Negotiating Fences

Interaction in Advisory Encounters for Nature Conservation

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Abstract

Farmers are key actors for the management of nature conservation. Environmental quality objectives, programmes, subsidies and advisory activities are incentives from society to enhance nature conservation. Recent policies claim the work should be guided by participatory approaches. The thesis describes how these ambitions are to be realised and co-ordinated with the farmer's other activities in encounters between the adviser and the farmer. Furthermore, its aim is to analyse participation and learning issues in advisory encounters. The analytical focus is the interaction where the policy ideas, concepts and categories are negotiated into meaning by the participants in an actual situation. This encounter is described in terms of an institutional talk where the asymmetries between the participants, i.e. the institutional representative and the non-institutional representative, are relevant for the accomplishment of the tasks at hand.

The study is made from a communicative perspective, where people are considered as social actors who act by means of communication in a socially constructed world. The data consists of 35 hours of video recordings of naturally occurring conversations between farmers and advisers. The thesis applies conversation analysis (CA) as a new method in order to approach problems of environmental communication. It is complemented with semi-structured interviews and a literature study.

Compared to other advisory activities, in the encounters studied the prerequisites for learning and participation contain several drawbacks. The learning concerns the frames of the encounter and the inherent participation rather than nature conservation more generally. This advisory activity has a double agenda; elements of advice-giving as well as surveillance. This is an obstacle for both participants. The farmer endeavours to understand the aim of the encounter, the frames for participation and how to achieve a legitimate professional vision. The adviser attempts to accomplish the conflicting institutional commissions. The study presents how the practice of seeing is used as an activity-structuring resource and for making assessments. The findings also demonstrate how the space for action is used for dealing with complaints in a way which demands a delicate balance between professional loyalty and the social solidarity of the situation for the adviser.

The study emphasises the importance of the face-to-face interaction in advisory encounters. An acknowledgement of the communication is especially crucial in the profession of the adviser. The thesis offers a terminology to enhance such a development.

Keywords: Conversation analysis, advisory encounter, nature conservation, learning, interaction, participation, institutional talk, agricultural extension, biodiversity, street-level bureaucracy, Sweden.

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Till alla som inser att det sällan räcker
att tala med bönder på myndighetsvis

I den snärjda verkligheten
ser du gränsen mellan ting
och tänkt, mellan värld och velat.

Naken syns världen aldrig
men kläd den i ovan dräkt
och du ser vanligt på nytt.

Benkt-Erik Hedin

Vignette: The visit

From the tractor I saw a metallic car coming along the road. Just before the edge of the wood it followed the rough road and turned up the hill towards my farm. On the phone she had sounded young, nice, but young. It was hard to say if she had grown up in the area, but it did not sound like that from her way of talking. We had agreed upon this morning for her visit. As far as I had understood she wanted to discuss my pastures.

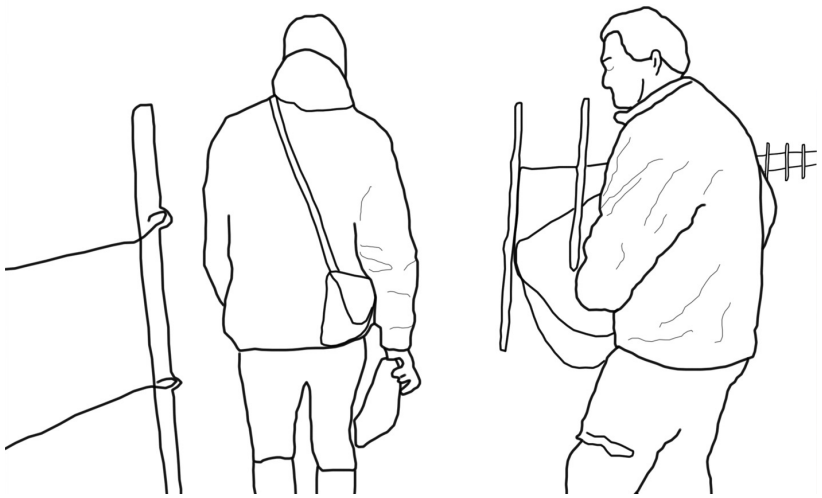
I remembered a man that came out to look at the flowers in my pasture about a year ago. He must also have been from the County Administration. All of a sudden he just appeared in my courtyard and said he had come to make some inventory of my fields. Afterwards, I remembered him being very enthusiastic about the meadow saxifrage[1] growing beside the little stream and telling me to be proud of them and preserve them. Of course I like them when I go there an early summer morning and I really would like them to be there. Like the birds in the bushes. I became a bit puzzled when he told me it would be good if I took away a few more of the trees. He said the flowers got too little sun exposure. I did not agree with that, so the oaks are still there, all of them. Maybe it is worse with the grazing that is not done properly. At least not according to the rules I heard someone mentioning some years ago: That the bureaucrat was out measuring the length of the grass with a ruler. That's ridiculous! You could enclose every area properly with fences so that the animals can graze. The burning issue is to get the time to manage the things you care about. Especially as bureaucratic paper work tends to take all your time nowadays. This visit included… These bureaucrats sometimes have good things to say, but at other times it seems as if they are living in a different universe. I have the

[1] In Swedish *mandelblomma*, in Latin *saxifraga granulata*.

land and my farm before my eyes, whereas they seem to have protocols and documentation.

She carried a folder under her arm. I had not met her before and I realised I did not know the reason why I was supposed to meet her here in the courtyard. It is really not possible for me to scrutinize all the papers that I get by mail. Or rather, I know when the important stuff is coming, but as for the rest – I have learnt that I seldom miss a lot. I hear from my neighbours or read in some of the agricultural magazines when something of relevance is coming up. I recalled she said on the phone she wanted me to participate, which sounded nice, even though I was not really clear about what I was supposed to participate in. Maybe I could take the opportunity to ask her about the subsidies and tell her about my frustration that the consultant I engaged could not answer my questions. I hope she is nice to talk to. Then we can perhaps sort things out together and I'll figure out her reason for being here, what she would like to see. Then I'll show her my beautiful flowers in the pasture.

My dog was already there to greet her and she actually seemed comfortable with that, laughed as she was looking around, wondering perhaps if I had misunderstood the time. I made myself a bit more presentable by rubbing my hands. Then I walked over to meet her.



Svensk sammanfattning

Naturvård har traditionellt i Sverige betraktats som något som ligger i samhällets intresse. Ansvar för vad som ska bevaras och på vilket sätt detta ska ske har legat på experter och myndigheter, eftersom föreställningen varit att markägare haft andra mål med sin verksamhet. På många håll har detta lett till om inte konflikter mellan stat och markägare så i alla fall en upplevd klyfta mellan naturvård och lantbrukande.

Det finns flera skäl till att idéerna om hur naturvård ska bedrivas idag ser annorlunda ut. Ett tungt skäl är att samhället har insett att mycket av den biologiska mångfalden för att bevaras är beroende av hävd, alltså kontinuerlig skötsel såsom bete och röjning. För att åstadkomma detta är samhället beroende av lantbrukaren. Insikten finns att för att lyckas måste idéer, erfarenheter och kunskap från lantbrukare tas tillvara. I nya policys för naturvård lyfts lantbrukares och markägares deltagande och delaktighet fram. Den här avhandlingen undersöker hur naturvårdsfrågor i jordbruks-landskapet diskuteras och konkretiseras i rådgivning mellan lantbrukare/markägare och rådgivare.

Policyer är ett styrmedel för naturvård. Lagstiftning är ett annat, men mer relevant i detta sammanhang är de miljöersättningar som betalas ut till de lantbrukare som väljer att bruka enligt vissa fastslagna villkor som sägs gynna naturvärdena. De lantbrukare som ansöker om åtagande för att sköta sina betesmarker i linje med villkoren får besök av en rådgivare från länsstyrelsen. Det är dessa besök och videoinspelningar av dem som ligger till grund för avhandlingens huvudsakliga empiri. Syftet med besöken är att samla in underlag för att rådgivaren ska kunna upprätta den åtgärdsplan som lantbrukaren sedan ska följa för att få ut ersättningen. Dessutom ska rådgivaren under besöket göra en bedömning om det är rimligt att kraven för att få det stöd lantbrukaren ansökt om kan uppfyllas under den aktuella åtagandeperioden. Under besöken vandrar rådgivare och lantbrukare genom

de marker som omfattas av ansökan och diskuterar vad som kan göras. Ett ytterligare syfte med besöken är att erbjuda lantbrukaren kompetens-utveckling, vilket är ett annat styrmedel. Denna rådgivning skiljer sig från annan lantbruksrådgivning i det att den sker på myndighetens initiativ och har vissa likheter med tillsynsverksamhet. Dessa aspekter undersöks i avhandlingen.

Syftet med avhandlingen är att analysera deltagande och lärande i dessa rådgivningsbesök. Fokus i analysen är på interaktionen mellan rådgivare och lantbrukare ute i landskapet där innebörden i idéer, begrepp och kategorier förhandlas fram. Att beskriva detta samtal som ett institutionellt samtal hjälper oss att förstå nya aspekter av vad som händer. Den asymmetri som råder mellan deltagarna i termer av kunskap och kännedom om besökets mål och ramar är ett exempel på något som påverkar förutsättningarna för deltagande och därmed det lärande som sker. Avhandlingens huvudsakliga metod för att undersöka detta är samtalsanalys (CA), vilken inte tillämpats tidigare på lantbruksrådgivningssamtal.

Avhandlingen visar på att jämfört med annan beskriven rådgivning inom lantbruket finns det i den undersökta typen av besök faktorer som begränsar förutsättningarna för deltagande och lärande. På grund av osäkerhet kring mål och ramar för besöket blir det svårt för lantbrukaren att bidra till att utföra det institutionella uppdraget på ett tillfredställande sätt. Det lärande som sker rör till stor del hur dessa besök ska gå till och hur reglerna kring miljöersättningarna ska förstås. Att besöket både ska rymma rådgivning och en form av tillsyn blir ett hinder för de båda deltagarna.

Studien presenterar hur deltagarnas olika sätt att iaktta konkreta företeelser och växter omkring dem i markerna visar på skillnader i perspektiv. Seendet fungerar som en resurs för att strukturera samtalet och aktiviteterna samt för att vägleda i värderingen av marken. I besöken förekommer klagomål från lantbrukarna, där föremålet för klagomålet är någon som inte är närvarande under besöket. Hanteringen av dessa klagomål skapar en situation där rådgivaren balanserar mellan att visa lantbrukaren förståelse och att på grund av sin professionella identitet visa sig lojal mot den part och potentiella kollega klagomålet rör.

Avhandlingen bygger på ett antal delstudier. Den första är en litteraturstudie av vad vi idag vet om hur lantbrukares kunskaper och erfarenheter tas till vara i befintliga bevarandeprogram (paper I). Den andra är en intervjustudie av tjänstemän som arbetar som ett slags rådgivare, s.k. street-level bureaucrats, där deras erfarenheter av flexibla arbetssätt där andra aktörer involveras i naturvårdsarbetet diskuteras (paper II). Den tredje studien bygger på videoinspelningar av de ovan beskrivna rådgivnings-

besöken och två centrala teman i besöken analyseras i paper III respektive IV: Iakttagandet av marken och hanteringen av klagomål.

Med utgångspunkt i studiens slutsatser presenteras också ett antal förslag till hur situationen skulle kunna fungera på ett sätt som i högre grad tar tillvara och respekterar lantbrukarnas och rådgivarnas intressen och därmed i förlängningen också främjar naturvården. För detta behöver samtalet erkännas som den kanske främsta tillgången också för rådgivaren inom lantbruks- och naturvårdsrådgivning. Denna studie kan ses som ett bidrag för att så skall kunna ske.

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Paper I-IV

List of publications

This thesis is based on the work contained in the following papers, referred to by Roman numerals in the text:

I Ahnström, J., Höckert, J., Bergeå, H.L., Francis, C.A., Skelton, P. & Hallgren, L.: Farmers and nature conservation – what is known about attitudes, context factors and actions affecting conservation? *Submitted paper.*

II Bergeå, H.L. & Ljung, M.: Implementing nature conservation policy in the name of participation: Field-level bureaucrats as a lubricant. *Manuscript*.

