients do not take their medicines correctly — and there is a ban on pharmacists providing cheaper medication to patients. [Grounds and Claim]. If our ideas on issues such as these could be addressed, they would bring about real and lasting savings and have real benefits for patients. [Claim].*

The author is putting forward facts and figures to support their Claim that they have been “*putting forward ideas on how savings can be made*” and if their ideas on issues such as these could be addressed, they would bring about real and lasting savings.

Pathos

For arguments supported by pathos the speaker uses persuasive appeals to fairness, and the lack thereof, doing the right thing and for example

highlighting the plight of the underdog. It can involve attempts to induce emotions such as anger, sadness, loss, greed, fear, indignation and so on and the use of emotional language. Claims underpinned by pathos do not have to be based on logical reasoning or credibility.

Example:

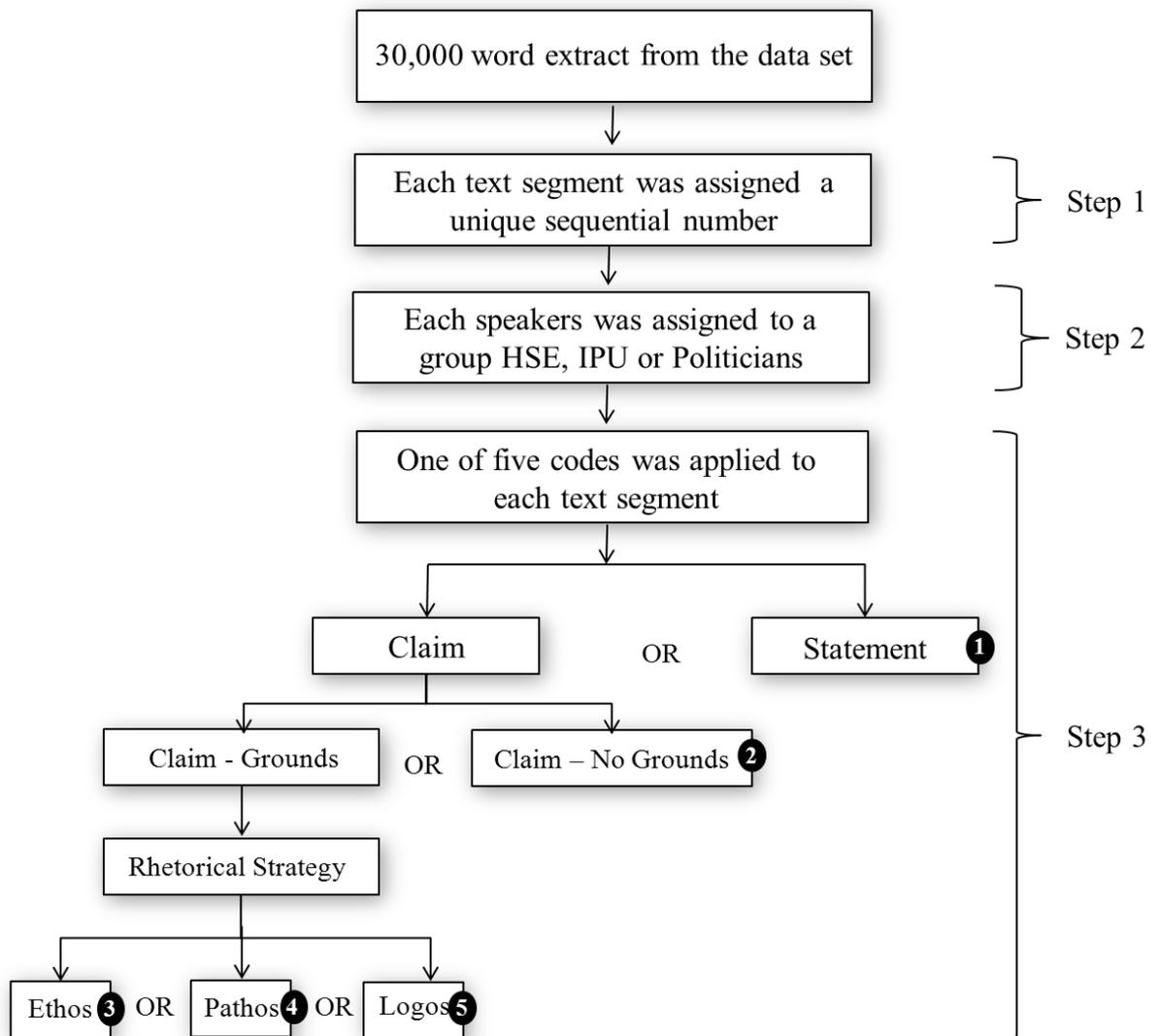
*The HSE applied unprecedented and extraordinary pressure on the wholesalers to force them to alter their prices. The three wholesalers were kept in three separate rooms in an attempt to extract various commitments from them over their trading arrangements with pharmacists.*

The speaker offers the fact that three wholesalers were kept in three separate rooms as evidence for the Claim that the HSE applied unprecedented and extraordinary pressure. It does not logically follow that because they were in separate rooms that unprecedented and extraordinary pressure was applied. There is no reference to a third party so ethos is not being used to persuade. Given the use of the emotive language, ‘unprecedented’, ‘force’ and ‘attempt to extract’, pathos is the persuasive appeal used used to link the Grounds to the Claim.

To test the efficacy of this coding protocol I coded approximately 40% of the study’s data set (circa. 30,000). This volume was selected for two reasons. Firstly, given the output of Exploratory Studies 1 and 2, I was confident that this simplified approach would be effective and meet the study’s objectives. Secondly, I wanted to determine whether this method could reveal useful patterns, structures and mechanisms. To establish this I determined that a significant cross section of the data set would need to be analysed.

The sample data set was coded in three steps (Figure 6-3).

Figure 6-3: Coding protocol developed for Exploratory Study 3.



Step 1: Each text segment was assigned a unique sequential number.

Step 2: Each speaker was assigned to one of three speaker groups depending on their stance in relation to the change; HSE, IPU or Politicians.

Step 3: Each text segment was allocated one of five codes depending on whether it was a Statement, Claim – No Grounds, Claim – Ethos, Claim – Logos or Claim – Pathos. If a text segment contained more than one Claim, as discussed earlier, it was divided into multiple text segments and numbered accordingly.

The results of this coding exercise indicated patterns were emerging in relation to the use of different argument strategies and rhetorical appeals by proponents and opponents of the Change. I was also satisfied, from the clarity of the definitions and consistency of the coding, that the protocol was sufficiently rigorous to proceed to pilot testing it with the assistance of scholars not familiar with the study or the text.

#### **6.2.6 Pilot testing the coding protocol for inter-coder reliability**

The inter-coder reliability of the coding protocol developed during the third exploratory study was tested with the assistance of two colleagues.

The literature highlights the importance of validity and reliability among coders and why they are so essential in qualitative research.

*In its simplest form, reliability refers to the ability of repeated coding trials to lead to the same score (Jones 1971:347; Stanley 1971:356; Carmines and Zeller 1979:11–12). (Rothman, 2007: p. 438)*

Compton et al. (2012) emphasise the importance of the reliability of not only the measures but also the consistency among coders.

*In addition, while a common definition for reliability is the consistency in measures over time, for intercoder reliability, it is consistency in the observations between two or more coders in addition to their consistency in coding over time. (Compton et al., 2012: p. 350)*

They suggest that “if at all possible, at least two should code all the interaction variables” as “more observations provide better estimates” (Compton et al., 2012 p. 354). They acknowledge that coding can be time consuming and expensive and sometimes one person will code all the data with a second person coding a portion.

The inter-coder reliability model (ICR) outlined in Burla et al. (2008) suggests that if sufficiently high agreement levels can be achieved between two coders, measured using Cohen's kappa coefficient, when coding a random sample then “coding of the remaining transcripts by single coders is a feasible and reliable

procedural option” (p. 115). Cohen's kappa coefficient is considered a conservative model but more reliable than simple per cent agreement calculation as it corrects for chance agreement between coders.

The model set out in Burla et al. (2008) involves coders coding a sample of text independently with the concordance and discordance of the two coders listed and an overall Cohen's kappa coefficient calculated for all codes.

There is an absence of agreement on what Cohen's kappa coefficient levels are required in order to justify single coding. Landis and Koch, (1977) suggest values  $< 0$  as indicating no agreement and 0–0.20 as slight agreement, 0.21–0.40 as fair agreement, 0.41–0.60 as moderate agreement, 0.61–0.80 as substantial agreement, and 0.81–1 as almost perfect agreement. Fleiss's (1971) guidelines describe Cohen's kappa coefficient levels over 0.75 as excellent, 0.40 to 0.75 as fair to good, and below 0.40 as poor. According to Everitt (1996), (quoted in Burla et al., 2008) Cohen's kappa coefficient levels of between 0.41 and 0.60 can be regarded as moderate agreement, and values above 0.60 as satisfactory or solid agreements. Values above 0.80 are regarded as nearly perfect agreements. Burla et al. (2008) suggested that on the basis of the Cohen's kappa coefficient levels of 0.67 which they secured “coding of the remaining transcripts by single coders is a feasible and reliable procedural option” (p. 115).

Based on this guidance I determined that to have confidence in single coding the complete data set, agreement among coders during the pilot testing would have to achieve a Cohen's kappa coefficient level of 0.65 or above.

#### **6.2.6.1 Pilot Test 1**

Pilot Test 1 involved three people coding approximately 4,200 words of text (approximately 2% of total data set) with inter coder reliability among the coders calculated using Cohen's kappa coefficient. The coders were a University Lecturer qualified to PhD level (Guest Coder A) specialising in Human Resources, a second year PhD student (Guest Coder B) studying in the Human Resources field and myself (Researcher). The test was carried out over a three hour period. The first hour involved training the coders. This involved

- Introducing the study and the coding protocol.
- Reading aloud the coding manual line by line with participants, confirming comprehension of the concepts, what coders were required to do and inviting discussion.
- The coders coding a 500 word sample of text followed by a discussion among coders comparing results and clarifying coding definitions. (This text consisted of 14 text segments from the meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007).

Following this training, a one page sample of the data set was coded individually. Coders were encouraged to ask questions at any time if they were unsure how to code a text segment.

After 20 minutes I stopped the coding and the codes the coders had applied to the first page of text were discussed and compared. There appeared to be approximately 60%-70% agreement in the codes applied. Coders sought clarity on the difference between logos and ethos. The fact that evidence for a Claim could itself be a Claim and a text segment could contain more than one Claim was also discussed.

Coding resumed for another 20 minutes and after this questions were invited. The difference between logos and ethos emerged again and was discussed until coders understood the difference.

After the test Cohen's kappa coefficient was used to determine inter-coder reliability between coders. Agreement was measured between two coders at a time (Table 6-1).

*Table 6-1: Agreement among coders as measured by Cohen's kappa coefficient.*

	Coder	Coder	Cohen's kappa coefficient
(i)	A	B	0.42
(ii)	B	Researcher	0.48
(iii)	A	Researcher	0.30

(i) Guest Coder A and Guest Coder B Cohen's kappa coefficient 0.42 (Table 6-2).

A significant contributory factor to the low Cohen's kappa coefficient score (0.42) between these two coders was a result of the number of common text segments which Guest Coder A coded as No Grounds (47), which Guest Coder B coded as Statement (24), Pathos (3), Logos (7), Ethos (7) or No Match (6) (See column 2 on Table 6-2). These differences suggested that the No Grounds code was being used as a default code by Coder A when there was uncertainty and suggested further training was required.

Table 6-2: Comparison of coding of Guest Coder A and Guest coder B.

		Guest Coder A							
		State	NoG	Pathos	Logos	Ethos	No Match		
Guest Coder B	State	89	24	0	0	0	2	<b>115</b>	
	NoG	2	31	2	0	3	6	<b>44</b>	
	Pathos	0	3	4	0	0	0	<b>7</b>	
	Logos	2	7	1	3	2	0	<b>15</b>	
	Ethos	1	7	0	1	2	0	<b>11</b>	
	No Match	6	6	0	1	0	0	<b>13</b>	<b>205</b>
		<b>100</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>129</b>	
							<b>205</b>		
							<b>Kappa Score</b>	<b>0.4184</b>	

(ii) Guest Coder B and Researcher – Cohen's kappa coefficient 0.48 (Tables 6-3 and 6-4)

A significant contributory factor behind the low Cohen's kappa coefficient score (0.48) between these coders can be accounted for by the instances where Guest Coder B coded a paragraph containing a number of text segments as a series of Statements and the Researcher coded the same paragraph as a single Statement. As a result there were 20 (almost 10% of codes) Statement codes from Guest Coder B for which there were no corresponding codes in Researcher's results. The Researcher had three Statements for which there were no corresponding codes in Guest Coder B's results. These 23 codes were coded as No Match.

Table 6-3: Coding of Guest Coder B and Researcher.

		Researcher							
		State	NoG	Pathos	Logos	Ethos	No Match		
Guest Coder B	State	81	5	0	2	4	3	95	
	NoG	5	28	0	0	0	1	34	
	Pathos	3	0	6	0	2	0	11	
	Logos	4	5	0	11	1	1	22	
	Ethos	0	1	1	0	3	0	5	
	No Match	20	7	0	1	2	0	30	197
		<b>113</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	129	
							<b>197</b>		
							<b>Kappa Score</b>	<b>0.48308</b>	

When the No Match classification was removed from the analysis the Cohen's kappa coefficient score increased from 0.48 to 0.67 (Table 6-4). While the literature does not support selective use of results in this way, this suggested that further training could improve agreement levels.

Table 6-4: Coding of Guest Coder B and the Researcher excluding No Matches.

		Researcher							
		State	NoG	Pathos	Logos	Ethos	No Match		
Guest Coder B	State	81	5	0	2	4	0	92	
	NoG	5	28	0	0	0	0	33	
	Pathos	3	0	6	0	2	0	11	
	Logos	4	5	0	11	1	0	21	
	Ethos	0	1	1	0	3	0	5	
	No Match	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	162
		<b>93</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	129	
							<b>162</b>		
							<b>Kappa Score</b>	<b>0.6659</b>	

(iii) Guest Coder A and Researcher - Cohen's kappa coefficient 0.30 (Table 6-5).

These two coders experienced the lowest levels of agreement. Much of the discordant coding was accounted for by the difference in the number of text segments that were coded Claim – No Grounds; 28 of the text segments coded by Guest Coder A as Claim – No Grounds were coded as Statements by the Researcher. There was also a high number of No Match. This suggested that the coding protocol was not sufficiently specific and more training was required.

Table 6-5: Coding of Guest Coder A and the Researcher.

		Guest Coder A							
		State	NoG	Pathos	Logos	Ethos	No Match		
Researcher	State	64	28	0	0	0	1	93	
	NoG	3	25	3	0	1	1	33	
	Pathos	0	5	3	1	2	1	12	
	Logos	5	6	0	4	1	2	18	
	Ethos	2	2	0	0	1	0	5	
	No Match	12	13	1	1	1	0	28	189
		86	79	7	6	6	5	97	
							189		
							<b>Kappa Score</b>	<b>0.298</b>	

Overall the Cohen's kappa coefficient scores between coders showed that agreement among the coders was, according to Landis and Koch's (1977) scale, between fair and moderate and did not reach the inter-coder reliability levels required to justify proceeding with single coding of the text.

Following a post-pilot discussion among the coders and a review of the results, it was considered likely that agreement levels could be improved if coding instructions were more explicit and there was additional training. Before proceeding with Pilot Test 2, three refinements were made to the coding protocol and coder training instructions.

- The emergence of a high discrepancy in No Matches as a result of one coder coding individual text segments in a paragraph (based on the data set's original layout) and the other coding the paragraph as a single Statement was addressed by reformatting the data set with each text segment separated by a carriage return.
- The definitions of the four types of Claims (No Grounds, Pathos, Logos and Ethos) needed to be clarified further during the coder training and supported by examples.
- It was suggest that the labels ethos, logos and pathos be replaced with familiar words which related more directly to their definitions; emotion, logic and credibility respectively.

### 6.2.6.2 Pilot Test 2

A second pilot test was conducted a week after the first pilot was completed using more explicit coding instructions. This involved two of the original three coders who had the highest inter-coder reliability scores (based on the Cohen's kappa coefficient); Guest Coder B and the Researcher. At the start of the test session it was pointed out that the main shortcomings with the first coding exercise related to Statements and different interpretations of the definitions of the rhetorical appeals. The revised coding manual addressed these difficulties. As was the case at the opening of the first Pilot Test, the coding manual was reviewed line by line by the two coders. During this discussion it was agreed that the trigger for coding a Claim – Grounds which use pathos appeals would be emotive words, the triggers for ethos appeals would be references to third parties and the trigger for logos appeals would be the use of facts and a logical line of reasoning. It was also decided if coders were unsure, the persuasive appeals underpinnings Claims – Grounds could be identified through a process of elimination; if not emotion or logic, it must be credibility. Instances from the first test where both coders had allocated different codes to the same text were discussed. During this discussion there were instances where both coders agreed to revise their original codes.

As a refresher, two pages of text were coded separately and results compared and discussed. These training steps, reviewing and discussing the revised coding manual, coding a section of text and discussing the results, improved the coding confidence of both coders.

During this second test, agreement improved but disagreement persisted. It was identified that many of these disagreements related to contextual issues. For example, on a number of occasions the Researcher coded a text segment as a Claim and the Guest Coder B coded the same text segment as a Statement. Through discussion between the two coders it emerged that because the Researcher was more familiar with the context in which the text was uttered he was adding a dimension of meaning to the coding process which was not visible in the text. Because Guest Coder B was not familiar with the context, and the meaning it was adding, he was only relying on what was visible from within the

text. It became clear that context was creating an element of slipperiness that required a modified approach similar to the way meaning and sense can be context specific. To overcome this, a process of discussion-consensus formation was initiated which was used when there was coding disagreement. After coding two pages of text the coders paused, discussed disagreements and reached a consensus on the “correct” code. This follows Berente et al. (2011) where a similar discussion-consensus approach was used. I discussed this with Professor Berente and he concurred with the slipperiness issue and found this discussion-consensus formation to be a suitable method. (I could find no other paper that has used Toulmin type analysis in this way, so had only Berente et al. (2011) to rely on.)

#### Summary of Pilot Test 2.

- There was a lot of agreement between coders in relation to Statements.
- There were instances where Guest Coder B coded a text segment as a Statement and the Researcher coded the same text segment as a Claim. Through discussion the coders agreed that these differences were related to meaning the context was infusing in the utterance.
- While there was still some disagreement on the rhetorical appeals underpinning Claims supported by Grounds, these disagreements reduced as the coders became more experienced.
- When coders discussed disagreements they quickly reached consensus. Most of the disagreements were related to context.

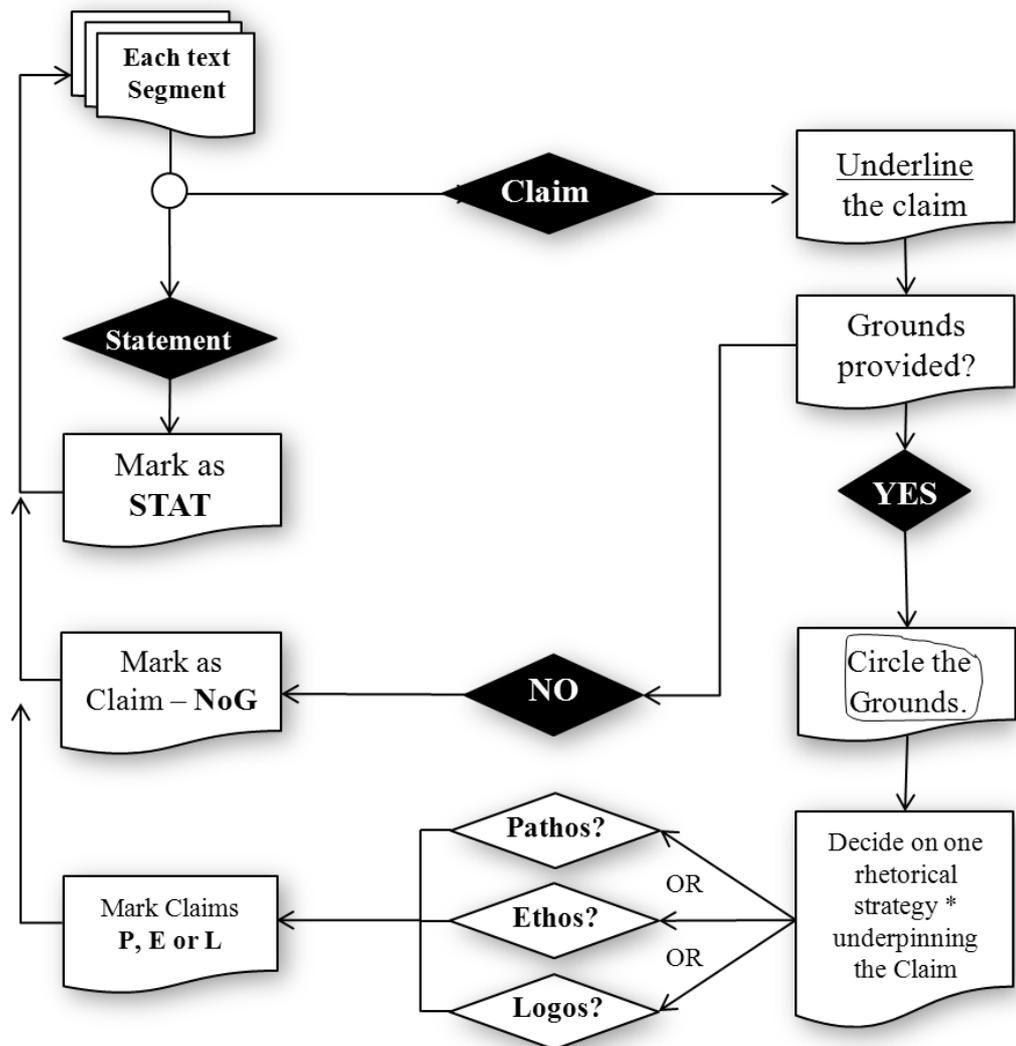
Following this review I did not calculate the inter-coder reliability between the coders using Cohen's kappa coefficient as I determined that insufficient levels of agreement could be achieved without coders engaging in discussion-consensus formation. This was due to a number of factors; the novel research method being used, the abstract nature of the concepts being investigated and the significance of my contextual knowledge. I concluded that single coding could not be justified.

## 6.2.7 Dual coding the complete data set

With the assistance of Guest Coder B, the data set was dual coded. This involved coding 4,000+ text segments (approximately 80,000 words) using the final coding manual (Appendix 10) and the final coding protocol (Figure 6-4).

A discussion-consensus approach was used which involved both coders stopping after coding five pages of text and comparing codes applied. Coding differences were discussed and a single code agreed. This discussion-consensus approach reduced differences as the coding progressed.

Figure 6-4: Coding protocol used during the dual coding of complete data set.



\* For ease of comprehension during the coding sessions, the rhetorical strategies were referred to as emotion, credibility and logic.

### 6.2.8 Electronically matching the codes to the data set

The coding decisions made by the two coders who participated in the dual coding were initially recorded manually on hard copies of the data set. These codes were then electronically combined with the data set using the data handling software MAXQDA. During this transfer process, patterns in relation to the different types of Statements, Claims – No Grounds used by speakers emerged. The emergence of these observations reflect Miles and Huberman's (1994) view that qualitative data analysis is a “continuous iterative enterprise” (p. 12). While they emphasise the need for “thoroughness and explicitness” (p. 5) and for qualitative processes to be well documented, they also advise that researchers “look behind any apparent formalism and seek out what will be useful” (p. 5).

This guidance enables methodological flexibility during the analysis process as long as it is explicit and documented. On conclusion of the transfer process I had identified common usage among speakers of four types of Statements and two types of Claim – No Grounds. These Statements and Claims sub types were unproblematic to identify. I determined that coding them may assist in identifying worthwhile patterns, structures and mechanisms during subsequent data analysis activities.

Types of Statements identified with examples.

1. Statements which were concerned with relaying facts (St-Fact).

*Last autumn we also agreed a deal with the Association of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers in Ireland, representing generic manufacturers, which could save a further €20 million in the next four years. (Minister Harney, HSE, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007, text segment 26).*

2. Statements which were based on expressing a personal opinion (St-Opinion).

*I agree it would have implications for other professional groups. (Minister Harney, HSE, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007, text segment 104)*

3. Statements which involved reporting on the position of a third party (St-Report).

*He has made it very clear, and so has the Minister in the House, that the issue is with the wholesale margin and the wholesalers.* (Deputy Reilly, Politicians, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008, text segment 104)

4. Statements which were in the form of questions (St-Question).

*Will the Minister and Professor Drumm explain this issue?* (Deputy Devins, Politicians, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007, text segment 26)

Claim – No Grounds identified with examples (CL-NG Question).

1. Claims which were in the form of questions.

*Why are pharmacists being punished for the perceived sins of the wholesalers?* (Deputy Reilly, Politicians, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008, text segment 104)

2. Claims which involved reporting on the position of a third party (CL-NG Report).

*Pharmacists tell me that their profits could be reduced on average by €70,000.* (Darragh O'Loughlin, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 653)

During this process it was again confirmed that most of the utterances made by speakers were directed at identifiable targets: actions, conditions, entities and concepts (Fletcher and Huff, 1994). The existence of 11 targets was first noted in Section 5.5. I merged two of the targets identified in Section 5.5 due to their similarity. I labelled the remaining 10 targets as Sensegiving Targets as most of the text segments of speakers appeared to be concerned with giving sense to these targets (Table 6-6).

As these new codes (four Statement sub types, two Claim – No Grounds sub types and the Sensegiving Targets) emerged progressively during the transfer of the manual codes to MAXQDA, for completeness and when the transfer was

completed, I reviewed the complete data set twice and applied codes using the coding protocol set out in Figure 6-5 using the definitions set out in Table 6-7.

Table 6-6: Sensegiving Targets.

Sensegiving Targets	
1	HSE
2	IPU
3	Resolution
4	The Change
5	Impact
6	Interim Contract
7	Post Change Costs
8	Motion
9	The Shipsey Process
10	The Indecon Report

Figure 6-5: The final coding protocol used to code the complete data set.

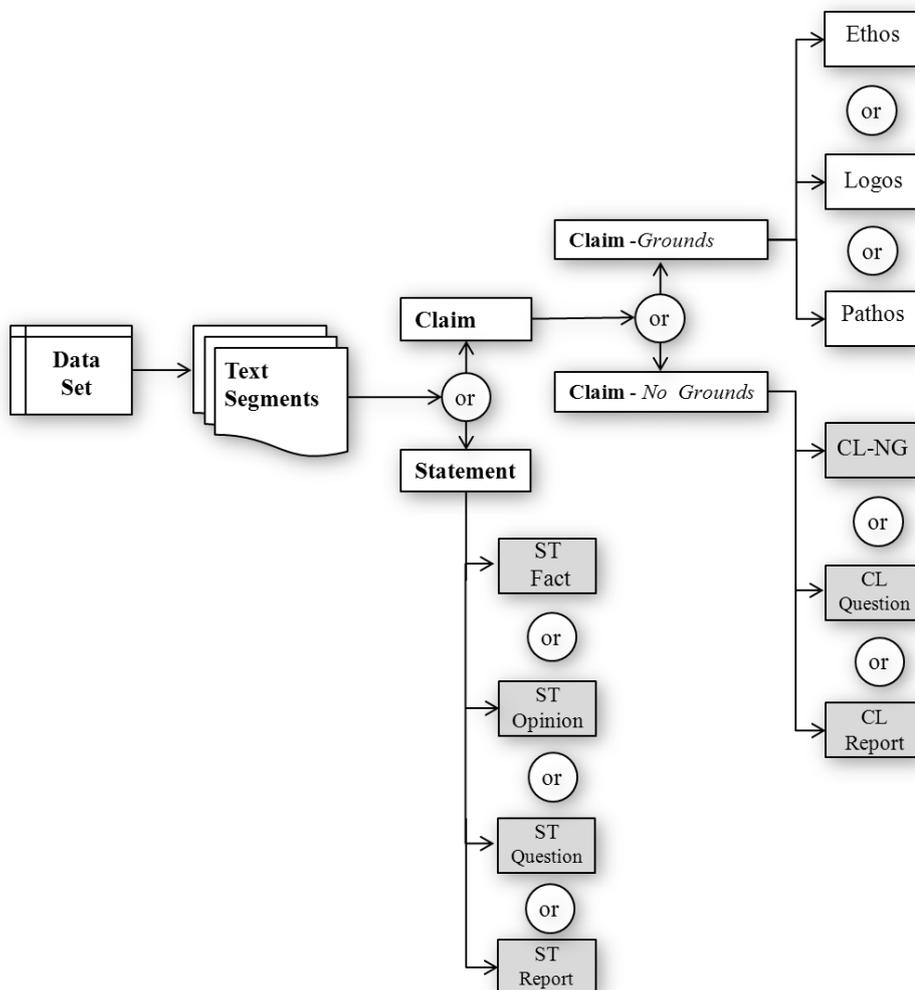


Table 6-7: Final definitions of codes used.

<b>Type of Claims</b>	
CL – NG	This is a Statement which makes a Claim which is likely to be controversial and/or argued against but no Grounds is provided to support the Claim.
CL – NG Question*	This is a Statement uttered in the form of a questions which makes a Claim which is likely to be controversial and/or argued against but no Grounds is provided to support the Claim.
CL – NG Report*	This is a Statement which makes a reference to a view, position, opinion, report of another or an existing arrangement or procedure which is likely to be controversial and/or argued against but no Grounds is provided to support the Claim.
CL – P (Pathos)	This is a controversial or arguable Claim which is supported by Grounds and the relationship between the Grounds and the Claim is underpinned by an appeal to emotion.
CL – L (Logos)	This is a controversial or arguable Claim which is supported by Grounds and the relationship between the Grounds and the Claim is underpinned by an appeal to logic.
CL – E (Ethos)	This is a controversial or arguable Claim which is supported by Grounds and the relationship between the Grounds and the Claim is underpinned by appeals to the credibility/authority of the speaker or that of another source.
* Claims – Grounds were not sub coded as to whether they were in the form of questions or reports of third parties.	
<b>Types of Statements</b>	
St – Fact	This is a Statement of fact which an audience is likely to accept as valid and unlikely to be considered controversial or argued against.
St – Opinion	This is a Statement which represents the speakers view, opinion, wish or desire and which is unlikely to be considered controversial or argued against.
St – Report	This is a Statement which makes a reference to a view, position, opinion, report of another or an existing arrangement or procedure which is unlikely to be controversial and/or argued against.
St – Question	This is a Statement which is made in the form of a question which is unlikely to be controversial or argued against.
Sensegiving Targets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. HSE</li> <li>2. IPU</li> <li>3. Resolution</li> <li>4. The Change</li> <li>5. Impact</li> <li>6. Interim Contract</li> <li>7. Post Change Costs</li> <li>8. Motion</li> <li>9. The Shipsey Process</li> <li>10. The Indecon Report</li> </ol>

### 6.3 Coding statistics

A total of 7214 codes were applied to the data set from the eleven Oireachtas Committee meetings as outline in Table 6-8.

Of these codes, 1072 were applied to identify Claims (Claim – Grounds and Claim – No Grounds) and 2966 were used to identify Statements. The remaining codes were used to identify the Sensegiving Targets and the speaking episodes (consisting of multiple text segments) of speakers.

*Table 6-8: No of codes applied to complete data set.*

<b>Debate No</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Codes applied</b>
1	2007	15th February	110
2		1st March	51
3		6th Nov	15
4		14th Nov	1295
5		22nd Nov	147
6	2008	7th Feb	179
7		12th Feb	3796
8		13th Feb	585
9		14th Feb	392
10		6th March	361
11		19th March	283
			<b>7214</b>

Following an initial review of the coded data set the following modifications were made.

- The Chairman of the Oireachtas Committee on Health uttered significantly more text segments than anyone else 434 (319 – Fact, 80 – Opinion, 14 – Reporting and 21 – Questions). The next nearest speaker made 150 Statements. Given the high proportion of the Chairman’s utterances which were Statements concerned procedural matters associated with chairing the meetings and were not concerned with giving sense to the change, I removed this speaker from the analysis.

- Following the same logic I excluded the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee which discussed this issue as part of a number of other issues during one debate (7th February 2008).
- As the meeting which involved the Competition Authority was a once-off, the utterances represented just 3% of the overall utterances and the speaker was neither an obvious proponent or opponent of the change, this meeting was excluded.

These changes adjusted the number of codes for analysis as outlined in Table 6-9.

*Table 6-9: Total codes applied.*

	Original		Revised
Total number of Codes applied	7257		6575
Total number of Statement codes	2966		2357
Total number of Claims codes	1072		996

#### **6.4 Summary**

Chapter 5 made a number of notable contributions to method. It highlighted that the application of framing analysis in sensegiving research can result in potentially important sensegiving behaviours, other than frames and frames which make Claims, being excluded from further analysis without any evidence to support the conclusion that the excluded behaviours do not have a sensegiving function.