III Bergeå, H.L., Martin, C. & Sahlström, F.: "I don't know what you're looking for": Professional vision in Swedish agricultural extension on nature conservation management. *Submitted paper.*

IV Lindström, A. & Bergeå, H.L. 2007. Klander, identitet och professionell solidaritet. Analyser av klagomål i möten mellan lantbrukare och naturvårdsrådgivare. In: Engdahl, E. & Londén, A-M. (Eds.). *Interaktion och kontext*. Lund: Studentlitteratur, pp. 303-324.

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In paper I Bergeå took an active part in the development of the ideas, the planning and accomplishment of the study. Ahnström has made the collection of data (in this case literature) and together with Bergeå and Höckert carried out the majority of the analysis. Bergeå also participated in

structuring and processing of the material and has taken an active part in different phases of the writing process, the discussion part in particular.

Paper II is entirely based on data collected and processed by Bergeå. The interviews and transcriptions have been planned and accomplished by Bergeå. Ljung has been an active discussant during the entire process. The writing and theory development have been performed by both authors, but the major part has been written by Bergeå.

Paper III and IV rely entirely on data from video recordings of advisory encounters, that have been collected and processed by Bergeå. The admittance to the field and the entire field work were done by Bergeå. For paper III, Bergeå chose the sequences, that are the base for the analysis and made the transcriptions as well as the graphic representations. The ideas for the paper originate from Bergeå, but have been further developed together with the co-authors. The analyses have primarily been made by Bergeå but synthesised and structured in collaboration with the co-authors. The development of the theory has been done by the entire group of authors, and the contributions from the co-authors have been important. The major part of the writing has been done by Bergeå. The co-authors together with Bergeå have made adjustments to the paper.

For paper IV Bergeå chose the sequences after discussions with the main author and made the transcriptions. Paper IV mostly relies on ideas from Lindström, who was the one cognizant with the theory from the start. The ideas have been developed together with Bergeå, who is familiar with the data and institutional context. The first analyses of the entire data were made by Bergeå, but have been further analysed, synthesised and structured together with Lindström. Bergeå has written drafts and parts of the paper, but the major part of the writing has been accomplished by Lindström. Bergeå has actively participated in the revision of the paper.

1 Aim and research questions

To enhance biodiversity through nature conservation is a societal goal formulated by experts. Many environments where nature conservation has specific importance are located in the agricultural landscape. The management of many of these nature values is dependent on the activities of the farmer, and at the same time potentially conflicting with the farmer's other activities such as striving for a high yield of crops. New policies for nature conservation emphasise the imperative in applying participatory approaches. That is generally claimed to enhance the development of management strategies appreciated by all participants. However, when it comes to the concrete case, managing all these aspects is a challenge. To be effective, the implementation of public policies should be both consciously planned and openly deliberated, including all phases from the idea behind the policy to the concrete measures on each decision level. In nature conservation issues, it becomes imperative to manage the fundamental dilemma of the enhancement of expert-based decision making and public participation. In the steering documents, little evidence is seen that there is a conscious consideration of how the participation is supposed to be carried out, e.g. in the concrete situation where the farmer meets the representative of the policy.

Still, this encounter between the farmer and the adviser is the instance where the participatory ambitions are to be realised at the same time as nature conservation ambitions are to be negotiated. Therefore, this study aims to focus on the interactional level, to explore the implications of introducing participation as a guiding principle for nature conservation management. A point of departure is that insights based on the interaction in the implementation process are important to take into consideration when developing nature conservation management. So far, there are no studies of the interaction between farmers and advisers in advisory encounters designed

for nature conservation issues, even though these encounters are acknowledged to be of crucial importance (Harrison, Burgess & Clark, 1998; Cooper, 1999; Juntti & Potter, 2002; Siebert, Toogood & Knierim, 2006, Prager & Nagel, 2008).

The interaction between farmer and adviser is an instance where the ideas, concepts and categories from the policies are negotiated into meaning by the participants in that concrete and specific situation. My point of departure is that not until we fill the words with meaning can we learn something and judge whether ambitions in alignment with the policies are within our reach. In order to understand more of this than the participants already know, we need methods to study interaction on the detailed level that the interactants themselves normally are discursively unconscious of. This will give new insights of value for farmers, advisers and policy makers. The ambition in this thesis is to present a nuanced picture of what is happening between farmers and advisers when they discuss nature conservation issues. The principle method that will be applied is conversation analysis (CA). Thus, the present study will contribute to the field of environmental communication, where studies of interaction at this detailed level are deficient. By describing this type of advisory activity to researchers outside the field of environmental communication, I will be able to show that these advisory encounters and their phenomena not only exist, but also that they contain aspects of interests for advisory activities not exclusive to the area of nature conservation.

The thesis aims to:

- Describe how farmers and advisers cope with the implementation of environmental objectives of nature conservation for agriculture when participation is introduced as a guiding principle.
- Analyse participation and learning issues in advisory encounters where farmers and advisers discuss nature conservation and negotiate important concepts.

The following questions have been posed to the data to focus my attention on relevant aspects:

- How is participation and learning embedded in the implementation of nature conservation management? – with special focus on communication and the interactional level of advisory encounters.
- How do the participants in advisory encounters implement the ideas of participation in nature conservation management at the local interactional level?

- How is participation expressed and organised in terms of identity, solidarity, inclusion, asymmetries, responsibility and control over the agenda?
- How are the prerequisites for participation and learning dependent on organisational belonging and the organisation of the advisory activity?

The core of the thesis is based on the empirical data originating from advisory encounters between farmers and advisers when discussing management of nature conservation in pastures. Only a limited number of phenomena based on the gathered data are analysed. However, there is certainly much more to be investigated and described in the material. The focus is on the matters that the participants are oriented towards (Hutchby & Woffitt, 1998, p.15). That might be matters that are in alignment with the declared aims of the encounters, e.g. favourable measures to enhance biodiversity[2], but it is the orientation of the participants rather than the declared aims that have guided my attention. Given my epistemological platform and the aims of the thesis I avoid taking a stance myself to the content of their discussions. Instead, *how* the discussions are carried out and the implications of that are in focus. The point is exactly that there are many concepts of relevance to nature conservation management in alignment with participation which are contested, and must therefore be negotiated in real situations. To present the struggles in these situations is the focus of the thesis.

The reason for choosing to study nature conservation and the communication around is my engagement with nature conservation issues, and enjoyment of nature is part of my quality of life. I am also interested in people's approach to each other and their mutual attention as interactants. This is a tangible interest in my everyday life, and I have experienced that the inner life present in social relations can be a viable, personal driving force. Interaction between people has importance and is therefore a relevant part of managing nature conservation. The study of real life situations with nature conservation on the agenda therefore combined a scientific concern with a personal interest.

My research is problem-oriented and the insights can hopefully be useful in order to change actions and reformulate the prerequisites in ways people think are appropriate. I believe many of the answers and insights might be provided by the participants themselves. My role as a researcher is to elicit

[2] An example of measures that enhance biodiversity is grazing, which often presupposes that the area is enclosed by fences. In the advisory encounters in focus in the thesis the grazing issue is prevalent.

them, with the help of systematic analyses that the practitioners may not have time for or the means to manage. My interpretation of the phenomena in the empirical data, is based on my understanding as a speaker, member of Swedish cultural society, as an agronomist and knowledge of other researchers' findings. Relying on my background I perceive certain aspects of the world around me as more important than other aspects. This is true in my private life as well as in my profession as a researcher. The important difference is that in my profession I have a duty to reliably discover and confess as many of the relevant aspects as possible that have had an impact on the study.

My interest could also be formulated as understanding the advisory activity, and the focus then moves slightly in favour of the adviser. The adviser is the institutional representative and when I had to choose between recording her or the farmer's activities I prioritised the adviser's. My interpretations of the actions of the participants are probably somewhat biased, since I have experiences similar to the adviser's rather than the farmer's. The perspective of the adviser was the easier option due to previous and frequent casual contact. As an agronomist with specialisation in biology and nature conservation I have the same education as the adviser whereas my main practical experiences of agriculture are limited to periods of work during the summer holidays and through specialist subject training.

1.1 Guide for the reader

Having established the aims and research questions that the thesis addresses, I will now (in chapter 2) present a more thorough picture of the underlying context for the study. I will give a brief outline of the main arguments for taking nature conservation into consideration and the approaches to work with it in the Swedish context. I then (in chapter 3) present the epistemological grounds that have inspired me to design this study the way I have. In chapter 4 I briefly describe the overall research design where the four attached papers are embedded and then discuss the different methods used. The thesis has a crucial point in the conversation analytic study of the advisory encounters and a major part of the method chapter will explain the assumptions of and procedures of conversation analysis. Next chapter (5) is on the three major theoretical concepts that have guided the analysis of the papers and the summary part. The focus is not on previous studies of contexts similar to this one, but on the concepts as such, independently of the context. I then (in chapter 6) give a critical overview of the specific advisory activity in focus, where the empirical material that paper III and IV

rely on is presented in a new way to answer some of the general questions of the thesis. The subsequent chapter (7) is a synthesis of the study and attached papers which leads to the concluding discussion (chapter 8), where I return to the research questions. By means of a comparison with two other advisory activities from the Swedish agricultural context, a deeper understanding of the prerequisites for participation and learning in the investigated advisory activities is achieved. I finish by proposing some aspects to consider for the practice. In the last chapter (9) I sketch a few suggestions for future research.

2 Introduction: The commission

This chapter serves as a contextual background for the study. It sketches a brief outline of the underlying arguments for taking nature conservation into consideration and the approaches to work with it in the Swedish context both in terms of policies and institutional organisation.

Threatened biodiversity managed by environmental objectives

In the late 1990s the Swedish Parliament adopted a system of environmental quality objectives (Swedish Gov. Bill 1997/98:145; Swedish Gov. Bill 2000/01:65; Swedish Gov. Bill 2000/01:130; Swedish Gov. Bill 2001/02:55). Here the Swedish Parliament points out the desired state of the Swedish environment with the overall aim to hand over a society to future generations where the major environmental problems have been solved. The fundamentals for it can also be traced back to the World Commission on Environment and Development (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). One of the fundamental principles for environmental policies in Sweden is the conservation of biodiversity (Swedish Gov. Bill, 1990/91:90). To clarify the direction and agency for the different fundamental principles there is a system of environmental quality objectives[3]. Two of these are within the concern of this thesis, the thirteenth and the sixteenth. The thirteenth of the objectives is called "A varied agricultural landscape" and is explained in the following terms:

> "The value of the farmed landscape and agricultural land for biological production and food production must be protected, at the same time as

[3] Originally the number of environmental quality objectives were 15 but since 2006 the objective of "A rich diversity of plant and animal life", has been added.

> biological diversity and cultural heritage assets are preserved and strengthened."

The sixteenth of the objectives, "A rich diversity of plant and animal life", is explained like this:

> "Biological diversity must be preserved and used sustainably for the benefit of present and future generations. Species habitats and ecosystems and their functions and processes must be safeguarded. Species must be able to survive in long-term viable populations with sufficient genetic variation. Finally, people must have access to a good natural and cultural environment rich in biological diversity, as a basis for health, quality of life and well-being."

The objectives are further divided into more realistic and concrete interim targets, which are specifically relevant for this study, such as the preservation of meadows and pasture land. All of these, as well as additional hectares should be managed to preserve their value. Another interim target would be the introduction of action programmes concerning threatened species.

The management technique of objectives implies that the policy goals are set by the politicians and separated from the implementation that is carried out by the civil service (Edvardsson, 2004). Different authorities are responsible for the 16 different environmental quality objectives among which the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency are responsible for 10, among these "A rich diversity of plant and animal life". The Swedish Board of Agriculture is responsible for "A varied agricultural landscape".

Arguments for protecting biodiversity

Sweden is one among 168 countries which have signed the Convention on Biological Diversity from the 1992 Rio Earth Summit (CBD, 2007). The convention recognizes that biodiversity is a matter of ecosystems, species and genetic variation that these countries will keep, but it is also a matter of people and the need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live. The Convention establishes three main goals: The conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources among the countries diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (United Nations, 2001). There are different arguments for maintaining biodiversity. One way is to divide them into a group of abstract values and a group of concrete use values. Among the abstract values we find: Ethical values, values of existence

and symbolic values. Among the concrete use values we find: Utilitarian values, consumption values, scientific values and production values (Lisberg Jensen, 2000). Sometimes when arguing for enhancing biodiversity, the ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity is put forward as an argument, the warrants behind it not explicitly pronounced.

The social construction of biodiversity as a common concern

The Convention on Biological Diversity was a way of giving greater importance to an issue that for long has been the concern of many biologists now placing the concern and responsibility for action on society. However, there are a multitude of reasons why biodiversity and nature conservation have been put on the public agenda, which will be illustrated by a few examples.

Rhetoric is seen as a major explanation for the success in public acceptance of preservationism in the US in the 1890s (Oravec, 1981). The message that subsequently resulted in wide acceptance for establishing the Yosemite National Park, was framed in an appealing way, applying the essay format rather than a persuasive discourse and using a voice in the text was sympathetic so that the readers tended to affiliate to it. People were touched emotionally, and felt a social responsibility and therefore wanted to take action to preserve the landscape they had read about. The author, John Muir, can be described as the first to get support for preservation of wilderness. Another American study of a more recent date investigates how environmental issues are reframed rhetorically to receive interest by society (Schultz & Zelezny, 2003). Their recipe is to emphasize the arguments that are the most congruent with general values in a society. In concrete terms for their American culture it is easier to get through when the arguments for environment concerns appeal to the self-enhancing side of people's life goals.

The interface between society and nature is in the focus of many studies, i.e. both how society impacts nature and nature society (Worster, 1996). In a study analysing the introduction of the concept biodiversity into Swedish forestry debate, the author concludes that it is not the values that have shifted but *the way the values were negotiated* (Lisberg Jensen, 2000). Lisberg Jensen clarifies that nature or any other physical phenomenon is not in itself created by the words used to talk about it. However, actions to deal with such an environmental problem rely on the social construction of the problem, which is created partly by discourse and partly through interaction with others. Even the physical reality is partly a result of previous human activities, made in a socio economic context (Lisberg Jensen, 2000). The

encounters between people produce and reproduce the perception of a phenomenon and have a conservative effect. In order to change these perceptions fundamentally either something exceptional must take place or several factors must interact in the same direction.

Focusing now on biodiversity specifically, there are a few inherent difficulties in arguing for biodiversity. In contrast to many other environmental issues such as global warming, the threats reported for humans in connection with the loss of biodiversity are less dramatically presented (Hannigan, 1995). Loss of biodiversity has been a side effect of the human success to achieve higher production of food and fibres (Firbank, 2005). Agriculture is in one sense to strive for the opposite to biodiversity, i.e. monocultures. Other obstacles to arguments for action are the uncertainty of the rate of distinction of species and of the appropriate measures to apply (Norton, 1986). Nevertheless, other factors were stronger and together made biodiversity an issue at the agenda.

During the 1970s the research had resulted in an amount of findings in the field of conservation biology, which is an applied science that apart from other natural science studies uses ecology per se as argument for conservation (Hannigan, 1995). The arguments for conserving biodiversity have later through the use of the concept *ecosystem services* come to include the economic value of the services that species as one part of biodiversity deliver to sustain human life on earth (Hannigan, 1995; Costanza *et al.*, 1997). Among the important ecosystem services are water purification, degradation and pollination. These potential economic values inferred that biodiversity became a socio political issue. A legal and organisational infrastructure developed in terms of organisations and a range of conventions (Hannigan, 1995). The critical mass of researchers and growing public awareness enabled the organisation of different venues for further development.

In 1986, in one of the international conferences covered by over a hundred universities and with researchers from different disciplines gathered, biodiversity was taken a step further on the public agenda (Hannigan, 1995). This was made when the organiser of the conference, Dr Walter G. Rosen introduced *biodiversity* as a simple and distinctive term for the public to remember it more easily (Wilson, 1994, p. 359). There were also a number of other persons operating pedagogically to spread the message and the interest grew. When Wilson edited a key collection of articles on biodiversity under the title *Biodiversity* in 1988, that became one of the bestselling books so far of the National Academic Press (Wilson, 1994, p. 358). In conclusion, when in 1992 the Convention on Biological Diversity

was presented in Rio there was already a political and medial preparedness to work with the new messages (Hannigan, 1995).

Biodiversity in the agricultural landscape dependent on management

Many endangered species are dependent on the management of the agricultural landscape. A recent Swedish study stated that biodiversity can be fully accounted for by differences in the landscape heterogeneity (Weibull, Östman & Granqvist, 2003). Farming systems traditionally contained a mix of crops, grassland, woodlands and semi-natural habitats, which enabled biodiversity at different levels. However, the rationalisations in agriculture, especially during the second half of the 20th century, have resulted in increased field sizes and standardizations and conversion of semi-natural habitats into arable land. Today this development at the expense of biodiversity loss is considered unacceptable (Firbank, 2005). Looking at the national level in Sweden, semi-natural pastures are among the biotopes that hold the highest biodiversity (Ingelög *et al.*, 1993). These biotopes have dramatically diminished. Today not more than a fourth of the semi-natural pastures and 1% of the meadows in the country still exist compared to the level in 1927 (SJV, 2004a, p.23)[4]. More than half of the threatened vascular plants are connected to the agricultural landscape (Gärdenfors, 2005) and a large part of these species are connected to semi-natural pastures and meadows. The semi-natural pastures are important for biodiversity in the agricultural landscape because of the continuous disturbances caused by the animals' grazing, tramping and faeces (Ekstam & Forshed, 1997; WWF, 2007).

Decreasing numbers of hectares of semi-natural pastures and decreased management of the land are viable threats to biodiversity. The future destiny of these species is dependent on continuous management accomplished by farmers. In a final report from a major Swedish research project within the framework of pasture management, the researchers argue for the benefits of combining the traditional "object perspective" focus has been on separated species or pastures with a landscape perspective (Lindborg *et al.*, 2006). A point of departure for the design of that research project has been that the

[4] To use a reference point that is nearly one hundred year back in time might seem appropriate for a conservationist with biodiversity and evolutionary perspectives. On the contrary, for someone with the changes in the agricultural political and technical developments in mind, it is obvious that those significant changes have had consequences to the landscape. Estimations of rate of decreasing biodiversity are often done from a conservationist perspective, also when the Swedish Board of Agriculture is the source of information, which is the case here.

management activities of a landscape have strong implications for the future values in it, where biodiversity is the first one mentioned. The study emphasises the importance of the farmer for future biodiversity, something which is also claimed in other research from international contexts (Juntti & Potter, 2002; Yliskylä-Peuralahti, 2003).

Whether there is an inherent and inevitable conflict between biodiversity measures and production has been the field of interest for conservationist researchers (Silvasti, 2003; Edvardsson, 2004; Firbank, 2005). In the agricultural landscape one question is how fulfil the desire of combining nature conservation and production of food and fibres. That question raises both scientific and pedagogic components. This discussion is often held in terms of ecosystems and their resilience linking ecological and social systems (Berkes, Folke & Colding, 1998; Folke, Colding & Berkes, 2003; Olsson, 2003). These dilemmas are at stake when biodiversity issues are being managed and implemented in the system of agriculture. The concept *nature conservation* has an inherent aspect of action within it, compared to *biodiversity* that is a description of a desired state. Acknowledging that management is needed, *nature conservation* is the concept preferably used throughout this thesis. The measures that farmers implement or are encouraged to implement will be referred to in alignment with the environmental quality objectives as *nature conservation management*.

Traditional methods in Sweden

Conservation goals can be reached through different measures. Often it is a combination of policy options which are used; legal restrictions, economic incentives, educational programmes, advisory services, and market solutions. Traditionally nature conservation issues have been put on the agenda by experts, i.e. conservationists, not by farmers, nor by politicians, or the public. This is also reflected in the Swedish governmental politics on nature conservation which have, over the last decades, applied a top-down approach, emphasizing scientific expertise to manage and protect valuable ecological systems (Swedish Gov. Bill, 1993/94:30; Swedish Gov. Bill 1996/97:75). This is manifested in a dominating discourse characterized by its tendencies to; (a) give ecologists and biologists the prerogative to define what is valuable and should be conserved, why and how, (b) exclude some stakeholders in taking an active part in the public discussion, (c) create a physical and a symbolic distance between man and nature (reserves, protecting nature from human activities, etc.), and (d) establish and support institutions which are to manage nature conservation mainly through regulatory measures and economic incentives. Such traditional discourse

might be called exclusive (Bergeå & Ljung, 2002), similar to what Tuler (2000) label an adversarial discourse in natural resource management. The agent responsible for the management of nature conservation is considered to be someone other than the farmer. On the contrary, the conservation has been presented as something that is taking place separate from the farming activities. In general, public and landowner[5] participation has not been perceived as important for successful conservation.

The Swedish Board of Agriculture responsible for the environmental objective "A varied agricultural landscape" has traditionally applied economic incentives or regulations as incentives. In the case of the commission to work with the environmental quality objective it has launched campaigns (*Markernas mångfald*, *Levande landskap*[6]) and organised competence development programmes and advisory activities. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency uses tools such as reserves, protected areas and national parks. The finance for nature conservation has increased during the 2000s. The majority of the money is used to compensate landowners in order to protect areas such as nature reserves and national parks. The amount of financial resources was doubled between year 2003 and 2006. The environmental subsidies in agriculture are another major investment. (SEPA, 2007).

The County Administrations can enforce regulations regarding certain types of activities that might endanger the environment. Such activities must be reported according to Environmental Code 12 chapter 6 §. The County Administrations and the Municipalities can establish nature reserves according to the Environmental Code 7 chapter 4 §. When establishing reserves, you implicitly declare that the preceding management has been a failure. These approaches of restrictions and control have caused reactions in Sweden that can be described in terms of violated integrity, violated autonomy and insufficiently declared acknowledgement (Ahnström & Hallgren, 2006). Farmers have a history of portraying themselves as victims of the system, of political reforms (Djurfeldt & Waldenström, 1999; Nordström Källström & Ljung, 2005), which nature conservation policy has had a tendency to reinforce.

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[5] Throughout the summary part of this thesis when I consequently talk about *farmers* I also include landowners in the group. Often in Sweden, these terms refer to the same people, although there are cases where the farmer is not the owner of the land or where the owner does not operate the farming activities. More importantly, the terms have different connotations. By choosing 'farmer', my purpose is to emphasise the connection to measures and also participation and learning. However, in contexts where I would like to allude to the aspects connected to ownership I explicitly use the term 'landowner' or similar.

[6] These campaigns were introduced within the KULM -program (SOU, 2003:105).

A new paradigm for conservation

Within the last decade the discussions about the management of protected areas have adopted a new paradigm. One of the dominating forms of conservation practices has been to protect pristine areas from the development caused by mankind. This approach has encountered many difficulties (Beresford & Phillips, 2000; Hiedanpää, 2002; Doremus, 2003; Siebert, Toogood & Knierim, 2006). Considerable amounts of money have been invested, but the approach falls short in the rate of success (Beresford & Phillips, 2000; Sauer, 2006). Despite legal protection, these areas are sometimes no more than "paper parks". Destructive activities are going on, management plans are lacking and the managerial skills are insufficient. Thus the competence claimed to be needed is not primarily biological, but how to work with people and business (EC, 2004). The deficiency in the implementation can be explained by the fact that the local people have not been allowed or invited to participate earlier in the process of formulating the aims and management strategies (van Woerkum, 2000; Selman, 2004; Schenk, Hunziker & Kienast, 2007). There is a lack of horizontal communication and the local people and communities are excluded from the programme (Beresford & Phillips, 2000). Areas that previously were considered pristine are now acknowledged to be the result of people's activities.

In the long run, when the pressure on the land will increase as an effect of a growing global population, the models for protected areas must rely on the interdependence between man and nature. People must be able to live alongside nature where people are integrated, not only tolerated (EC, 2004). This is the fundamental principle for the *Conservation model for the st century* that Beresford & Phillips launched in the George Wright Forum[7] in 2000. The new paradigm argues for a diversity of management forms where many stakeholders are involved (Doremus, 2003; Cocklin, Mautner & Dibden, 2007). The argument is the complex and interdependent relationship between man and nature. Dependence on the local and traditional experiences is important (Burgess, Clark & Harrison, 2000) and consequently on the local people and their sense of stewardship is emphasized. This calls for more emphasis on communication in the process (Appelstrand, 2002; Morris, 2006; Visser *et al.*, 2007). Some of the skills that Beresford & Phillips claim need to be developed are "communication, presentation, negotiating and mediation techniques" (Beresford & Phillips, 2000, p. 25).