This Chapter has made additional contributions to method. It presented a novel protocol to overcome the limitation of framing analysis in sensegiving research by taking account of all utterances and not just those which are presumed to have a sensegiving function. This protocol is underpinned by Toulmin's model of argumentation. To overcome the challenge of identifying implicit Warrants (Toulmin, 1958; Bruschke and Wiseman, 1992; Fletcher and Huff 1994; Keith and Beard 2008) Aristotle's three rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos and pathos) were used to identify the persuasive appeals underpinning practical arguments.

These appeals are well recognised in the literature and provide the necessary rigor to identify how speakers attempt to make their Claims persuasive, but are less abstract and difficult to identify than Warrants.

The protocol also enables Claims that are not supported by Grounds and different types of Statements used by speakers during sensegiving episodes to be identified and categorised. As it does not necessarily follow that utterances that are presumed not to have a sensegiving function do not actually have a sensegiving function, the isolation of utterances in this fashion is important. The identification of utterances which are not presumed to have a sensegiving function is therefore potentially as important as isolating utterances which are considered to have a sensegiving function. It enables the patterns and relationships between utterances to be considered by type (Statement, Claim – No Grounds, Claim – Grounds) but also enabled the corpus of utterances to be considered in totality to identify patterns and relationships at a macro level which would not be visible from micro level analysis. The identification of Sensegiving Targets, which is one of the study's significant findings, and is discussed in detail in Chapters 7 and 8, emerged from this macro level analysis. The significance of Sensegiving Targets would not have not have been identified if the study had focused only on Claims supported by Grounds.

This wider angle on sensegiving behaviour is consistent with the study's critical realist stance and its objective to dig deeper into sensegiving behaviour and beyond what is immediately visible in the empirical domain and presumed to have a sensegiving function.

Chapter 7 takes the output of the dual coding of the data set outlined in this chapter and presents the second activity in Miles and Huberman's (1994) data analysis framework; data display.

## **Chapter 7: Data displays, and testing and confirmation.**

### **7.1 Introduction**

Chapters 5 and 6 outlined the development of the study's data reduction method. Chapter 6 detailed the application of this method to the data set. This involved dual coding all text segments in the data set, not just those which the literature suggests could have a sensegiving function, such as frames (Kaplan, 2008). This data reduction method was underpinned by key elements of Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation (Claims and Grounds) and Aristotle's three rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos and pathos).

Data reduction is the first of three streams in Miles and Huberman's (1994) data analysis framework which this study adopts. This chapter and the next chapter are concerned with the second and third streams; data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

A data display is "a visual format that presents information systematically" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 91). Data displays "permit careful comparisons, detection of differences, noting of patterns and themes, seeing trends and so on" (p. 92). Conclusion drawing and verification involves making sure the findings which the data displays reflect are valid.

As outlined in Figure 5-2 data displays are used in this study to investigate, using inductive reasoning, the events occurring in the actual domain through the systematic coding of text segments observable in the empirical domain.

Miles and Huberman (1994) advise that the format of a data display depends on what the researcher is trying to understand (p. 93). Given the exploratory nature of this study, six data displays (Table 7-1) have been developed to enable a thorough exploration of the empirical, actual and real domains. The first two displays present the argument and rhetorical strategies used by the speaker groups (HSE, IPU and Politicians). Data Display 1 presents the strategies that underpin all text segments. Data Display 2 compares these strategies with those which underpin the text segments directed at the five most common Sensegiving

Targets. Data Display 3 displays the relationships and patterns underpinning the text segments directed at these Sensegiving Targets. This display revealed significant meaning giving and sense creation patterns. These findings were then explored in depth. The findings are presented in Data Displays 4 – 6 before being tested and confirmed.

*Table 7-1: Summary of the data displays.*

<b>Data Display</b>	<b>Content</b>
Data Display 1	Presents the argument and rhetorical strategies which underpin all text segments.
Data Display 2	Compares these strategies with those which underpin the text segments directed at the five most common Sensegiving Targets.
Data Display 3	Displays the differences in the approaches by the speaker groups to the five most common Sensegiving Targets.
Data Displays 4-6	Displays, separately, how each speaker groups treats each of the five most common Sensegiving Targets.

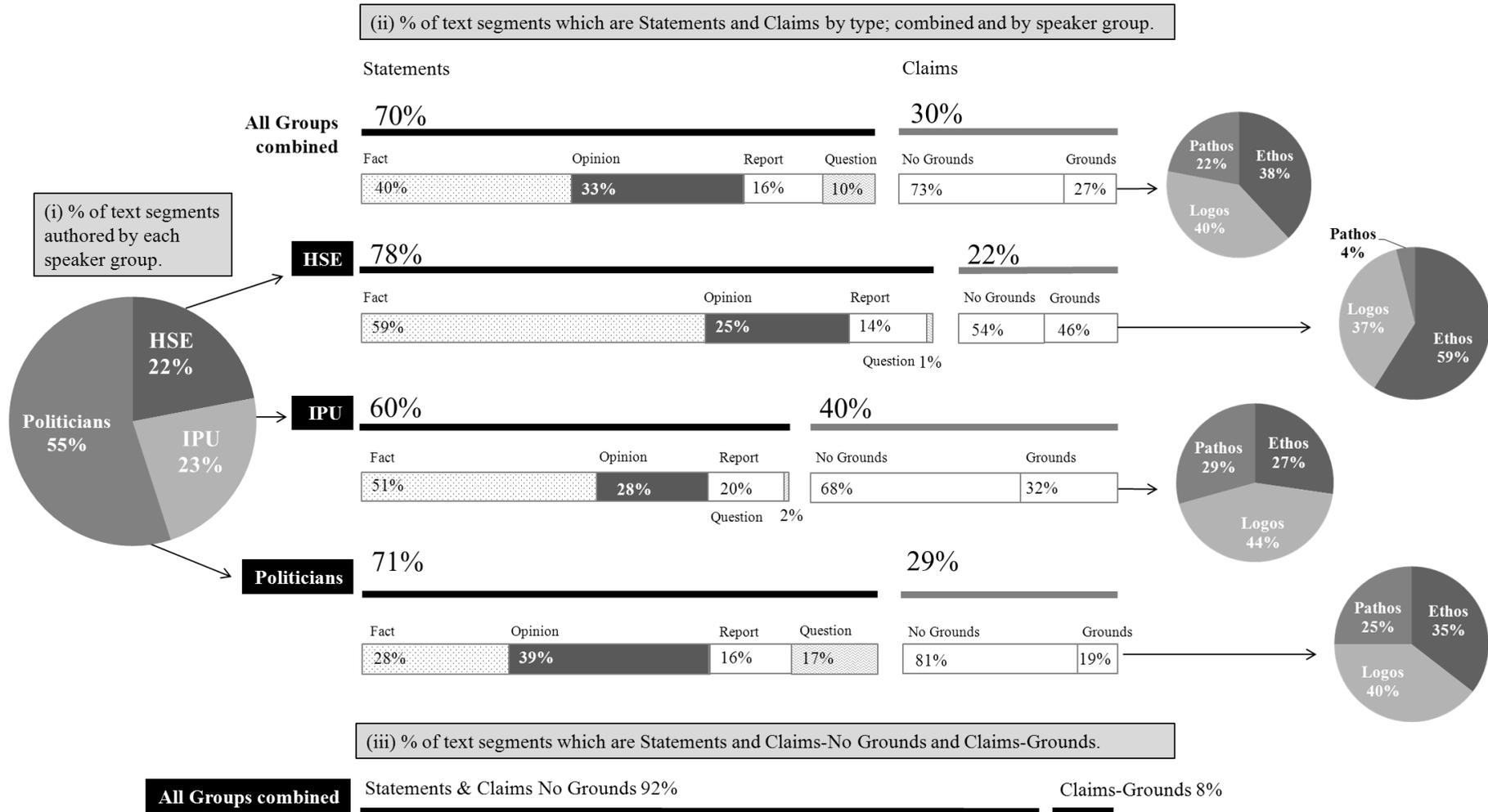
This chapter concludes with the presentation of a model which draws together the findings in the data displays to explain what occurs in the empirical and actual domains when leaders give sense to the same strategic change in a multi-leader context.

Chapter 8 explores the real domain and using retroductive reasoning, identifies a generative mechanism whose tendencies cause these processes to occur.

## **7.2 Data Display 1 – Strategies underpinning all text segments**

Data Display 1 (Figure 7-1) presents (i) the % of text segments authored by each speaker group and (ii) the types of Statements and Claims made by each group.

Figure 7-1: Data Display 1.



*(i) % of text segments authored by each speaker group*

In total 3353 text segments were coded. Speakers from the Politicians authored over twice as many text segments (55%) as speakers from the IPU (23%) and HSE (22%).

These differences correspond with the number of different speakers in each group; 39 speakers in the Politicians, nine speakers in the IPU and six in the HSE.

*(ii) Types of Statements and Claims used*

70% of all text segments made by all speaker groups were Statements and 30% were Claims. The data display shows that these proportions varied among speaker groups. Opponents of the change made proportionately more Claims (IPU 40% and Politicians 29%) than the proponent group (HSE 22%).

The display also shows that the types of Statements made by speaker groups varied. Most of the Statements made by speakers from the IPU and HSE were statements of fact (St – Fact); 51% and 59% respectively. Just 28% of the Statements made by speakers from the Politicians group were St – Fact. Speakers from the Politicians group made more (39%) statements of opinion (St – Opinion) than any other group; IPU (28%) and the HSE (25%). A significantly higher proportion of the Statements made by speakers from the Politicians (17%) were statements in the form of questions (St – Question), when compared with the IPU and HSE; 2% and 1% respectively.

Of the 989 Claims made by all speaker groups combined, 73% were Claims – No Grounds. Of the Claims – Grounds made (27%), 38% were underpinned by ethos, 40% by logos and 22% by pathos.

### **7.2.1 Data Display 1 - Findings**

Data displays do not speak for themselves (Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 100). Identifying patterns, relationships and themes can require interpretation of the display and reference back to the data set. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest “13 specific tactics to draw meaning from a particular configuration of data in data

display” (p. 245). At this early stage in the data analysis process I chose counting to see what I had (Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 253). Through a process of reflection on findings in the data display and reference back to the data set, I identified two notable patterns.

*(i) Speaker groups used few practical arguments, as defined by Toulmin (1958).*

According to Toulmin’s (1958) model of argumentation, practical arguments must contain Claims, Grounds and Warrants; “messages that do not contain these parts are not arguments” (Wangerin, 1993: p. 205). The data shows just 8% of all text segments (Statements and Claims) made by speaker groups were Claims – Grounds (Table 7-2).

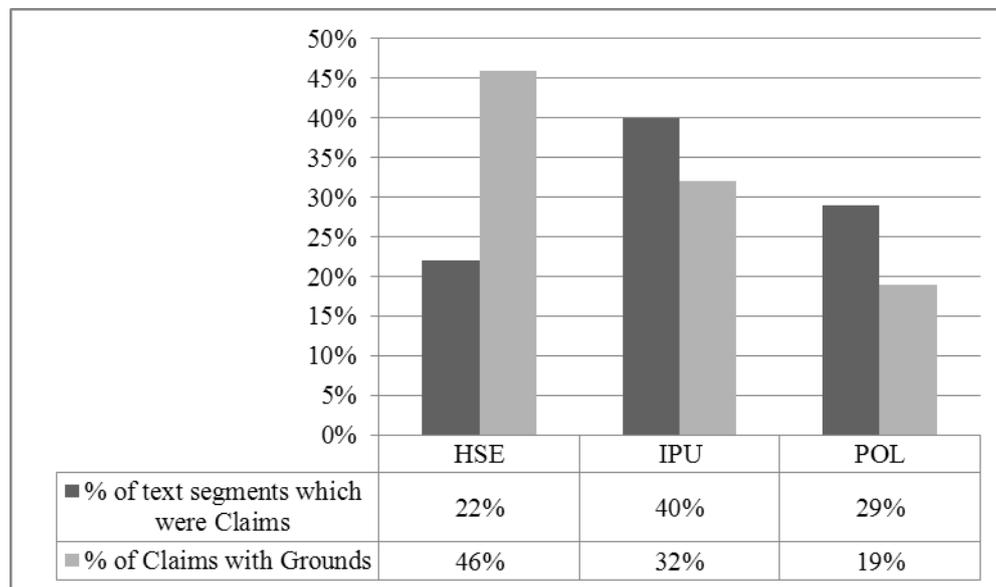
*Table 7-2: % of all text segments which were Claims – Grounds.*

Total number of text segments coded	3353
Total number of text segments coded as Claims – Grounds	268
% of all text segments coded as Claims – Grounds	8%

This is an important finding for two reasons. Firstly, speakers had the opportunity to prepare in advance and knew that they would have a limited time to speak. They also knew that they had a captive audience which included key influencers (politicians and the media) yet made very few arguments (8%) which could be considered practical arguments (Claims – Grounds). Secondly, this finding reveals that when adapting Toulmin’s model to sensemaking-sensegiving scholarship and to only concentrate on Claims – Grounds, as was the case with Berente et al. (2011), would mean that over 90% of text segments would be overlooked. The importance of taking account of all text segments, not just practical arguments, is further supported by the identification that proponents and opponents used different Claims making strategies. While proportionately fewer of the text segments authored by proponents (HSE) were Claims (22%) a higher proportion of the Claims they made were Claims – Grounds (46%). The opposite was the case with opponents. The opponents made proportionately more Claims (IPU – 40% and Politicians – 29%), but a smaller proportion of these were Claims – Grounds (IPU – 32% and Politicians – 19%). This

observation (Figure 7-2) could not have been made if only Claims – Grounds had been considered relevant.

*Figure 7-2: % of all text segments which were Claims and % of these Claims which were supported by Grounds.*

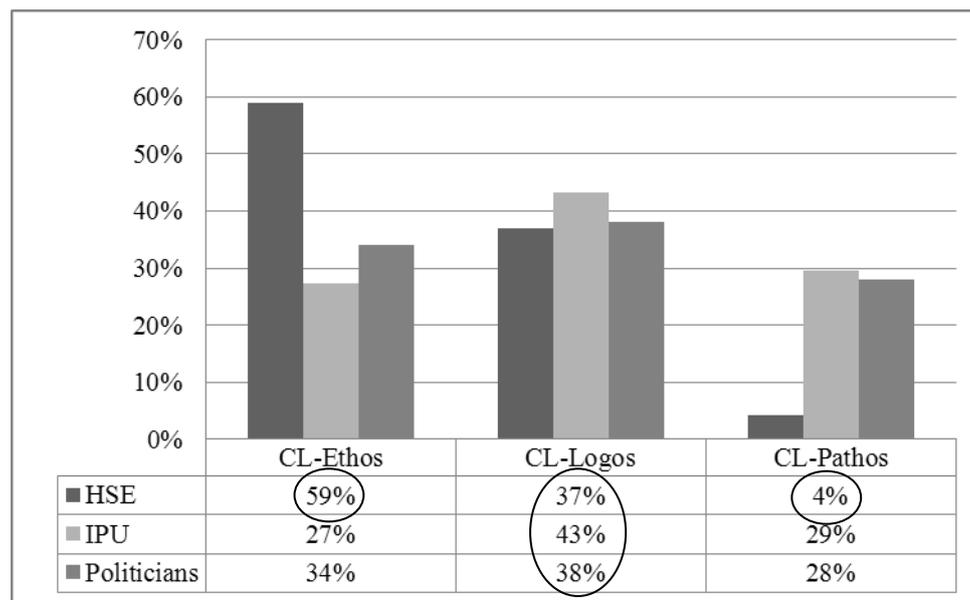


*(ii) Proponents and opponents used different rhetorical strategies*

While the speaker groups made similar volumes of Claims – Grounds underpinned by logos based rhetorical appeals (Figure 7-3), there were significant differences in their use of ethos and pathos based rhetorical appeals. Just 4% of the Claims – Grounds made by the proponents were underpinned by pathos. For the opponent groups (IPU - 29% and Politicians - 28%) the Claims – Grounds they made were underpinned by pathos. This difference was counterbalanced by the relatively frequent use of ethos based rhetorical appeals by the proponents (59%) when compared its use by the opponent groups (IPU 27% and Politicians 34%). This low use of pathos based rhetorical appeals by proponents could be associated with the fact that the proponents of the Change had the authority of the Government and could use their power to use “more direct sensegiving tactics, such as resource allocations and personnel changes” (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991: p. 1163). Speakers were therefore focused on using ethos and logos based appeals to explain the rationale behind the Change, rather than seek approval or support for it.

These findings in relation to the use of varying rhetorical appeals by speaker groups is consistent with Suddaby and Greenwood (2005). They examined the transcripts of testimony provided by witnesses at two US Government Commissions to reveal the arguments used by key speakers engaged in a legitimacy contest over a new organisational form which combined accounting and legal professionals. They found that proponents of the new form extolled its economic benefits and used pragmatic vocabularies whereas opponents “used arguments appealing to moral and normative legitimacy (Suchman, 1995)” (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005: p. 48).

*Figure 7-3: Rhetorical appeals underpinning Claims – Grounds, by Group.*



59% of the Claims – Grounds made by proponents of the change (HSE Group) were underpinned by ethos which reflect Suddaby and Greenwood's (2005) finding that “those trying to legitimate change adopt the mythology of progressive rationality and, logically, choose words that connote practical efficiency and scenarios of change that imply movement toward a goal” (p. 60). Similarly only 4% of the Claims – Grounds made by the HSE speakers were underpinned by pathos whereas the corresponding figure for the IPU was 29% and the Politicians 28%. This also confirms the findings that “those resisting change adopt the mythology of moral tradition and choose words that evoke a value orientation and scenarios of change that reify the existing order of things” (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005: p. 60). These

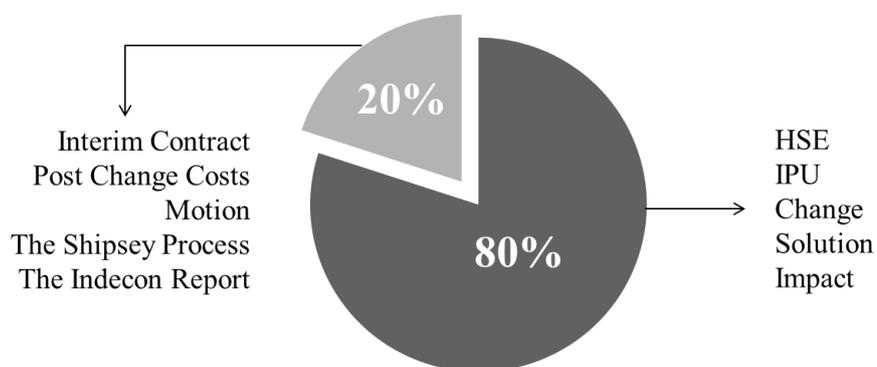
findings also support Brown et al. (2012) who examined the rhetorical strategies used in the Australian Senate Community Affairs Committee Report into Quality and Equity in Aged Care (2005). They found that “where arguments for change based on logos are insufficient, ethos and pathos may assume significance” (p. 315). This current study found that all speaker groups uttered relatively similar volumes of Claims – Grounds underpinned by logos with proponents also giving significance to ethos and opponents giving significance to pathos.

### 7.3 Data display 2 – Strategies underpinning Sensegiving Targets

Data Display 1 presented the argument and rhetorical strategies underpinning all text segments uttered by the three speaker groups. Data Display 2 compared these strategies with the strategies which underpinned the text segments directed at the five most common Sensegiving Targets.

75% of the text segments (2495) from the Speaker Groups were directed at 10 common Sensegiving Targets (Figure 7-4). As 80% of these text segments (1983) were directed at five Sensegiving Targets, this analysis concentrated on these five targets; two related to constituents (HSE and IPU) and three related to issues (Change, Solution and Impact) (Foldy et al., 2008).

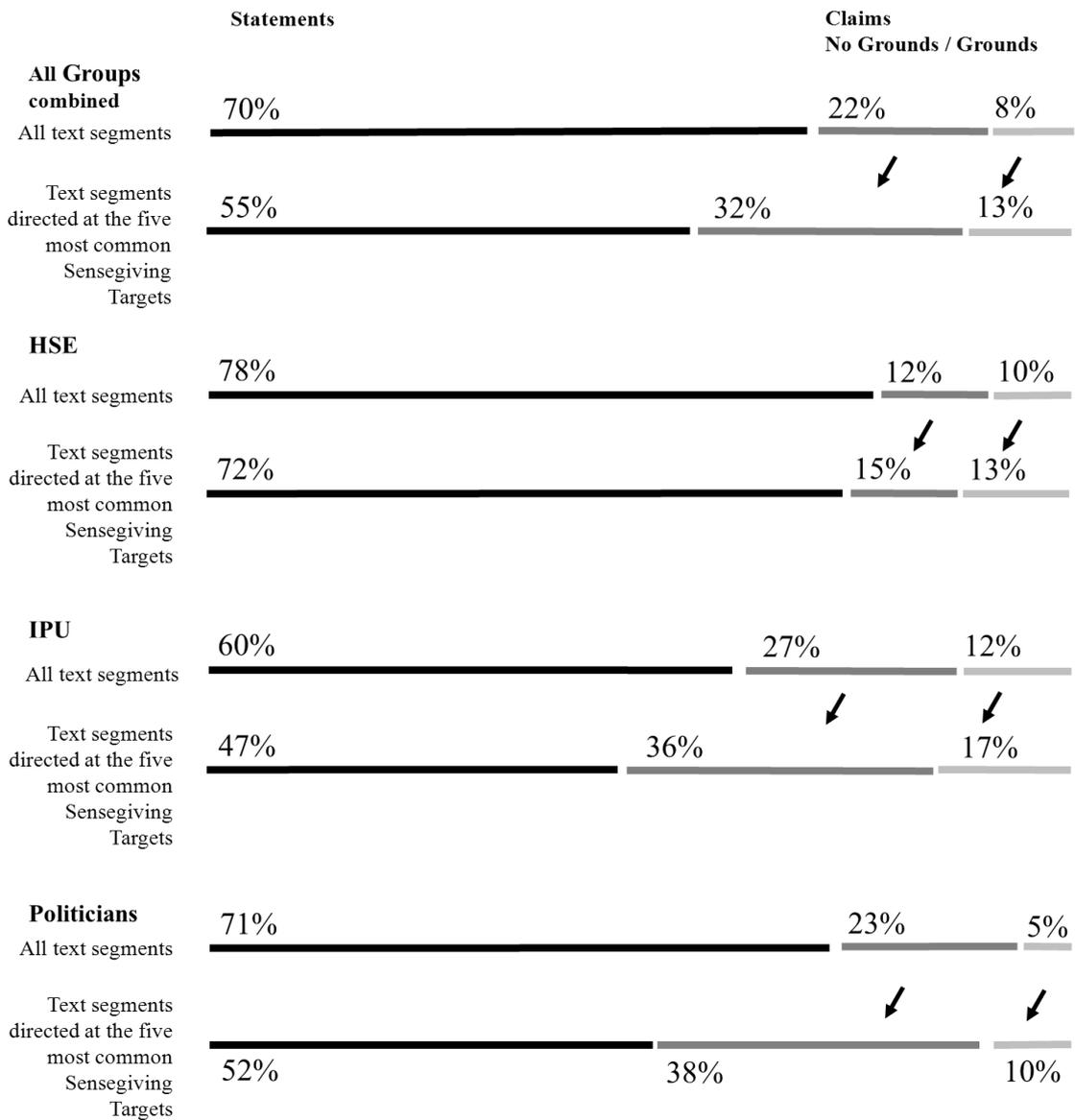
*Figure 7-4: 80% of the text segments directed at the 10 Sensegiving Targets were directed at five targets.*



### 7.3.1 Data Display 2 - Findings

Counting was also used as the tactic to extract meaning from this data display. It showed that differences in the use of Statements and Claims between proponents and opponents observed in Data Display 1 were more pronounced in text segments directed at the five most common sensegiving targets (Figure 7-5).

*Figure 7-5: Data Display 2 - comparison of argument and rhetorical strategies underpinning all text segments and those directed at the five most common Sensegiving Targets.*



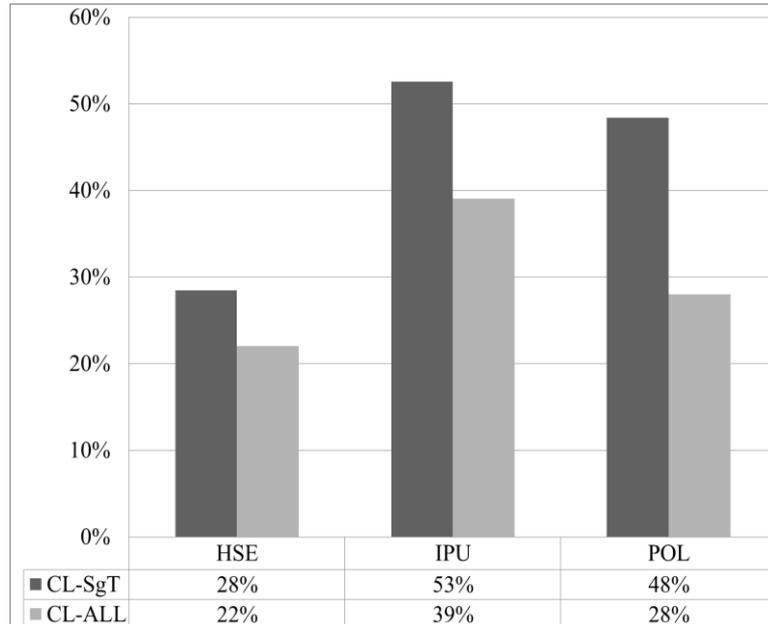
Data Display 2 (Figure 7-5) shows text segments directed at these five Sensegiving Targets consisted of 15% more Claims (45%) and 15% fewer Statements (55%) when compared with all text segments. The breakdown for text segments directed at all ten Sensegiving Targets was Claims 40% and Statements 60% (Table 7-3).

*Table 7-3: Statements and Claims in text segments.*

	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Claims</b>
All Text Segments	70%	30%
Text Segments directed at 10 Sensegiving Targets	60%	40%
Text Segments directed at five most common Sensegiving Targets	55%	45%

Of all of the text segments directed at the top five Sensegiving Targets, 13% were Claims – Grounds. This compares with 8% when all text segments are taken into account. The increase between the speaker groups varied (Figure 7-6).

*Figure 7-6: Claims made in text segments directed at five most common Sensegiving Targets (CL – SgT) and all (CL – ALL) text segments.*



The increase in use of Claims among the HSE (22%-28%) was just over 6%; a 4% increase in the number of Claims – No Grounds and a 3%<sup>4</sup> increase in the number of Claims – Grounds.

Speakers from the IPU made 14% more Claims (39%-53%) with a 9% increase in the use of Claims – No Grounds and a 5% increase in the number of Claims – Grounds.

The biggest difference identified was among speakers from the Politicians (28%-48%). These speakers increased their use of Claims by 20%; 16% increase in the use of Claims – No Grounds and a 5% increase in the use of Claims – Grounds; 48% of their text segments were Claims.

These findings suggest that the more text segments, proportionately, speakers directed at a Sensegiving Target, the more Claims they were likely to contain. This is evidenced by the progressive increase in the use of Claims identified between (i) all text segments, (ii) those directed at the 10 Sensegiving Targets and (iii) those directed at the five most common Sensegiving Targets (Table 7-3).

#### **7.4 Summary of findings from Data Displays 1 and 2**

Data Displays 1 and 2 presented, numerically, the argument and rhetorical strategies used by speaker groups in all text segments and those directed at the five most common Sensegiving Targets respectively. Using these displays and with reference back to the coded data, it was established that there were variations in the argument and rhetorical strategies used by proponents and opponents when they attempted to give sense to the same strategic change.

The analysis of all text segments (Data Display 1- Figure 7-1) showed the following:

- Proponents used proportionately more Statements and less Claims than opponents.

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<sup>4</sup> Discrepancies are due to rounding.

- Proponents used proportionately more Statements supported by facts and less Statements based on opinion than opponents.
- Although proponents used proportionately less Claims than opponents, a larger proportion of the Claims they made were supported by Grounds.
- Most of the Claims – Grounds made by proponents used ethos as a rhetorical appeal. Opponents used pathos (IPU 29% and Politicians 28%) as a rhetorical appeal significantly more than proponents (4%).
- Just 8% of all text segments made were Claims – Grounds.

The analysis of text segments directed at the five most common Sensegiving Targets (Data Display 2 – Figure 7-5) showed the following:

- Speaker groups used proportionately more Claims in text segments directed at the five most common sensegiving targets.

This analysis reveals the argument and rhetorical events in the actual domain which underpinned the text segments visible in the empirical domain. However to meet this study's objective to investigate the deep structures of leader sensegiving these findings provided insufficient depth. It was necessary to delve deeper into the data set and engage in more abstract thinking about the patterns and relationships identified in a fashion similar to moving up Carney's (1990) "ladder of abstraction" (in Miles and Huberman, 1994: p. 91). Given the presence of Sensegiving Targets and the variation in the proportion of text segments proponents and opponents directed at each target, it was determined that the relationship between speaker groups and the Sensegiving Targets could offer a route to deeper insights into the generative mechanisms underlying these behaviours. I proceeded with this exploration by first examining the relationships between the speaker groups and the five most common Sensegiving Targets and presenting this relationship numerically.

### **7.5 Data display 3 – Speaker Groups and the Sensegiving Targets**

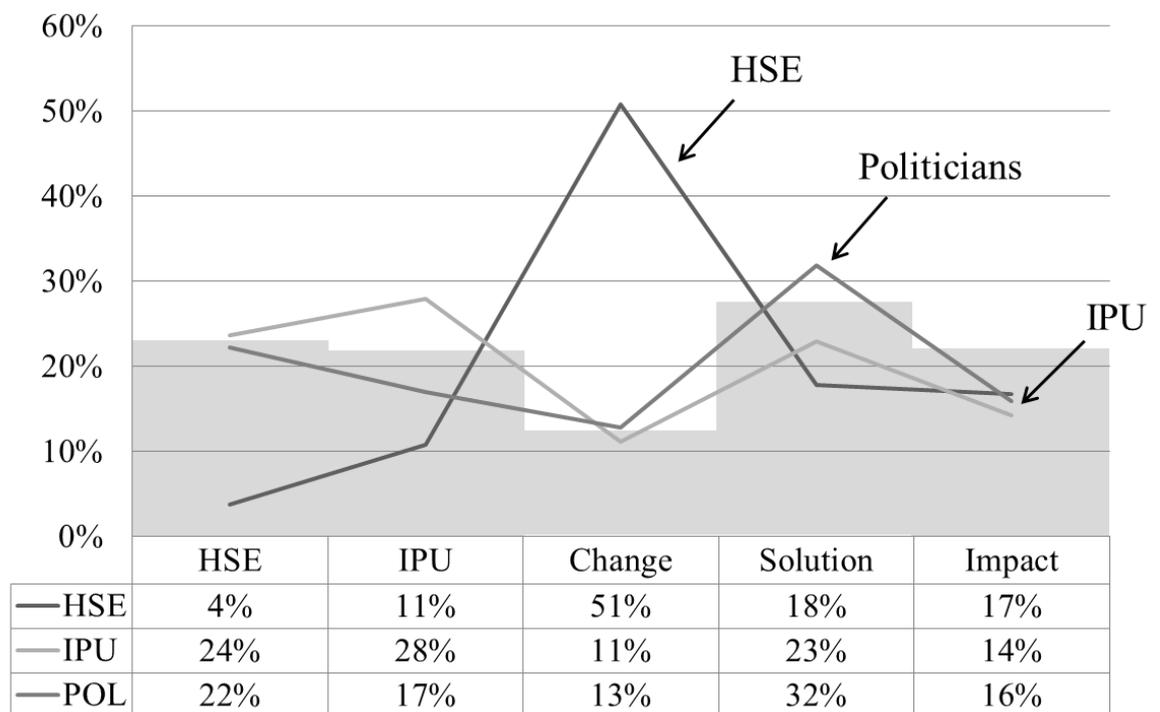
Data Display 3 (Figure 7-7) presents the number of text segments directed at each of the five most common Sensegiving Targets collectively and by speaker group. The shaded area identifies the spread of all text segments by all speaker groups combined

directed at these five targets and the lines identify the proportion of each speaker group's text segments that were directed at each target.

This display shows that there were significant differences in the proportion of the text segments that each speaker group directed at these five targets. The most notable observation is that the proponents (HSE) directed the highest proportion of their text segments (51%) at the Change while the opponents directed the least proportion of their text segments at this target (IPU – 11% and Politicians – 13%).

To explore these relationships beyond counting, I chose another of Miles and Huberman's (1994) tactics for drawing meaning from a data display. Using Data Display 3 as a guide, I immersed myself in the text segments directed at these five targets to identify patterns and relationships.

Figure 7-7: Data Display 3.