[7] The George Wright Forum is a journal devoted to interdisciplinary inquiry about parks, protected areas, and cultural sites.

The traditional top-down approach is not completely dismissed, but the need to develop complementary approaches is emphasized. Public and landowner participation is now put at the fore; recreation and leisure are seen as necessary for long term public commitment to nature conservation; and the interest for new ways of organizing existing and new institutions, for instance through collaboration, are growing (O'Riordan *et al.*, 2002). Local participation is presented as one of the solutions well in alignment with such an ambition by many researchers (Harrison, Burgess & Clark, 1998; IEH, 2002; SEPA, 2003; Stenseke, 2006a)[8]. This is not just applicable in pristine areas, but also in the farmed landscape, partly because of the high biological values which thrive in such managed landscapes. Another reason for local participation in the farmed landscape is the immediate need to manage nature conservation alongside other already existing human activities. This new paradigm also has implications for the individual landowner and farmer as in the case of the Swedish cultural landscape *Öland* as described by Stenseke (2006a). The basic arguments for participation is that the process will be democratic, the decisions will benefit from experiences and knowledge of all participants and the long term effect will be better since participation leads to higher acceptance of a decision (Ebbesson, 1997; Ljung, 2001; Appelstrand, 2002).

In new Swedish policy documents (Swedish Gov., 2001/02:173; SEPA, 2003; Swedish Gov. Bill, 2004/05:150) dialogue, participation, local participation ("*lokalt deltagande*"), local anchorage ("*lokal förankring*") and local management ("*lokal förvaltning*") are put to the fore as approaches to nature conservation management. The ambitions are good, but what to include in the concepts is unclear. Thorell (2005) discusses landscape management in the name of "*lokal förankring"* and distinguishes two ways to use it with different meanings. Either there is focus on implementing the decisions at a local level, or local ideas and values are integrated in the entire process, earlier. Pimbert & Pretty (1997) as well as Selman (2004) suggest diverging the concept of participation into a continuum where the lowest level is synonymous to informing the public and the highest to self-mobilizing, where the process is driven independently from external actors. These concepts are further investigated in section 5.2.

Studies in environmental communication have investigated, described and clamoured for stakeholder collaboration to find ways to manage these different processes. In this sense, environmental communication can be

[8] There are many concepts that work in the same direction, but which emphasize slightly different aspects and are partly overlapping: Collaborative learning, social learning, co-management, implementation, common good, adaptive management.

described as explicitly normative with instrumental functions (Depoe & Delicath, 2004). The means to achieve this is through communication, interaction and learning. There is however, another ambition in environmental communication, which is to investigate the constitutive function within communication (Depoe & Delicath, 2004). This would explain not just *what* actions should be done and *why*, but also *how* they should be done as well as their constitutive effects. The need to combine different approaches in environmental work is the conclusion from a multidisciplinary research programme (The Mountain *Mistra* Programme) with the aim to find strategies for sustainable management of resources in the Swedish mountain region (Esselin & Ljung, 2006).

Extension as a means of facilitating change

Nature conservation, as well as other environmental issues, have been dealt with in connection with agricultural activities through extension services. Leeuwis (2004) defines extension as "a series of embedded communicative interventions that are meant, among others, to develop and/or induce innovations which supposedly help to resolve (usually multi-actor) problematic situations" (p. 27). Especially within agriculture institutionalised and state financed extension has been instrumental in the continuous development of the sector. Societal objectives and new policies have been implemented through extension programmes, with more or less success (Röling, 1988). Nevertheless, the role of extension services in agriculture has undergone several shifts ever since it was established as an organised human activity more than 150 years ago (Jones & Garforth, 1997). Extension started as a service for spreading information that was generated at the universities. This idea is still reflected in the concept of extension itself: The purpose was to reach out to the farmers with the new findings and provide them with the skills needed to develop agriculture. *The diffusion of innovation model* that categorizes farmers into different groups depending on how they adopt to innovations (Rogers, 1962) was earlier dominating for how the commission of the extension services was to be carried out. This model has later on been criticized (see Röling, 1988; van den Ban & Hawkins, 1996; Ison & Russell, 2000; Leeuwis, 1993, 1995, 2004, among others) for having a top-down approach and presupposing that all farmers would develop in the same direction. These ideas might sound strange today but nevertheless, according to Leeuwis (2004), still influence agricultural activities.

Extension has a normative dimension: Most extension services are built on the belief that there are things that should be learned that will facilitate change in agriculture. Generally you have to adjust your message to your

target group, and start from their definition of the problem. There might of course be cases where the supposed target group is totally unfamiliar with or indifferent to the issue. The pedagogical challenge is then to plant the seed of interest that will grow to something viable enough from which to start the discussion. However, the community of actors engaged in agricultural extension have realised that the problems of management are complex and often involve many stakeholders, simple solutions do not exist (Leeuwis & Pyburn, 2002). Instead, innovative measures must be searched for more broadly. It is not necessarily the case that the adviser as an expert is the one who has the best answer. Often the farmer has a unique competence when it comes to interpreting information, testing its relevance and implementing suggested measures on farm level. There might also be other obstacles to realise desired changes than the level of knowledge of the farmer or other groups. Learning is reframed as a means for fruitful collaboration when involving many stakeholders. In a world where farmers are seen as knowledgeable actors and simultaneously autonomous more and more integrated into the socio-economic web of the global economy, the traditional top-down model of extension becomes obsolete. Instead, one has to find new ways to – in co-operation – develop relevant skills to meet future challenges in agriculture[9]

Consequently, the research over the past decades has been concerned with concepts like social and collaborative learning, participation and action research. There has also been a shift in the research field towards social constructionism, interpersonal communication, counselling and adult education (Long, 1990; van den Ban & Hawkins, 1996; Johansson, 1997; Röling & Wagemakers, 1998; Ison & Russell, 2000; Waldenström, 2001; Leeuwis, 2004). The concept of social learning has in the latest decade been prevalent in the field of agricultural extension research (Aarts, 1998; Röling & Wagemakers, 1998; Leeuwis & Pyburn, 2002; Leeuwis, 2004). Leeuwis' studies conclude that joint reflection and discussions are recommended to achieve learning (Leeuwis, 2004). This has even resulted in a new model which has been recommended as an explanation of what communication is, and where the negotiating within networks is in focus (Leeuwis, 2004). The importance of reaching a shared understanding of the farmers' and advisers' respective roles and aims is stressed by Waldenström (2001) who points to the need to establish a "dialogical space" in which actors can reflect over and

[9] These ideas behind extension can be described as overcoming obstacles in one way or another when the involved participants collaborate. The title of the thesis is inspired by these ideas, which are reflected in an expression used in some sports for managing how to pass an obstacle: To negotiate fences.

explore possible actions. Dialogue as a means for social learning is in the forefront of research on agricultural extension.

In accordance with the change in the ideas behind extension, the role of the adviser has shifted from being a messenger of information to someone with whom you can discuss and learn. However, the overall aim is still to support the farmers to make decisions and to accomplish desired changes in agriculture, regardless of whether the needs are those of the farmers or the society. Because of the last years' focus on participatory approaches, the facilitating skills of the adviser have been in focus. It has raised demands on new communicative approaches and an adaptive pedagogy. However, advisory activities about nature conservation in Sweden today are primarily financed by the state and accomplished mostly on single instances of encounters between farmer and adviser. This makes it harder for the participants to build up a relationship and trust in the advisory situation, especially when the encounters have dimensions of both discussion and inspection, as will be described later on. The individual face-to-face encounter is nevertheless important (Schenk, Hunziker & Kienast, 2007).

When face-to-face encounters between farmer and adviser are referred to the term *advisory encounter* is used. When more generally describing the system of practices organised by the adviser to enable learning, the term *advisory activity* is used. There are several reasons for abandoning the term extension. "Advice" is the more general term used in other fields, and parallels will be drawn to these. As will be obvious to the reader as the picture develops, the activity in focus here comprises important differences compared to what is generally described as agricultural extension today (Leeuwis, 2004). "Advisory activity" and "adviser" are the words used by the institution when referring to the activity and person respectively.

Management plans and advisory encounters as an instrument

As a way to implement the environmental objectives, there is an incentive from year 2000 to reward farmers whose work is in alignment with the environmental quality objectives (SFS, 2000:577). This is made within the Swedish rural development programme ("*Miljö- och landsbygdsprogram för Sverige år 2000-2006*", "*LBU-programmet*"), based on the EU regulations 1257/99 and 817/04. Part of the programme during this period was the campaign Levande Landskap[10] with 30 million Swedish crowns allocated

[10] The Swedish name of the campaign contains an interesting ambiguity that is hard to translate into English: It has the meaning of "Living landscapes" as well as "Landscapes which are alive".

every year (SJV, 2004a, p. 30). Another part, which is also financed by the state, are subsidies to compensate farmers for their work with nature conservation ("*Miljöersättningar*"). In 2004 (the year when the empirical data of this study was collected) application for payment was made for 464 300 hectares (SJV, 2005, p. 12) of semi-natural pastures and mown meadows. The number of hectares that actually were registered for environmental support the same year was 408 656 (SCB, 2005, p. 141). Translated into percentage, this means that more than 80% of the land in that category received subsidy (SJV, 2004a, p. 26). For the year 2004, 656 million Swedish crowns were paid for the environmental subsidy for semi-natural pastures and meadows until March 2005 (SCB, 2005, p. 142). Internationally, the expences for agri-environmental payments have strongly increased over the lact decade, both in absolute and relative terms (OECD, 2003). However, it is contested whether financial incentives are strong enough to persuade farmers to apply these schemes, or if they can be of partial importance only (Møller Madsen, 2003; Burton, 2004; Siebert, Toogood & Knierim, 2006; Schenk, Huziker & Kienast, 2007).

The principle has been to give a higher amount of money for pastures where the nature values are particularly high. Accordingly, there was a sum of 1000 Swedish crowns per hectare for the basic level ("*grundersättning*"), and 1400 Swedish crowns per hectare extra for the land with higher nature values ("*tilläggsersättning*") (SJV, 2004b, p. 12). It is the farmer who is responsible to send in an application for this. On approximately 160 500 hectares the farmer received the higher level of subsidy (SJV, 2005, p. 12). However, this higher level of nature values is also connected to a higher level of responsibility for the management in terms of measures that must or must not be made. Therefore specialised management plans ("*åtgärdsplaner*") are made for the land within the higher subsidy level. In the management plans, the conditions that must be fulfilled during the whole five year period of the undertaking are established, but they also contain tips for better management that are voluntary.

The management plans are established by the County Administration. For a majority[11] of the plans the establishment was preceded by a field visit at the farm where the representative from the County Administration both assessed if the land qualified for the higher level of subsidy and gave advice. The production of the management plans has mostly been financed by KULM-money, motivated by the claim that the establishment of management plan will result in competence development of the farmer in

[11] 95% according to a sample from the Swedish Board of agriculture (SJV, 2004a, p. 39).

how to execute measures in the best environmental way (SJV, 2004a, p. 31). Turning it the other way round, participation and learning are essential components in the advisory encounters. It is from these advisory encounters that the major part of the empirical material within this thesis originates. Considerable amounts of money are invested in order to achieve these objectives (SJV, 2004b; SJVFS, 2001; SFS, 2000:577). Between year 2000 and 2003 more than 20 000 management plans have been produced to a cost of 94 million Swedish crowns (SJV, 2004a, p. 25). Every year the County Administration makes inspections on a sample of the farms within a system to check that the financial resources are spent appropriately. The most important means for the competence development are advisory visits, and the resulting management plans.

Internationally these kinds of schemes have received a moderate appreciation by farmers. Firstly, the amount of paper work on the farms has increased due to the administration of the schemes and subsidies (Kaljonen, 2006; Morris, 2006), which in the Finnish context is claimed to undervalue the more accepted hard work of the farmer (Silvasti, 2003; Kaljonen, 2006). Secondly, policies inherently presuppose the farmers are primarily food producers, who need payments to enhance biodiversity or else they would exploit it (Kaljonen, 2006), and whose knowledge and autonomy is challenged (Burgess, Clark & Harrison, 2000; Morris, 2006). Thirdly, the design of many programmes can be questioned since they tend to give priority to universal, scientific knowledge instead of local and contextual (Burgess, Clark & Harrison, 2000; Kaljonen, 2006).

The Swedish Board of Agriculture has concluded that the management plans have been acknowledged by the farmers (SJV, 2004a). However, farmers have different demands on advisory activities that are free of charge compared to activities they pay for, partly because they do not know what demands they can put on advisory activities that are free of charge (SJV, 2003a). Statistics based on the answers by the farmers in a survey also claim that the encounter has a positive impact on the farmer's understanding and usefulness of the management plan (SJV, 2003b). In the survey, 46% of the farmers admitted they had learnt something new by the visit free of charge or the management plan (SJV, 2004b, p. 39). However, what the farmers learned and how they learned it is not accounted for, nor why more than half of the farmers did not affirm the question.

The encounter between the adviser and the farmer is an important meeting since it is the venue for the realisation of the nature conservation policies (Harrison, Burgess & Clark, 1998; Cooper, 1999; Juntti & Potter, 2002; Siebert, Toogood & Knierim, 2006). There are statistics on the

number of farmers affected, the amount of land and number of management plans produced. To what extent that actually results in changed farming practices can be questioned (Kaljonen, 2006). Still, individually tailored advice at the farm is considered highly powerful (Smallshire, Robertson & Thompson, 2004). The interesting thing must be to understand more about the content, meaning and quality of the encounter to understand in what terms these encounters make a crucial difference, i.e. to focus on the interaction between the farmer and adviser during these encounters.

The powerful adviser as street-level bureaucrat

The adviser as described above has to act according to a commission, regulation and policies. In that sense the adviser can be considered a bureaucrat. Traditionally in an organised society, the politicians make the decisions and then the bureaucrats are supposed to implement the decisions. In the nature conservation issues concerning the agriculture, much of the responsibility falls on the Swedish Board of Agriculture and is then further delegated to the County Administrations. The institutional representative (i.e. the bureaucrat or in this case the adviser) of the County Administration can be considered as nothing more than an extension of the state and the politics, who unreflectively implements the formulated ambitions. This picture, however, has been challenged by the political scientist Michael Lipsky who has turned the top-down approach upside down. He calls the institutional representatives *street-level bureaucrats* and claims they are the ones that virtually decide in the individual case how the policy should be interpreted and realised (Lipsky, 1980). The freedom is referred to as *space for action*, and is a prerequisite for the street-level bureaucrat, however small. The street-level bureaucrats develop action strategies in order to cope with the conflicts, uncertainty and freedom within the situation connected to the typical goals. In this sense, even the so called top-down situations can be seen as negotiations, where the bureaucrats have to communicate to be able to accomplish their commission. The encounter between the adviser and the farmer as described so far in the thesis is a good match for the criteria for situations where Lipsky's theory has been applied.

The theories of Lipsky are mostly applied on cases of inspection in different contexts, but only in few cases of agri-environmental schemes (see Cooper, 1999; Juntti & Potter, 2002). However, these studies propose a changed perspective on the role of nature-conservation advisers operating in situations restricted and regulated in different ways, at the same time as they need to handle local circumstances and high levels of uncertainty.

The role of this study

To conclude, nature conservation can be seen as trapped between a traditional top-down approach in terms of implementing the environmental quality objectives into agriculture, and the new paradigm of participation, both in society at large and more specifically in agricultural extension. Implementing the ideas about biodiversity and high nature values, which The Swedish Board of Agriculture and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency are responsible for, implies a top-down perspective where the role of the expert is emphasized. Another dilemma to be addressed is beyond the implementation at the local level. It has been established that the traditional top-down approaches do not lead to a long-term commitment that will guarantee the conservation of biodiversity managed by engaged people. The new participatory paradigm for nature conservation presents another method that demands more communicative skills on the institutional representative and emphasizes the knowledge and experiences of the local people. The arguments rely both on seeing the advisers from different organisations as street-level bureaucrats who have the possibility to adjust the policy to the local prerequisites, and on the theories of local participation where the adviser is one of the actors, the farmer another, where the learning and sharing of perspectives are essential components. Both these arguments for successful nature conservation lead to expectations of the advisory situation to be the encounter where the different perspectives will be realised and the policies manifested.

The movement, policy and institutions around nature conservation have opened up for a range of methodological perspectives about how to find approaches to manage the dilemmas. The role of the encounter and the communication therein is claimed to be of great importance. Systematic empirical studies of how these discussions are carried out by the farmer and the adviser are lacking. Given the powerful force of these encounters it is considered necessary that they are investigated. To be able to improve the way nature conservation mattes are managed, we need to know more about how people handle these dilemmas through communication. A communicative perspective with focus on the interactional level is therefore suggested in this thesis. This way we will learn more about what actually happens and may achieve an understanding that will help to develop the competence necessary to cope with future demands on nature conservation.

3 Epistemological platform

This chapter is called the epistemological platform to highlight that this is the foundation of the overall approach in this thesis in environmental communication. This chapter more than the others, is supposed to establish what we take for granted today. These ideas have influenced the overall research process and design.

3.1 Social actors in a socially constructed world

The sociologist Erwing Goffman's way of describing people is to talk about them as actors. Man as an active agent has its roots in Blumer's coining of the term symbolic interactionism. People are considered as acting subjects in an environment of other acting subjects. Although acting in an environment where structures are present, the focus is on how the individuals take each other into account and carry out actions in their absolute reality. Although the structures just like the material world constitute frames for the actions it is how people experience them and interpret them, that has an impact on what people eventually decide to do in that very situation.

The world around us is not only a material world. Through agreements over the years, people have agreed upon rules for understanding the world around them - ways of structuring and organising the things they perceive (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In this endeavour, language has been a necessary tool (Searle, 1995). This is especially valid for *institutional facts* (Searle, 1995, p. 15), i.e. facts that are true because of agreements made by people. In other words, these facts are fully dependent on whether people are competent and able to communicate with each other. An example of such a socially constructed phenomenon is the environmental objectives, which also implicates the importance of increasing the discursive consciousness in order for their prospects to be fulfilled. It is not until they

are filled with meaning by the actors' use of them, that they become viable. This is the argument to study these interactions.

It is in inter-subjective interaction that we share meanings, agreements and can process things. Altogether these abilities and actions qualify us as human beings and members of society. These instances of interaction can be looked upon as society's fundamentals. Through interaction with others people interpret the surrounding world. The material world around us is given meaning through the categories applied to them. These meanings might to a certain extent be individual, but for us to be able to act in a meaningful way towards other people in a situation where actions get an appropriate response, they are adopted continuously in interaction with others. Hence, the basis for our actions can be explained as the relationist perspective (Israel, 1981). Part of the point is that people can have multiple perspectives also within the same situation (Wicklund, 1999). That individuals can shift perspectives is a prerequisite for communication and (collaborative) learning in the situation (Ljung, 2001).

A result of sharing the needs and experiences with each other is the welfare state of today and the systems created to support the individual. An example of this is how farmers today are not only dependent on their individual measures and exposure to weather and so forth, but also to get funding, support and advice from various organisations. As such they constitute parts of a bigger system of politics. Interviews with farmers (Nordström Källström, 2002) demonstrate the fact that many farmers today experience that their motives and ambitions are in collision with surrounding administrative systems impinged upon them. This is part of the inspiration for this study. The phenomena that are investigated here can be seen as reactions to these experiences.

We are products of all the encounters we have gone through, all the people we have met and the situations we have been through. Some encounters have had a greater impact on us than others, but to some extent they all have formed us into the persons we currently are. In this sense we are all echoes of the interactions in which we have participated. Not only have we been shaped by others, we have also influenced these interactions and other persons by the same means.

3.2 Communication as the prerequisite and means for acting in the world

The word *communicate* has its origin in the Latin word "*communicare*" that means *doing common*. I would like to benefit from the ambivalent interpretation I see of this word by highlighting two different aspects of it. The meaning can both be interpreted as describing the way something is done, i.e. as a co-construction and as the result of sharing something, that is shared understanding. Thus - ironic as it may seem - the meaning of communication is ambiguous. Sometimes the word *interaction* is used almost synonymously with communication as within symbolic interactionism.

The reason why we communicate is that we rely on being able to understand each other. This is called the *assumption of inter-subjectivity* (Rommetviet, 1974). It does not mean that the subjects who communicate will have the same opinion, but that they will share experience of life and how to use symbols well enough to believe that the communicative act will result in sharing the other's perspective. Another principle force in people's persistence in mutual engagement and communication, is that we believe there are new ideas of interest with which we can become familiar through the means of exchange (Linell & Luckmann, 1991).

Communication is something humans do together. The aim does not necessarily need to be a consensus or affiliation between the interactants, but to reach understanding. The expression "successful communication" is a problematic combination of words since there is a confusing undertone of assessing the result of the communicative act as mere affiliation. An example will illustrate the problem embedded in this expression. Suppose you would like to humiliate the person in front of you. You make your attempt and receive exactly the kind of negative reaction you expected. That communicative act according to the present definition can be considered a very successful one since the interactants succeeded in taking the other's perspective. It is even more successful from a *communicative* perspective than if the person meant to be humiliated walked away quite happily. However, from a relational perspective that communicative act has resulted in feelings of the interactants that in most situations would be considered detrimental. So a successful communicative act must be when the actions get a relevant response. Hence, the concept is descriptive rather than normative.

There are reductionist models that have been used in extension where the communication is described as a process where one of the participants is called the sender of information and the part that is hit by the message is

called the receiver, see for example the Shannon-Weaver model (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). The model is focusing the transaction of information. The shortcomings in taking the humans into account in this type of models have been extensively described in the literature. Communication is here seen rather as a collaborative act where all actors participate and are active, although their production of words can differ during the course. What happens is described as actions that are produced through the means of words accompanied by non-verbal actions and the other participant (who for the moment is the quiet one) has an influence over what happens through the response given. Simultaneously the first person can react upon this response by adjusting his actions. When trying to explain why people do not understand each other, the challenge is to find reasons for this rather than repudiating it as noise, which is the explanation proposed by the Shannon-Weaver model.

According to the theory of Coordinated Management of Meaning (Pearce & Cronen, 1980) social realities are constructed by persons in interaction. People want to understand what is going on and apply certain rules in order to figure things out. This is done through communication. In that sense communication is a combination of the content and relationship; about what and how something is said (Griffin, 1997). What people do is a result of how they understand the situation and then deciding what rules are appropriate. According to this theory, people use rules to communicate: Constitutive rules that are rules to interpret meaning and regulative rules that decide how we respond and behave (Pearce & Cronen, 1980). Asplund (1987) argues that people are inherently *socially responsive*, i.e. that the normal situation is that we communicate with each other. The avoidance of a response demands a sophisticated consciousness and attention towards the other participant, and therefore can be described as a *coordinated action* between the participants. According to Watzlawick (Watzlawick, Weakland & Fisch, 1974) one cannot *not* communicate, since all behaviour is a kind of communication. This statement challenges that communication pre-supposes two parties, which is the basis for this thesis. As I understand Watzlawick, his concept *communicate* could be used interchangeably with 'inform' or 'send signals'. Given this, I agree that everything we do - whether it is done verbally, non-verbally or is the absence of something - constitutes the object of interpretation for others. However, there is an analytical point in being able to differentiate between informing someone and doing things together. The latter activity can be called *to communicate* or *to interact*. By using 'interaction' it will be demonstrated here that the focus is on the active

aspect, which is also suitable for the aim and direction of the thesis and will have implications for the applied method.

Direct interaction between people is the primordial site for sociality (Schegloff, 1987). There are theories, which in a unique way combine the actions of people with tracing these down to a detailed level which is possible to analyse. Talk is considered a means to accomplish actions, and people make actions by using words accompanied by non-verbal actions. This is referred to as *talk embedded in action*. The action performed is interpreted by the response received from the other participants. Based on the reaction from the other participant, you understand what you have achieved.