### 7.5.1 Immersion in data set

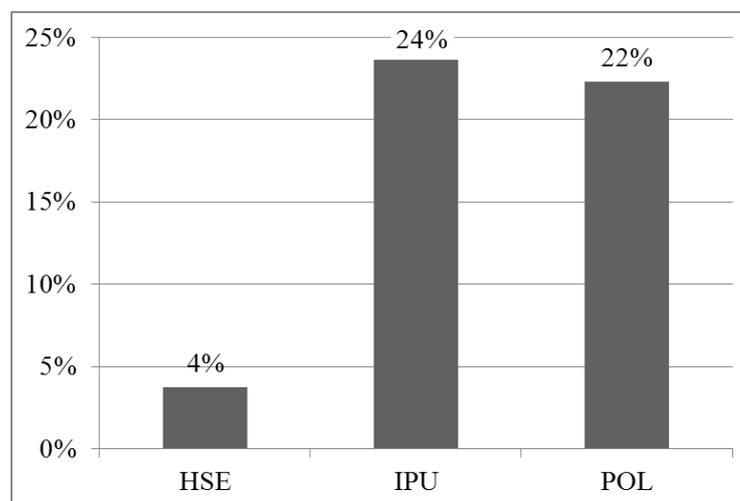
Immersion in the data set involved reading the text segments directed at each individual target. The purpose of approaching it in this way was to identify whether

there were patterns in the way the different targets were treated. This immersion occurred over two months and notes were taken. This revealed that, in addition to identifying that different speaker groups directed different proportions of their text segments at different targets, there were significant differences in the content of these text segments and the sense they were offering. I set out these findings with examples below (Sections 7.5.1.1-7.5.1.5). Following this analysis and to test and confirm these findings (the third stream in Miles and Huberman's (1994) data analysis framework) I immersed myself in the data again but adopted a different perspective. Instead of considering how each of the targets was treated, I focused on how each speaker group approached and treated each target. This enabled the interconnected links between the meaning given to environmental cues and the sense created for the sensegiving targets to be identified. The findings of this analysis are outlined in Section 7.6.

#### **7.5.1.1 Sensegiving Target 1 – HSE**

This target was concerned with text segments that were directed at creating sense for the HSE and HSE personnel. There was a significant difference in how proponents and opponents prioritised this target.

*Figure 7-8: % of text segments directed at the HSE – by group.*



Only 4% of the text segments from the proponents (HSE) were directed at this target (Figure 7-8). This low volume reflects the few opportunities speakers took to create

sense for this target and counter the sense created by others. The high proportion of text segments made by speakers from the opponents groups (IPU and Politicians) directed at this target, (24%) and (22%) respectively, reflects the fact that they were far more focused on attempting to create sense for the HSE than the Change itself. (Both groups directed 11% and 13% of their text segments respectively at the change.) The HSE was the opposing groups' secondary target. The IPU was the IPU's primary target (28%) and the Solution was the Politician's primary target (32%).

Opponents gave meaning to the past actions of the HSE in relation to its handling of the Change, such as its approach to engaging with the IPU, and its use and interpretation of the Competition Law. This was the platform for the sense they were attempting to create for the HSE which was as an incompetent and untrustworthy organisation which was mishandling the Change.

*What we cannot and will not accept is the HSE hijacking competition law to bolster its monopoly position as the dominant purchaser of goods and services from the pharmacy sector. On top of all this, and while the Shipsey process was ongoing, the HSE announced on 17 September its intention to unilaterally undermine the basis on which current payments are made to pharmacists.*

*This was done without any consideration of the impact of the decision on the pharmacy sector and without carrying out any economic study on its impact on the delivery of services to patients. In this type of environment, inevitably things will happen that we all wish did not happen and such was the case. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 69-72)*

*As my colleague has noted, it would appear there is not much goodwill on the side of the HSE. (Senator Geraldine Feeney, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segment 826)*

*The HSE can realise savings but it is going about it in the wrong way, both in terms of its proposals and its approach. (Dermot Twomey, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segment 134)*

*Effectively, I can only say that the HSE is now using a bullying tactic to make the pharmacists do the work as regards getting the wholesalers to reduce their prices. (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segment 527)*

This sense of the HSE also supported the sense opponents were attempting to create in relation to the Change and the Solution. They were obliquely attempting to create the sense that because the Change was being introduced by people who lacked credibility, the Change lacked credibility.

*The HSE has acknowledged that, of the projected savings of around €100 million per annum, nearly all will be made from community pharmacies and not from the pharmacy wholesalers. This decision, if implemented, would also constitute a unilateral breach of the contract that exists between each pharmacist and the HSE. The HSE has admitted that it did not carry out any assessment of how its decision would impact on community pharmacies and their ability to provide pharmacy services to patients. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 78-80)*

#### **7.5.1.2 Sensegiving Target 2 – IPU**

This Sensegiving Target was the umbrella for text segments which attempted to create sense for the IPU and the pharmacy profession.

The IPU was the IPU’s primary target (28%) and the Politicians’ third target (17%) (Figure 7-9).

Both opponent groups (IPU and Politicians) gave meaning to past behaviours of the IPU and pharmacists, such as their willingness to negotiate at any time and delivering medicines to patients on Christmas Day, to enable them create a plausible sense that they were reasoned, reasonable and open to change.

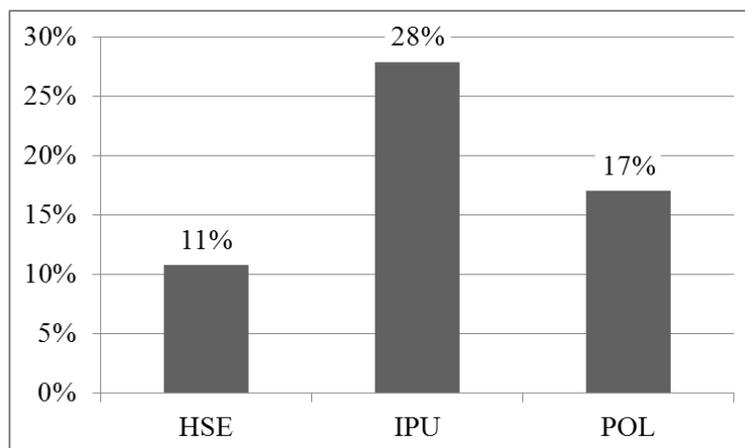
*We offered to go to the table, without preconditions, to discuss a new contract. We even offered to put the issue of pharmacy payments first. We made ourselves available for talks in the weeks before Christmas but are sorry to say they did not*

*materialise. It seems to us that the HSE's door is not open to real discussions with the IPU. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 66-69)*

*It has already been said that there is no doubt about the public esteem, respect and general goodwill for community pharmacists. (Senator Geraldine Feeney, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segment 810)*

*He [the pharmacist] drove a good number of miles to the pharmacy to make the delivery to the patient who was in need. Another patient was sent from hospital on a Saturday afternoon. Again, the pharmacist only had a certain number of the 12,000 drugs that can be prescribed in stock. On this occasion the pharmacist had no choice but to ring the wholesaler and delivery was made within two hours to the patient who had been discharged from hospital. (Senator Paddy Burke, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segments 1780-1783)*

*Figure 7-9: % of text segments directed at the IPU – by group.*



These episodes were designed to support the sense they were seeking to create for the Solution, which was that theirs was the right one because they were reasoned and reasonable whereas the HSE was not.

This contrasted significantly with, and was linked to, the sense they were giving to the HSE, which was that it was unreasonable.

*That would be a fair and reasonable way to proceed and the IPU is available for discussions until 1 March because the patients we meet in our pharmacies are extremely worried. One of my patients, an elderly gentleman who is more than 70, heard a representative of the HSE speaking on “Drivetime” last Thursday. He told me that although he thought he lived in a democracy, this was dictatorship.* (Liz Hocht, IPU, 12th February, 2008, text segments 706-709)

The proponents directed the least number of their text segments at this target. They attempted to create sense for the IPU as being primarily concerned with maintaining excessive profits by giving meaning to its recent court case and the high sale price being achieved for the pharmacies.

*Only one of those claims can be true. If it does not negotiate the wholesale price, it should withdraw the court action and stop opposing this initiative for better prices for patients. If it does negotiate prices, it should accept responsibility for maintaining artificially high prices at the expense of patients and taxpayers.* (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12th February, 2008, text segments 1780-1783)

*Retention of the additional profits, which go all the way back to 1971 and currently stand at €100 million per year, and artificially high prices have obviously been beneficial for existing owners but there are significant long-term disadvantages for the pharmacy sector. These include: huge entry barriers to new pharmacists from inflated market prices — we know that shops have routinely sold for three times the turnover.* (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12th February, 2008, text segments 252-255)

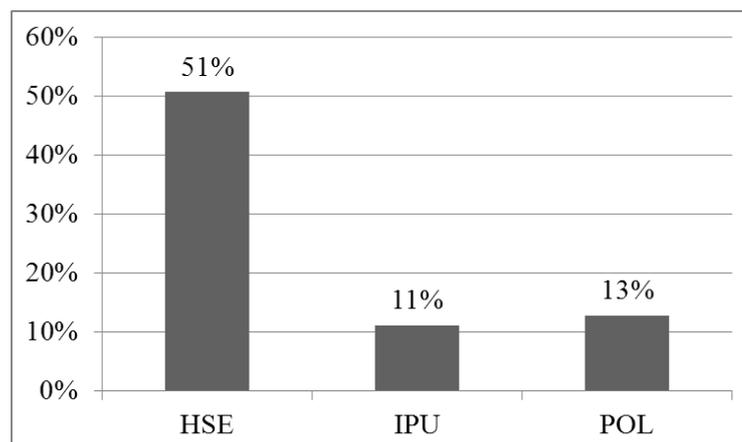
This was an example of both proponents and opponents attempting to create different sense for the same target (IPU) as discussed in Section 3.2.1.1 and supported by the work of Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) and Vaara and Monin (2010).

### **7.5.1.3 Sensegiving Target 3 – Change**

The difference in the volume of text segments each speaker group directed at this Sensegiving Target is significant; 51% from the HSE followed by the Politicians at 13% and the IPU at 11% (Figure 7-10). The proponents attempted to give sense to

the Change as logical, rational and righteous while the opponents attempted to give sense to the change as unfair and irrational.

Figure 7-10: % of text segments directed at the Change – by group.



Speakers from the Politicians, who directed the least number of their text segments (13%) at this Sensegiving Target, did not address the content of the Change. This was likely because they had limited understanding of the detail (or did not want to understand the detail) in comparison with the other groups who were deeply involved in the issue and knew the details intimately.

To criticise the Change itself would have involved criticising national policy and a programme to save taxpayer funds which would have had potentially negative implications for them. Instead they concentrated on creating sense for the way the Change was being introduced by the HSE.

*If the HSE is genuinely treating people with dignity and equality, surely it must allow time for negotiations. To say it has to be imposed on pharmacists because of budgetary constraints seems to be entirely the wrong way to go about achieving a result. We certainly have a serious difficulty with that approach. (Deputy Jan O' Sullivan, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segments 538-541)*

*Like all my colleagues, I want to see cheaper drugs — it is the least my constituents expect. However, there is a right way and a wrong way of going*

*about it and the HSE is on the wrong track. By setting up the so-called independent body it is carrying out surgery on pharmacists. (Deputy Paul Connaughton, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segments 776-778)*

These episodes illustrate how the Politicians created sense for HSE as bungling while avoiding creating a negative sense for the content of the Change.

The IPU gave meaning to typical dispensing transactions which illustrated the financial hardships that pharmacists and patients would experience, to give plausibility to the sense it created for the Change which was that it was unfair and would lead to the closure of pharmacies and reduced services.

*Based on these findings, this could mean that up to 337 pharmacies could close, resulting in the loss of 2,257 full-time jobs. Pharmacies which survive would have to reduce staff numbers by in the order of 2,500. If the proposals are implemented, this could lead to at least 4,750 job losses in total. (Dermot Twomey, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 122-125)*

*For years those discounts have propped up the medical card scheme. That is the only reason it is possible to dispense a €100 medicine for €103. Even with those discounts, it will not be possible to dispense a €100 medicine for €92 plus a fee of €3. One would still be down €5. (Darragh O'Loughlin, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2007, text segments 325-328)*

These meaning giving episodes by the IPU involved meaning manipulation which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8 (Section 8.2).

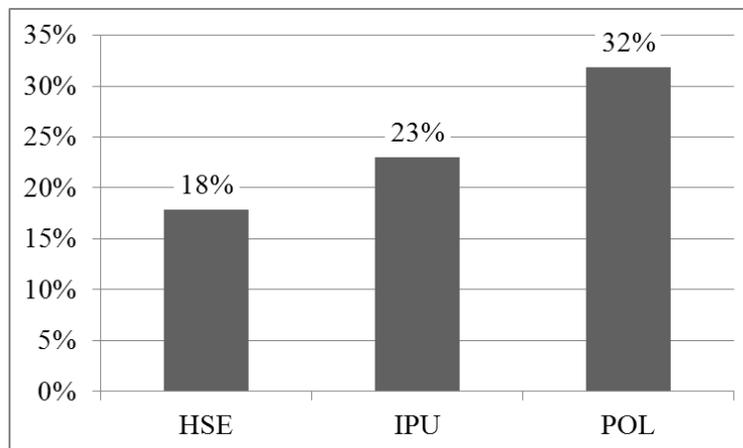
The HSE gave meaning to the findings of the Indecon Report and its consultation with stakeholders to give plausibility to its sense of the Change; there was no economic justification for the current charges. As discussed earlier this rational approach reflected its frequent use of ethos as a rhetorical appeal. This sense was linked to the sense the HSE was attempting to create for the IPU which was one of a profession supportive of overcharging.

*The wholesale price is paid, by means of a reimbursement to pharmacists, as a way of moving a product from A to B. If one reads the Indecon report, one will find that it states clearly that we are paying more than twice the European average to move a drug from A to B. As I said at a previous meeting, a wholesale margin of 17.76% is not needed to move gold from A to B. (Kamal Sabra, HSE, 12th February, 2008, text segments 434-436)*

#### **7.5.1.4 Sensegiving Target 4 – Solution**

This target featured in the top three Sensegiving Targets of all speaker groups. This was the primary Sensegiving Target for Politicians; 32% of their text segments were directed at this target. It was the HSE's secondary target (18%) and the IPU's third (23%) target (Figure 7-11).

*Figure 7-11: % of text segments directed at the Solution – by group.*



The IPU and Politicians repeatedly gave meaning to the HSE's inability to negotiate in a fair and reasonable way to create sense for their Solution which was to defer the decision and commence 'real' negotiations.

*That is unsustainable, unworkable and unfair. All we are asking for is fair play, right to representation, due process and fair procedure. As both of the Deputies stated, this is about the method of the approach. The bullying and intimidating approach that pharmacists have had to suffer from the HSE is unfair. (Liz Hctor, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2007, text segments 644-647)*

*I have never come across circumstances where one of the two parties involved in negotiations, through an independent intermediary, put a proposal to the other and where the process came to an end as a result of that proposal being rejected. That is not negotiation, it is unilateral action.* (Deputy Beverley Flynn, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segments 1418-1421).

*I would like to see the HSE show some cop-on and to get down to negotiating like it should. This nitpicking should stop. Both nitpicking and bully-boy tactics have been employed, which is not helpful to anyone. It certainly is not helpful to the further negotiations in which the HSE must engage.* (Deputy Niall Blaney, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segments 1418-1421).

The HSE attempted to give meaning for its reduced budget and the restrictions imposed by Competition Law to create sense for implementation of the Change being the only viable Solution.

*The process was established because we could not, under Competition Law, discuss fees directly with the Irish Pharmaceutical Union. We agreed to engage with Mr. Shipsey and his terms of reference were to work out a mechanism with us whereby we could comply with competition law and arrive at a mechanism for agreeing remuneration for the pharmacists. We did not reach agreement.* (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12th February, 2008, text segments 454-456).

*As Mr. Hurley said, our drug budget has been allocated. We have two choices. While we are not here to subsidise the wholesalers and multinationals, either we do that or certain patients will not get the medication they require.* (Kamal Sabra, HSE, 12th February, 2008, text segments 886-888).

Rather than respond or engage with the sense the HSE speakers offered to the Solution, the IPU ignored it and attempted to create an alternative sense. It gave meaning to how other disputes were settled to give plausibility to the sense that the situation should be viewed as an industrial relations issue, (rather than a commercial customer supplier relationship) and this required negotiations compatible with an industrial relations setting.

*However, three industrial actions were being taken that weekend, involving staff at Iarnród Éireann, Aer Lingus and ourselves. The disputes at Iarnród Éireann and Aer Lingus were settled, but what did the HSE do to settle its dispute with pharmacists in the eastern region? The Competition Authority sent provocative letters by courier to each pharmacist on the Friday evening. (Richard Collis, IPU, 12th February, 2008, text segments 419-420).*

Speakers from the Politicians supported this approach in its meaning giving episodes. By giving meaning to the situation as a dispute, they gave sense to their Solution which was that the resolution of disputes was inevitable and it should be treated as an industrial relations issue.

*I am not asking what the final decision would be and I understand the position of the HSE, but there are two sides to this dispute. I have seen many disputes in the years I have served in this House. They have all had to be settled. Given that three weeks remain, a solution could well be found. (Deputy Rory O'Hanlon, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segments 747-750).*

#### **7.5.1.5 Sensegiving Target 5 – Impact**

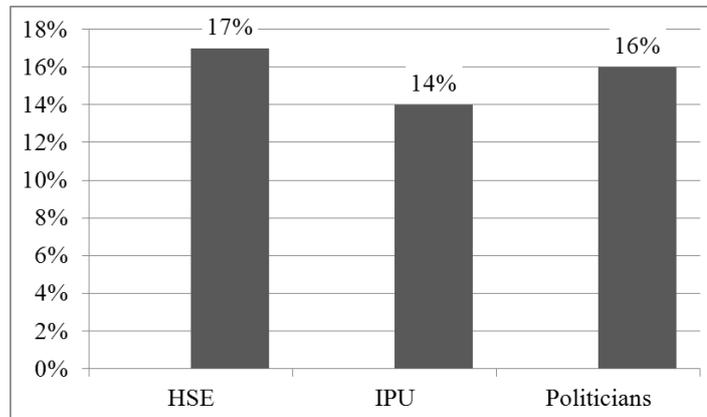
These text segments attempted to create sense for the Impact of the Change. All speaker groups directed a similar portion of their text segments at this target: HSE (17%), IPU (14%) and Politicians (16%) (Figure 7-12).

The IPU attempted to create sense for their prediction of the Impact by giving meaning to the implications for patients of reduced services and the impact on pharmacists' businesses. They supported this by giving meaning to a survey of members to create sense that the impact would be significant on their businesses.

*The proposal to unilaterally reduce payments to pharmacists by 8.2% from 1 March would have a catastrophic effect on my business. The sheer fact of the matter is that if this decision goes ahead, my business will start making a loss. In total, pharmacists will lose between €85 million and €100 million. This will, undoubtedly, lead to loss of services and job losses. (Dermot Twomey, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 111-114)*

*These are people who are not mobile, who are ill and who suffer with chronic conditions, requiring care and support in their community. They need the service we provide as trained professionals which we wish to continue to provide for a fair price. We ask for the committee's support to ensure that no changes are made to the current contractual agreements unless they are discussed and agreed with this union. (Aisling Reast, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 174-176)*

Figure 7-12: % of text segments directed at the Impact – by group.



Speakers from the Politicians Group continued in a similar fashion and extended the implication of closures to patients.

*The HSE is carrying out orders and the impact on the IPU will be catastrophic, especially for small pharmacies and for rural Ireland. (Deputy Bernard Allen, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segment 1291).*

*The most important consideration is that patients should not suffer. (Deputy Rory O'Hanlon, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segment 668).*

The HSE concentrated on giving meaning to the consequence of not making the change to create the sense of the impact; health services would have to be reduced if the change was deferred.

*However, a position whereby patients and taxpayers pay €100 million a year more than anyone else for wholesale distribution of medicines is not sustainable*

*and will seriously compromise the HSE's ability to provide new and innovative treatments for patients. (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12th February, 2008, Utterance 213).*

*This €100 million [the value of the savings that the change will make] equates to 60 hospital beds, over 1,000 nurses, medicines for 53,000 long-term illness patients and drugs for over 120,000 medical card patients. (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12th February, 2008, Utterance 310).*

This is another example of both proponents and opponents attempting to give different sense to the same target.

The senses that the HSE and IPU attempted to create for the Impact were equally valid from the respective positions but neither acknowledged the legitimacy of the Claims of the other. For example the HSE did not acknowledge that the income of pharmacists would drop by €100 million. The IPU did not acknowledge that the HSE was paying twice the European average for wholesale services and if the €100 million was not saved, services would have to be reduced in another part of the health service. This example illustrates that what speaker groups left out of their text segments reflected their strategy, in a similar fashion to what they included.

## **7.6 Drawing conclusions and verification**

The findings of this analysis confirm the utility of Sensegiving Targets; 75% of utterances were directed at 10 common targets. They show that speaker groups allocate different levels of attention to particular targets depending on their stance in relation to the change, with the greatest variation visible between those who proposed and opposed the Change (Figure 7-7). The findings support the proposition that sensegiving consists of giving meaning to environmental cues and this meaning can be used as a platform to create sense. This relationship was first discussed in Section 3.2.1. They also show that the meaning given to cues can be interconnected; meaning given to one cue can support the meaning given to another. The same applies with sense creation; the sense created for one target can support the sense created for another target. In addition, the findings reveal that the meaning given to the same environmental cues and the sense created for the same targets can also vary between speaker groups.

The numeric presentation of the findings in Data Display 2 (Figure 7-5) and 3 (Figure 7-7) and the subsequent immersion in the data set (Section 7.5.1) identified the presence of a number of notable patterns during multi-leader sensegiving directed at the same strategic change (Table 7-4).

*Table 7-4: Patterns and relationships identified.*

<b>Confirmed from Data Displays 2 &amp; 3</b>	
1	When giving sense to the same strategic change, in a multi-leader context, leaders attempt to create sense for common Sensegiving Targets.
2	Sensegivers can direct different proportions of their text segments at each target depending on whether they are proponents or opponents of the change.
<b>Observed during immersion in data set (Section 7.5.1)</b>	
3	The creation of sense for Sensegiving Targets is frequently preceded by meaning given to past behaviours, events, outcomes, laws, anecdotes, reports and future predictions. The meaning given can act as a platform for sense creation for the Sensegiving Targets.
4	Meaning giving and sense creation episodes are interconnected.
5	Proponents and opponents create different meanings for the same environmental cues and different senses for the same targets.

The presence of patterns 1 and 2 was confirmed by Data Displays 2 and 3. There was evidence of the presence of patterns 3 to 5 from the findings of my immersion in the data set (Section 7.5.1). The identification of patterns 1, 2, 4 and 5 during leader sensegiving was potentially a notable contribution to sensegiving research. However the presence of these patterns required verification.

To complete this stream I again immersed myself in the data set over a two month period to find evidence to verify the existence of these patterns. This involved studying the text segments authored by each speaker group that were directed at the five most common targets separately. This approach differed to that discussed in Section 7.5.1 which focused primarily on the targets followed by the speaker groups.

A data display was constructed to reflect the findings in relation to the behaviour of each speaker group. These findings and displays are set out in Sections 7.6.1-7.6.3.

#### **7.6.1 Data Display 4 – HSE Group text segments**

As outlined in Data Display 3, speakers from this group directed just over half of their text segments at the Change (51%) followed by the Solution (18%) and the Impact (17%). They made the least number of Claims of all speaker groups; 29% of their text segments which were directed at the five most common Sensegiving Targets were Claims. However, proportionately, they made the highest number of Claims – Grounds; 45% of the Claims they made were Claims – Grounds.

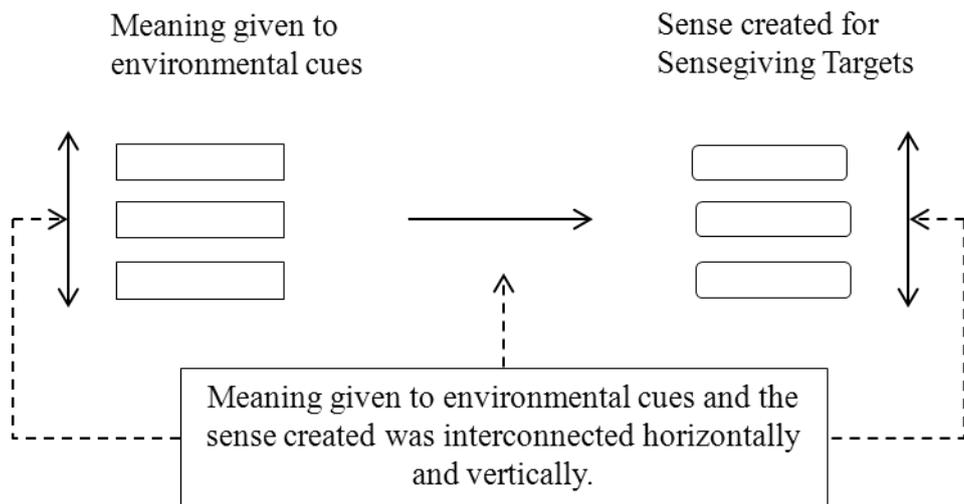
The HSE's focus on rationality and logic was reflected by their proportionately high use of ethos (80%) and logos (20%) based rhetorical appeals to underpin the Claim – Grounds they directed at these targets.

Speakers supported the sense they were attempting to create for the five sensegiving targets by giving meaning to environmental cues. For example they focused on giving meaning to the national policy to reconfigure the medicine supply chain, its implementation strategy, the Indecon Report and the restrictions associated with Competition Law to create a sense that the Change and its behaviour were appropriate. For example speakers gave meaning to the restrictions imposed by Competition Law to justify its Solution (direct negotiation over price could not take place with retail pharmacists) and create the sense that it was acting responsibly.

*The process [negotiation] was established because we could not, under competition law, discuss fees directly with the Irish Pharmaceutical Union. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 545)*

It was also observed that the meaning speakers gave to environmental cues and the sense they created were interconnected horizontally as the above example illustrates, and vertically (Figure 7-13).

Figure 7-13: The horizontal and vertical interconnections.



An example of the vertical interconnections between meaning giving to environmental cues is the meaning given to the existing relationship between the pharmacists and the wholesalers as muddy which supported the meaning given to the overcharging of patients.

*The new system which we are about to implement will provide far greater transparency in respect of payment. Everyone will know what is being paid and for what it is being paid. It will remove the anomalies whereby patients and taxpayers currently subsidise the wholesaler business model and small and rural pharmacies subsidise large chains and urban shops. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12th February 2008, text segments 208-210).*

An example of the vertical interconnections between sense creation episodes is the sense speakers were attempting to create for the Solution which was interconnected to the sense they were creating for the Impact; if the Solution to the “overcharging” (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12th February 2008, text segment 243) was not implemented patients would be impacted.

*As Mr. Hurley said, our drug budget has been allocated. We have two choices. While we are not here to subsidise the wholesalers and multinationals, either we do that or certain patients will not get the medication they require. (Kamal Sabra, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 886 – 888).*

Below are extracts from the data set which illustrate how speakers from the HSE Group gave meaning to a selection of environmental cues which supported the sense they were attempting to create for Sensegiving Targets, and the vertical and horizontal interconnections between these episodes. The Sensegiving Targets referenced in commentary are in bold to highlight these interconnections. These episodes are illustrated in Figure 7-14.

#### Strategy implementation

*The HSE was asked, as approved by our board and the Department under Government policy, to find a fair, reasonable and transparent price for each of these sectors' components [manufacturing, wholesale and dispensing]. This process began in 2005 when the Cabinet sub – committee on health decided that work should be done on this area. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 234 – 235)*

The meaning given to past events (i.e. national policy) supported the sense that the **Change** was rational and righteous. The **HSE** was acting responsibly by implementing a national policy and an approved strategy which would have a positive **Impact**.

#### Costs too high

*However, a position whereby patients and taxpayers pay €100 million a year more than anyone else for wholesale distribution of medicines is not sustainable and will seriously compromise the HSE's ability to provide new and innovative treatments for patients. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 213)*

The meaning given to the payment schedule that existed before the **Change** supported the sense that it was necessary, the **IPU** was unreasonable because it did not agree with the Change and to defer it would have a seriously negative **Impact**.

### Opaque Relationship

*The new system which we are about to implement will provide far greater transparency in respect of payment. Everyone will know what is being paid and for what it is being paid. It will remove the anomalies whereby patients and taxpayers currently subsidise the wholesaler business model and small and rural pharmacies subsidise large chains and urban shops. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 208 – 210)*

This meaning given to current relationships supported the sense that the **Change** was an appropriate **Solution** to the current issues. The **Impact** would be positive.

### Indecon Report

*The reimbursement price paid is far higher than the cost the pharmacies pay and the independent analysis, prepared for us by Indecon, clearly shows that more than half the wholesale mark – up is given back to retail pharmacists as discount and rebate. This was also corroborated by the wholesalers directly to us. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 200 – 201)*

*If one reads the Indecon report, one will find that it states clearly that we are paying more than twice the European average to move a drug from A to B. (Kamal Sabra, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 435).*

The sense created for the Indecon Report (which was one of the ten sensegiving Targets) supported the sense that the **Change** was evidence based and justified based on EU comparisons.

### Wholesaler communication

*The HSE and the manufacturers of the drugs have received explicit assurances from wholesalers that the net monthly cost to pharmacies for reimbursable products will not be greater than the amount reimbursed by the HSE. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 225)*

This meaning given to the communications from wholesalers supported the sense that the **HSE** was managing the process appropriately and had the necessary support from wholesalers.

### Competition Law

*Accordingly, in that scenario the State determined fair and transparent arrangements for wholesale procurement supply in line with published Competition Authority guidelines. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 197)*

*The process [negotiation] was established because we could not, under competition law, discuss fees directly with the Irish Pharmaceutical Union. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 545)*

*Under European competition law any manufacturer of medicines is prohibited from agreeing the price at which representative organisations, including wholesalers, may sell to their customers. Mr. Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 230)*

The meaning given to the Competition Law supported the sense that the **HSE** was acting appropriately and the **Solution** was justified because it was developed within the Competition Law guidelines as advised by its legal team.

### National policy

*The Vote [the budget] allocated to the HSE by Dáil Éireann is Government and national policy and the HSE must introduce this measure on 1 March. There can be no further delay in its introduction because it will cost the HSE money. National policy must be implemented by the HSE. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 215 – 217)*

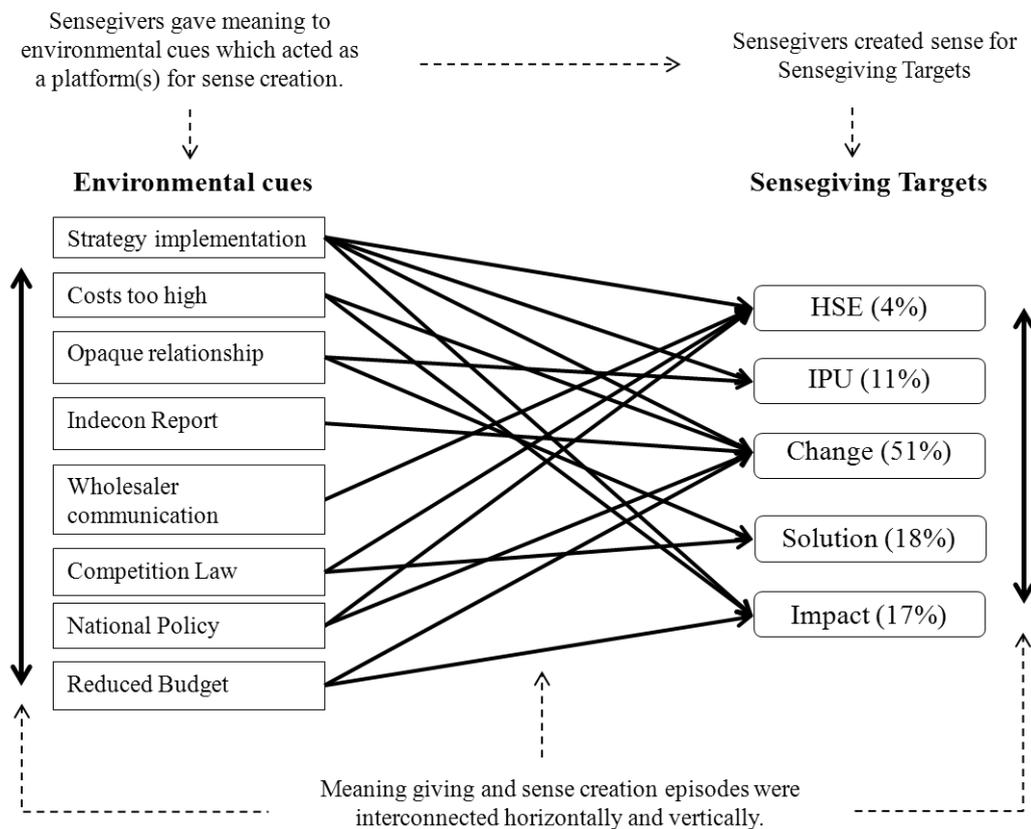
This meaning supported the sense that the **HSE** had support for its management of the **Change** from Government. It was acting responsibly.

## Reduced budget

*The Vote [the budget] allocated to the HSE by Dáil Éireann is Government and national policy and the HSE must introduce this measure on 1 March. There can be no further delay in its introduction because it will cost the HSE money. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 215 – 216)*

The meaning given to the reduced budget was used to create sense for the urgency and the imperative to implement the **Change** and the **Impact** that would occur if it was not implemented. It also created sense for the **HSE** as responsible in managing its budget.

*Figure 7-14: Data Display 4 – Examples of meaning giving and sense creation episodes by the HSE.*



## 7.6.2 Data Display 5 – IPU Group text segments

As highlighted earlier, in contrast to the approach adopted by the HSE, the efforts of the IPU and Politicians to give sense directly to the Change were relatively low; 11% and 13% respectively.

Most of the text segments from speakers from the IPU were directed at creating sense for the IPU (28%), the HSE (24%) and its preferred Solution (23%) which was to have the Change paused and for ‘real’ negotiation to be initiated. Speakers from this group made proportionately the most Claims; 53% of their text segments were Claims; 32% of these were Claims – Grounds.

Speakers attempted to create sense for the IPU as reasonable and reasoned, and caring contributors to the greater good of local communities. It amplified this sense by creating meaning for the behaviour of the HSE which supported a sense that it was incompetent and unreasonable, uncaring and incapable of managing the issue in a professional and respectful manner. Building on these senses, that the IPU was reasonable and the HSE was unreasonable, it created sense for its Solution and the Change: the IPU’s solution could not be wrong because it, and its members, were reasonable and the Change was wrong because it was being introduced by a wrongdoer. The only Solution was to reverse it and for the guilty party (the HSE) to negotiate a fair and reasonable solution with the victim (the IPU and patients). The IPU thus created a sense for its Solution as logically correct (having created meaning for itself as reasoned and reasonable) and the HSE’s as incorrect (having created meaning for the behaviour of the HSE as irrational).

As was the case with speakers from the HSE, the meaning given to environmental cues and the sense they created for the Sensegiving Targets were interconnected vertically and horizontally. Below are extracts from the data set which illustrate the how speakers gave meaning to environmental cues which sometimes acted as a platform for the sense they were attempting to create for the Sensegiving Targets. These episodes are illustrated in Figure 7-15.

## Membership

*The Irish Pharmaceutical Union is the representative body for community pharmacists and has more than 1,600 members who are committed to delivering a quality, accessible, personal and professional pharmacy service that puts the patient first and has, as its primary goal, the optimisation of the health and well – being of society. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 8 – 9)*

This meaning given to membership of the **IPU** supported the sense that it was credible, responsible, reasonable and knowledgeable and the sense it was creating for the Sensegiving Targets was well founded.

## Effectiveness of profession

*Pharmacists play a vital role in health care delivery but still are one of the most underutilised resources in the health service. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 42 – 43)*

*This [the Change] would be unacceptable given that pharmacy is one of the few elements of the health service that works for patients. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 88 – 89)*

*It is important that this service is allowed to continue to develop to its full potential and which is vital to patients, particularly given demographic changes, not undermined by the confrontational behaviour and short – sighted actions of the HSE. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 47 – 49)*

The meaning given to the role of pharmacists supported the sense that the **IPU** had a lot to offer, and the sense that the **HSE** was incompetent because it was incapable of seizing the opportunity to engage constructively with professionals who were overseeing a part of the health service that worked.

## Responsible

*The union recognises the need for fiscal responsibility in the provision of health services and that the HSE must address the rising cost of the State's medicines bill HSE. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 38)*

*We want to be able to operate in an atmosphere that is free from threat and intimidation, and we want to work in partnership with the HSE in order to deliver a quality health care service to our patients. (Liz Hocht, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 456)*

The meaning given to the IPU's willingness to engage supported the sense that the **IPU** was responsible and willing to cooperate. Juxtaposing this meaning with the meaning given to the HSE's threatening and intimidating behaviour, amplified the sense that the **HSE** was mishandling the Change.

## Victim status

*They [pharmacists] have seen the right to be represented in a traditional way in the negotiation of fees challenged when the HSE indicated that, in its view, competition law outlawed direct negotiations on such matters with representative organisations. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 57)*

*The competition legislation being used by the HSE was a ruthless weapon against us. It [competition law] told us we did not have the right of association or freedom of speech. That was a serious intrusion on my civil rights. (Richard Collis, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 414 – 417)*

*In terms of our right to negotiate, clearly it is a right that only the courts can ultimately take away from us and it is a right that we will defend. (Seamus Feeley, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 372)*

*This decision, if implemented, would also constitute a unilateral breach of the contract that exists between each pharmacist and the HSE. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 74)*

These meanings given to the rights of pharmacists supported the sense that the **HSE** was the perpetrator and the **IPU** the victim.

### Indecon Report

*In the Indecon report, published yesterday by the HSE, the economic consultants advised the HSE that the timing of significant changes in payment terms was crucial and that changes should be evaluated in advance in conjunction with key stakeholders. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 81)*

*The HSE, however, ignored the advice of its own economic advisers and recklessly proceeded with its announcement on 17 September. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 83 – 84)*

The meaning given to the Indecon Report and the HSE's response supported the sense that the **Solution** should be delayed and the **HSE** was not dealing openly and honestly with the facts available to it. This is an example where the opponents gave contrasting meaning to the same cues to create different sense.

### HSE behaviour

*However, this can only happen when we operate in an environment of trust where change is brought about through negotiation and agreement, an environment without threat, provocation, intimidation or unilateral actions and where there is recognition of the genuine concerns and contributions of all parties. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 151 – 152)*

*The HSE applied unprecedented and extraordinary pressure on the wholesalers to force them to alter their prices. The three wholesalers were kept in three separate rooms in an attempt to extract various commitments from them over their trading arrangements with pharmacists. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 95 – 96)*

*We thought that was a significant step forward from the perspective of the HSE. However, as we outlined in our presentation, all that changed the next day.*

*Unfortunately, that is what tends to happen when one deals with the HSE. (Seamus Feely IPU, 14th November 2007, text segments 542 – 544)*

*My colleagues have grown increasingly frustrated as they have seen both the Department and the HSE drag their heels in the implementation of agreements. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 52 – 56)*

*At this point, it is very difficult for us to trust the HSE but we will continue to make ourselves available for meaningful talks. (Aisling Reast, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008, text segments 178 – 179)*

These meanings given to the HSE's behaviour supported the sense that the 'dispute' stemmed from the incompetence of the **HSE** and the way it was handling the **Change**. The viable **Solution** required a change in this behaviour.

#### IPU behaviour

*In an attempt to be helpful, we proposed that we meet with the HSE under the chairmanship of an independent person to see if we could come up with a process that we were confident would be fair to all parties. (Seamus Feely IPU, 14th November 2007, text segment 360)*

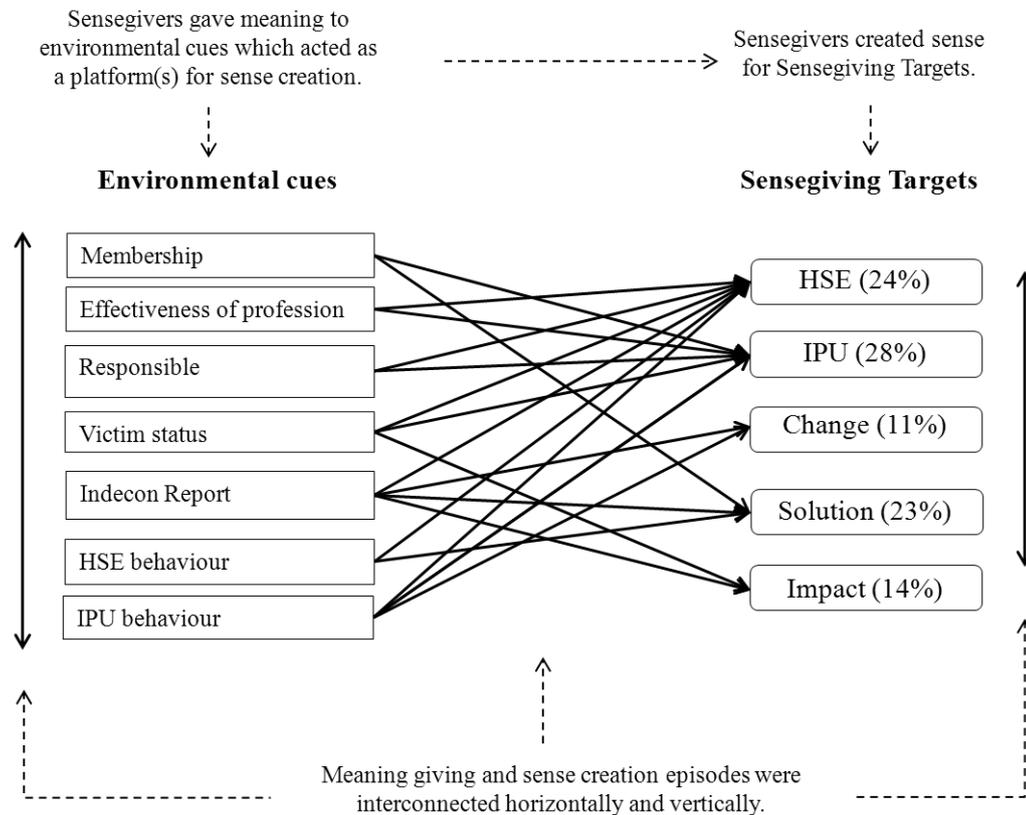
*We do not understand why someone of the standing of Mr. Kieran Mulvey, or someone nominated by him, would not be acceptable to the HSE. (Seamus Feely IPU, 14th November 2007, text segment 559)*

*We want this issue to be resolved in a way that will ensure our patients will receive the service they need and that our members will be paid a fair rate for providing that service. (Aisling Reast, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008, text segment 165)*

*As my colleagues have said, we are in there at every opportunity desperately trying to do a deal, but every time we think we have come close to doing a deal we get a letter or a phone call the next day to tell us that what happened the night before is off the table and we are back to square one. (Darragh O'Loughlin, IPU, 14th November 2007, text segment 667)*

These meanings given to the behaviour of the **IPU** supported the sense that the **IPU** was cooperative and responsible and by contrast the **HSE** was mishandling the **Change**.

Figure 7-15: Data Display 5 – Examples of meaning giving and sense creation episodes by the IPU.



### 7.6.3 Data Display 6 – Politicians Group text segments

Like the IPU, speakers from the Politicians did not create sense for the Change directly; the text segments directed at the Change focused on the way it was being implemented and not the content of the Change. They spent most of their time giving sense to their proposed Solution (32%), followed by the HSE (22%) and IPU (17%). They mirrored the sense that the IPU created for the HSE as incompetent and untrustworthy and the IPU as reasonable and responsible.

Speakers from this group made the most Claims, directed at these Sensegiving Targets, but proportionately the least number of Claims – Grounds; 49% of their text segments were Claims and 20% of these were Claims – Grounds.

Speakers focused on giving meaning to the situation as a dispute and a crisis, and from this created sense for the Change as causing the crisis. Its Solution to avert the crisis was further direct negotiation between the parties even though this was problematic within the rules imposed by Competition Law. They ignored the difficulties raised by the HSE in relation to negotiating with the IPU and created a sense they would eventually have to negotiate a solution – it was inevitable. Like the IPU, the Politicians supported this by giving meaning to the HSE's behaviour to undermine its credibility and in so doing undermine the credibility of their Solution, which was to implement the Change in line with national policy. In addition to supporting the sense that they were creating for the HSE they were giving meaning to the past behaviours of the IPU to enhance their credibility and highlight that they were reasoned and reasonable. The interconnectedness of meaning giving and sense creation was also observed among the text segments authored by this speaker group. Below are extracts from the data set which reflect these behaviours and they are illustrated in Figure 7-16.

### Dispute

*Whoever walked away from the table, whether it was the HSE or the IPU — I am not here to debate that question — it is time the two groups, which are mighty players in this game, came together around the table to make decisions and alleviate the concern that exists. (Deputy Catherine Byrne, Politicians, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 503 – 504)*

*At the heart of this dispute is the lack of an independent arbitrator to resolve the issue in a fair – minded manner. I call on the Health Service Executive and the Minister to take this option because the problem will not be resolved by edict, the approach they have taken. (Deputy James Reilly, Politicians, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 614 – 615)*

The meanings given to the situation as a dispute supported the sense that the **Change** must be paused and the **Solution** negotiated in the same fashion as disputes between parties are settled.

### Industrial relations

*I am simply asking a question here as to why normal industrial relations and negotiation practices are not being followed in this case.* (Deputy Darragh O'Brien, Politicians, 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 161)

*The IPU position and the interest of individual community pharmacies throughout the country has not been helped by the approach proposed and already employed. With regard to the Competition Act, barring direct engagement between the IPU and the HSE, I fully support the right of the IPU to represent its members.* (Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin Politicians, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 393 – 394)

*I agree that as a union it should be allowed to represent pharmacists. Irrespective of the provisions of competition law, the union represents its members and should be allowed to negotiate.* (Deputy Bobby Aylward, Politicians, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 562 – 565)

*We strongly believe any group of workers is entitled to have representation. This applies across the board in social partnership and a variety of organisations.* (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 512 – 514)

The meaning given to the situation as an industrial dispute supported the sense that a negotiated and agreed **Solution** must be achieved which is what happens in industrial relations disputes and therefore the **Solution** being implemented by the **HSE** was flawed because it did not follow an industrial relations type process.

## Negotiations

*Like others, I feel there is an immediate need to return to the talks table. I understand that good progress was made last week but suddenly it all fell through. Without negotiation and a willingness on both sides, this matter will run on and ultimately the patient will suffer. (Deputy Margaret Conlon, Politicians, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 594 – 596)*

*In the meantime, I appeal to all sides to come together and sort out the problem, even if this requires having the negotiating parties sit in separate rooms while an independent mediator acts as go – between. People genuinely want the service pharmacies provide to continue. (Deputy Kathleen Lynch, Politicians, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 619 – 620)*

*Can we not sit down with the IPU, without preconditions, and discuss the contractual changes needed to make these savings? (Deputy Darragh O’Brien, Politicians, 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 141 – 145)*

*Would it not be better to allow the independent review group to decide upon submissions forwarded by the HSE and the retail sector, “retaining the status quo” and let them adjudicate on it, rather than pushing forward? (Deputy Darragh O’Brien, Politicians, 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 215)*

Here meaning was given to the benefits of negotiation and their potential to deliver an amicable **Solution**. This was supported by the sense that the **Change** must be paused and the effective **Solution** implemented. There was no reference to the **IPU** accepting the **Change** as an alternative solution.

## HSE behaviour

*The HSE has made a number of false claims in regard to the commitment by the wholesalers. (Deputy Beverley Flynn, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 986 – 987)*

*That [reply from Professor Kamal Sabra, HSE] is totally disingenuous and misleading.* (Deputy Beverley Flynn, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 1152)

*The HSE seems to consistently move the goalposts and is doing so again today.* (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 516 – 517)

*Professor Sabra has just confirmed my view that the proposal is totally disingenuous.* (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 656)

*It is unfair of the HSE to attack the pharmacists as a way of getting at wholesalers and manufacturers.* Deputy Dara Calleary, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 1699)

*The HSE is trying to ram the proposed discount mechanism down the throats of those who work in a sector that is operating well. It is difficult to have confidence in the HSE’s ability to reach a share agreement on the fees issue.* (Deputy Dara Calleary Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 1711 – 1712)

*I do not believe that one can negotiate with people by saying “Accept the interim contract, then we’ll talk to you”.* Deputy Darragh O’Brien, Politicians, 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 141 – 145

*As Deputy Aylward stated, we have been given a significant amount of information but the HSE is trying to blur the big picture.* (Deputy Barry Andrews Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segment 1662)

Meaning was given to behaviour of the **HSE** which supported the sense that it was incompetent and mishandling the **Change**. This in turn supported the sense that their **Solution** was flawed. This has parallels with, and supported, the approach adopted by speakers from the IPU. It also added support to the sense that the **IPU** was, by comparison, reasoned and reasonable.

## IPU behaviour

*The IPU has made a reasoned and reasonable case today and should be allowed to represent its members who are the professionals concerned.* (Deputy Margaret Conlon, Politicians, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 597 – 598)

*We must use an inventive approach to overcome these difficulties and give pharmacists back their rightful voices.* (Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin Politicians, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 401)

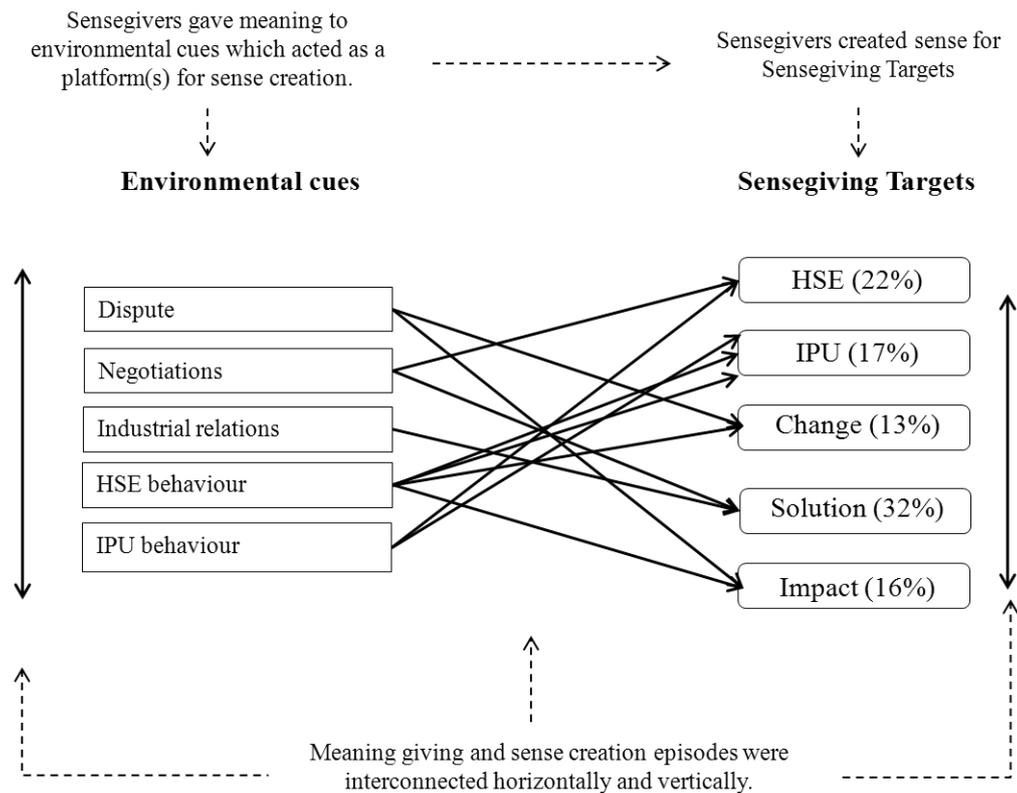
*The pharmacist did everything possible to save his life but unfortunately the man died before the ambulance arrived. Every single community pharmacist offers such support. We must acknowledge and respect them for what they do and thank them for it. I have a deep respect for community pharmacists and hold them in high regard.* (Senator Ivor Callely, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 1731 – 1734)

*I have met almost every pharmacist in Dublin South East and they are extremely open to discussion. They provide a human and humane service and this issue highlights the need for meaningful discussion.* (Deputy Barry Andrews Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 1663 – 1664)

*In effect, pharmacists are getting a raw deal in all of this.* (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segments 530)

Meaning was given to the behaviour of the **IPU** and the manner in which they had been treated to support the meaning that they were the victim and sense that they should be part of the **Solution**.

Figure 7-16: Data Display 6 – Examples of meaning giving and sense creation episodes of the Politicians.



#### 7.6.4 Verifying pattern 5

The fifth pattern identified (Table 7-4) is that proponents and opponents can create different meanings for the same environmental cues and different sense for the same targets.

There is evidence of this pattern in the discussion above (Sections 7.6.1 – 7.6.3). For completeness I present additional examples here.

It was observed that the HSE speakers gave meaning to its reduced budget to give sense to the urgency of proceeding with the Change.

*The Vote [the budget] allocated to the HSE by Dáil Éireann is Government and national policy and the HSE must introduce this measure on 1 March. There can*

*be no further delay in its introduction because it will cost the HSE money.* (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 215 – 216)

Some opponents gave alternative meaning to this environmental cue to support the sense they were creating for the HSE as a bully and mishandling the change.

*I want to make a point as regards the HSE budget and the reasons it gives the committee for introducing this measure. Again, I can only describe this as a bullying tactic.* (Deputy Jan O' Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 534 – 535)

*To say it [the Change] has to be imposed on pharmacists because of budgetary constraints seems to be entirely the wrong way to go about achieving a result.* (Deputy Jan O' Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 539)

*To remove €100 million from the budget and then tell pharmacies to provide the service for less than one third of the original budget is an appalling way to do business.* (Deputy Kathleen Lynch, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 964)

*As I understand it, when the HSE was allocated its budget, it was told to dream up ideas as to where it could cut costs. It came up with what it thought was a simple way to do it, namely, to target the rich pharmacist sector which could take a big hit.* (Deputy Mary O'Rourke, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 1506 – 1507)

These examples illustrate how proponents and opponents can give different meaning to the same environmental cues to support alternative sense. Another example is in relation to the Indecon Report. Proponents gave meaning to the Indecon Report to create sense for the Change being necessary. They avoided giving meaning to aspects of the report which opponents used to give sense to the Change; it should not go ahead.

*The Indecon and other reports clearly showed the impact that structured overcharging for wholesale services has had on the State drug budget. The cost is*

*an extra, and unnecessary, €100 million per year. (Seán Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 240 – 241)*

*The new wholesale market will be introduced by March 2009 if Indecon's recommendations are taken on board. (Kamal Sabra, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 445).*

Speakers from the IPU and the Politicians gave alternative meaning to The Indecon Report which created sense that the Change should not proceed. These related to the Report's warnings that the impact of any changes to the existing arrangements should be carefully managed.

*Indecon, the HSE's own consultants, warned in a report published on 13 November last that: "The timing of significant changes in payment terms is crucial. We believe the changes should be evaluated in advance in conjunction with key stakeholders and this needs to be carefully managed to avoid unnecessary market disruption". Market disruption is not the only result of these proposals. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 91 – 94)*

*Why does it [HSE] continue to ignore the Indecon report which it commissioned? The report stated clearly that no precipitative action should be taken. It also argued that the complexities of this country's pharmacy arrangements meant they should not be compared with those in other European countries. I emphasise that the report was commissioned by the HSE. (Deputy James Reilly. Politician, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 397 – 400).*

In relation to giving alternative sense to the same Sensegiving Targets, as discussed earlier, the HSE attempted to give sense to itself as acting in the interests of taxpayers and patients and implementing national policy. The opponents attempted to create a sense that the HSE was untrustworthy, lacked credibility and was mishandling the issue. The pattern in relation to the Impact of the Change was similar. The proponents attempted to create a sense that the Impact would be positive for taxpayers and patients as supplies of medicines and services would not have to be curtailed. The proponents attempted to give sense to the Impact as being

catastrophic for pharmacies and their employees and patients who would have a reduced service.

### **7.7            There's more to sensegiving than giving sense**

In Section 4.3 I argued that sensegivers do not have the power to give sense; the giving part of the transaction is not completed until it is accepted and acceptance is at the discretion of sensemakers. Before sense is given it must therefore be offered and before it can be offered it must be created by the sensegiver. The discussion in Sections 7.5 and 7.6 proposes that this creation, in a multi-leader context, occurs through a series of meaning giving and sense creating episodes which are vertically and horizontally interconnected and which have common Sensegiving Targets as their focal point. This model highlights that there is more to sensegiving than giving sense. Cognitive processes occur before sense is offered. Corvellec and Risberg (2007) provide support for this conceptualisation of sensegiving.

Corvellec and Risberg (2007) investigated the behaviour of Swedish wind power developers, over a five year period, as they sought the permits necessary to establish wind farms. From their observation they set out three concepts to capture the meaning management behaviour of stakeholders; “contextualising the project, ontologising its characteristics and neutralising any criticism” (p. 309). They conceptualised this behaviour as a “mise-en-sens process” (p. 309) to draw attention to a dimension of sensegiving which occurs prior to sense being given; the stage setting. They argue that viewing meaning making activities as “stage – setting and direction – providing” (p. 322) is “a way of explicating the actual content of sensegiving activities” (p. 321).

The findings of this current study overlap with the three types of meaning management behaviours identified by Corvellec and Risberg (2007). They show that proponents and opponents use “narrative, rhetoric, argumentation and other devices” (p. 322) to (i) contextualise the change, (ii) provide it with ontology and (iii) neutralise criticism. The findings also add to Corvellec and Risberg’s (2007) findings by highlighting the role of meaning giving and sense creation, in relation to

common Sensegiving Targets, plays in these three types of meaning management behaviours.

*(i) Contextualising the change*

Data Displays 4 to 6 confirm that proponents and opponents attempted to contextualise the change differently by giving different meaning to environmental cues to support the creation of different sense for common Sensegiving Targets. Proponents presented the Change as part of a wider strategy to reduce costs and maintain patient services. Opponents presented the Change as being introduced by an incompetent organisation and claimed that its mishandling of the issue would have significant negative effects on pharmacies and patients. Both contexts were created to provide a context that supported the sense that each group was attempting to create for the Sensegiving Targets from which the sense of the overall change emerged. The context created by the HSE was that the Change was national policy and the evidence showed that taxpayers were being overcharged. The IPU argued the change was wrong because it was being introduced by an incompetent organisation.

*(ii) Ontologising the change*

The data displays also show that proponents and opponents ontologised (made real) the Change differently. For example the proponents emphasised the relationship between the Change and the benefits for patents and tax payers, whereas the opponents emphasised that patients and pharmacists would suffer if the change went ahead.

Proponents

*We want to produce a fair and transparent price for medicines — one which is sustainable and continues to allow Irish patients rapid access to the best of new and innovative drug therapies. (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 285)*

*This is the right thing to do and in the long term will help to provide better care through the sustainable provision of the best of new and innovative treatments for patients.* (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 313 – 314)

*The submission made today indicates that if a sum of €100 million is not found, the HSE's ability to provide new and innovative treatments for patients will be compromised.* (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 1769)

## Opponents

*Market disruption is not the only result of these proposals. The impact on the service our members provide and the patients who use the service would be severe.* (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 94 – 97)

*This will, undoubtedly, lead to loss of services and job losses.* (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 114)

*Ms Aisling Reast from Lucan and I will provide the committee with details of the impact of the HSE proposals on our services to patients.”* (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 116)

The concept of Sensegiving Targets however take this category of meaning making activity (ontologising) a step further. It draws attention to the fact that proponents and opponents give different meanings to environmental cues and from these meanings, can create different sense for common Sensegiving Targets in order to create sense for the overall change. For example relatively few of the text segments made by opponents (IPU 11% and Politicians 13%) were directed at the Change itself. But as part of their attempts to give sense to the overall change, they created sense for the Impact of the Change.

## Opponents

*The proposal to unilaterally reduce payments to pharmacists by 8.2% from 1 March would have a catastrophic effect on my business.* (Dermot Twomey, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 111)

*The HSE is carrying out orders and the impact on the IPU will be catastrophic, especially for small pharmacies and for rural Ireland.* (Deputy Bernard Allen, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 1291)

*That action could destroy rural pharmacies.* (Deputy James Reilly, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 355)

Proponents on the other hand spent more time (51%) creating sense for the Change than any other Sensegiving Target. This sense was created from the meaning given to past practice (i.e. wholesale rates being double the European average and changes which have been made to the HSE's budget), and future benefits (i.e. transparency, fairness and a better deal for taxpayers and patients).

*If one reads the Indecon report, one will find that it states clearly that we are paying more than twice the European average to move a drug from A to B.* (Professor Kamal Sabra, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 435)

*The outcome of the introduction of this measure is included in the HSE's 2008 budget; the reduction in 2008 of the HSE's expenditure of €100 million has been taken into account in determining the HSE's Vote. The Vote allocated to the HSE by Dáil Éireann is Government and national policy and the HSE must introduce this measure on 1 March. There can be no further delay in its introduction because it will cost the HSE money.* (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 213 – 215).

### (iii) Neutralising criticism

The third meaning management behaviour observed by Corvellec and Risberg (2007), neutralising criticism, was also observed among proponents and opponents

in this current study. The proponents sought to neutralise criticism of its decision to introduce the Change by presenting rational arguments, emphasising the wholesale rates being double the European average and reductions already made to the HSE's budget based on the savings that the change would bring. Opponents sought to neutralise criticism of the existing arrangement by emphasising that it was necessary to subsidise the loss making Government funded schemes as well as emphasising the Impact.

#### Proponents

*Irish patients and taxpayers pay more than twice as much for wholesale services as that paid by the retail pharmacy sector. We reimburse 15% whereas the net mark-up or wholesale distribution rate pharmacists must carry is approximately 8%. (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 202-203)*

#### Opponents

*The scheme [medical card] has been largely sustained until now by the ability of pharmacists to negotiate trading terms with the main suppliers in order to produce greater efficiencies by, for example, making prompt payments and placing bulk orders electronically and at specific times. We also accept that private patients are subsidising the scheme. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 52 – 53)*

Corvellec and Risberg (2007) “mise-en-sens process” (p. 309) sets the stage. This study advances this concept by revealing in a more granular fashion the process which underpins this stage setting.

To set the stage for the sense speakers were attempting to give to the strategic change, speakers created sense for the Sensegiving Targets. For example the IPU directed a considerable volume of their utterances at both the IPU and HSE (52% of the text segments they directed at the five most common targets were directed at the IPU and HSE). Many of these utterances attempted to create a positive sense for the IPU and a negative sense for the HSE in order to make IPU's sense of the Change

rational and the HSE's irrational. The stage was set for these sensegiving episodes by the meaning speakers gave to environmental cues. These two processes, meaning giving to environmental cues and sense created for common Sensegiving Targets represented stage setting events for the emergence of an overall sense of the Change.

## **7.8 A model of how leaders give sense in a multi-leader context**

To get at the processes underpinning leader sensegiving in a multi-leader context, this study adopted a critical realist worldview. This approach enabled this type of sensegiving to be analysed at a level that may not have been possible using a social constructionist worldview.

By unpacking behaviour observable in the empirical domain in a systematic way, and drawing on existing literature, the study has revealed the sensegiving processes which occur in the actual domain during organisational change. The most significant finding is the identification of the presence of common Sensegiving Targets which act as a focal point for the meaning making and sense creation episodes of proponents and opponents. A deep analysis of the relationship between the text segments directed at the five most common targets and the speaker groups revealed the presence of dynamic processes underpinned by five behavioural patterns (Section 7.5.1). When giving sense to a strategic change leaders give sense to multiple common Sensegiving targets. Speaker groups allocate different levels of attention to individual targets depending on whether they propose or oppose the change. Speakers give meaning to environmental cues and can use this meaning as a platform to create sense for the Sensegiving Targets. These meaning giving and sense creation episodes are interconnected. The meaning given to the same cues and the sense created for the same targets can also vary between speaker groups.