Given the aim to understand interaction, it should now be clear to the reader that Habermas' ideal speech situation is of minor relevance for this particular work (Habermas, 1995). Habermas describes an ideal situation where all the interactants can express their thoughts and will be listened to independently of status and position. In *the ideal speech situation* it is the power of the argument that is the basis for assessing a contribution to the conversation. This theory should be understood against the background of Habermas' theories on deliberative democracy. This is of relevance when aiming to create a vision that could be shared among the participants in work with democracy and participation. For the situation described in the introduction of this thesis part of the problem is the top-down approach of the national environmental objectives. The approach in this thesis is to study instances where these ambitions are negotiated in practice and to discuss concrete and naturally occurring examples of talk-in-interaction that will demonstrate the dynamic and structure of such negotiations. For this purpose the theory of Habermas is not very helpful. It does not offer a concrete method to study talk-in-interaction and it is normative rather than descriptive.

3.2.1 Discursive consciousness

When people interact they pay attention to the response their actions receive from the other interactants. Dependent on how they interpret this they make decisions on how to continue to achieve understanding. These decisions are made more or less consciously. How to act is not something people find problematic, but how they do it they have difficulties in verbalising. This is both true for very practical operations where it is often referred to as tacit knowledge. Giddens calls this *practical consciousness*. There is also a *discursive consciousness* where the actor can talk about what she does. Quoting Giddens, "discursive consciousness refers to the understanding or

knowledge which the agent achieves by reflecting upon his or her actions" (2000, p. 5). The participants constantly have choices of what to do and how. However, people are often *discursively unconscious* of what they do to make someone react in a certain way. The point in conversation analysis, as will be explained in chapter 4, is that these small nuances in the formulations really matter to the participants, although they might not themselves be able to tell how (Čmejrková & Prevignano, 2003, p. 26; Bolden, 2006). We can analyse things that the participants do by interaction analysis and understand how people do it. To be able to discover this, we must study it on a detailed level. This study aims to increase the readers' consciousness of the consequences of how things are done, and of the choices that can be made.

3.2.2 The power of denominating

For their actions people are more dependent on interpretations of the surrounding world than on the material world *per se* as the social philosopher Mead expressed it (Månsson, 2003, p. 177). Concepts need to be filled with content and put into a discourse to achieve meaning and to be possible to apply. This is what we do constantly when we interact. By giving something a specific name and talking about it – consciously or not – in a specific context and fashion, the understanding of it is powerfully guided in a certain direction. This means that the forms we use to talk about something also have implications for what will be said about it in terms of the content. In that sense form and content are interdependent.

The philosopher Michael Foucault is considered the father of discourse analysis. The point of departure is that the way we talk about something is unavoidably dependent on our perspectives, identities and the situation, and also actively shapes how we reconstruct these. This is a social, constructivist standpoint that underpins all types of discourse analysis. Then there is a significant difference between the researchers who focus on the active use of the discourse of the individuals, which is done in discursive psychology and the discourse theorists who see the subjects as restricted by the discourses (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, p. 14). Foucault describes *discursive practices* as what we do when we formulate something in words and that determines the ways we will think about it. He has also investigated the hidden use of power. His theories are too extensive to be commented on here. However, he expresses the importance in and power of using categories. Mäkitalo has further investigated the negotiations of categories in interactions between job applicants and vocational guidance officers in a public employment agency. She presents a somewhat different perspective on categories by describing them as "flexible tools that allow the participants

to recontextualize and negotiate the issues at stake" (Mäkitalo, 2003, p. 495). It is this idea that will be affiliated to and used in this analysis where the participants will be described as negotiating the meaning of the concepts and categories through interaction.

3.3 The interdependence between action and structure

Traditionally sociologists have been divided into two groups: The ones who focus the action and those who focus the structure. Both groups acknowledge the other perspective, but what is debated is which one of the perspectives that gives the preconditions for the other, and hence is the most fruitful to study. During the last decades, however, sociological theories have been characterised by the attempts to link the two levels. There are also alternative ways of separating the sociological schools in mutual, but contrasting relationships: concrete - abstract, micro - macro, specific - general. The present point of departure is the first of these pairs respectively. However, the most fruitful relationship for this study is *action – structure*. This choice is inspired by Giddens' structuration theory and in alignment with symbolic interactionism and conversation analysis. Giddens treats structure and agency as mutually constitutive in an asymmetric way, i.e. he privileges agency before structure (Giddens, 1984). Here action and structure is seen as a dualism where they are logically exclusive (Jessop, 2001). This means that structure is examined in relation to action and action in relation to structure. For the analysis you can not bracket either of them, since they are both present simultaneously in any given situation (Hay, 2002). The point in this study is to acknowledge the interrelation and mutual interdependence between action and structure. This will be done on three different levels. The first level that has been described above is the interdependence between actor and structure at a general *macro level* where questions of determinism and independence are at stake (Mortensen, 1991). This level is touched upon in paper II where the relation between a policy and the concerns about getting it realised is discussed.

Secondly, it is possible to see the actions at the *situational level* in relation to the advisory activity about nature conservation. The structural preconditions inherent in the organisational arrangement have to be handled in that very situation by the actors. To what extent the actors use the space for action or become restricted by it varies. That situation can be considered a mirror of the structure, but also the arena where the structure, concepts and rules are negotiated and given meaning in practice. By studying the local negotiations in the interaction of the encounters, we learn about the

structure. People make actions through their way of interacting, actions that together constitute activities. In the case of this thesis, the institutional activity of an advisory encounter is made up by these actions - actions that are constituted by the institutional prerequisites and reconstitute the institutional activity. Here the advisory encounter is considered as the instance where the intentions of politics are to be realised by the affected people. Therefore the encounter is the instance where the participants are to negotiate the meaning of not just the policies and the rules, but of all the concepts and categories used. In these interactions the participants also co-construct their identities towards each other. In this particular case nature conservation advisory activities as part of the policies of the environmental objectives and the policy of participation will be described through analysing the actions that are realising and concretizing it. Although the power and potential in what the interactants can do in interaction is acknowledged, there is no ambition to understand individual people or their incentives. In the latter case conducting a study based on in-depth interviews would be the appropriate methodological choice. The ambition in sthis study is rather to understand activities in general and nature conservation encounters in particular. I recognise the interest in the first chapter in Erving Goffman's *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 1959) that he, rather than aiming for studying the people and their situations, wants to study the situations and their people. What the participants do is considered an attempt to take the overall situation (including structure and previous actions) into account when producing actions in the local, situated context. That connects with the next level that is the institution of talk.

Thirdly, at the *micro level*, I am also oriented towards the dualism between action and structure. The micro level in this study is the conversation between the participants. The principal method in the thesis is conversation analysis, as will be further explored in next chapter. This method relies on and has charted some general principles for conversation between people, irrespective of the situation. A fundamental principle for understanding human interaction is that it is highly structured and follows some general principles (Heritage, 1984, p. 241). The orderliness of talk is dominating at the turn taking level (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). The rules enable us to make appropriate interpretations of what at first impression may seem chaotic and disordered. The participants as competent speakers are oriented towards these patterns, and interpret what has been said assuming that other participants are competent and thus follow the same principles. These patterns are used by the participants to interpret what others do and at the same time to make actions themselves. An example of this is that people talk

one at a time (see section 4.3). These rules are familiar to all speakers to the extent that we also know what it means to violate them, and when we violate them we are aware of it. When one of the participants dominates the interaction in terms of initiatives to elicit new topics, the participants consider that appropriate if the interaction takes place in an institutional setting like the advisory encounter. In this way while communicating people take the context into consideration, and at the same time contribute to the on-going evolvement of interaction (Heritage, 1984). Having said this, it is also clear within this perspective on communication, that communication is not deterministic, although relying on rules. This also has implications for the agency of the actions performed through communication in that it is seen as co-construction by everyone that is participating. In the same way this has implications for how the roles of the participants should be considered. Within this perspective the relevant roles are the ones that the participants negotiate through talk and are oriented towards as relevant in that interaction. At the micro level of the interaction there are structures that the participants orient towards at the same time as they through their actions, contribute to the evolving organisation of talk.

In one way or another the competent speakers figure out a way to handle the situation through interaction. The way this is done may be criticized when we see the effects in the interaction. However, what they did had its reasons given the situation, context and prerequisites. What people do can therefore be used as an indication of what the consequences of a policy or else is at the concrete level. Given that this is a fundamental principle in my approach, it must also guide the method and analysis. This requires a humble and open minded approach from the researcher. Instead of condemning what the participants do when it at a first glimpse may seem inappropriate, you recall that they are competent to act, (see section 4.3). This implies that the method needs to be inductive, i.e. examining the interaction and eliciting phenomena and situations that the participants themselves indicate are problematic in one way or another. It is also possible that you as an analyst react upon something when you see what the interactants do, and you try to understand what is going on. If you had chosen to ask the interactants about what they do, why and how, they would probably find it difficult to answer. The reason for this is that the interactants can do these things, but since they are not discursively conscious about *how* they do it, they can not express it in words. One of the aims of a study like this is to draw attention to matters which we have good reasons to believe are discursively unconscious to the participants, and to provide them with vocabulary to discuss their experience.

4 Methods

This chapter starts with a description of my demands on the methods chosen. I then present and critically reflect upon the overall research design of the studies comprised in the thesis, and link the different research questions and methods to the papers. The methods applied are presented as well as the considerations made. Since the study based on the advisory encounters is dominating the thesis, I present a more thorough explanation of the principles behind it, and the chapter ends with a separate account of how I proceeded in that study.

4.1 General demands on the method

We use methods to be able to answer our research questions given our epistemological platform. For this thesis the research methods are found within the realm of qualitative research, since the underlying problem comprises a number of complex relationships where people's actions are to be understood from the subjects' perspective (Bryman, 1989). All descriptions of a social world are bound to be restricted to a particular perspective. Our attempts to reproduce all aspects of reality will fail and instead we must rely on representations of reality (Hammersley, 1992). In social science it is hard and sometimes not relevant to distinguish reality in right or wrong. This is because there is not one single way of describing reality, which is a fundamental paragraph in social constructivist perspective. Therefore, a benchmark for assessing the quality of the account within social science is if it is *illustrating and makes you understand something new that enriches your view of the phenomenon*.

In qualitative research, understanding a phenomenon irrespectively of whether it is ubiquitous or unique, is paramount over knowing about the frequency of a phenomenon that you do not understand. Therefore it is not

necessarily the most relevant to investigate the frequency of doing something. An example of this comes from the ideas underlying one of the methods used: Conversation analysis (CA). Within this method there is a pronounced methodological principle which focuses on the *deviant cases* (Peräkylä, 1997, p. 210), i.e. the instances when a person's action differs from the conventional. Scrutinizing this can be a way to figure out how the same action is normally performed, it is a way of paying attention to relevant aspects that otherwise would have been hidden.

Qualitative research has often been criticised for contested reliability and validity. Silverman effectively motivates qualitative research by saying that previous qualitative studies already have "assembled a usable, cumulative body of knowledge", that is, we can rely on the usefulness of the approach based on previous experiences (Silverman, 1997, p. 1). Within qualitative research the ambition to produce high quality research can be explained by considering three different dimensions of truth: Correspondence, meaning, applicability (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 1994). This can be seen as an alternative to talking about reliability and validity. The *correspondence criterion* concerns how well the theory represents reality. The *meaning criterion* has its roots from Heidegger (1927) who searched for a deeper meaning than the evident one. In the *applicability or pragmatic dimension* the focus is on whether the results from the research are useful in practice. These three dimensions are all important in qualitative research, but the balance between them varies. One approach to meet these demands is methodological pluralism where different selected methods with strengths and weaknesses in combination result in more valid and reliable research. An alternative term for this is methodological triangulation (Stake, 1995). The approach in this study has been to choose a method depending on the questions in the different papers.

4.2 Research design: Presentation and critical reflections

A literature review was conducted to investigate what is known about farmers' attitudes towards nature conservation. More specifically, focus was on how agri-environmental schemes, as part of the incentive structure for change and action by society, affect farmers' willingness to implement actions in nature conservation issues. The study emphasized the importance of the contact with the representative of the agri-environmental scheme and of local adjustments. That was further investigated in the second study concerning the employees in a nature conservation organisation,

Upplandsstiftelsen[12], based on their experiences of using participatory approaches. With the aim and ambition to see more innovative ways of working with nature conservation the employees were interviewed in semi-structured interviews. The study investigated the employees' experiences of working with participation in nature conservation matters, and which possibilities they see in working with nature conservation management where farmers and landowners have a more active role to play. The interviewees emphasised the importance of communication, participation and learning. The design of the study enabled a comparison of the claims and the way these were formulated.