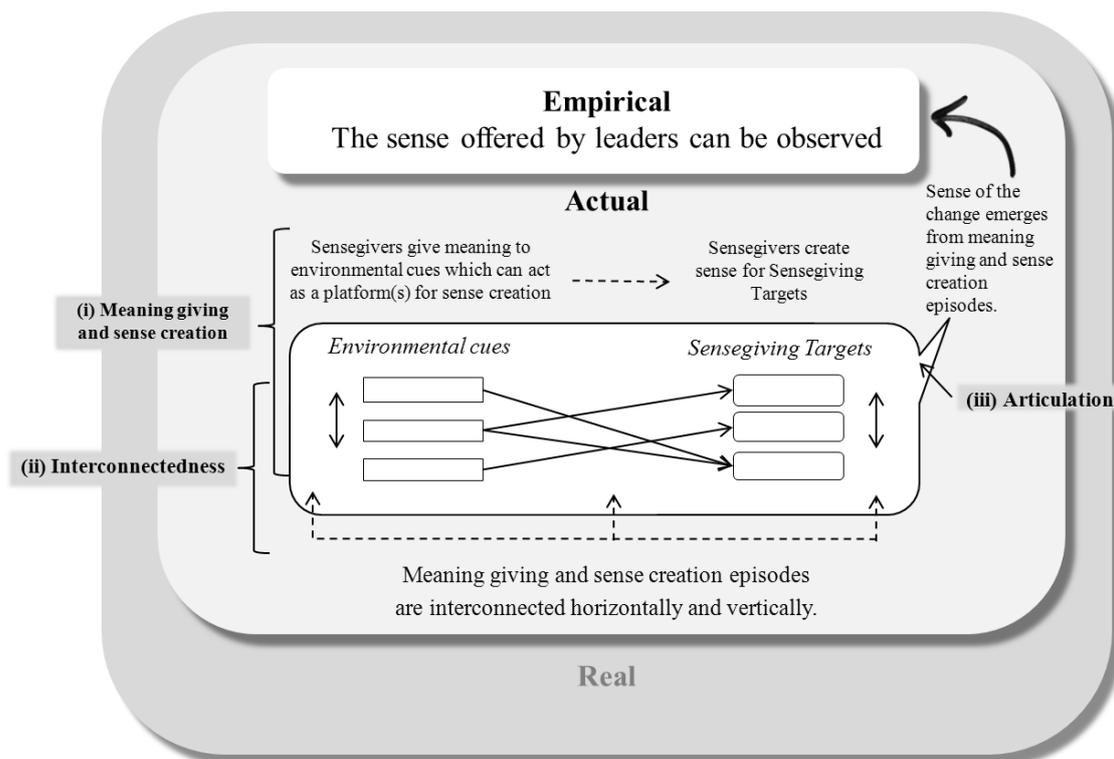
These findings show that leader sensegiving in a multi-leader context is not a linear process involving leaders giving sense to others in a neat pre-packed form. Before it can be given sense must be offered and before it can be offered it must be created. The evidence presented here shows that this sense creation is messy. It is "gradual and cumulative rather than immediate and final" (Weber and Glynn, 2006: p. 1648).

It involves a series of on-going processes and causal relationships; meaning giving to environmental cues and sense creation for common Sensegiving Targets.

Based on the study's discovery of aspects of sensegiving that occur prior to sense being given, I introduce here a model that explains how leaders, in a multi-leader context, give sense to the same strategic change (Figure 7-17). This model displays what occurs in the empirical and actual domains of reality during leaders sensegiving in the context studied. Tendencies of a generative mechanism that resides in the real domain, which cause these processes to occur, are discussed and outlined in the next chapter.

This model conceptualises multiple leader sensegiving as consisting of actors engaged in (i) giving meaning to environmental cues and creating sense for common Sensegiving Targets. These processes are (ii) interconnected. As the meaning and sense is (iii) articulated (which can be orally and/or visually) sense for the change emerges and is offered and available for sensemakers.

Figure 7-17: The relationship between sensegiving processes and the empirical and actual domains of reality.



Adopting the model presented in Figure 4-4, which illustrated the three domains of reality (Bhaskar, 1978), this model illustrates the relationship between meaning giving and sense creation and the empirical and actual domains. It locates meaning giving and sense creation in the actual domain. Their activation yields what can be experienced and observed in the empirical domain.

*(i) Meaning giving and sense creation*

Data displays 4 to 6 provided numerous examples of how speaker groups gave meaning to environmental cues and how, in many instances, these meanings acted as a platform for the sense they created for the sensegiving targets (Figure 7-17).

For example the opponents gave meaning to the past behaviours of the HSE in relation to how it was dealing with the Change.

*Essentially he is saying that the HSE negotiated with the people who produced the medication and then tried to negotiate with the wholesalers, but the latter would not do so. Effectively, I can only say that the HSE is now using a bullying tactic to make the pharmacists do the work as regards getting the wholesalers to reduce their prices. (Deputy Jan O' Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 526-527)*

This meaning subsequently acted as a platform to create sense for the preferred Solution (one of the most common Sensegiving Targets) of the opponents.

*If the HSE is genuinely treating people with dignity and equality, surely it must allow time for negotiations. (Deputy Jan O' Sullivan, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 538)*

*(ii) Interconnectedness*

Examples were identified from the data set which illustrate that meaning giving and sense creation can also be vertically and horizontally interconnected (Section 7.6). For example the HSE gave meaning to the absence of visibility on the financial arrangements between wholesalers and pharmacists to give meaning to this

arrangement as supporting alleged overcharging. The vertical interconnections between the sense creation episodes was exemplified by the way the HSE created sense for its Solution and the sense it created for the Impact if the Solution was not implemented.

*(iii) Articulation*

Until meanings and sense are articulated they are available only to the sensegiver as cognitions. Through articulation the meaning given and sense created during these episodes are “talked into existence” (Weick et. al., 2005: p. 409). From this articulation the sense that speakers offer to sensemakers emerges and is made available for sensemakers in the empirical domain. The sense that emerges from meaning giving and sense creation episodes is not a neat singular and finite cognition but an amorphous cognition which is transitory. As meaning is “intangible and slippery” (Foldy et al., 2008: p. 525) and “one never makes finite sense of a situation because things are always changing” (Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010: p. 565) sense emerges in an on-going basis as more meaning is given and more sense is created within a shifting social context.

Sense is available for sensemakers to accept, reject, ignore or modify, outright or selectively, as they attempt to answer the central sensemaking question *What's the story here?* (Weick et al., 2005: p. 410). For example the IPU accepted the meaning given to the HSE as bullies by the Politicians as speakers from both groups repeated this meaning. The IPU rejected the sense that the Change was about wholesalers margins. They created a sense that it was taking money out of the pockets of pharmacists which was supported by the meaning they gave to the results of their survey of pharmacists. The HSE ignored the sense the IPU created for the Impact of the Change on their incomes and the IPU ignored the meaning given to the Indecon Report which pointed out that the wholesale margins in Ireland were twice the European average. The Politicians modified the meaning given to the IPU's survey to pharmacists to create a sense that the Impact could result in the closing of pharmacies in rural areas.

*Rural Ireland has already been denuded of banks and post offices. We cannot allow the rural pharmacy to go also.* (Deputy James Reilly, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 359-360)

## **7.9 Summary**

This study adopts Miles and Huberman's (1994) data analysis framework. Chapter 6 outlined the application of the first stream of activity in this framework: data reduction. This chapter dealt with the two remaining streams: data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

Six data displays were presented in this chapter to illustrate the study's findings. Data Display 1 presented the argument and rhetorical strategies that underpinned all text segments uttered by speakers. Data Display 2 compared these strategies with those used in text segments directed at the five most common Sensegiving Targets. Data Display 3 revealed significant meaning giving and sense creation patterns, which underpinned the text segments directed at these Sensegiving Targets. These patterns were then explored in depth and the findings presented in Data Displays 4 to 6. The presence of these patterns was subsequently verified.

From these findings a model of leader sensegiving in a multiple leader context was developed. While the examples of the meaning giving and sense creation episodes outlined in this Chapter are just a snapshot of the episodes that occurred in the complete data set, they support the efficacy of the model presented

These findings also highlight that limiting sensegiving research on organisational change to viewing sensegiving as a linear process and involving leaders giving sense to others in a neat fashion fails to capture the complexity of how actors go about giving sense. By viewing sensegiving through this model, which presents sensegiving as a series of interconnected causal relationships (meaning giving, sense creation and articulation), new insights into the 'how' of multiple leader sensegiving surface.

In the next chapter retroductive logic is used to “look for the necessary conditions” (Eastwood et al., 2014: p. 9) in the real domain which cause these processes to occur and complete the model.

## **Chapter 8: Discussion and conclusion**

### **8.1 Introduction**

A key objective of this study has been to uncover new insights into the how leaders give sense. This has been achieved by adopting a critical realist stance and developing a novel research method to analyse a large corpus of naturally occurring data.

Chapter 7 outlined the output of this approach; the identification and verification of causal relationships which underpin multiple leader sensegiving. The most important feature of this model, and indeed this study's findings, is the discovery that when leaders attempt to give sense to the same strategic change, in a multi-leader context, this sense is not given as a neat tailored cognition. Sense emerges from an on-going pattern of interconnected meaning giving, sense creation and articulation episodes which have common Sensegiving Targets as their focal point. Chapter 7 concluded with a model which explains these processes.

This model highlights the complexity of sensegiving and, uniquely, what occurs before sense is offered. It also highlights the limited capability of the elegant sensegiving-sensemaking dyad to reflect this complexity. The emergence of different descriptors and variants (sensebreaking, sensehiding, sensemanipulation, sensedemanding, senseforcing) in the literature reflects the interest in capturing this complexity. What is common to these descriptors and variants is that they focus on describing the content of sensegiving episodes; the 'what' rather than the 'how', of sensegiving. This is not dissimilar to the challenge facing framing research, where many studies generate unique frames potentially leading to the generation of Benford's (1997) "rather long laundry list" (p. 414) of frames.

This problem is not new. Maitlis (2005) identified this deficiency within the more voluminous sensemaking literature. She set out a solution which she said provided "an important and missing element in sensemaking research: a language with which a variety of everyday sensemaking processes can be described, compared, and

contrasted” (p. 44). In her longitudinal study carried out among three British symphony orchestras which investigated the social processes underpinning organisational sensemaking Maitlis (2005) identified four different forms of organisational sensemaking; guided, fragmented, restricted, and minimal. Maitlis (2005) also identified two types of sensegiving; “high sensegiving” and “low sensegiving”. However these forms of sensemaking and types of sensegiving do not address the mechanisms that underpin sensemaking or sensegiving processes, but rather add to the growing list of descriptors.

While the model presented in Chapter 7 captures previously unidentified processes it also stops short of revealing the generative mechanisms that cause these processes to occur. From a critical realist perspective (Bhaskar, 1978) generative mechanisms are the underlying realities that become actualised through empirically identified events. These mechanisms influence events through complex contextualised interactions in open social systems. The mechanisms ...

*...ascribe possibilities which may not be realised and impose necessities which constrain but do not determine; they ascribe the former to novel kinds and impose the latter on familiar things. These features cannot be explained away as an imperfection of knowledge; but must be seen as rooted in the nature of our world (Bhaskar, 1978: p. 106).*

This study follows the approach of Bygstad and Munkvold (2011) and adopts a retroductive step to identify candidate mechanisms that underpin events in the domain of the actual. The generative mechanisms, although said to be real, are rarely “actually manifest and rarer still that they are empirically identified” (Bhaskar, 1978: 47).

It is also important to acknowledge that critical realism provides no epistemological guidance (Yeung, 1997) and so does not tell us how to find real generative mechanisms. Eastwood et al. (2014) point out there is no clarity on how they should be determined so their exploration requires the application of creative reasoning.

While critical realism accepts an interpretative epistemology, it insists that we go deeper to investigate more stable mechanisms. This delving deeper requires a creative approach to propose mechanisms that cannot be seen by humans. The objective in going deeper is not to prove the existence of causal mechanisms, but to “transparently” (Bygstad and Munkvold, 2011: p. 13) and “relatively precisely” (p. 13) describe how an event might actually take place. Being clear about the creative nature of the process, transparent, and precise, allows the reader to “assess the credibility of the proposed mechanism” (p. 13) and the “research community to engage in discussion and evaluation” (p. 13).

Using retroduction, this chapter proposes generative mechanisms which activate patterns observed in the actual domain of reality by asking and answering the following question: *What motivates multiple leaders to give sense the way they do?* Following consideration of the relevant literature, theories and findings, the final model of multiple leader sensegiving is presented. This is followed by a summary of the study’s contribution, its limitations and opportunities for future research.

## **8.2 Breaking and manipulating sense**

A starting point to uncovering what motivates leaders in a multiple leader context to give sense the way they do is the recurring observation from the data set that actors supported their sensegiving attempts by attempting to undermine the sense other actors had or were trying to create for Sensegiving Targets. This occurred both directly and indirectly. For example the HSE attempted to create sense for the Change as a way to reduce costs for taxpayers in line with European norms and to protect patient services which would be at risk if the Change was not introduced. The IPU sought to undermine this sense by creating sense for the Change as taking €100 million directly out of the pockets of pharmacists which they claimed would have a catastrophic impact on pharmacy businesses and reduce patient service as 20% of pharmacies could close. A more indirect approach is evident from the efforts of the IPU to create a sense that its members were reasoned and reasonable in contrast to the sense it was creating that the HSE was incompetent and mishandling the management of the Change. Given the frequency with which this type of construction was observed in the data set, I return to the literature on two

sensegiving variants, sensebreaking and sensemanipulation to consider their role as generative mechanisms.

### **8.2.1 Breaking sense to give sense**

Of the sensemaking-sensegiving variants, the literature on sensebreaking is the most developed. It conceptualises sense made by sensemakers as a cognition that can be broken and replaced by sensegivers. Sensebreaking is the opposite of sensemaking (Karreman and Alvesson, 2004). It fills a gap in the sensemaking-sensegiving process, by pointing to deliberate attempts by sensegivers to undo existing sense held by sensemakers. The sensebreaking construct has parallels with Lewin's (1947) unfreeze, change, freeze model of change. It also has parallels with the cognitive shift construct proposed by Foldy et al. (2008) which involves "a change in thinking or perception" (p. 514) about a variety of concepts and is, they argue, a desired outcome of leader sensegiving. It also has similarities with what Kaplan (2008) calls framing contests where actors compete to transform their "own cognitive frames of a situation into predominant frames through a series of interactions" (p. 729). This framing contests model also takes into account the "political processes by which one frame rather than another comes to predominate" (p. 730).

Pratt (2000) coined the term sensebreaking in his study of how the Amway organisation managed the way its agents identified with its values. He suggested that "the main purpose of sensebreaking is to disrupt an individual's sense of self to create a meaning void which must be filled" (p. 464). Amway created the meaning void by dream building, juxtaposing the agents' current identity and their dream ideal identity, which centred on accumulating possessions. The creation of the meaning void triggered sensemaking by agents which, when successfully met by the organisation's sensegiving, resulted in members becoming "impregnated with new ideal selves" (p. 464). It is notable that Pratt (2000) is specific on what sensebreaking seeks to break, that is the sense of self. Ashforth, Harrison, and Corley (2008) concur with his position: "sensegiving serves as a response to sensebreaking, providing the organizationally sanctioned answers to the questions associated with identity deficits" (p. 343). Subsequent discussions on sensebreaking extend the target of sensebreaking to include the sense of realities held by

sensemakers. Walsh and Glynn (2008) see sensebreaking as capable of destabilising both reality and identity “to make alternative realities – and a future legacy – possible” (p. 269). Drawing on Maitlis (2005) and Weick (1995), Vlaar et al. (2008) define sensebreaking as “acts by which individuals attempt to alter and influence the way others think and act” (p. 240); it is “used to question existing understandings of others” (p. 241).

*A focal person engages in acts of sensebreaking when he or she believes that others hold incongruent or undesirable views of reality, and when he or she believes that other lines of thinking lead to adverse and disjointed action.* (Vlaar et al., 2008: p 241)

These definitions are more nuanced than that of Pratt (2000). The sensebreaking target is not confined to an individual or individuals’ identity but also challenges their sense of reality. Drawing on Pratt’s (2000) definition as “the destruction or breaking down of meaning” (p. 462) but notably silent on Pratt’s emphasis on identity, Maitlis and Christianson (2013) support this position and suggest that sensebreaking “can motivate people to re-consider the sense that they have already made” (p.69).

Added to the variations in definitions of sensebreaking is the conspicuous gap between what the term sensebreaking implies and how it is conceptualised in the literature. The term sensebreaking suggests it is concerned with breaking sense in a blunt fashion. It implies contestation and the presence of a level of coercion and cognitive strong arming between the sensegiver and sensemaker. In contrast, the language used to describe the output of sensebreaking in the literature referred to above is inconsistent with this characterisation. Maitlis and Christianson (2014) use the term ‘re-consider’ sense, Lawrence and Maitlis (2014) use the term ‘disrupted’ sense, Walsh and Glynn (2008) use ‘destabilize’ sense, and Vlaar et al. (2008) use the term ‘alter and influence’ sense. Adding to the confusion, Pratt’s (2000) definition of sensebreaking as “the destruction or breaking down of meaning” (p. 464) is quickly followed by a description of its purpose which refers to disruption rather than destruction: “to disrupt an individual's sense of self” (p. 464). These inconsistencies are reflective of an emerging field.

In their working paper<sup>5</sup> Lawrence and Maitlis (2014) set out for the first time a theory of sensebreaking, which is underpinned by two motivations and three strategies (Table 8-1). Application of this theory to the data set confirms that the speaker groups in this current study engaged in attempted sensebreaking.

*Table 8-1: Sensebreaking motivations and strategies (Lawrence and Maitlis, 2014).*

<b>Sensebreaking</b>	
<i>Motivations</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
(i) Problematisation	(i) Undermine the objects, concepts and relationships that constitute an account
(ii) Interruption of actions	(ii) Disconnecting an account from its context
	(iii) Discredit an author

*(i) Motivation - Problematisation*

Problematisation can involve “disrupting previously held accounts of events and experiences” (Lawrence and Maitlis, 2014: p. 10). This study shows how proponents and opponents attempt to disrupt the accounts held by others. The HSE attempted to disrupt the accounts the IPU had of their relationship with wholesalers and in so doing disrupt their identity. Before the change, wholesalers received wholesale margins at levels that enabled them to provide significant discounts (up to 50% of the value of the wholesale margin they received) and additional benefits to pharmacists. These discounts and benefits were negotiated between the pharmacists and the wholesalers with the larger chains of pharmacists in a stronger position to negotiate more favourable terms than individual pharmacists. Michael Guckian of the IPU explained this arrangement by pointing out that it was necessary to offset the losses from the Government funded schemes.

*These business arrangements which can take the form of discounts are vital for the pharmacy business, particularly for the medical card scheme which has been uneconomic for pharmacists to deliver for some time. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 17-19)*

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<sup>5</sup> Received in personal communication with Professor Maitlis.

This ability to negotiate the distribution of monies received from the HSE supported their identity as independent traders able to exercise a certain level of control over the income they received under the Government funded schemes. The Change would curtail this independence. Sensebreaking theory as set out by Pratt (2000) suggests that in order for this identity change to be accepted the HSE had to problematise this relationship. They attempted to do so in the first place by portraying the relationship between the IPU and wholesalers as being unsustainable and not in the best interests of taxpayers. Following on from this, they further proposed replacing it with a relationship that they portrayed as more transparent and in the best interests of patients.

*However, a position whereby patients and taxpayers pay €100 million a year more than anyone else for wholesale distribution of medicines is not sustainable and will seriously compromise the HSE's ability to provide new and innovative treatments for patients. (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 212)*

*We want to produce a fair and transparent price for medicines — one which is sustainable and continues to allow Irish patients rapid access to the best of new and innovative drug therapies. (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 286)*

Those opposed to the Change attempted to problematise the behaviour of the HSE, and particularly its attitude towards negotiating an agreement, as unconstructive.

*However, this [engaging in a constructive manner] can only happen when we operate in an environment of trust where change is brought about through negotiation and agreement, an environment without threat, provocation, intimidation or unilateral actions and where there is recognition of the genuine concerns and contributions of all parties. (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>h</sup> November 2007, text segments 149-150)*

*I do not understand how a group of professionals have been manipulated into a situation where they have no employee rights, no right to stand up for themselves*

*or no right of representation.* (Deputy Mary O'Rourke, (Richard Collis, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 1519-1520).

These examples are illustrative of attempted sensebreaking episodes where actors sought to disrupt existing accounts, by problematising them, and then presenting alternatives associated with the Sensegiving Targets.

*(ii) Motivation - interruption of action*

The study's findings also reflect the second motivation in Lawrence and Maitlis's (2014) sensebreaking theory, interruption of action. The opponents were seeking to interrupt the unwillingness of the HSE to negotiate an agreed Solution and stop implementation of the Change. They wanted 'real' negotiation to take place.

*All we want is fair play. This can be achieved through real negotiations with the HSE together with an independent review of payment agreements.* (Aisling Reast, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 166-168)

The proponents of the Change did not focus on interrupting any action as it was on the side of the momentum of the Change. This was reflected in their use of ethos and logos based Claims and the very low volumes of pathos based Claims.

*(i) Strategy - Undermine an account's constitutive elements*

Both opponents and proponents attempted to undermine the constituent elements of accounts: (i) the objects, (ii) concepts in each other's accounts and (iii) relationships that constitute these accounts, by giving meaning to environmental cues and creating sense for the Sensegiving Targets.

For example the IPU was repeatedly direct in its attempts to undermine the account presented by the HSE by giving an alternative sense of the Change.

*The HSE was not, in fact, reducing wholesaler margins but the price at which it would normally reimburse pharmacists for medicines dispensed to patients under the various community drug schemes, including the medical card scheme and the*

*drug payment scheme.* (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 73).

*We began our presentation today to make it clear to the committee that this was not about reducing the wholesale price of anything, but about reducing payments to pharmacists. It is still that issue. They can spin it any way they like, but the fact is that from 1 March €100 million is being taken out of the tills of all pharmacies in this country. The HSE is trying to eliminate discounts from the pharmacy sector, and we should be open and honest about that.* (Séamus Feely, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 1984-1989)

On the other hand the proponents sought to undermine the accounts of the opponents (the Change was taking money out of the pockets of pharmacists) by putting it in an alternative context to make it seem like a natural progression or what Vaara (2006) calls “normalization” (p 797). The proponents repeatedly stated the change was part of a wider Government approved national policy and this was the second of three elements of this strategy. It was reducing wholesale margins, which should not be the concern of pharmacists, and part of the overall plan to streamline the supply and reimbursement chain.

*There are three elements to the reimbursement paid to pharmacists. The first element is the ingredient cost of the medicines provided by the manufacturer. The next element is the wholesale distribution of service and the third element is the payment to the pharmacist which covers his or her professional fee and the mark-up. The issue concerning us today is that of the cost of the wholesale pharmacy services and, in particular, how much ordinary patients and the taxpayer should have to pay for them.* (Séan Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 186-189).

(ii) *Strategy - Disconnecting an account from its context.*

Examples of the use of this strategy by opponents include their attempts to create sense of the situation as an industrial relations dispute through the use of phrases such as “industrial action”, “normal industrial process”, “breakdown in industrial

relations” and “vote to go back to work”. These accounts were at odds with the context pharmacists operate in; they are independent, commercial, self-employed entities providing services to the HSE on a contractual basis. Similarly the proponents sought to disconnect the accounts the pharmacists were creating regarding their relationship with wholesalers. According to the pharmacists, the Government funded schemes were loss making and the rebates make them viable and therefore should not be changed. The HSE attempted to disconnect this account from its context by repeating that wholesale services were not payments for professional pharmacy services and therefore the relationships between manufacturers, wholesalers and pharmacists must be decoupled and the professional fee issue dealt with in the next stage.

*(iii) Strategy - Discredit the Author*

Finally, the third sensebreaking strategy suggested by Lawrence and Maitlis (2014) involves discrediting the author. The opponents devoted considerable time attempting to discredit the HSE. Speakers from the IPU and Politicians directed 24% and 22% respectively of their utterances at the HSE, most of which were aimed at discrediting its behaviour.

*The HSE has a mandate to look after the health of the population. As an individual pharmacist, it appeared to me on that Friday evening that it [the HSE] was abusing that mandate. It [the HSE] did not care about the very people it had spoken of so warmly in the previous week but simply wanted to intimidate us back to work. (Richard Collis, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 424-426).*

This juxtaposing of the key dimensions of Lawrence and Maitlis's (2014) sensebreaking model with examples from this current study's data set shows that proponents and opponents engaged in behaviours which reflected sensebreaking characteristics. However, attempts to undo, disrupt, destabilise, alter and influence the sense other actors had or were creating did not result in the creation of observable meaning voids. This was due to the fact that speakers tended to talk past each other and dismissed the sense created by others without connecting with it.

On occasion speakers made their Statements and Claims in isolation from the Statements and Claims made by the opposing groups. This was more observable among the proponent group (HSE). For example, it virtually ignored the fact that the revenue that flowed to pharmacists would drop by in the region of €100 million and instead made sense of the €100 million adjustment as savings to taxpayers. They ignored what would happen to the income of pharmacists until the next stage in the long term strategy was negotiated with pharmacists. Similarly the IPU did not acknowledge that the HSE was paying twice the European average for wholesale services. They made sense of the difference being paid in Ireland and other European countries as necessary because of the unique market in Ireland and the fact that the government scheme was loss making. The HSE ignored the upset that pharmacists around the country were experiencing and speakers from the IPU and Politicians pointedly dismissed the restrictions caused by Competition Law.

### **8.2.2 Using manipulation to give sense**

Sensemanipulation seeks to control how others construct meaning (Hope, 2010) by creating conditions, through the deliberate manipulation, withholding and denying access to information or information processes, that lead actors to make sense in a particular way.

This study's findings show that both the IPU and the HSE attempted sensemanipulation. Through the selective use of data, the IPU attempted to create the impression that strategic change would result in pharmacists dispensing medicines at a loss. This sense was used to give a sense that the Change was unworkable and unfair. Here the sensemanipulation occurred on two levels. Firstly, the IPU claimed that wholesalers would not be reducing their prices in line with the reduced wholesale margins. This was challenged by the HSE.

*The HSE and the manufacturers of the drugs have received explicit assurances from wholesalers that the net monthly cost to pharmacies for reimbursable products will not be greater than the amount reimbursed by the HSE. (Sean Hurley, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 225)*

Secondly the IPU speakers suggested, by selective use of information, that they received a fee of in the region of €3 per €100 euro of medicine dispensed.

*For years those discounts have propped up the medical card scheme. That is the only reason it is possible to dispense a €100 medicine for €103. Even with those discounts, it will not be possible to dispense a €100 medicine for €92 plus a fee of €3. One would still be down €5. (Darragh O'Loughlin, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segments 325-328)*

While it would have been technically correct to say that pharmacists would receive €3 for every €100 of medicine dispensed, this could only have occurred if every prescription dispensed had one item on it and every item was valued at €100. In 2007, when this Statement was made the average number of items on a prescriptions dispensed under this scheme was 3 and the average cost per item was €23.27<sup>6</sup>. Therefore for each prescription dispensed under the scheme, the pharmacists would receive an average of three dispensing fees (1 per item) of €3.26 totalling €9.78. Rather than getting €3 for dispensing €100 euro of medicine, pharmacists were in fact receiving on average the equivalent of €14 for every €100 of medicines dispensed.

While more subtle than the IPU omitting to mention that most prescriptions have multiple items on them, by focusing only on the economic benefits of the Change to taxpayers the HSE did not acknowledge the loss in revenue pharmacists would incur. In both instances of sense manipulation speakers left out critical information to deliberately influence the way sensemakers constructed accounts. These examples also draw attention to the fact that sensemanipulation can occur due to the supremacy of plausibility over accuracy in sensemaking.

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<sup>6</sup> HSE's Primary Care Reimbursement Service: Statistical Analysis of Claims and Payments 2008.

### 8.2.3 Shortcomings of sensebreaking and sensmanipulation

Many examples were observed in the data set where actors attempted to break sense and manipulate sense. The sensebreaking attempts did not always result in successfully breaking the sense held by others nor create meaning voids. For example, the HSE attempted to problematise the existing relationship between pharmacists and wholesalers as being opaque and costly to taxpayers. They attempted to undo the existing sense of the relationship between pharmacists and wholesalers and present a new sense of the relationship. However they did not create a meaning void among pharmacists or follow through with a new identity that offered any benefits or dreams (Pratt, 2000) to the pharmacists.

The IPU attempted to add an identity as employees to their existing identity as contractors, by claiming that they had employee negotiation rights.

*It [the new contract] also significantly reduces the rights of the pharmacy contractors.* (Michael Guckian, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 77)

*I am a community pharmacy contractor in Cloyne, County Cork.* (Mr. Dermot Twomey, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segment 100)

They did this by declaring that they wanted their objections to the Change to be addressed as part of an industrial relations dispute process applicable to employer-employee relationships and provided examples to support this sense.

*However, three industrial actions were being taken that weekend, involving staff at Iarnród Éireann, Aer Lingus and ourselves. The disputes at Iarnród Éireann and Aer Lingus were settled, but what did the HSE do to settle its dispute with pharmacists in the eastern region?* (Richard Collis, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2007, text segment 417-418).

This suggests that, in this environment, it was not necessary to break one identity, a feature of Pratt's (2000) sensebreaking, in order to attempt to add a new identity, which could be considered a type of sensebreaking.

While the sensemanipulation attempts of the speakers from the IPU were not successful among proponents, they were among allied groups. Following the Claims by the pharmacists that they would end up selling medicines at a loss and many would close, this sense was repeated by the Politicians. The manipulated sense the IPU created was that there would be widespread closure of pharmacies.

*More than one in five, over 20%, said the HSE cuts threatened the future of their business and that they could close.* (Dermot Twomey, IPU, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, text segment 122)

*There is a genuine concern that pharmacies will close.* (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segment 545)

*Let us explore those other areas but please do not leave us in a situation where rural pharmacies throughout the country are closed and patients, once again, suffer the consequences when the axe is wielded.* (Deputy Margaret Conlon, Politicians, 12th February, 2008, text segments 792-793).

This discussion of sensebreaking and sensemanipulation makes a contribution to theory. It highlights a shortcoming associated with classifying these behaviours as separate sensegiving behaviours and therefore generative mechanisms that could underpin multiple leader sensegiving. Determining their presence based on their success (breaking sense and causing actors to make sense through manipulation) would result in the exclusion of *attempted* sensebreaking and sensemanipulation without confirmation whether unsuccessful attempts served a sensegiving function. This would be similar to overlooking utterances which were not frames or not Claims supported by Grounds without knowing whether these utterances served a sensegiving function (Section 5.6.3.1). Had this study focused only on Claims supported by Grounds, 92% of the utterances of speaker groups in the data set would have been set aside and the causal relationships set out in Section 7.5.2 could not have been identified.

To overcome these shortcomings, I considered Lawrence and Maitlis's (2014) view of sensebreaking as concerned with making the accounts (sense) made by others

“either illegitimate or incongruent” (p. 11). I add to this proposition by drawing on this study’s findings, which showed that while speaker groups were seeking to make the sense held and being created by others in relation to the Sensegiving Targets illegitimate or incongruent, they were also seeking to make their own accounts (sense) legitimate or congruent. Taking Lawrence and Maitlis (2014) into account, this study’s findings suggests that the processes observed were “fired” (Pawson and Tiley, 1997, p 85 in Eastwood et al., 2014) by the desire of speakers to have their sense accepted as legitimate or congruent and the sense proffered by their opponents considered illegitimate or incongruent. Numerous examples were observed in the data set (Section 7.6) where opponents of the Change were attempting to deconstruct the legitimacy of the HSE, (i.e. it was a bully, was incompetent and mishandling the Change) and construct its own legitimacy (e.g. pharmacists were reasoned and reasonable). This in turn supported the legitimacy they were creating for multiple Sensegiving Targets (i.e. the IPU, the Solution and the Impact).

Speakers from the HSE were observed to follow a similar pattern. They attempted to create legitimacy for their sense of the Change based on the fact that the new arrangement would save money for tax payers and protect services. They attempted to delegitimise the sense that opponents were creating for the change based on the sense that it was at odds with what was happening in other countries and would result in service reduction in other parts of the health service.

Consistent with this part of the study’s retroductive approach, and to assist in answering the question *What must be true in order to make the processes identified possible?*, I turn to the literature on legitimacy to explore the proposition that legitimacy making and breaking by proponents and opponents are the tendencies of the generative mechanisms which underpin leader sensegiving, in a multi-leader context, when it concerns the same strategic change.

### **8.3 Legitimacy**

The literature on legitimacy centres mostly on organisational legitimacy. Suchman's (1995) seminal work provides an overarching definition of legitimacy, as it relates to organisations, as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an

entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (p. 574).

The work of Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Vaara and Monin, 2010; Erkama and Vaara, 2010 and Vaara et al., 2006, explore the topic from a discursive perspective. In their definition, and drawing on the work of van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999), Vaara and Monin (2010) concentrate on a ‘sense’ of legitimacy rather than Suchman's (1995) ‘perception or assumption’. They define legitimation as “the creation of a sense of positive, beneficial, ethical, understandable, necessary, or otherwise acceptable action in a specific setting” and delegitimation as “establishing a sense of negative, morally reprehensible, or otherwise unacceptable action or overall state of affairs” (p. 6). The findings of this study show many examples of speaker groups trying to create positive and negative senses.

Both perspectives, Suchman's (1995) and Vaara and Monin's (2010), and the use of terms such as perception, assumption and sense, and the influence of the issue, context and social norms, values and beliefs, highlight legitimacy’s social dimension and its parallels with sensegiving. This is underscored by Suchman's (1995) suggestion that “the multifaceted character of legitimacy implies that it will operate differently in different contexts, and how it works may depend on the nature of the problems for which it is the purported solution” (p. 573). Another feature of legitimacy that is shared with sensegiving is its slipperiness which Vaara et al. (2006) refers to: “there is significant ambiguity concerning what legitimacy actually means” (p. 791).

Suchman (1995) identifies three primary forms of legitimacy; pragmatic, moral and cognitive. Pragmatic legitimacy centres on the self-interest and the perceived benefits to the immediate audience. Organisations “often can purchase pragmatic legitimacy, by directing tangible rewards to specific constituencies” (p. 585). Moral legitimacy is grounded in altruism and “beliefs about whether the activity effectively promotes societal welfare, as defined by the audience's socially constructed value system” (p. 579). Cognitive legitimacy relates to comprehensibility and taken-for-grantedness. Legitimacy based on comprehensibility involves accounts which “mesh both with larger belief systems and with the experienced reality of the audience's

daily life (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; cf. Geertz, 1973)” (p. 582). Legitimacy based on taken-for-grantedness involves alternatives becoming unthinkable.

According to Suchman (1995) pragmatic and moral legitimacy rest on discursive evaluations; “audiences arrive at cost-benefit appraisals and ethical judgments largely through explicit public discussion and organizations often can win pragmatic and moral legitimacy by participating vigorously in such dialogues” (p. 585). He suggests that cognitive legitimacy does not involve discursive evaluations but, like moral legitimacy, does “implicate larger cultural rules” (p. 585). Suchman (1995) points out that all three forms of legitimacy exists in most real world settings and are interrelated;

*....as one moves from the pragmatic to the moral to the cognitive, legitimacy becomes more elusive to obtain and more difficult to manipulate, but it also becomes more subtle, more profound, and more self-sustaining, once established.* (Suchman, 1995: p. 585)

This study’s findings suggest that the sensegiving behaviour of proponents and opponents is consistent with these legitimating strategies. For example proponents sought to generate pragmatic and moral legitimacy for the change by focusing on the savings that would accrue for taxpayers from the change (€100 million annually) and pointing out that it was wrong for taxpayers to pay twice the wholesale rates their European counterparts were paying while pharmacists enjoyed excessive profits. In contrast, and reflected in their prioritisation of Sensegiving Targets, the opponents concentrated on generating moral and cognitive legitimacy. They portrayed pharmacists as upstanding community citizens and reinforced this by juxtaposing it with the portrayal of the HSE as untrustworthy and intimidating bureaucrats disconnected from the real world. Both portrayals tapped into larger belief systems that pharmacists were good and the HSE, based on the negative media coverage it attracted since its establishment in 2005, was incompetent. In addition they highlighted that the closure of 20% of pharmacies, which would occur if the change was implemented, was unthinkable. Both accounts sought to generate cognitive legitimacy for the sense they were attempting to create for the Change.

Creed et al. (2002), Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) and Vaara and Monin (2010) provide support for the proposition that legitimacy making and breaking is a mechanism whose tendencies underpin multiple leader sensegiving. Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) has connections to this current study. They investigated the use of rhetoric by proponents and opponents as they contested the legitimacy of a new organisational form which proposed that accounting firms could also provide legal services. Creed et al. (2002) also has similarities. They investigated how proponents and opponents deployed legitimising accounts “to legitimate their stances on policies that would prohibit workplace discrimination” (p. 481) on the basis of sexual orientation. The study’s data drew on three different sets of text; public testimony, media accounts and position papers, and interviews with work-place activists from the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans-gender communities. The study found that opponents depicted people who were gay and lesbian as privileged elite and themselves as people of religious conscience and victims of a form of reverse discrimination. This has parallels with the way the IPU depicted themselves as the victim and the HSE as the perpetrator (Section 7.6.2.1). In Creed et al. (2002) proponents identified people who were gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender as “victims of real and enduring discrimination, like women and African-Americans, initially excluded from the embrace of constitutional guarantees of equality” (p. 493). In the current study the HSE depicted taxpayers as victims of overcharging (Section 7.6.1.2).

Creed et al. (2002) present two findings that have relevance for this discussion. Firstly, they found that proponents and opponents used multiple cultural accounts as building blocks for legitimacy accounts. What is particularly noteworthy is that proponents and opponents made “contested Claims about what available cultural accounts and institutional logics "really mean" and to whom they should or should not apply” (p. 492).

In addition they

*...combine cultural accounts, selecting companion accounts both for their resonance with the target audience and for how they potentially interact to alter each other's meanings in a manner designed to advance*

*a frame sponsor's worldview and problem definitions”* (Creed et al., 2002: p. 492)

This framework, which involves actors combining cultural accounts and contesting their meaning as a precursor to drafting legitimating accounts, mirrors the behaviour observed in this current study. Speaker groups selected environmental cues and Sensegiving Targets (*cultural accounts and companion accounts*), combined them and contested them and gave them meaning and sense that supported the sense (*legitimising accounts*) of the strategic change they were attempting to create and undermine the sense those with opposing positions were attempting to create. These engagements also echo Kaplan's (2008) concepts of legitimacy contests that actors are likely to engage in to mobilise support for their frames.

Vaara and Monin's (2010) study of discourse legitimation during a failed merger between two French pharmaceutical companies provides further support for this proposition. As the merger negotiations progressed the term 'synergy' became the centre of the merger's sensemaking, sensegiving and sensehiding efforts. At a strategic level the concept of 'theranostics' (a neologism morphed from the words therapy and diagnostics) was created as the rationale to 'sell' the synergy benefits both internally and externally. Using the model of multiple leader sensegiving presented in Chapter 7 (Figure 7-17), legitimacy for the merger emerged from sense created for key Sensegiving Targets: synergy; theranostics; and the merging companies. Twenty one months later, after the promised synergies did not materialise, a new sense was created for these targets which was designed to delegitimise the merger, and the main proponent of the merger (a new Sensegiving Target), and legitimise the break-up (a new Sensegiving Target) of the merger. Without any change in reality, sensegivers changed reality, by changing the sense created for the Sensegiving Targets. In an about turn sensegiving was used to legitimise the break-up and delegitimise the merger. Vaara and Monin (2010) capture how slippery reality can be.

*What is special about these justifications [for the merger] is that they are by nature “imaginary,” that is, things that are being talked into being* (Fairclough and Thomas 2004). (Vaara and Monin 2010: p. 6)

This pattern was observed in this study's findings. The HSE attempted to delegitimise the IPU by giving meaning to the existing arrangement as exploiting the vulnerable.

*The IPU has produced no data on pharmacy incomes [reductions that would result from the change] to support this action. It has yet to condemn this further exploitation of vulnerable people for the purpose of allowing one of the wealthiest sectors of our society to continue to overcharge ordinary citizens. (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2008, text segments 284-286)*

On the other hand, speakers from the Politicians attempt to construct legitimacy for the IPU by giving meaning to their valuable service.

*I am saddened that the service provided by pharmacists has not been mentioned. There is no charge for it and it is unsolicited. The reassurance, confidence giving and the intimacy with which the advice is given by local pharmacists to their customers are being set at naught, as if they did not even matter. (Deputy Mary O'Rourke, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2008, text segments 1531-1533)*

*I do not accept the point made by the HSE delegation that pharmacists are stirring up this concern. The latter provide an excellent service. I underwent heart surgery eight years ago, from which I recovered well. I still take tablets every day and my local pharmacist has always been good to me. I do not want to go to my local supermarket, as pleasant as the staff there are, to purchase my prescription. I prefer to go to my local pharmacy where I can receive good service and advice and be properly looked after. (Deputy Charlie O'Connor, Politicians, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2008, text segments 1375-1380)*

This discussion illustrates that the sense created for Sensegiving Targets can vary depending on the purpose to which it is being put; legitimising or delegitimising a

change. Put another way, creating sense for Sensegiving Targets can be used to legitimise and delegitimise organisational change.

### **8.3.1 Identity and legitimacy**

Creed et al.'s (2002) second key finding adds further support to this proposition that legitimacy making and breaking are the tendencies of generative mechanisms which underpin the causal relationships (meaning giving, sense creation and articulation) identified. They argue that identity constructions are “embedded in legitimating accounts” (p. 493) and work to enhance the meaning they are seeking to give.

*In the political contests over the meaning and jurisdiction of institutional logics, account makers construct their own and their audience's identities in ways that enhance their interpretations of and Claims to the logics in an attempt to create the conditions for the collective, on-going social construction of the institutional logic.*(Creed et al., 2002: p. 493)

These identity constructions serve a number of purposes. They legitimise “on the one hand, an account maker's participation in the discourse and set of Claims, and on the other hand, the involvement of proponents and crucial audiences” (p. 675). The authors also suggest that the identity constructions by proponents and opponents were designed to undermine the right of the other “to make legitimating Claims using the civil rights frame” (p. 493) which they identified as the master frame. Importantly they suggest that

*... the construction of social identity may be at once both an antecedent to and a critical outcome of the framing of legitimating accounts, especially as they pertain to the human jurisdiction of institutional logics and systems of meaning.* (Creed et al.'s, 2002; p. 493)

The link between sensemaking and identity “is fairly well established” (Ashforth et al., 2008: p. 343). It is the first of Weick’s (1995) seven properties of sensemaking. He suggests “people learn their identities by projecting them into an environment and observing the consequences” (p. 23). I contend that identity legitimising and delegitimising was observed as a sensegiving strategy within a wider legitimising

and delegitimising strategy. There is ample evidence (Table 8.2) in the study's findings to show that proponents and opponents (to varying degrees) attempted to construct identities (37% all text segments directed at the top five Sensegiving Targets were directed at the HSE and IPU) for themselves (positive) and their opponents (negative) and these identities were interconnected with the sense they were attempting to create for the other Sensegiving Targets in the fashion outlined by Creed et al. (2002). While the HSE directed most of its text segments at the Change (51%), it directed 15% at the HSE and the IPU. The IPU on the other hand directed 11% of its text segments at the Change and 52% of its text segments at the HSE and the IPU. Similarly the Politicians directed just 13% of its text segments at the Change and 39% at the HSE and IPU. The data shows that the opponent groups were more interested in constructing identities for the IPU and HSE than the Change.

The IPU claimed that the HSE could not be trusted, was intimidating in its approach and lacked direction. The IPU Claimed that it was reasonable, reasoned and wanted to protect the profession so it could continue to meet the needs of patients. They were therefore better qualified to understand the Impact (Sensegiving Target 5) and their Solution (Sensegiving Target 4) presented a viable way to resolve the crisis and worry for patients that the Change (Sensegiving Target 3) had produced.

*If our ideas on issues such as these could be addressed, they would bring about real and lasting savings and have real benefits for patients.” (Michael Guckian, IPU, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, text segment 138)*

Table 8-2: Example of positive and negative identity construction.

<p><b>1. IPU constructing negative HSE identity</b></p> <p><i>To date, the HSE has systematically undermined all attempts to advance this issue. It is determined to force new arrangements on the sector one way or the other and has no plans to be either fair or reasonable in its approach. On top of all this, it has ignored the advice of its own economic consultants on the implementation of change. (14th November 2007, text segments 126-129)</i></p> <p><i>The HSE can realise savings but it is going about it in the wrong way, both in terms of its proposals and its approach. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 134)</i></p> <p><i>At this point, it is very difficult for us to trust the HSE. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 178)</i></p> <p><i>To take up another point raised by Deputies Reilly and O’Sullivan, we find it difficult to sit and listen to the HSE talk about the price of medicines. The bullying and intimidating approach that pharmacists have had to suffer from the HSE is unfair. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 621)</i></p> <p><i>The bullying and intimidating approach that pharmacists have had to suffer from the HSE is unfair. (12th Feb 2008, Text segment 647)</i></p>
<p><b>2. IPU constructing positive IPU identity</b></p> <p><i>It is also perfectly reasonable for pharmacists to build a business plan based on the assumption that the HSE would abide by all the terms of the contract, instead of unilaterally changing the payment terms of the contract while insisting on the same service levels. (14th November 2007, text segments 126-129)</i></p> <p><i>We are as concerned as the committee about the cost to the taxpayer of providing medicines and have made a number of proposals to secure value for money for the taxpayer. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 127)</i></p> <p><i>That [appointment of independent body] would be a fair and reasonable way to proceed and the IPU is available for discussions until 1 March because the patients we meet in our pharmacies are extremely worried. (12th Feb 2008, text segments 706-707)</i></p> <p><i>We want someone who is fair, reasonable and independent to put together a transparent process in order that pharmacists will know they receive a fair and reasonable return on the work they do. However, we cannot survive the proposed cuts. (12th Feb 2008, text segments 1854-1855)</i></p>
<p><b>3. Politicians constructing negative HSE identity</b></p> <p><i>I regret to say there is little trust in the HSE, in general, particularly in recent times. These developments do little to enhance trust in the HSE. The bullying and intimidating approach that pharmacists have had to suffer from the HSE is unfair. (12th Feb 2008, text segments 412-413)</i></p> <p><i>Effectively, I can only say that the HSE is now using a bullying tactic to make the pharmacists do the work as regards getting the wholesalers to reduce their prices. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 527)</i></p> <p><i>As my colleague has noted, it would appear there is not much goodwill on the side of the HSE. This must change. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 826-827)</i></p>

<i>I would like to see the HSE show some cop-on and to get down to negotiating like it should. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 1418)</i>
<i>It is difficult to have confidence in the HSE's ability to reach a share agreement on the fees issue. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 1712)</i>
<b>4. Politicians constructing positive IPU identity</b>
<i>The reassurance, confidence giving and the intimacy with which the advice is given by local pharmacists to their customers are being set at naught, as if they did not even matter. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 1533)</i>
<i>We are all concerned to ensure patients receive the services they need, and also that pharmacies can stay in business — in particular small community pharmacies which provide an excellent service to the public. (14th Feb 2008, text segment 29)</i>
<b>5. HSE constructing positive HSE identity</b>
<i>The new system which we are about to implement will provide far greater transparency in respect of payment. Everyone will know what is being paid and for what it is being paid. It will remove the anomalies whereby patients and taxpayers currently subsidise the wholesaler business model and small and rural pharmacies subsidise large chains and urban shops. (12th Feb 2008, text segments 208-210)</i>
<i>The HSE makes no apologies for achieving the best prices possible for patients and taxpayers. This is the right thing to do and in the long term will help to provide better care through the sustainable provision of the best of new and innovative treatments for patients. (12th Feb 2008, text segments 313-315)</i>
<i>We want to pay a reasonable, transparent price for the service. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 1903)</i>
<b>6. HSE constructing negative IPU identity</b>
<i>It has yet to condemn this further exploitation of vulnerable people for the purpose of allowing one of the wealthiest sectors of our society to continue to overcharge ordinary citizens. Not only that, the IPU is asking the very people who are being overcharged to support its campaign. The evidence is irrefutable. (12th Feb 2008, text segments 303-307)</i>
<i>The IPU is demanding retention of a €100 million overpayment for a discount that has nothing to do with patients, the professional practise of pharmacy or the health service. (12th Feb 2008, text segment 312)</i>

Speakers from the Politicians claimed they lacked confidence in the HSE, it was bullying in its approach and it was adopting an unreasonable stance. They claimed their interest, and that of the IPU, was the interest of patients, who were in contact with them and were anxious.

*There is a significant worry about the risk to patients. It is of great concern that they are contacting Oireachtas Members, the HSE and their pharmacies because*

*they are frightened and worried about their prescriptions.* (Senator Frances Fitzgerald, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008, text segments 1063-1064).

Politicians claimed they were more qualified than the HSE to understand the Impact (Sensegiving Target 5) and set out a reasonable Solution (Sensegiving Target 4) which was for negotiations to commence.

The HSE Claimed the IPU were overcharging and taxpayers were overpaying for medicines.

*Ordinary patients and the State are paying over twice the value of wholesale services.”* (Sean Hurley, HSE, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2008, text segment 292).

The HSE was acting on instruction from Government and bringing fairness and transparency and its data (from the Indecon Report and consultation) provided the evidence to support the Change.

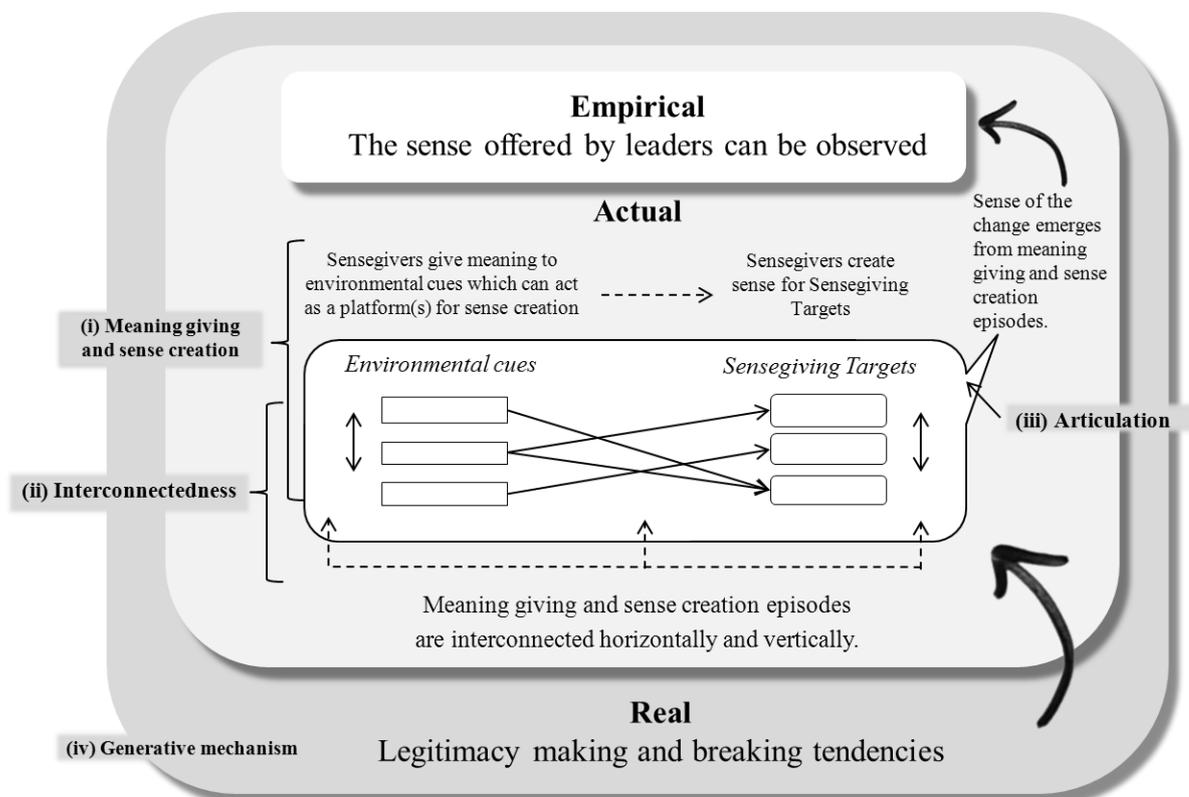
#### **8.4 Generative mechanism underpinning leader sensegiving**

Chapter 7 presented a model to explain the processes which occur when leaders give sense to a strategic change in a multi-leader context. These processes involve interconnected meaning giving, sense creation, and articulation which centre around common sensegiving targets. This chapter explored what motivates leaders to give sense in this way to uncover the tendencies of generative mechanism which underpins this behaviour.

Using retroductive reasoning this study explored in a creative fashion, unencumbered by formal reasoning, what would need to occur in order for these processes to be activated. In the language of critical realism, it sought to identify the intransitive mechanisms in the real world whose tendencies were causing these processes to be activated in the actual domain and be visible in the empirical domain. Sensebreaking and sensemanipulation were considered but dismissed as potential generative mechanisms as they were considered sensegiving behaviours, rather than separate behaviours. It would have been a tautology to suggest that sensegiving was a generative mechanism underpinning sensegiving.

The proposition that sensebreaking is concerned with making the accounts held and created by others “either illegitimate or incongruent” (Lawrence and Maitlis, 2014: p. 11) was explored. In consultation with the literature on discursive legitimation and the study’s findings, evidence emerged, and examples were presented, to suggest that a generative mechanism underpinning the sensegiving behaviour identified in this study is the motivation of participants to make and break legitimacy. It is this study’s contention that the activation of this intransitive generative mechanism, identified as (iv) on Figure 8-1, creates the conditions for multiple leaders to give sense to the same strategic change. They do this through meaning giving, sense creation and articulation, which leads to sense offering. This completes the proposed model of leader sensegiving in a multiple leader context in relation to the same strategic change

Figure 8-1: Complete model of how leaders give sense to the same strategic change in a multi-leader context.



## 8.5 Contribution

This study has made a number of notable contributions to methodology and method, theory and practice (Table 8-3).

*Table 8-3: Summary contribution*

	<b>Confirmed or replicated</b>	<b>Identified, developed or added to</b>	<b>Contributed to new knowledge</b>
Methodology and Method	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confirmed the use of Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation in sensegiving research.</li> <li>2. Confirmed the complexity of identifying Warrants on a consistent basis.</li> <li>3. Confirmed the presence of sensegiving, sensebreaking and sensemanipulation in organisational change.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identified the limitations of only including frames with practical arguments (Toumlin, 1958) in sensegiving data analysis.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Effectively applied a critical realist worldview in sensegiving research.</li> <li>2. Developed a novel and effective way to unpack sensegiving behaviour using key elements of Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation and Aristotle's three rhetorical appeals.</li> </ol>
Theory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confirmed the presence of Corvellec &amp; Risberg's (2007) mise-ens-sens process.</li> <li>2. Confirmed the presence of the dimensions of Lawrence &amp; Maitlis's (2014) theory of sensebreaking.</li> <li>3. Identified issues associated with only focusing on successful sensebreaking and sensemanipulation.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Added to theories of sensegiving (Corvellec &amp; Risberg, 2007) and sensebreaking (Lawrence &amp; Maitlis, 2014).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identified the presence and role of Sensegiving Targets in leader sensegiving in a multi-leader context.</li> <li>2. Identified the interconnectedness of meaning giving and sense creation and patterns underpinning this behaviour.</li> <li>3. Identified legitimacy making and breaking as tendencies of a generative mechanism which underpin the type of sensegiving investigated.</li> </ol>
Practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confirmed the role of sensegiving when multiple leaders compete to have their position in relation to a strategic change prevail.</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provided a model to enable practitioners to identify the sensegiving strategies proponents and opponents are likely to use during strategic change.</li> </ol>

### 8.5.1 Contribution to methodology and method

Unusually for sensegiving research, this study adopted a critical realist worldview. It argued that the concept of sensegiving is built on the premise that sensemakers choose what to do with sense that is offered by sensegivers. Because this choice exists, sense can exist independently of the sensemaker and be available for them to accept, reject, modify or ignore. A social constructionist worldview would be inadequate to account for this perspective.

Because the study investigated a relatively unexplored type of sensegiving behaviour, there was little guidance from the literature on how to analyse the data set. Three exploratory studies were undertaken to develop a method of coding data, the results of which are noteworthy. The first study highlighted the limitations of framing analysis and the second study identified why focusing on frames which make claims would impose unjustifiable boundaries. These two exploratory studies served a significant function to highlight that just because we are aware of sensegiving behaviours does not mean we are aware of *all* sensegiving behaviours. Excluding behaviours from investigation because they do not meet the characteristics of what is presumed to be sensegiving behaviours, such as frames or Claims with Grounds, runs the risk of excluding behaviours which may have a sensegiving function we are not yet aware of and may in fact not be visible. From the third study, a novel method that can take account of all text segments and not just those which are presumed to have a sensegiving function was developed and tested. This protocol is underpinned by Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation and Aristotle's three rhetorical appeals (logos, ethos and pathos). If this study had adopted an exclusionary approach, it would not have made the discovery it did in relation to the processes and generative mechanisms underpinning leader sensegiving.

Combined with its critical realist worldview, this method enabled the exploration of the "deep structures" of "communicative actions" (Heracleous and Barrett, 2001: p. 775) and the discovery of insights into how leaders give sense.

## 8.5.2 Contribution to theory

The study's findings confirm the presence of sensegiving, sensebreaking and sensemanipulation in organisational change. It confirmed the presence of Corvellec and Risberg's (2007) *mise-en-sens* process and added to this theory. It also confirmed the presence of dimensions of Lawrence and Maitlis's (2014) theory of sensebreaking. It highlighted that focusing only on successful sensebreaking and sensemanipulation can result in overlooking attempts at these behaviours which may not achieve their objective but may still have a sensegiving function.

Using the novel method discussed in the previous section, all text segments in the data set were coded, and analysed following Miles and Huberman (1994). After identifying the central role of Sensegiving Targets, it investigated the relationships between the speaker groups and these targets. In so doing it discovered that when leaders attempt to give sense to the same strategic change, this sense emerges from an on-going pattern of interconnected meaning giving, sense creation and articulation episodes which revolve around common the Sensegiving Targets. Five patterns of behaviour were identified which are associated with these meaning giving and sense creation episodes.

Deep exploration of these processes revealed that a generative mechanism underpinning these behaviours is legitimacy making and breaking. Proponents and opponents directed a considerable proportion of their text segments towards generating legitimacy for the sense they were attempting to create and offer and illegitimacy for the sense that their opponents were attempting to create and offer. Opponents were observed to concentrate a great deal of their attention on generating legitimacy for their own identity and illegitimacy for that of their proponents. The presence of these mechanisms provides a plausible explanation of what was observed in the actual domain of reality. It is proposed that these intransitive mechanisms exist in leader sensegiving in a multi-leader context regardless of the transitive mechanisms observed in the actual and empirical domains. These findings have been presented in a model, which for the first time provides theoretically and operationally sound insights into this aspect of sensegiving.

### **8.5.3 Contribution to practice**

The study has confirmed the role of sensegiving when leaders compete to have their sense of a strategic change prevail. It also adds to the literature on leadership practice during strategic change by highlighting that meaning giving and sense creation are complex interconnected processes that revolve around Sensegiving Targets. This process unfolds and is moulded by the social context. It is iterative. It cannot come about through one way communications, regardless of how relentless, which some process theories of organisational change suggest (e.g. Kotter, 1995). The model presented provides a framework to enable practitioners to unravel this complexity.

This framework has application in many practice environments relevant to both leaders and managers where they are engaged in face to face negotiation with one or more actors. Its application is not just confined to environments experiencing strategic change. It has the potential to enable practitioners identify the processes underpinning efforts by others to give sense to past events, a proposal, a change, a course of action or potential outcome.

It will enable them identify how others give meaning to environmental cues, such as past events or behaviours, or a finding, and from this meaning create sense for related Sensegiving Targets and from these processes sense emerges.

By identifying the environmental cues and the Sensegiving Targets used during negotiations, practitioners will be in a position to counter them with alternative meaning and sense and in so doing dilute or neutralise their potential persuasive appeal and also challenge questionable meaning and sense.

It also provides practitioners with a model to enable them reflect on their own sensegiving behaviour by exploring their own meaning giving and sense creation strategies.

At a more abstract level the framework has the potential to enable practitioners identify the legitimising and delegitimising strategies used by actors and develop tactic to address and counter them.

## **8.6 Limitations of this study**

Every academic endeavour has its limitations. Identifying these limitations is important to enable the findings to be contextualised so that the limitations may be addressed if the endeavour is being built upon. This study's limitations are outlined below.

1. The study concentrated on one strategic change by leaders in a public sector industry (health and social care). Concentration on one change in a specific industry within the public sector limits its generalisability to other contexts.
2. Only one data source was used. While this was a very rich source and consisted of naturally occurring data, reliance on this single source removed the opportunity to test and verify the reliability of these findings with other data sets.
3. No account was not taken of the other sensegiving efforts that speakers were engaged in outside the context of the Committee meetings such as through the media, lobbying efforts, meetings or written communications to enable comparison.
4. Participants in the meeting were not interviewed to gain deeper insights into what they had intended to achieve from their sensegiving efforts at whom these efforts were directed at and whether they considered them successful.
5. The speaker groups may have had priorities and objectives for the meetings other than giving sense to the strategic change. For example as representatives of the proponent and public servants, the HSE executives may have had the objective of avoiding personal conflict which may have tempered their sensegiving behaviours. The Politicians may have had the objective of being as vocal as possible to attract the attention of their constituents without leaving them exposed to criticism from their political colleagues. The IPU may have wanted to use the opportunity to make provocative statements to attract headlines in the media.
6. The speakers were divided into three groups and further sub-divided into proponents and opponents. As a result, the number of speakers represented in each group varied significantly from 39 in the Politicians Group to 6 in the

HSE Group. A more evenly balanced representation of speakers in the various groups would have been preferable.

7. Organising the text segments of individuals into three speaker groups and extrapolating findings these at group level (HSE, IPU and Politicians) overlooked dimensions, such as position and power of the individuals which may have impacted on their behaviours. Organising the data in this fashion was an inelegant approach but necessary to enable the data to be organised in a workable framework.
8. While all of the participants in the meetings were leaders in their fields, they occupied different levels. This may have been a factor influencing their sensegiving approach.
9. As the objective of the study was to go beyond the ‘what’ of sensegiving to the ‘how’, and in the absence of agreed methods to achieve this level of discovery, a novel research method was developed. This novel approach, while transparent and systematic, has by definition no comparators and so requires further testing to confirm its robustness.
10. The author of this study was a consultant to the CEO of one of the proponent organisations. While methods were adopted to control biases that may have occurred as a result of this association, such as dual coding of the data set and the development of a rigorous and transparent data analysis protocol, biases may not have been completely eliminated.

## **8.7 Future research**

The study concentrated on multiple leader sensegiving in a specific environment. It developed a novel research method so as to take account of the complete data set. Testing this model requires its application in different environments where naturally occurring data is available. This could involve applying the model using data from other Government committees dealing with different industries and issues.

The study identified differences in argument and rhetorical strategies used by proponents and opponents. These patterns were not explored in detail as the decision was made to concentrate on the relationship between the speaker groups and the Sensegiving Targets. These relationships were believed to offer a more fertile route

to deeper exploration of the data set and access to the generative mechanisms. Investigation of the argument and rhetorical strategies of sensegivers in more detail, using a more homogenous group of actors, could build on the model presented here.

The discovery of common Sensegiving Targets among proponents and opponents, and the model that conceptualises them as a focal point for interconnected meaning giving and sense creation episodes is original. This model requires further testing in different environments on a larger scale. While access to naturally occurring leader sensegiving in the private sector is problematic, testing this model in a private sector context could yield valuable comparison data.

During this study the role of power and politics was considered as a variable as it is a dimension of sensemaking and sensegiving research which has attracted interest. Calls for more attention to be given to these aspects have gone largely unheeded. Following initial consideration of these important variables they were not explored in detail as the role of power and politics in multiple leader sensegiving was found to be sufficiently complex to warrant a separate study. In this context investigating the strategies of individual leaders, as opposed to rolling up the behaviour of individuals to represent the behaviour of groups, would enable the role of power and politics on sensegiving behaviours to be observed in more detail.

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## Appendix 1 – Search results

Results of searches of Academic Search Complete (EBSCO) for articles published in scholarly journals in English which had the following words in their titles strategic change, strategy, change, data, knowledge, information, communication, sensemaking or sensegiving.

Search No	Search string	Filter	Result
1	strategic change	all text	27955
2	strategic change	title	870
3	strategic change	subject	149
4	strategic change	subject	
		scholarly journal	113

Given the volume of results produced from Searches 1-2 they were deemed too general to be practical. The search was narrowed for Searches 3 and 4 which produced 149 and 113 results respectively. The titles (and in some instances abstracts, if the title did not provide sufficient insight into the nature of the article) of the 113 articles were reviewed and 19 articles were identified based on their considered potential to assist in meeting the scoping study's objectives.

Articles identified from filtering the results of Search 4	
No	Details
1	Sonenshein, S. (2010) We're changing—Or are we? Untangling the role of progressive, regressive, and stability narratives during strategic change implementation. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> , 53(3), 477-512.
2	Jansen, K. J. (2004) From Persistence to Pursuit: A Longitudinal Examination of Momentum During the Early Stages of Strategic Change. <i>Organization Science</i> . 15(3), 276-294.
3	Rouleau, L. (2005) Micro-practices of strategic sensemaking and sensegiving: How middle managers interpret and sell change every day. <i>Journal of Management Studies</i> . 42(7), 1413-1441.
4	Goll, I., Johnson, N., and Rasheed, A. A. (2007) Knowledge capability, strategic change, & firm performance: The moderating role of the environment. <i>Management Decision</i> . 45(2), 161-179.
5	Nag, R., Corley, K. G., & Gioia, D. A. (2007) The intersection of organizational identity, knowledge, and practice: Attempting strategic change via knowledge grafting. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> . 50(4), 821-847.
6	Lettice, F., & Brayshaw, K. (2007) Using graphical techniques to communicate strategy: An exploratory study. <i>Strategic Change</i> . 16(4), 145-159.