The next step was to study how the policies and claims exposed in the previous studies were carried out in authentic face-to-face advisory situations. The interaction was documented by means of video recording and analysed through conversation analysis. The encounter is considered a possible site for the study of how negotiations about nature conservation are handled in a real situation where a farmer and a representative of an organisation with an interest in nature conservation management meet and where there are expectations of participation and learning. This case study was to focus on an organisation that traditionally has been known to apply a top-down approach, the County Administration. This case may be understood as a critical case (Yin, 1994, p. 38). If participation and learning can be seen even in encounters performed by an institution, which is not pervaded by modern extension ideas, it is likely that the policy of participation and learning is implemented in many organisations. The County Administration has a tradition of working with extension as an implementation tool. To be able to achieve a larger collection of data, recordings of encounters with another advisory organisation, *Hushållnings-sällskapet*[13], were also made, since their commission shared the nature conservation issue. However, as the analytical work proceeded, it became clear that many of the phenomena that the participants were oriented towards were connected to the institutional frames of the encounters, and they differed in some important aspects, see section 4.4. For example, neither of the themes in paper III and IV were really applicable to the encounters with *Hushållningssällskapet,* i.e. nor the commission to find nature values good enough to fulfil the qualifications of the subsidy, nor the discussions about whether the applications were correctly made.

[12] *Upplandsstiftelsen* is an institution for nature conservation, outdoor life, and public health, named after the particular region, Uppland, where it is operating.

[13] The Swedish word for the organisation *Hushållningssällskapet* can be translated as *The Rural Economy and Agricultural Societies*.

Nevertheless, the abovementioned themes appeared to be of prime importance in the County-Administration organised encounters. Therefore, the analysis has been focused primarily on the encounters between farmers and advisers from the County Administration. The County Administration operates throughout the country, and is in charge of large financial means – thus being a very important actor in the field of nature management encounters with farmers, which is an argument in itself for this study. Continuous evaluations of the results of their activity are made by the Swedish Board of Agriculture. However, qualitative studies of how they carry out their activities in practice are lacking.

The research project has resulted in four papers and a general overview of the advisory encounters based on the collected empirical data. Figure 1 presents an overview of the connections between research questions, papers, data and applied methods.

If the study was ever to be redesigned, a larger corpus of data from the encounters with Hushållningssällskapet would be included to enable an interesting comparison with the County Administration of the possibilities for participation and learning, given the different organisational prerequisites. The possibility of interviewing all the participants in the encounters after the visits would be another desirable feature. Knowing more about how they experienced the encounter (for example from the participation and learning aspects) would give the researcher a chance to study the level of the participants' discursive consciousness. In addition, the interactional analyses could be compared with the participants' experiences and offer an opportunity for method triangulation, see section 4.4.

Traditionally within conversation analysis, pure sequential studies of the interaction are considered rich enough for making conclusions - it is more a matter of what type of conclusions you make. Further, the study of Upplandsstiftelsen, the organisation that is considered to be more participatory and flexible, could have given interesting results if the farmers' experiences had been included. However, the street-level bureaucracy angle of the paper that explicitly takes the institutional representative as point of departure, the bias is pronounced and a part of the research design. In chapter 9 some ideas for new research projects are formulated.

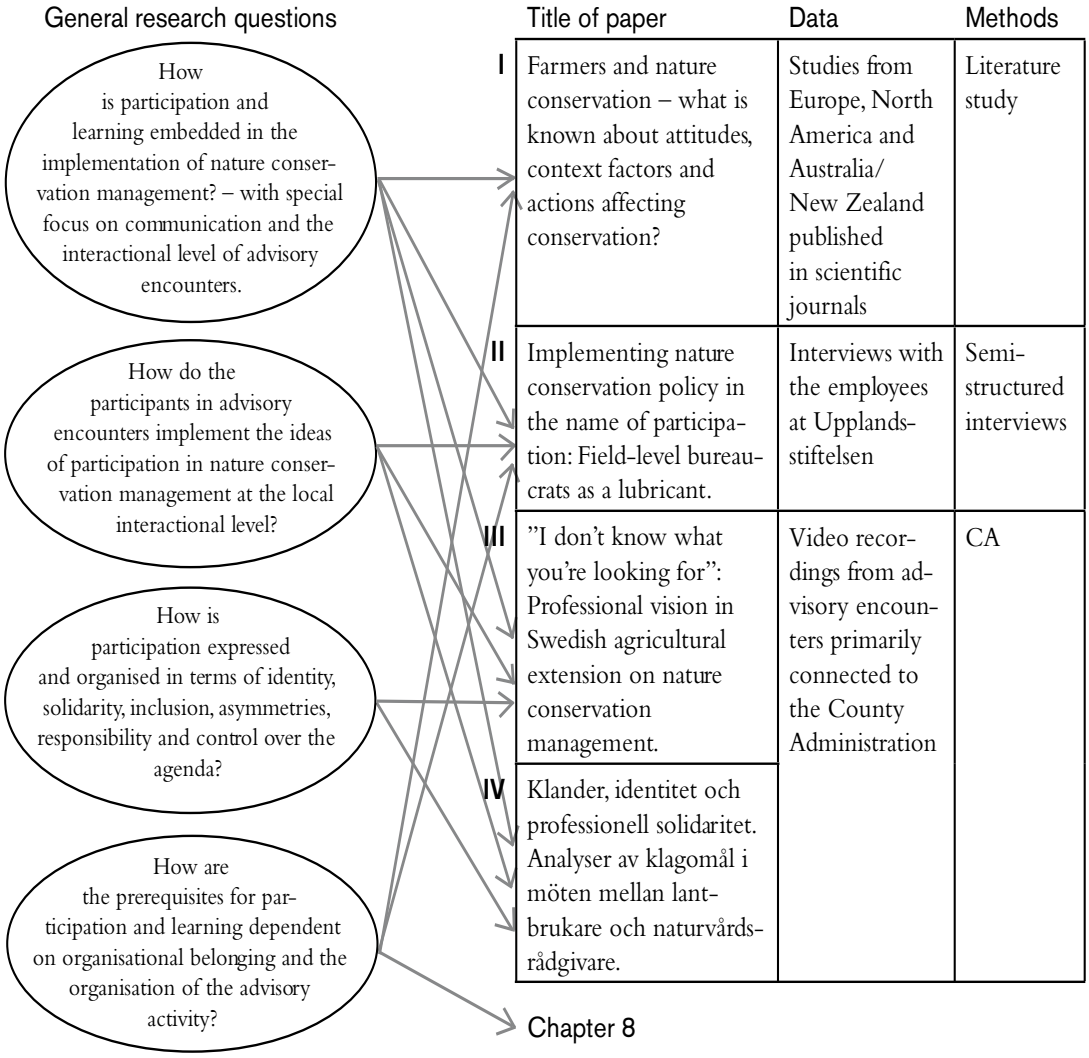

Figure 1: Overview of the included studies

4.2.1 Literature as data

The aim of the first paper was to understand the accumulated scientific knowledge about farmers' perception of nature conservation and how that is taken into account in policies and agri-environmental schemes. Since there were rather a lot of studies already performed, it was decided to use these articles as input to make an analysis of the pieces of work. In this sense the method was in alignment with grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), but where the data instead of being observations of people was observations

of articles. Glaser & Strauss argue that "every book, every magazine article, represents at least one person who is equivalent to the anthropologist's informant or the sociologist's interviewee" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 163).

As described in paper I the authors made an extensive literature search, interpreted data and synthesised it into ideas about how to develop the social level in the new programmes. The key words used for the search at the databases were *Attitudes*, *Perception*, *Feelings*, *Farmers*, *Nature* and *Nature Conservation*. In order to make the selection of studies standardized, the search was restricted to easily accessible peer reviewed journals. The rationale behind this choice was primarily to make the selection transparent and reliable for other researchers with easy access to these sources of information. For policy makers, who are also included in the target group for the paper, other sources of information might be more accessible and for example information from working papers or reports would potentially have a higher impact on the development of agri-environmental schemes. Hopefully, the findings from previous working papers and reports result in peer-reviewed papers, and hence eventually have been included in the study that way. Evidently, the design of the study is a compromise between using a maximum amount of data and a selection that is accessible for the researcher.

Included in the literature search were studies from Europe, North America and Australia/New Zealand that were published in scientific journals. The reason for the geographical limitation was an assumption that these regions would have structural and organisational preconditions similar to the area where these studies were conducted. This would increase the possibility of finding parallels.

4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

In paper II, semi-structured interviews are used. The interview is a conversation with a specific purpose: To learn about a phenomenon. The interview situation is considered a kind of institutional talk where the interviewer sets the agenda. In section 5.1 the features of institutional interaction and the constraints it has on the conversation is explained.

The semi-structured interview is a scientific study of the interviewee's experiences of a phenomenon. Making interviews imposes attention both on the dynamic and thematic dimensions of the conversation. As a researcher you have an initial idea of what you would like to do, which renders some questions relevant. One of the strengths of the semi-structured interview is that by avoiding imposing your themes on the interviewee, you have the chance to get an insight into the themes seen through the perspective of the

interviewee. This in turn can be used to deepen the knowledge of how the world is constructed in different categories according to the interviewee. Along the interview process as you get a better idea of the case, you are able to adjust your themes, further investigate something or pass over to another theme. In this sense the semi-structured interviews have similarities to the dynamics of ordinary, non-institutional conversations. Forcing the conversation into strict questions formulated in advance loses the flexibility of being able to concentrate on the topics that will give the best understanding of the crucial phenomenon. As an interviewer you take the dynamics of the conversation situation into account when you interpret the utterances. Facilitating a dynamic that is authentic in conversation will help the interviewee to feel comfortable and more willing to tell their stories.

Alvesson & Sköldberg (1994, p. 325) present a hierarchy useful for the interpretation of the utterances in an interview. In my words the corresponding questions are like this:

> What do the people say about the phenomenon?
> How can these utterances be interpreted?
> Is this in accordance with what they think or are there reasons for them to tell another story? And in that case what then is influencing what they do say? How can I avoid downplaying this by my way of influencing the interview situation, the interpretation and my account?

In this sense interpreting and reflecting are constantly important actions throughout the process of interviewing (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 1994).

Paper II is based on interviews with employees at Upplandsstiftelsen that in their daily work handle nature conservation management issues. The interviewees have several years of experiences in this organization, but also from other institutions. One can assume that people generally want to give a good impression of themselves and the institutions they represent (Alvesson, 1999). Interview situations are no exceptions. There might be reasons for the employees to adjust their stories in order to portray themselves as rational or morally accountable. The interviewees can even adjust their story to a political agenda, to suite their own aims or what they believe is the agenda for the interviewer (Alvesson, 1999). Additionally, as a professional you are part of an institutional practice where ways of talking about what you do is something you develop (Svensson, 1990). This was taken into account in the design of the interview guide and in the interpretation of the interviews. It was done by asking about *others*, asking for their *own experiences* and about *negative experiences*, when possible input from other sources was

sought. Thus, whether the interviewees actually do what they say or not has not been studied empirically, merely through secondary sources.

Interviews were made with all employees (with one exception) and one person who had been working for *Upplandsstiftelsen* for a ten year period now working in a project. In total this made 12 interviews. Each of them lasted for about one hour and started with a brief introductory talk where the aim of the study was described in general terms, as well as the prerequisites for participating in the study. Some topics were prepared for the interviewees. Since the employees have different backgrounds and assignments, the topics varied in importance and familiarity for the interviewees.

All interviews were taped, transcribed and analyzed. Since this study is mainly focused on the content, the transcription is on a word-by-word level, no further details as for conversation analytical studies. For a comparison see appendix 1. More specifically the usage of specific words, categories, core concepts, narratives, and how the employees identify and position themselves and others was analyzed. The analysis is presented on the basis of the hermeneutic interpretation made and the conceptual framework of street-level bureaucracy.