7	Fiss, P. C., & Zajac, E. J. (2006) The Symbolic Management of Strategic Change: Sensegiving via Framing and Decoupling. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> . 49(6), 1173-1193.
8	Balogun, J., & Johnson, G. (2005) From Intended Strategies to Unintended Outcomes: The Impact of Change Recipient Sensemaking. <i>Organization Studies</i> . 26(11), 1573-1601.
9	Bruch, H., Gerber, P., & Maier, V. (2005) Strategic Change Decisions: Doing the Right Change Right. <i>Journal of Change Management</i> . 5(1), 97-107.
10	del Val, M., & Fuentes, C. (2003) Resistance to change: A literature review and empirical study. <i>Management Decision</i> . 41(2), 148-155.
11	Higgins, J. M., & McAllaster, C. (2004) If You Want Strategic Change, Don't Forget to Change Your Cultural Artifacts. <i>Journal of Change Management</i> . 4(1), 63-73.
12	Ericson, T. (2001) Sensemaking in organisations—towards a conceptual framework for understanding strategic change. <i>Scandinavian Journal of Management</i> . 17(1), 109-131.
13	Barr, P. S. (1998). Adapting to unfamiliar environmental events: A look at the evolution of interpretation and its role in strategic change. <i>Organization Science</i> , 9(6), 644-669.
14	Huff, A. S. and C. Schwenk. 'Bias and sense making in good times and bad'. In A. S. Huff(ed.), <i>Mapping Strategic Thought</i> , Wiley, Chichester, 1990, pp. 89-108.
15	Rajagopalan, N., & Spreitzer, G. M. (1997) Toward a theory of strategic change: A multi-lens perspective and integrative framework. <i>Academy of Management Review</i> . 22(1), 48-79.
16	Gioia, D. A., & Thomas, J. B. (1996) Institutional identity, image, and issue interpretation: Sensemaking during strategic change in academia. <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i> . 41(3), 370-403.
17	Gioia, D. A., Thomas, J. B., Clark, S. M., & Chittipeddi, K. (1994) Symbolism and strategic change in academia: The dynamics of sensemaking and influence. <i>Organization Science</i> . 5(3), 363-383.
18	Smith, C. G., & Vecchio, R. P. (1993) Organizational culture and strategic management: Issues in the management of strategic change. <i>Journal of Managerial Issues</i> . 5(1), 53-70.
19	Thomas, J. B., Clark, S. M., & Gioia, D. A. (1993) Strategic sensemaking and organizational performance: Linkages among scanning, interpretation, action, and outcomes. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> . 36(2), 239-270.

Search No	Search string	Filter	Result
5	Strategic change Data	Title Title	1

Search 5 produced an irrelevant press release.

Search No	Search string	Filter	Result
6	Strategic change Organis(z)ation	Title Title scholarly journal	14

Search 6 produced 14 articles four of which were identified for further review. Many of the results of this search were book reviews.

Articles identified from filtering the results of Search 6	
No	Details
20	Sminia, H., & Van Nistelrooij, A. (2006) Strategic management and organization development: Planned change in a public sector organization. <i>Journal of Change Management</i> . 6(1), 99-113.
21	Hay, G. W. (2006) New Partners For Strategic Change and Organizational Transformation: The Combined Effects of Market Research and Organization Development. <i>Organization Development Journal</i> . 24(4), 55-61.
22	Hafsi, T., & Thomas, H. (2005) Strategic Management and Change in High Dependency Environments: The Case of a Philanthropic Organization. <i>Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary &amp; Nonprofit Organizations</i> , 16(4), 329-351.
23	Rowden, R. W. (2001) The Learning Organization and Strategic Change. <i>SAM Advanced Management Journal</i> (07497075), 66(3), 11.

Search No	Search string	Filter	Result
7	strategic change sensemaking	Title All text scholarly journal	26
8	strategic change sensemaking	Title no field selected scholarly journal	7
9	strategic change sensemaking	Title Title scholarly journal	5

Search 7 produced 26 articles seven of which were identified for further review. Search 8 produced Articles 1, 16, 17, 12, 23, 24 and 29. Search 9 gave 5 results which were articles 16, 17, 24 and 25 – one was a repeat.

<b>Articles identified from filtering the results of Search 7</b>	
	The results of this search also included Articles No 1, 5, 12, 13, 16, and 17 above.
No	Details
24	Chittipeddi K, Gioia DA. (1991) Sensemaking and Sensegiving in Strategic Change Initiation. <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> . 12(6):433-448.
25	Sonenshein S., (2009) Emergence of Ethical Issues During Strategic Change Implementation. <i>Organization Science</i> 20, 1, 223-239.
26	Gagnon, M. A., Jansen, K. J., & Michael, J. H. (2008) Employee Alignment with Strategic Change: A Study of Strategy-supportive Behavior among Blue-collar Employees. <i>Journal of Managerial Issues</i> . 20(4), 425-443.
27	Scroggins, W. A. (2006) Managing meaning for strategic change: The role of perception and meaning congruence. <i>Journal of Health &amp; Human Services Administration</i> . 29(1), 83-102.
28	Dunford, R., & Jones, D. (2000) Narrative in strategic change. <i>Human Relations</i> . 53(9), 1207-1226.
29	Schwenk, C. R. (1989) Linking cognitive organizational and political factors in explaining strategic change. <i>Journal of Management Studies</i> . 26(2), 177-187.
30	Hruska, D. D., Rasic, S. S., & Bakovic, T. T. (2010) Implementation of strategic change by belief-driven and action-driven processes. <i>Annals of DAAAM &amp; Proceedings</i> . 1077-1078.

Searches 10 and 11 combined the terms Strategic Change, Sensemaking and Data. Search 11 produced 3 articles: 16, 17 and 24. Search 12 involved replacing the word ‘data’ with ‘knowledge’ and produced 3 articles; 16, 17 and 24. Search 13 expanded the search to abstracts and identified two additional articles.

<b>Search No</b>	<b>Search string</b>	<b>Filter</b>	<b>Result</b>
10	Strategic change Sensemaking Data	title title no field selected scholarly journal	0
11	Strategic change Sensemaking Data	title title all text scholarly journal	3
12	Strategic change Sensemaking Knowledge	title title all text scholarly journal	3
13	Strategic change Sensemaking	abstract abstract	17

<b>Articles identified from filtering the results of Search 13</b>	
No	Details
31	Lines, R. (2007) Using Power to Install Strategy: The Relationships between Expert Power, Position Power, Influence Tactics and Implementation Success. <i>Journal of Change Management</i> . 7(2), 143-170.
32	Bartunek, J. M., Krim, R. M., Necochea, R., & Humphries, M. (1999). Sensemaking, sensegiving, and leadership in strategic organizational development. * In J. Wagner, J. Wagner (Eds.), <i>Advances in qualitative organization research</i> . Vol. 2 (pp. 36-71). US: Elsevier Science/JAI Press. * This did not meet the criteria of being in a scholarly journal as defined by the EBSCO data base but, based on the title, was included due to its potential relevance.

To establish whether a strategic literature review had been conducted in the research field Searches 14-25 were carried out. They did not produce any additional relevant articles.

<b>Search No</b>	<b>Search string</b>	<b>Filter</b>	<b>Result</b>
14	Sensemaking Systematic Literature Review	Title Abstract	
15	Strategic change Systematic Literature Review	Title Abstract	
16	Sensemaking Systematic Literature Review	All Text All Text	
17	Strategic change Systematic Literature Review	All Text All Text	
18	Systematic Literature Review Gioia	Title All Text	
19	Systematic Literature Review Maitlis	Title All Text	
20	Systematic Literature Review Obstfeld	Title All Text	

21	Systematic Literature Review Thomas	Title All Text	
22	Systematic Literature Review Sutcliffe	Title All Text	
23	Systematic Literature Review Weick	Title All Text	
24	Systematic Literature Review Clark	Title All Text	
25	Systematic Literature Review Chittipeddi	Title	

## Appendix 2 – Results of Step 3 of systematic literature search

To ensure that the key articles by these scholars were captured, searches EBSCO and ISI Web of Knowledge databases were carried out using the surnames and initials of these scholars. This search produced the following additional articles.

No	Details
	Chittipeddi K
	No additional articles of relevance identified
	Clark SM
39	Clark, S. (2000) Top management team sensemaking, sensegiving, and cognitive change during strategic alliance formation. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International</i> . Section A, 61.
	Gioia D
40	Gioia, D. A. (1989) Self-serving bias as a self-sensemaking strategy: Explicit vs. tacit impression management. In R. A. Giacalone, P. Rosenfeld, R. A.
	Maitlis, S.
41	Maitlis, S. (2004) Taking it from the Top: How CEOs Influence (and Fail to Influence) their Boards. <i>Organization Studies</i> (01708406), 25(8), 1275-1311.
	Sutcliffe KM
42	Sutcliffe, K. M., & Huber, G. P. (1998) Firm and industry as determinants of executive perceptions of the environment. <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> . 19(8), 793.
43	Sutcliffe, K. M. (2005) Information handling challenges in complex systems. <i>International Public Management Journal</i> . 8(3), 417-424. R
44	Sutcliffe, K. M., & Weber, K. (2003) The High Cost of Accurate Knowledge. <i>Harvard Business Review</i> . 81(5), 74-82. (Not scholarly journal – did not meet criteria.)
45	Sutcliffe, K. M., (1994) What executives notice: accurate perceptions in top management teams. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> . 37(5), 1360-1378.
	Thomas JB
46	Thomas, J. B., Gioia, D. A., & Ketchen, D. r. (1997) Strategic Sense-Making: Learning through Scanning, Interpretation, Action, and Performance. In J. P. Walsh, A. S. Huff (Eds.), <i>Organizational learning and strategic management</i> (pp. 299-329). Advances in Strategic Management, vol. 14.
47	Thomas, J. B., Shankster, L. J., & Mathieu, J. E. (1994) Antecedents to organisational issue interpretation: The roles of single level, cross level, and content cues. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> . 37(5), 1252-1284.
	Weick KE
48	Weick, K. E. (2006) Faith, Evidence, and Action: Better Guesses in an Unknowable World. <i>Organization Studies</i> . 27(11), 1723-1736.

49	Weick, K. (Ed.). (2009) <i>Making sense of the organization: The impermanent organization</i> . Vol 2. New York, NY US: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
50	Weick, K. E. (2002) Leadership When Events Don't Play by the Rules. <i>Reflections</i> . 4(1), 30-32.
51	Weick, K. E. (1995) <i>Sensemaking in Organizations</i> . Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE Publications Inc.
	Additional articles identified
52	Meyer, A. D., Brooks, G. R., & Goes, J. B. (1990) Environmental jolts and industry revolutions: Organizational responses to strategic change. <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> . 11, 93-110.
53	Taylor, J.R. & Lerner, L. (1996) Making sense of sensemaking: How managers construct their organization. <i>Studies in Cultures, Organizations and Societies</i> . 2, 257-86.
54	Taylor, Steven S.1. (1999) Making sense of revolutionary change: differences in members' stories, <i>Journal of Organizational Change Management</i> . 12(6) 524-539.
55	Armenakis, A. A. and Bedeian, A. G., (1999) Organizational change: a review of theory and research in the 1990s, <i>Journal of Management</i> . 25, 293-315.
56	Watson, T J (1995) Rhetoric, discourse and argument in organizational sense making; a reflexive tale. <i>Organization Studies</i> . 15(5), 805-821.
57	Romanelli, E. and Tushman, M. (1994) Organizational transformation as punctuated equilibrium: an empirical test. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> . 37, 1141-66.
58	Krisco, K.H. (1997) <i>Leadership and the Art of Conversation: Conversation as a Management</i> . Prima Publishing, Rocklin, CA.
59	Suchman, Mark C (1995) Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches. <i>Academy of Management Review</i> . 20: 571-610.
60	Fairhurst, G.T. and Sarr, R.A. (1996) <i>The Art of Framing: Managing the Language of Leadership</i> . Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

### Appendix 3 – Result of search string clustering

#### Search Term 1: CEO

ORIGINAL	CLUSTERED
Leader	<b>leader</b>
Leaders	

Chief Executive Officers	<b>chief executive</b>
Chief executive	

CEO	<b>CEO</b>
President	<b>president</b>
Top Managers	<b>top manager</b>
Top Team	<b>top team</b>
Top management team	<b>top management team</b>
TMT	<b>TMT</b>
Senior management team	<b>senior management team</b>
SMT	<b>SMT</b>
Leading change	<b>change leaders</b>
Leadership team	<b>leadership team</b>
Change agents	<b>change agents</b>
Managing director	<b>managing director</b>
MD	<b>MD</b>
Corporate apex	<b>corporate apex</b>
Upper echelons	<b>upper echelon</b>
c level	<b>c level</b>
c-level	<b>c-level</b>
c suite	<b>c suite</b>
Corporate team	<b>corporate team</b>
Corporate leader	<b>corporate leader</b>
Schemas	<b>schema</b>
Bracketing	<b>bracketing</b>
Knowledge grafting	<b>knowledge grafting</b>
Legitimize	<b>Legitimis(z)e</b>
Influence tactics	<b>influence tactics</b>
Persuasion	<b>persuasion</b>

Search Term 2: Sensegiving

**ORIGINAL**

**CLUSTERED**

Impression management	<b>impression</b>
Managing impressions	

Meaning materialization	<b>meaning</b>
Meaning construction	
Management of meaning	
Subversive meaning	
Handed down meaning	
Transformational meaning	

Narrative(s)	<b>narrative</b>
Progressive, stability & managerial narrative(s)	

Strategic issues management	<b>issues</b>
Issues management & diagnosis	
Strategic issues diagnosis	
Issues selling	
Tacit/rational knowledge	

Sensebreaking	<b>sensebreaking</b>
	<b>sense-breaking</b>
	<b>sense breaking</b>

Sensegiver	<b>sensegiver</b>
	<b>sense giver</b>
	<b>sense-giver</b>

Shaping reality	<b>shaping reality</b>
Creating order	<b>creating order</b>
Construction of events	<b>construction of events</b>
Discourse	<b>discourse</b>
Frame/framing	<b>framing</b>
Schemas	<b>schema</b>
Bracketing	<b>bracketing</b>
Knowledge grafting	<b>knowledge grafting</b>
Legitimize	<b>Legitimis(z)e</b>
Influence tactics	<b>influence tactics</b>
Persuasion	<b>persuasion</b>

**Search Term 2: Sensemaking**

**ORIGINAL**

**CLUSTERED**

Environmental interpretation	<b>interpretation</b>
Managerial interpretation	
Strategic interpretations	
Conflicting interpretations	
Issues interpretation	
Strategic issues interpretation	

Environmental perceptions	<b>perceptions</b>
Misperceptions / Flawed Perceptions	

Sensemakers	<b>sensemaker</b>
	<b>sense maker</b>
	<b>sense-maker</b>

Reconstruction	<b>reconstruction</b>
Organizational understandings	<b>organizational understanding</b>
Collective expectations	<b>collective expectations</b>
Collective meaning	<b>collective meaning</b>

Make sense	<b>make sense</b>
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**Search Term 3: Organisational Change**

**ORIGINAL**

**CLUSTERED**

Strategic Change	<b>strategic</b>
Strategic Management	
Strategic planning	
Strategy execution	
Strategic decision making	
Strategic organizational development	

Radical change	<b>change</b>
Dramatic change	
Cultural change	
Large-scale change	
Environmental change	
Discontinues change	
Major change	
Transformational change	
Political change	

Momentum	<b>momentum</b>
Resistant	<b>resistance</b>
Conflict	<b>conflict</b>
Transformation	<b>transformation</b>
Restructuring	<b>restructuring</b>
Reorganisation	<b>reorganisation</b>
Unfamiliar environmental events	<b>unfamiliar</b>
Unsettled	<b>unsettled</b>
Troublesome situation	<b>troublesome</b>
Unexpected	<b>unexpected</b>
New direction	<b>new direction</b>
Organizational adaptation	<b>adaptation</b>

Instability	<b>instability</b>
	<b>unstable</b>

Ambiguity	<b>ambiguity</b>
	<b>ambiguous</b>

Uncertainty	<b>uncertainty</b>
	<b>uncertain</b>

#### **Appendix 4 – Subject areas excluded from searches**

MANAGEMENT (53)

BUSINESS (36)

EDUCATION & EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH (25)

POLITICAL SCIENCE (15)

HEALTH CARE SCIENCES & SERVICES (11)

EDUCATION, SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES (10)

SOCIAL SCIENCES, INTERDISCIPLINARY (9)

PSYCHOLOGY, APPLIED (8)

PUBLIC, ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (8)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (7)

**MEDICINE, GENERAL & INTERNAL (7)**

SOCIOLOGY (7)

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES (6)**

NURSING (6)

PSYCHOLOGY, MULTIDISCIPLINARY (6)

ETHICS (5)

PSYCHOLOGY, CLINICAL (5)

**BIOCHEMISTRY & MOLECULAR BIOLOGY (4)**

HISTORY (4)

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (4)

PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIAL (4)

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (4)

RELIGION (4)

ANTHROPOLOGY (3)

**AREA STUDIES (3)**

COMMUNICATION (3)

**ENGINEERING, MULTIDISCIPLINARY (3)**

**ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES (3)**

HEALTH POLICY & SERVICES (3)

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS & LABOR (3)

INFORMATION SCIENCE & LIBRARY SCIENCE (3)

**PHARMACOLOGY & PHARMACY (3)**

SOCIAL WORK (3)  
**CHEMISTRY, PHYSICAL (2)**  
ECONOMICS (2)  
ETHNIC STUDIES (2)  
GEOGRAPHY (2)  
HISTORY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (2)  
LAW (2)  
**PEDIATRICS (2)**  
**PHYSICS, APPLIED (2)**  
PSYCHIATRY (2)  
SOCIAL ISSUES (2)  
**SURGERY (2)**  
URBAN STUDIES (2)  
**VIROLOGY (2)**  
WATER RESOURCES (2)  
AGRICULTURE, MULTIDISCIPLINARY (1)  
ARCHITECTURE (1)  
**BIOCHEMICAL RESEARCH METHODS (1)**  
**BIOPHYSICS (1)**  
**BIOTECHNOLOGY & APPLIED MICROBIOLOGY (1)**  
**CELL BIOLOGY (1)**  
**CHEMISTRY, ANALYTICAL (1)**  
**CHEMISTRY, APPLIED (1)**  
COMPUTER SCIENCE, INFORMATION SYSTEMS (1)  
CONSTRUCTION & BUILDING TECHNOLOGY (1)  
CRITICAL CARE MEDICINE (1)  
ENERGY & FUELS (1)  
**ENGINEERING, BIOMEDICAL (1)**  
**ENGINEERING, CHEMICAL (1)**  
**ENGINEERING, CIVIL (1)**  
**ENGINEERING, ELECTRICAL & ELECTRONIC (1)**  
**ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL (1)**  
**ENGINEERING, INDUSTRIAL (1)**  
FORESTRY (1)  
**GEOSCIENCES, MULTIDISCIPLINARY (1)**  
HOSPITALITY, LEISURE, SPORT & TOURISM (1)

HUMANITIES, MULTIDISCIPLINARY (1)  
LITERATURE (1)  
LITERATURE, ROMANCE (1)  
**MATERIALS SCIENCE, MULTIDISCIPLINARY (1)**  
**MEDICAL INFORMATICS (1)**  
**MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGY (1)**  
**MEDICINE, RESEARCH & EXPERIMENTAL (1)**  
METEOROLOGY & ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES (1)  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES (1)  
**NEUROSCIENCES (1)**  
NUCLEAR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (1)  
**NUTRITION & DIETETICS (1)**  
**OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY (1)**  
**ONCOLOGY (1)**  
**OPHTHALMOLOGY (1)**  
**PATHOLOGY (1)**  
PHILOSOPHY (1)  
**PHYSICS, CONDENSED MATTER (1)**  
**PHYSICS, MULTIDISCIPLINARY (1)**  
**PHYSIOLOGY (1)**  
**PLANT SCIENCES (1)**  
PSYCHOLOGY (1)  
PSYCHOLOGY, PSYCHOANALYSIS (1)  
REHABILITATION (1)  
**RESPIRATORY SYSTEM (1)**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES, BIOMEDICAL (1)**  
STATISTICS & PROBABILITY (1)  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE (1)  
TRANSPORTATION (1)  
TRANSPORTATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (1)  
**UROLOGY & NEPHROLOGY (1)**

## **Appendix 5 – Inclusion – Exclusion Criteria 2 (IE2)**

Articles based on empirical data and/or theory exploration/building which provide insights into leaders and/or manager sensegiving and meaning making in environments experiencing strategic or major operational change.

Seminal articles by recognised scholars in the field.

Articles concerning sensegiving and meaning making in environments that could lead to strategic change such as mergers, spins off, major external market changes, reorganisation of services and new ventures, transformation, restructuring, reorganisation, innovation, unexpected events, environmental jolts, unstable, ambiguous, or uncertain environments.

Articles which provide background on developments in the sensemaking and sensegiving fields which I believed would be helpful in providing context for the research question and background on research methods and methodology.

Articles concerning interpretation, issues selling, meaning construction, meaning giving, narrative or dialogue, discourse, framing, bracketing, schema, knowledge grafting, influencing, perception or persuasion.

## Appendix 6 – Sensegiving studies

No	Study	Data source	Direction	Environment	Focus of study	Relevant contribution	Operational	Strategic	Strategic change environment
1	Sonenshein (2010)	Case study	Manager to employees	Large US retailer rebrands selection of stores	How managers' and employees' meaning constructions differ.	Managers tell strategically ambiguous, interwoven narratives about how an organisation changes and how it remains the same. Employees embellish these narratives to make sense of and narrate responses to change; resisting, championing, and accepting.	Y		N
2	Vaara & Monin (2010)	Multi-method case study	Leaders of two organisations to internal and external stakeholders	Post-merger of two French organisations which failed	Discursive strategies used to establish and resist legitimacy including sensegiving and sensehiding.	Sensegiving and sensehiding are powerful mechanisms through which discourse impacts on organisational action. In this case the discourses created unrealistic expectations and illusionary ideas.		Y	Y
3	Foldy, Goldman & Ospina (2008)	20 organisations from the Ford Foundation Leadership for a changing World Programme 2001	Organisation (incl. leaders) to key stakeholders; internal and external	Social change organisations	Cognitive shifts as a construct for analysing sensegiving as a leadership task.	Focuses on the work of leadership as sensegiving which can bring overlooked areas of sensegiving to light. Suggests an approach to operationalise sensegiving.	Y		N

No	Study	Data source	Direction	Environment	Focus of study	Relevant contribution	Operational	Strategic	Strategic change environment
4	Vlaar, van Fenema and Tiwari (2008)	Case study	Onsite and offsite team members	Distributed workers in USA and India	How members of distributed teams develop advanced understandings.	Knowledge and experience asymmetries and task and requirements characteristics constitute important sources for sensegiving, sensedemanding, and sensebreaking.	Y		N
5	Lines (2007)	Case study - interviews with 250 managers	Change agents to managers	Large divisionalised telecommunication company (17,000 employees).	The relationship between a change agent's power and their use of influence tactics	Change agents with high levels of expert power are more likely to use participation and sensegiving than change agents with low levels of expert power. Change agents with a high amount of position power are more successful at implementing change than change agents with low amounts of position power.		Y	N
6	Corvellec & Risberg (2007)	28 interviews with cross section of actors involved in wind farm development in Sweden.	Developers to external stakeholders	Wind farm development by different organisations	How wind farm developers give meaning during the permit procedure.	Proposes mise-en-sens, a process similar to sensegiving, which focuses on stage setting and direction-providing; a more nuanced position than the one which sees sense as something that can be given others.	Y		N

No	Study	Data source	Direction	Environment	Focus of study	Relevant contribution	Operational	Strategic	Strategic change environment
7	Maitlis & Lawrence (2007)	Longitudinal study of meetings, rehearsals, tours and documentary analysis 3 organisations	Leaders to internal stakeholders to Leaders	27 issues across three British symphony orchestras	Identifies the triggers and enablers of sensegiving	Generally, sense giving is triggered by the perception or anticipation of a gap in organizational sensemaking processes.	y		N
8	Sonenshein (2006)	Experimental scenario method	Executives to stakeholders	Experimental using MBA students	How and when individual use language to shape the meaning of issues	Individuals give sense to issues not only through the use of tactics such as expressing an opinion, but also through the specific language contained within those opinions.		Y	N
9	Fiss & Zajac (2006)	Review of annual reports of 112 German firms	Corporations to external stakeholders.	The shift in orientation of the firms to shareholder value during 1990-2000	How organisations present strategic change to key stakeholders and the factors which determine the choice of different framing approaches.	The framing of actions by organisations is closer to a negotiated outcome, with the influence of different stakeholder groups carrying significant weight.		Y	N

No	Study	Data source	Direction	Environment	Focus of study	Relevant contribution	Operational	Strategic	Strategic change environment
10	Ravasi & Schultz (2006)	Longitudinal Case study	Senior managers to internal audiences and dealer network	Response to identity-threatening environmental changes.	Use of sensemaking and sensegiving to identify the firms true identity and relay to stakeholders	Points to the central role organisational culture plays in informing and supporting sensemaking and sensegiving processes which are triggered by external changes.		y	N
11	Maitlis (2005)	Case study	Leaders and stakeholders	Three British symphony orchestras	To investigate the social process of sensemaking among large groups of diversified stakeholders	Typology of sensemaking processes; guided, fragmented, restricted and minimal. Introduces dimension of animation and control to describe organisational sensemaking		Y	N
12	Scroggins (2005)	Case study	Top administrators to organisational members	US hospital	Evaluates the efforts and methods used to manage meaning of organisational phenomena and their effectiveness in creating a system of shared meaning.	Managers can create realities that facilitate the implementation of strategy and strategic change at all levels of the organization by changing organisational members' schemas and cognitions through action, discourse and the creation of organizational artefacts.		Y	N

No	Study	Data source	Direction	Environment	Focus of study	Relevant contribution	Operational	Strategic	Strategic change environment
13	Snell (2002)	Case study	Top down sensegiving	Hong Kong based utility company (2,200 staff) introducing the ideal of Learning Organisations (LO)	Use of sensegiving to legitimise change programmes under the learning organisation banner	Highlights that sensegiving by a dominant coalition can become a trap by ignoring pockets of resistance.			
14	Venard (2001)	Case study	Leaders to students	Establishment of a management training centre in Vietnam with French input.	The diffusion of ideology to control management education	Introduces sensegiving and sensemanipulation as types of senseforcing		Y	
15	Ericson (2001)	case study	Sensegiving by top management and sensemaking at middle management	Strategic change process (1993-'97) at a large university hospital	Following sensegiving by the hospital manager, different actors made sense differently.	Uses a sensemaking lens to develop a framework to understand strategic change processes , which draws on bracketing and the cognitive profiles of the participants explain why they make sense differently.		Y	N

No	Study	Data source	Direction	Environment	Focus of study	Relevant contribution	Operational	Strategic	Strategic change environment
16	Pratt (2000)	Ethnographic study of Amy distributors	Leaders to distributors	Managing distributors' identification with the company	The use of sensebreaking and sensegiving practices to align individual and organisational values.	When both sensebreaking (breaks down meaning) and sensegiving (provides meaning) practices are successful members positively identify with the organisation. When either fails member identify, dis-identify or experience ambivalent identification.	y		N
17	Bartunek, Krim, Necochea, & Humphries (1999)	Case study	A senior manager to leaders and other managers	Introduction of state of the art management techniques in City of Boston	Sensegiving and sensemaking by a change programme leader	Leaders may use four general approaches to present persuasive appeals: logical and reason, sanctions and rewards, appeals to values and norms, and emphasis on credibility of sender. Past results of change will likely modify a leader's understanding of later change.		y	N
18	Gioia & Chittipeddi (1991)	Ethnographic study in Public University	Leader to senior managers	New President initiating strategic change	Develops a new framework for understanding the distinctive character of the beginning stages of strategic change and labels four phases: envisioning, signalling, re-visioning, and energizing.	Suggests that the CEO's primary role in instigating the strategic change process might best be understood in terms of the emergent concepts of 'sensemaking' and 'sensegiving'.		Y	N

## **Appendix 7 - Background on the role of Government Committees**

The Oireachtas is Ireland's legislature. It consists of the President of Ireland and two Houses: Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann. Dáil Éireann is the lower House and the dominant House. It consists of TDs (Deputies and Ministers) who are directly elected by those eligible to vote. Subject to the Constitution, this House can pass legislation. Seanad Éireann is the upper House and consists of Senators selected through various other means. Seanad Éireann can debate and suggest amendments to legislation proposed by Dáil Éireann but does not have the power to veto legislation, just delay its passing.

The work of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann is supported by Joint and Select Committees. Their primary role is to consider the on-going work of Government departments. Each House (Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann) of the Oireachtas has its own Select Committees. The areas of responsibilities of the Select Committees reflect the Irish Government's departmental structure. For instance the Select Committee on Health and Children examines the budget and legislative proposals of the Department of Health and Children. Joint Committees are Committees which include members of both Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann. Major changes being introduced to, or controversial issues associated with, Government Departments, funded agencies or issues of public concern can be discussed by these committees. Committees often take evidence from interest groups, meet witnesses (people invited to attend committee meetings are referred to as witnesses) or invite key Departmental officials as witnesses during discussions on specific issues. They can also publish reports relevant to their area of responsibility. The Committees have no direct power and cannot compel witnesses to attend meetings. In addition to Select Committees and Joint Committees there is the Public Accounts Committee which has a key role to play in ensuring that there is accountability and transparency in the way Government agencies allocate, spend and manage their finances and ensuring taxpayers receive value for money. Most Committees meet in public session and their proceedings are broadcast (sound and vision) online with verbatim transcripts of each public meeting posted to the Oireachtas website after each meeting. Some

meetings, and parts of meetings, are held in private. Meetings vary in duration and can continue for 8 hours or more.

During the period under investigation there were many strategic changes occurring in the Health sector which were discussed by the committees and invited witnesses representing their various stakeholder groups. These changes were part of the Irish Government's programme to reform the health sector which it announced in 2003. At this announcement it described the changes as the most extensive reform programme of the health system in over 30 years. Drawing on the recommendations of two reports which became known as The Brennan Commission Report (2003) and The Prospectus Report (2003), the Government signalled that the programme would impact on every element of the health system. A key initiative within this reform programme was establishing the HSE in 2005 as the single corporate structure to manage all of the health services on behalf of the Government that had previously been managed and provided by a collection of 14 separately managed health authorities and agencies. These authorities and agencies had been individually accountable to the Department of Health and Children for the provision of health service. Because of the lack of interconnection between these agencies there was an absence of consistency in relation to a wide range of management processes and standard of care across the country.

The establishment of the HSE sought to modernise the accountability and governance structures to deliver better quality and value. It involved the appointment of a new Board, the appointment of the first CEO, the development of new organisational and governance structures and strategic direction. The HSE took over responsibility for the 110,000 people employed in the authorities and agencies that it subsumed along with their budget which at the time was in the region of €13 billion annually. In 2007 the HSE published its Transformation Programme 2007-2011 which formalised many of the changes that were underway and provided a road map for future reform. It consisted of 6 Transformation Priorities and 13 Transformation Programmes each of which consisted of a series of sub projects. In addition to the significant changes that

were outlined in this programme, the HSE was making substantial changes to processes and practices in relation to financial and performance management, funding models, work practices and procurement that were to have a far reaching impact on staff, suppliers and patients. Many of these changes were controversial and generated debate among those proposing and those opposing the changes. Because of their significance, and particularly the interest they generated from those affected by the changes which were amplified through the media, the Joint and Select Oireachtas Committees on Health and Children and Public Accounts Committee took a keen interest in these change initiatives

Between 2005 and 2010 the Joint and Select Committees on Health and Children and its Public Accounts Committee committees invited the leaders of relevant agencies and organisations to 149 meetings to set out and debate their position in relation to a wide range of health related issues and changes that were being made or not being made. In the case of the Department of Health and Children and HSE, their leaders were invited at least once every quarter to inform the Committee of, explain and defend their work. Committee meetings were opportunities for leaders within the health industry and political leaders in attendance to give sense to the change initiatives which were being implemented, or not being implemented, by the HSE and the Department of Health and Children. These meetings were opportunities for participants to attempt to directly influence the sensemaking of the various audiences; members of the committee, attendees, those in attendance in the public gallery (which included the media) and indirectly, as these meetings were regularly reported on by the media, a wider public audience. These Committee meetings therefore present an ideal opportunity to observe and study the sensegiving behaviour of multiple leaders in relation to the same strategic at first hand in a naturally occurring environment.

Given the number of meetings and the range of topics discussed, it would have been impractical for a single researcher to study the sensegiving behaviour of participants across all meetings. Consideration was given to investigating the sensegiving behaviour of participating leaders:

- Across a number of change initiatives discussed by the committees within a relatively short period; or
- In relation to a single change initiative across a longer period

Option 2 was selected as, in addition to providing the opportunity to observe sensegiving behaviour over an extended period, it offered the opportunity to identify whether sensegiving behaviour changed over time. This approach is supported by Miles & Huberman (1994) who suggest that the collection of data over

*....a sustained period makes them powerful for studying any process (including history): we can go far beyond “snapshots” of “what?” or “how many”? to just how and why things happen as they do—and evens assess causality as to actually plays out in a particular setting.”*

(Miles & Huberman, 1994: p. 10 - Italics in original)

Before deciding on which change issue to concentrate on, a number of change initiatives which were occurring within the health sector were identified. These included:

- Changes the HSE was seeking to make to terms and conditions under which it employed consultant doctors which would for the first time measure and curtail their public and private practice.
- Centralisation of the management and approval of patient medical cards from more than 30 offices around the country to a single central office.
- The change the HSE was making the margin it paid to wholesalers who supplied medicines to pharmacies under the Medical Card Scheme (free medicines) and the Drugs Repayment Scheme (free medicine beyond a threshold paid by participants).

## **Appendix 8 - Frame analysis of selected text in Explanatory Study 1**

### **Coding of selected text**

Mr. Michael Guckian:

I thank the committee for giving the Irish Pharmaceutical Union this opportunity to again address the current crisis in the sector.

It is a crisis not only for pharmacists but for the many thousands of people who use our services every day, and the many people who depend on pharmacists for life-saving medicines and advice in particular. (VI-NCC/C)

They could be patients with cystic fibrosis, heart conditions or psychiatric disorders; the thousands of diabetic people nationwide; or the full-time carers of patients in the home. These are only a few examples. (VI-NCC/C)

The services provided to communities all over Ireland is a vital part of the delivery of our health-care service. (PO-MSQ/C)

We deliver a service on behalf of the HSE, attending to patients just like other health care professionals (PO- MSQ /C)

We give advice as trained and experienced professionals who know their patients well. (PO- MSQ /C)

Customers have always had easy access to medication, advice and a choice of pharmacy. (PO- MSQ /C)

What is this issue about? The HSE stated recently this matter was about “reducing the wholesale cost of drugs”. This is spin, as the HSE cannot and is not reducing the wholesale cost of medicines, but rather the payments to pharmacists. (DC-DP/C)

The HSE stated this change will “save private patients 8% on the cost of each medicine”. This is again spin as the HSE has no evidence whatever that the costs

of medicines to private patients will reduce as a consequence of its proposals.  
(GM-DP - DC/C)

The HSE stated it is paying twice the European average for wholesale services, with this the reason for the changes. The HSE's own consultants indicated the European averages are not in themselves a reason to reduce payments as each market is different, (DC-DP/I) and any changes should be introduced on a gradual basis. (FA/I)

The HSE has stated this is about reducing the price of medicines. Why has the HSE recently concluded an agreement with the industry that resulted in some of the highest base prices in Europe for medicines and why does it continue to block Irish pharmacists from offering cheaper generics to patients? (DC-DP/I)

The HSE has stated the average discounts in pharmacy are in the order of 8% and no benefit goes to the patient or the HSE from these payments. That is not correct. (GM- DC-DP/C)

The HSE has acknowledged that the payments under the medical card scheme are very low and uneconomical. The scheme has been largely sustained until now by the ability of pharmacists to negotiate trading terms with the main suppliers in order to produce greater efficiencies by, for example, making prompt payments and placing bulk orders electronically and at specific times. (MSQ/C)

We also accept that private patients are subsidising the scheme. (MSQ/C)

Incidentally, pharmacists do not get any discounts on products such as insulin for patients with diabetes, controlled drugs such as morphine which are essential for those who need palliative care, or on any medicine purchased from secondary suppliers. (PO/C)

This is not in any way to imply that we are not open to change. (PO/C)

We are ready to work with the HSE on the issue. (E/I)

The kernel of the matter is the method by which we as pharmacists, working with the Government, can continue to provide pharmacy services in the most effective and efficient manner possible. That is what we want to continue to do. (GM-PO-MSQ /C)

We must, however, be paid a fair price for our service, one which allows us to stay in business. (S/C)

We will not be able to do this (NCC/C) if the proposal (IC/I) from the HSE which has not been negotiated or agreed (FA-AF/C) is imposed on us and our patients from 1 March. (AF/C)

I make one thing very clear. We want to talk. (PO-FA/I)

We want to discuss the service we provide for patients and how we can assist the Government in maximising value for money. (PO -FA/C)

All we are looking for is fair play. (CB-AF/C)

After our last meeting with the committee, when the 1 December deadline was deferred, we believed the HSE was serious about engaging in real discussions with us. (CB/C)

We offered to go to the table, without preconditions to discuss a new contract, even offered to put the issue of pharmacy payments first. (PO -FA/C)

We made ourselves available for talks in the weeks before Christmas but are sorry to say they did not materialise. (PO/C)

It seems to us that the HSE's door is not open to real discussions with the IPU (DP/C).

It did offer to discuss the issue with us on 5 December but only if we accepted implementation of the proposed cut as a fait accompli and a new flat fee payment structure as an interim measure. (DP/C).

I draw committee members' attention to bullet point no. 3 on page 14, appendix 1, of the HSE proposal lest they think what I describe is not an accurate reflection of what transpired. (DP/C)

On 10 January the HSE issued a letter to our members informing them that it would be implementing its plan to reduce the payments to pharmacists by 8.2% on 1 March. The letter also contained an offer of an interim contract. The HSE expected pharmacists to agree to this in advance of talks taking place with the union on a new substantive contract. (GM-DC-DP/C)

Acceptance of the interim contract would result in further reductions in the income of our members in addition to the 8.2% cut in payments to pharmacists from 1 March, and immediately hit the service we provide. (GM-DC/C)

In summary, what the contract document proposes is a flat fee of no less than €5 per item dispensed under all community drug schemes, a reduction in payments of 8.2% and the elimination of all other fees and mark-ups. It also significantly reduces the rights of the pharmacy contractors. (DC-IC-AF/C)

While it may seem the face of it to cushion pharmacists with a high proportion of medical card patients from the impact of the changes, what it is really doing is taking money from other schemes and allocating it to the medical card scheme. (GM-DC -NCC/I)

That will not work. (DC/C)

It will have a negative impact on many pharmacy businesses and the services they provide. (C/C/L)

Incidentally, this document was not sent by the HSE to the union until seven days after it had arrived at each pharmacy. (DP /I)

Obviously, we cannot agree to the proposal (GM/I) which puts in place a pre-determined outcome to talks, without any discussion, negotiation, evaluation, or analysis of its impact on the sector or the patient. (DP/I)

The reductions proposed by the HSE must form part of the review process. (PA/I)

If this is agreed, the IPU can start negotiations with the HSE on all other contractual issues. (FA/I)

That is why, as long ago as last spring, we asked the Minister for Health and Children, Deputy Harney, to establish an independent body to establish a fair and appropriate system of payments to pharmacists. (FA/I)

There should be no changes to the way pharmacists are paid until this body has reviewed the matter, listened to the views of all sides and made a recommendation on what pharmacists should be paid. (PA/I)

This would include reviewing the HSE's plan to reduce payments to pharmacists by 8.2% on 1 March and allow for fair play and due process. (PA/I)

We are more than willing to engage in such a process at this stage (POC/I) and believe it to be the only way out of this impasse (GM/I).

These talks must start with our existing contract and assess the impact of any proposed changes, whatever they may be. (FA/I)

It should be remembered that we are not the only ones concerned about the impact the HSE's proposed cuts would have. (S /C/)

Indecon, the HSE's own consultants, warned in a report published on 13 November last that: "The timing of significant changes in payment terms is crucial. We believe the changes should be evaluated in advance in conjunction with key stakeholders and this needs to be carefully managed to avoid unnecessary market disruption". (PA /C)

Market disruption is not the only result of these proposals. (T/I) The impact on the service our members provide and the patients who use the service would be severe. (S /C)

The HSE has carried out no analysis or evaluation of the impact of its proposals, which is incredible. (DP/I)

We know the committee shares these concerns. (CB/C) Mr. Twomey, chairperson of the pharmacy contractors committee, will now outline in more detail what the impact would be.

### **Second text reviewed**

Chairman: I thank the IPU representatives. I invite the HSE representatives to make its presentation.

Mr. Seán Hurley: I thank the Chairman and members of the committee. I will outline briefly what is currently covered by the reimbursement moneys paid to each of the pharmacists. (SDC/I)

There are three elements to the reimbursement paid to pharmacists. The first element is the ingredient cost of the medicines provided by the manufacturer. The next element is the wholesale distribution of service and the third element is the payment to the pharmacist which covers his or her professional fee and the mark-up. (ETS/I)

The issue concerning us today is that of the cost of the wholesale pharmacy services and, in particular, how much ordinary patients and the taxpayer should have to pay for them. (GM/C)

The State and patients pay for wholesale services to community pharmacy through the price paid to pharmacies for medicines. This price includes the mark up to which I have referred of between 15% and 17.7% under current arrangements. Prior to September 2006, wholesale margins were included in manufacture agreements. As this is no longer the case, following the agreement the HSE entered into in September 2006 with the manufacturers, the State then sought direct agreement with the wholesalers. (ETS/I)

However, full-line wholesalers refused to negotiate a new mark up for community wholesale supply. (NoC /I)

We on the State side were then advised that direct negotiations on fees or margins would breach competition law. (NoC/I)

Accordingly, in that scenario the State determined fair and transparent arrangements for wholesale procurement supply in line with published Competition Authority guidelines. This process included very significant stakeholder consultation, public submissions and an extensive independent economic analysis. (NoC/I)

The reimbursement price paid to pharmacy contractors is meant to cover the cost to pharmacies of the price of medicines. The reimbursement price paid is far higher than the cost the pharmacies pay and the independent analysis, prepared for us by Indecon, clearly shows that more than half the wholesale mark-up is given back to retail pharmacists as discount and rebate. This was also corroborated by the wholesalers directly to us. Irish patients and taxpayers pay more than twice as much for wholesale services as that paid by the retail pharmacy sector. We reimburse 15% whereas the net mark-up or wholesale distribution rate pharmacists must carry is approximately 8%. (ETS/I/ECC)

The decision (IC/I) on payment for pharmaceutical wholesale services in community and hospital supply will be implemented from 1 March. (ETS/I)

The following are the new arrangements that will apply. (ETS/I)

In regard to community pharmacy supplies, the pharmacy contractors will be reimbursed at the ex-factory price plus 8% and 12 months later that will be reduced to 7%, and for hospital deliveries, the hospitals will pay the ex-factory price plus 5%, but there are also some opportunities for further reductions in that 5% wholesale price. (ETS/I)

The new community rate reflects two key facts, one being its reflection of the real value of wholesale services where the wholesalers return currently more than

half their current mark-up as discount to pharmacies and the wholesalers' submission that 7% is a viable operating mark-up. (GM/I)

The new system (GM/I) which we are about to implement will provide far greater transparency in respect of payment. (CoC/I)

Everyone will know what is being paid and for what it is being paid. It will remove the anomalies whereby patients and taxpayers currently subsidise the wholesaler business model and small and rural pharmacies subsidise large chains and urban shops. (CoC/I)

The hospital review also reflects the complexity and lack of transparency in current arrangements and the wholesalers' submissions stated that, for them, hospital supply is a loss maker and is being subsidised by the community side, (GM/I) but henceforth there will be a fair payment for hospital supply and there will be no justification for an artificially high margin in the community to support it. (CoC /I)

The decision we took was not taken lightly. (PP/C)

However, a position whereby patients and taxpayers pay €100 million a year more than anyone else for wholesale distribution of medicines is not sustainable and will seriously compromise the HSE's ability to provide new and innovative treatments for patients. (S/C)

The outcome of the introduction of this measure is included in the HSE's 2008 budget; the reduction in 2008 of the HSE's expenditure of €100 million has been taken into account in determining the HSE's Vote. The Vote allocated to the HSE by Dáil Éireann is Government and national policy and the HSE must introduce this measure on 1 March. (JC/C) There can be no further delay in its introduction because it will cost the HSE money. National policy must be implemented by the HSE. (NoC/C)

Three important points need to be borne in mind. First, payments for professional services under the 1996 contract were not changed by us. (NoC/C) We are not changing the professional fees being paid to pharmacists. (ETS/I)

Second, the wholesale mark-up is a payment for wholesale services, not pharmaceutical services or professional services. Third, discounts from wholesalers to pharmacists are not part of the HSE's payment for professional pharmacy services. They form part of the commercial arrangements between wholesaler and retailers, which they are entitled to enter into. (GM/I)

The IPU and contractors are concerned that pharmacies will be charged more for the drugs than they will be reimbursed. (AO/I)

The HSE and the manufacturers of the drugs have received explicit assurances from wholesalers that the net monthly cost to pharmacies for reimbursable products will not be greater than the amount reimbursed by the HSE. United Drug has stated in writing to one of the major manufacturers that it will apply individual terms and settlement discounts to each customer account as negotiated on a case by case basis. Therefore, it will seek to ensure that customers will not buy medicines at a loss from it. They also point out that this structure is exactly the same as the system in the UK where the trade price is the fixed price in the market, and the NHS reimburses pharmacies at the lower price with no impact on continuity of supply. Other wholesalers have made similar commitments both to us and to the manufacturers. Under European competition law any manufacturer of medicines is prohibited from agreeing the price at which representative organisations, including wholesalers, may sell to their customers. In other words, any negotiations between the trade price and the reimbursable price must be subject to free competition between wholesalers and individual pharmacies. (CoC/I)

As regards implementation, it has been Claimed that the HSE ignored the Indecon report on wholesale prices. The HSE and the Department were asked to review medicine costs across the three main sectors in the chain — that is, the manufacturing sector, wholesale sector and, at retail level, dispensing

pharmacists. The HSE was asked, as approved by our board and the Department under Government policy, (NoC/I) to find a fair, reasonable and transparent price for each of these sectors' components. This process began in 2005 when the Cabinet sub-committee on health decided that work should be done on this area. (NoC/I) We in the HSE have now completed our examination of the first two components, that is the manufacturers and wholesale distribution services. We did this following widespread consultation and extensive analysis, including the Indecon report. (JC-PP/I).

The wholesale mark-up reduction, (IC) when completed, will have been implemented over two and a half years from September 2006 when we first started the process with wholesalers. (ETS/I)

The Indecon and other reports clearly showed the impact that structured overcharging for wholesale services has had on the State drug budget. The cost is an extra, and unnecessary, €100 million per year. (JC/I).

We now know that the real value of wholesale services is 7%. Ordinary citizens and the State are being overcharged for these services and this obviously needs to be addressed. This is being done and all the arrangements have been approved by the Government. (NoC/I) The decisions following on have been taken into account in the financial Vote for the HSE. We will implement the wholesale plan over the next two and a half years. (JC/I).

Professional fees for pharmacy services are not changing. (ETS/C).

Reimbursement payments under the drug schemes are about 40% of overall pharmacy income. Therefore, the new arrangements will produce an average drop in income of approximately 2.4%. (GM/I).

The extensive level of investment by third parties, in particular by wholesalers, in stock, premises and pharmacies, including fit-outs and free bonus offers, such as two-for-one and one-for-one offers, means that the effect on pharmacy incomes will be rather less than 2.4%. (GM /I).

There will be no change in professional fees being paid to pharmacists. (FF/C/EA).

Retention of the additional profits, which go all the way back to 1971 and currently stand at €100 million per year, and artificially high prices have obviously been beneficial for existing owners but there are significant long-term disadvantages for the pharmacy sector. (JC/I).

These include: huge entry barriers to new pharmacists from inflated market prices — we know that shops have routinely sold for three times the turnover; the associated consolidation of ownership and expansion of chains, particularly in the two-to-ten shop range, as existing owners buy and open more shops; and unsupervised purchase of medicines in other jurisdictions by Irish patients seeking to avoid high retail prices in Irish pharmacies, with an associated long-term loss of business. (JC/I).

As regards the voluntary interim contract, public representatives and this committee, pharmacists and the IPU have raised specific concerns about the potentially disproportionate impact of a reduction in discount level on pharmacies that are heavily dependent on medical card dispensing. I understand that this point was specifically raised last November when the committee discussed it both with the IPU and the HSE. (C/I/ECC)

Pharmacies dependent on medical card dispensing to a great extent, may not have income buffers which are available to other contractors. To address this concern, the HSE has now offered a voluntary contract that will include a much higher single professional fee replacing the current fee and mark-up mix. For GMS-dependent pharmacies, most of whose dispensing does not attract a 50% mark-up, this will greatly enhance their dispensing income. Obviously, take up of the offer is entirely voluntary and will be a commercial decision for each contractor. Within the potential fee range, an analysis based on 2007 figures for each contractor indicates that between 46% and 68% of contractors would increase their dispensing income if they took up the interim contract — that is, if they

accepted a flat professional fee to replace the current €3.26 fee and the percentage mark-ups. (AC/C)

The HSE is very concerned about the misinformation in the marketplace in regard to this initiative and the following is the position. The interim contract is entirely voluntary. Pharmacies that do not take up the offer remain on their current contracts and professional payments structures. The offer was made to contractors following its rejection by the IPU which was prepared to leave vulnerable pharmacies without recourse to alternatives. The HSE was not prepared to allow this. The contract is an interim contract pending the introduction of a new substantive contract. (JC/I)

The interim contract specifically addresses the concerns of GMS-dependent pharmacies. Again, we responded to the concerns expressed by many people, including the committee. Contracted professional activities such as phase dispensing and non-dispensing pharmaceutical intervention will continue to be paid. (AO-PP/I)

We sent out the contract in early January to give contractors time to consider the offer before the final figure is announced. It is a matter for each contractor to make an informed decision on the offer. As the contracting authority, the HSE is entitled to communicate directly with its contractors and does this on a regular basis on many issues. (JC/I)

Furthermore, not all contractors are IPU members and membership of the IPU is not, and has never been, a prerequisite for receiving a contract. It would be highly inappropriate for the HSE to differentiate between contractors on this basis and Claims that we should do so are disturbing. Contrary to IPU Claims, both sole traders and chains have expressed to us interest in taking up the interim contract and given that at the very minimum, at least 46% of contractors will increase their dispensing income, it appears that by opposing the voluntary offer the IPU may not represent all contractors on this issue. (DO/C/)

It has been suggested also that the implementation of the new wholesale arrangements should be determined by the Government's independent body. This body will determine the value of services provided under a new centralised or common contract with the State. The wholesale component of the medicine prices is a payment for wholesale services and is not a payment for pharmacy services under the pharmacy contract. The HSE does not have a contract with wholesalers for community supply and, therefore, the cost of wholesale services will not be a matter for the new independent body. The independent body will determine the value of pharmaceutical services under a new substantive contract for which the consultation process has begun. (GM/I)

This issue is solely about what ordinary patients and taxpayers should pay for the wholesale component of their prescription medicines. (GM/C)

**Appendix 9 - Revised coding form developed for Exploratory Study 3.**

Coding Form			
<b>Ref:</b> (1, 2, 3, 4 etc.)			
<b>Actor:</b>			
<b>Framing Target:</b> (Select 1 or maximum of 2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacists <input type="checkbox"/> Irish Pharmaceutical Union (IPU) <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Health and Children <input type="checkbox"/> Health Service Executive (HSE) <input type="checkbox"/> Politicians <input type="checkbox"/> The current situation <input type="checkbox"/> The change <input type="checkbox"/> The proposed solution <input type="checkbox"/> The negotiations process <input type="checkbox"/> The Indecon Report <input type="checkbox"/> Methadone withdrawal		
<b>Key Frame/Claim:</b>			
<b>Type:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Designative <input type="checkbox"/> Definitive <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluative <input type="checkbox"/> Advocative		
<b>Tone:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Benigh		
<b>Grounds / Evidence:</b>			
<b>Type:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fact <input type="checkbox"/> Common Knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Opinion / Citation		
<b>Warrants:</b>			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Substantive <input type="checkbox"/> Authoritative <input type="checkbox"/> Motivational		
<b>Qualifer:</b>			
<b>Rhetorical strategy:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Logos <input type="checkbox"/> Pathos <input type="checkbox"/> Ethos		
<b>Notes:</b>			

## Appendix 10 – Final coding manual

### Coding manual and coding framework.

Participants: Ciaran McFadden (PhD Student in School of Business, NUI Maynooth)

Date and location 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2014, Rowan House, NUI, Maynooth.

#### 1. Introduction

The first code testing exercise highlighted some shortcoming in the coding framework and the coding manual. These have been refined and the purpose of this second exercise is to test these refinements.

The exercise will involve two coders, one of which will be the researcher.

The exercise will begin with an introduction by the researcher. He will highlight that

- Each sentence is to be coded.
- Each sentence is to be given one of five codes (Definitions and examples of each code are outlined below.)

1. **S** = Statement (No Claim being made)
2. **NoE** = Claim with no Evidence
3. **L** = Claim primarily driven by Emotion
4. **E** = Claim primarily driven by Emotion
5. **C** = Claim primarily driven by Credibility

Each sentence is to be allocated one of five designated letter(s).

#### 2. Statement or Claim

Code 1 (**S**) is for Statements

The main difference between a statement and a Claim is that a Claim involves a proposition or **assertion** that meets the following two criteria.

The Claim is potentially:

- **Potentially controversial or disputable** about something, a person, an organisation, an action, a decision, behaviour or an outcome and
- Is likely to be **challenged** by others.

If the sentence is not controversial, disputable or likely to be challenged it is a statement.

## 2.1 Examples of Statements?

(i) Expresses an opinion or personal preference which is not potentially controversial or disputable: I would like if we could agree.

(ii) States a universal fact: We all know that....

(iii) Makes a historical reference: This was agreed last year.

(iv) Asks a question: Will we have the right to ask supplementary questions?

(v) Asks a rhetorical question:

(vi) Claims about Claims. Where a sentence involves a speaker making a Claim which involves another party's Claim, i.e. the speaker is making a Claim about a Claim made by somebody else, this is to be coded as a Statement. Example: The HSE stated it is paying twice the European average for wholesale services, with this the reason for the changes.

**If a sentence or part of a sentence resembles one of the above types of Statements but meets the criteria of being controversial, disputable or likely to be challenged it is a Claim.**

## 3. What is a Claim?

Codes 2-5 (**NoE, L, E & C**) are for coding sentences which contain a Claim(s).

Claims are used when an author wants to persuade an audience to believe something about an entity, concept, condition or action.

Claims are propositions or assertion. They are controversial and disputable. If they are not controversial, disputable or likely to be challenged they are Statements.

To determine whether a sentence or part of a sentence (a sentence can contain more than one Claim) is a Claim it is helpful to put the phrase “*I assert that .....*” before it. It will enable you to see more clearly if the author is seeking to persuade the audience.

The following text segment makes a Claim others are likely to argue against.

*I assert that ... All lecturers should teach for at least 20 hours per week.*

This sentence could be challenged and is potentially controversial. It is therefore a Claim.

The following text segment is unlikely to be challenged or create controversy because it is a statement of fact and is not an argument for or against the change being discussed. It is also common knowledge. It is not a Claim.

*I assert that ...due to the Government’s recruitment embargo we cannot employ full time permanent lecturers.*

If you believe that a Sentence is a Claim, or contains more than one Claim, UNDERLINE the specific words that led decide this.

Example:

“Following the methadone debacle at the end of last year, some pharmacies have threatened vulnerable patients such as the elderly, those with cancer or suffering with psychiatric illnesses with the withdrawal of services. The HSE has been contacted by extremely distressed patients whose pharmacies have informed them that they will not be given any medicines after 1 March.”

In this example the speaker is Claiming that ....*some pharmacies have threatened vulnerable patients such as the elderly, those with cancer or suffering with psychiatric illnesses with the withdrawal of services.*

You do not need to make any judgment on whether the Claim is valid or not.

Where a sentence contains more than one Claim you are to identify each Claim.

Example:

*I assert that .... We give advice as trained and experienced professionals who know their patients well.*

The speaker wants the audience to believe that pharmacists give advice and know their patients because they are well trained and experienced professionals.

There are two Claims in this sentence which are disputable and could be challenged.

Claim 1: Pharmacists give advice.

Claim 2: Pharmacists know their patients.

#### **4. Has evidence been provided to support the Claim?**

When you have identified a Claim(s) in a sentence you have to then decide whether the speaker has provided evidence to support the Claim.

Evidence is not always explicit and may require reflection on the various words and phrases in the sentence to identify if it is present.

To identify if the author has provided evidence, answer the following question  
*“The speaker thinks we should believe this Claim because....”*

Look for the answer in the sentence or an adjacent sentence.

Avoid dipping into your own experiences for guidance. If you cannot see the evidence it is not there.

## Claims – No Evidence

If there is no obvious answer to this question “*The speaker thinks we should believe this Claim because....*” in the text segment or an adjacent text segment no evidence has been provided.

If the speaker has not provided evidence to support the Claim you are to code the Claim as NoE (No Evidence)

Example:

The issue concerning us today is that of the cost of the wholesale pharmacy services and, in particular, how much ordinary patients and the taxpayer should have to pay for them. *NoE*

This statement is likely to be disputed by opponents. It is therefore controversial which makes it a Claim rather than a statement. But no evidence has been provided.

## Claims - Evidence

The study is not trying to determine the quality of the evidence provided, just whether it has been provided to support a Claim.

*Location of Evidence*

Evidence provided for a Claim may not be evident within the sentence where the Claim is located. Evidence may have been provided in an adjacent text segment.

If you can see evidence in the sentence which supports the Claim, CIRCLE this text.

*Example*

*Following the methadone debacle at the end of last year, some pharmacies have threatened vulnerable patients such as the elderly, those with cancer or suffering with psychiatric illnesses with the withdrawal of services. The HSE has been*

*contacted by extremely distressed patients whose pharmacies have informed them that they will not be given any medicines after 1 March.*

After you have circled what you believe is the evidence double check that the evidence supports the Claim. In this example:

The speaker thinks we should believe the Claim that

*'pharmacists have threatened vulnerable patients'* [Claim]

because [the question we use to find evidence]

*'The HSE has been contacted by extremely distressed patients whose pharmacies have informed them that they will not be given any medicines after 1 March.'*

[Evidence]

### **5: Identify the rhetorical strategies being used?**

The final step is to decide which of three the persuasive (rhetorical) strategy the speaker is using.

Is the persuasive dimension of their argument based on emotion, logic or credibility? These three strategies relate to Pathos, Logos and Ethos.

But for ease we'll refer to them as emotion, logic and credibility.

Emotion (Pathos): Here the author uses emotion to support their Claim. The use of this orientation does not have to be based on reason or credibility. It can involve appeals to fairness, and the lack thereof, doing the right thing and for example highlighting the plight of the underdog. It can involve attempts to induce emotions such as anger, sadness, loss, greed, fear, indignation and so on.

Logic (Logos): Here a speaker will try and support their argument with facts and rational reasoning; if x then y. It is similar to an academic approach with the persuasive appeal relying on facts, figures, data and charts. You are not required

to make any judgement on the validity or correctness of the facts and figures put forward. You are concerned with their presence which indicates the use of logic.

Credibility (Ethos): This approach can be a less obvious than emotion and logic and a little more difficult to spot. It involves speakers using their credentials, subject expertise and authority, or those of other sources, to persuade an audience that its Claim should be believed.

It can involve implicit and explicit references which suggest that the speaker is qualified and experienced to speak on the subject matter with authority; they know what they are talking about. It can also involve making references to, and quoting, other authoritative sources such as consultant reports, respected agencies and individuals who have socially accepted credibility in the subject area. Its persuasive power relies on the credibility of the speaker and his/her sources.

## **EXAMPLES**

### ***Example 1 – Statement - No Claim***

*I assert that ...* That is what we want to continue to do.

This is an expression of personal preference.

### ***Example 2 – Claim - No evidence***

*I assert that.....*The services provided to communities all over Ireland is (sic) a vital part of the delivery of our health-care service.

#### *Claim*

The speaker wants the audience to believe that services provided by pharmacists are vital. It could be argued that they are not. The speaker is making a Claim.

**Claim: Pharmacy services are vital.**

#### *Evidence*

No evidence provided.

***Example 3 – Claim – With Evidence Coded C***

*I assert that.....* We deliver a service on behalf of the HSE, attending to patients just like other health care professionals.

The speaker wants the audience to believe that pharmacists, because they deliver service on behalf of the HSE, are just like other health care professionals. It could be argued that they are not. The speaker is making a Claim.

**Claim: Pharmacists are like other health care professionals.**

*Evidence*

*The speaker thinks we should believe this Claim because....* pharmacists deliver services on behalf of the HSE.

**Evidence provided.**

*Rhetorical*

*strategy*

Credibility (Ethos) – alignment with the credibility of other health care professionals

***Example 4 – Two Claims in one sentence***

*I assert that ....* We give advice as trained and experienced professionals who know their patients well.

*Claim*

The speaker wants the audience to believe that pharmacists give advice and know their patients because they are well trained and experienced professionals. It could be argued otherwise. There are two Claims in this statement which are supported by the same evidence.

**Claim 1:** Pharmacists give advice.

**Claim 2:** Pharmacists know their patients.

*Evidence*

*The speaker thinks we should believe this Claim because....* pharmacists are well trained and experienced professionals.

**Evidence provided.**

*Rhetorical*

*strategy*

Credibility (Ethos) – appeal to the experience of pharmacists

**Example 6 – Claim – With Evidence**

*I assert that ....* We must, however, be paid a fair price for our service, one which allows us to stay in business.

The speaker wants the audience to believe that Pharmacists will go out of business if they are not paid a fair price.

**Claim: Pharmacists must be paid a fair price for their services**

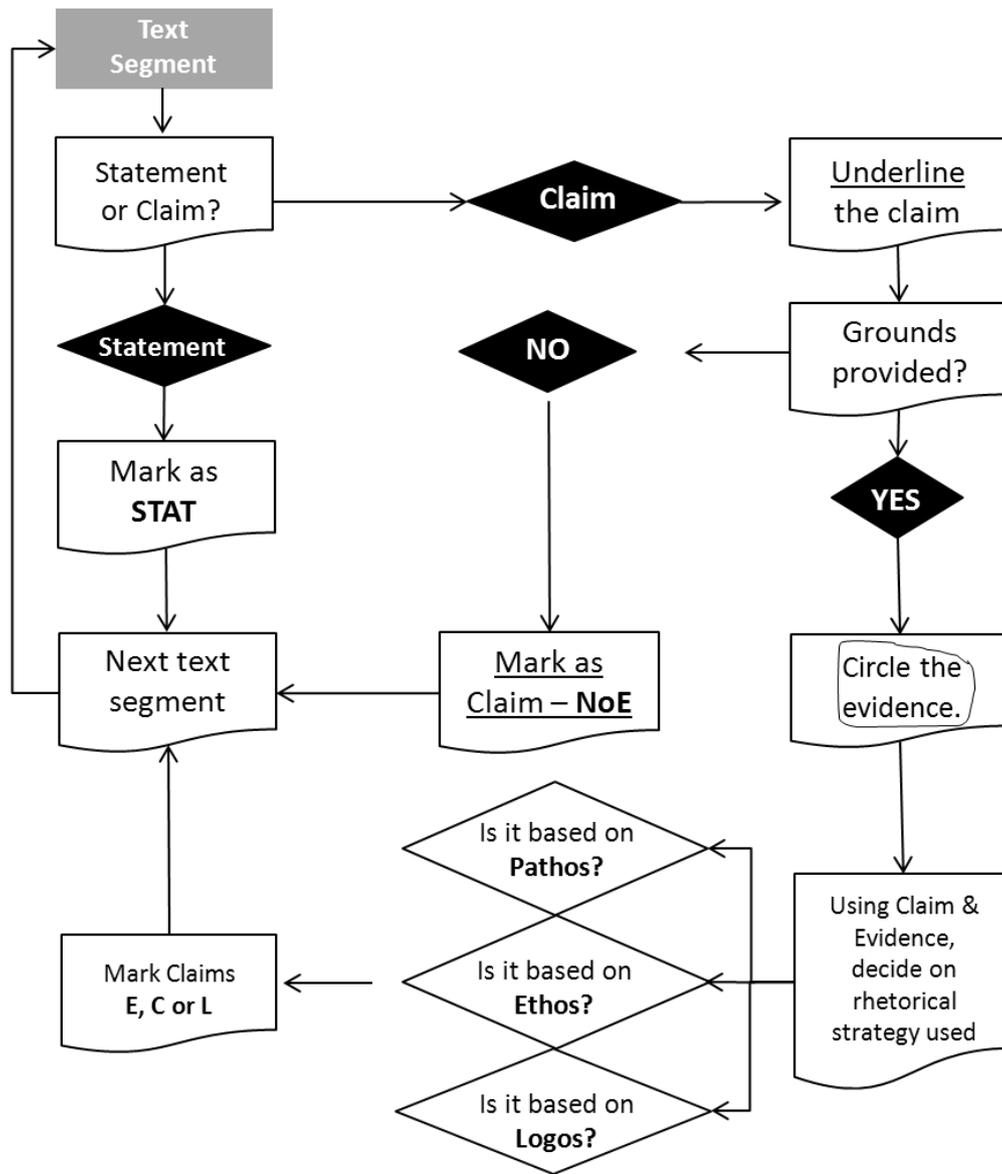
*Evidence*

*The speaker thinks we should believe this Claim because....* if pharmacists are not paid a fair price they will go out of business.

**Evidence provided.**

Rhetorical strategy

Emotion (Pathos) – appeal to fear of pharmacies closing.



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