Before the interviews started the employees were informed that their organization as such was to be described and mentioned by name. They were also assured they would not be connected to any utterance as individuals. Quotes from the interviews are presented and translated into English. Here names of individuals, places or other information that could possibly reveal the identity of the person or expose other delicate issues are replaced. Minor simplifications of the quotes have also been made, to enable the understanding without presenting too much background information about the context.

4.2.3 Conversation analysis

The main focus of the thesis has been the actual interaction between farmer and adviser. That has important implications for the method. The method must be able to handle a relevant degree of complexity and detail, but still have the capacity to see to the entire situation and the context instead of narrowing it down to just a matter of details. The method must acknowledge that actions are performed in a context, but that they are also constructing the forthcoming context. The principal method in two of the four papers in the thesis, paper III and IV, is conversation analysis (henceforth CA).

The strength of CA is its capacity to understand actions that are taking place. CA has been acknowledged for its high qualities regarding validity (Peräkylä 1997, p. 216). To a very large extent the analyses can capture what has actually happened and *how* it happened. Additionally, since the basis for analysis is what the participants orient towards and how they demonstrate their understanding to the other participants, CA is said to give a picture of reality that is valid. Compared to interviews, the CA-researcher is not interfering with the participants, but let them carry on with their activities as authentically as possible. In that sense it does not force people to give politically accepted answers to questions. The authenticity in the situation is a guarantee that the participants act to achieve their aims during the encounter. In that sense their actions are considered honest, i.e. not designed for the researcher, but *for the situation* that is the researcher's focus.

Understanding the *intentions* of the participants is harder, and CA has only modest pretensions in that respect. Participants do have intentions underlying their actions but the actual motives are unavailable for analysis (Steensig, 2001). Interpretations based on intentionality and predetermined categories are avoided within CA since they are considered as blocking a closer analysis of the interaction in a specific situation (Steensig, 2001). The primary resource available both for the participants and the analyst is what the participants demonstrate towards each other. However, background information about the participants has implications for the actions of the participants. In order for the analyst to understand the interaction, some background information can be relevant but should be acknowledged when drawn upon (Steensig, 2001). An effect of this is that the analyst addresses the *how*-questions first, and then the *why*-questions, if ever (Silverman, 1999). This type of *why*-questions can be directed by qualitative in-depth interviews, but have been put aside in this study. The participants were not asked how they perceived the communicative situation, but part of CA is that the point of departure is the participants' understandings of the interaction as displayed in the interaction (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974, p. 728).

Something else that can be considered a constraint in CA is the fact that the analysts strive to keep close to the empirical data in their analyses and conclusions (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Heritage & Atkinson, 1984). That means that it is traditionally only legitimate to comment on what you can see in your data (Steensig, 2001, p. 39). This makes it hard to normatively make suggestions about changes. Paper III is an example of a more applied approach to this doctrine. In that paper a few recommendations based on the analysis are suggested. CA is suitable when

wanting to understand a practice, but to facilitate within the study is not an ambition per se in CA. However, using the results to inform participants and actors responsible for the activity in the long run, can stimulate change. This approach is useful in the field of environmental communication, where the actions at the micro level that create meaning and constitute activities have been given insufficient importance.

The video recordings of this study offer a uniquely rich material of data from a new context and activity, which has not been scrutinised by CA before. The audio visual devices enables the researcher to not just hear what the participants say, but how the talk is accompanied by non-verbal actions such as gestures, gazes and mimics. Scholars within the field of CA regularly gather in data sessions where data is presented and discussed[14]. These sessions are one way of coping with the reliability, since the interpretations of the interaction is discussed among the scholars with different backgrounds, experiences and degrees of involvement in the project. In this way, CA prioritizes the reliability in research higher than it is done in other types of qualitative research (Peräkylä, 1997, p. 202). The use of detailed transcripts enables future readers to judge the interpretations of the analyst. Due to ethical considerations towards the participants in the study it is not permitted here to give the readers free access to the video files. Otherwise this would have been a step further in the direction of open access for assessment of the study's findings.

The design and principles of CA make the conclusions hard to generalise. What you see is valid for that specific instance that you have studied. At the very detailed level, patterns and structures (like the turn-taking system) are possible to transfer irrespective of the context, see section 4.3. When applying CA to understand a practice or phenomenon, analyses are good tools to study how people perform actions and their consequences. My data consists of 35 hours of video recordings of the type of activity that I would like to understand. However, the number of encounters are only 18 and hence, all attempts to make quantitative generalisations would be a risky project. Additionally, the number of advisers in the study is only three. For more details concerning the division of the encounters following the advisers, see section 4.4. Having the perspective that interaction is a co-construction, there are 18 different combinations of farmer - adviser pairs. Anything that happens can be considered a result of their interaction, where personal patterns of behaviour are taken into account by the participants themselves. Working with qualitative methods, the representative aspect of

[14] I have participated in several data sessions and been a member in one group with sessions on a regular basis.

the data is not the only concern. The qualitative researcher however, is interested in whether the data will enable her to describe characteristic aspects of the encounters that may deepen the understanding of the activity.

4.3 Guiding principles for conversation analysis

I will take the opportunity to present Conversation analysis (CA) more thoroughly in the following, since the method so far is not applied on advisory activities in agriculture. The reader who is unfamiliar with CA will perhaps be struck by the relatively theoretical elements that follow below. The reason is that CA can be described as a method that relies on some specific theories on human conduct. To illustrate this I quote Ten Have's introduction to the ideas and evidence in CA research:

> "Many people who take a look at CA 'from the outside' are amazed by a number of superficial features of CA's practice. It seems to them that CA refuses to use available 'theories' of human conduct to ground or organize its arguments, or even to construct a 'theory' of its own. Furthermore, it seems unwilling to explain the phenomena it studies by invoking 'obvious' factors like basic properties of the participants or the institutional context of the interaction. And finally, it seems to be 'obsessed' with the details of its materials. These impressions are not too far off the mark, but the issue is why CA refuses to use or construct 'theories', why it refuses interaction-external explanations, and why it is obsessed with details. The short answer is that these refusals and this obsession are necessary in order to get a clear picture of CA's core phenomenon, the *in situ* organization of conduct, and especially talk-in-interaction." (Ten Have 2004, pp. 27-28).

This account will focus on the aspects that are considered especially important and interesting for the aim of this thesis.

CA started out as a branch of American sociology in the mid 1960s. The pioneers Sacks and Schegloff were interested in a wide range of theories within social science and were students at the department where Goffman started to study face-to-face interaction. They were also strongly influenced by Garfinkel's ethnomethodology. They ended up developing theories on the coordination and construction of actions as expressed in the production of talk. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson found out that talk is organised in sequences made up by turns, described as *the turn taking system* (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). Normally, there is one person speaking at the turn and that stretch of speech is followed by a turn from another speaker

(Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). The transition point where there is a change of speaker is called a transition-relevance place. There are different principles to select the next speaker. Sometimes these points are characterised by overlapped talk, sometimes by instances of silence.

The talk that develops is a result of all the participants' collaboration, i.e. *interaction*. This is one reason why CA prefers using the term interaction (or *talk-in-interaction*) rather than conversation. Another reason is that conversation (at least the very similar Swedish word "*conversation*") gives connotations to mundane small talk communication instead of a result of actions[15]. The term *talk-in-interactiom* is preferably used to indicate that this area has developed from a number of data corpora (Drew & Heritage 1992a, p. 4). These insights constitute an argument for why conversation analysts and I avoid using the term *speaker* and instead use the word *participant*. This avoids the unfortunate dichotomy between speaker and listener which is problematic outgoing from the perspective that interaction is a co-construction even when scrutinized at the most detailed level. Additionally, as will be described below, the term *participant* shifts the focus towards an acting person where also the non-verbal aspects are taken into account. See parallels to the discussion on communication and interaction in section 3.2.

The participants interpret what has been said previously and consider that the context for their own contribution. By their own contribution they display their understanding to the other participants. This has been described as *the proof procedure* (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974, pp. 728-729, Heritage 1984, p. 242). The participants themselves get a validation of whether they correctly understood the previous interaction and responded in a relevant way through the reaction of the subsequent contribution. This is also a validation to the analyst (Peräkylä, 1997), who takes as point of departure what people do, and which is interpreted as responses to what has previously been uttered.

Sometimes this system of how people talk is referred to as to *the turn-taking machinery*. The word *machinery* is here considered somewhat misleading, as it is associated to non-human activities. However, presumably it is meant to be interpreted as a set of actions that competent speakers engage in more or less unconsciously as long as everything works out smoothly. We have choices in what to do and how, but at the detailed turn-taking level we often are discursively unconscious of our actions.

The following example from one of the encounters shows how a negotiation is co-constructed at a level that would be hard to predict or

[15] Nielsen & Wagner (2007, p. 441) comment that the name *conversation analysis* is an effect of its early dominance of mundane everyday conversations.

explain without empirical data. The participants are the farmer (F) and the adviser (A). In this sequence they are discussing what areas they should visit during the encounter in relation to which of the fields are included in the present application. The names *Långmyren* and *Nerlandet* refer to different areas that the farmer will withdraw from the application.

Example 4:1 [A:5][16]

```
01  F:   Sen  ha: vi upp i Långmyren där men ja: v↑et inte om du ska gå: på
         Then we have over in Långmyren but I don't know if you want to go in

02       hela       Nerlandet me: för     de   kommer vi säga frå:n¿
         the entire Nerlandet too because we're going to cancel that

03       (0.7)

04  A:   M[:

05  F:    [Men du  vill    gå: där   ändå:¿
           But you want to go  there anyway

06       (0.5)

07  A:   hhJa:  de  ä  lika br↑a: tycker j↑a: om om ni tänker sö:ka på de
           Yeah that's just as well I think if if you're going to apply for it

08       s↑e:n så:,
         later then

09  F:   Ja:a.
         Yeah

10       (2.0)

11  A:   Då:  äre ju liksom f↓ä:rdith.
         Then it's finished

12  F:   M:[:      >kan vi göra.<=
         M          let's say so
```

Judging from what is happening, we can see that the farmer (F) did not find it necessary to visit and investigate the area called *Långmyren* or *Nerlandet*, but it becomes clear that the adviser wanted to. The farmer starts to argue by stressing the considerable size of that work and formulates it as a question or concern: "I don't know if you want to go…" (line 1), and presents a reason for why this would be unnecessary. The silence from the adviser in line 3 is interpreted by the farmer as a dispreferred response (Pommerantz, 1984), which can be seen by the farmer's reformulation in line 5. Now the question is formulated with the opposite response as the preferred answer,

[16] The label indicates that this example is from an encounter with adviser "A" at farm "5".

i.e. that the adviser wants to get there. This makes it easier for the adviser to admit her standpoint. She offers an explanation to her opinion and thereby demonstrates her judgement that a sole answer would not have been accepted in this context. This is accepted by the farmer with a minimal response (line 9), which potentially could be interpreted as a response to possible future chances for subsidies for the land, not as an acceptance that he is prepared to walk through the actual piece of land. Further down in line 11 after a fairly long silence, the adviser takes the turn and presents yet another rationale for her suggestion, thereby demonstrating that the issue was not yet fully treated. This is accepted by the farmer, and this part of the negotiation is ended. The example demonstrates that the participants are competent negotiators. It is likely that were they asked about this episode, they would consider it a negotiation. Although very competent negotiators, it is not likely that they could provide a competent explanation about the procedure. That is the point: Actions like negotiating are highly structured and follow the turn-taking system as described by CA. However, in general, people are not capable of discursively discussing their competence.

Another underlying principle in CA is that all speakers are considered *competent speakers*. This implies that CA does not judge whether the participants succeed or not, but merely how they manage to perform actions that are relevant to them in the situation. As analysts we do not strive to study competence, but display, since the actions themselves create the new local context for the other participant. Neither is it possible through the means offered by CA to make claims about other things than what the participants demonstrate in their conduct. Although the presentations in this thesis may have critical implications in some respects, the aim is not to condemn, but to show how the participants choose to handle the very complex situation of the advisory encounters. This is why the choice of CA is so fruitful, since it has the capacity to capture the complexity as it is handled by the participants.

CA has been described as "the systematic analysis of the talk produced in everyday situations of human interaction" (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998, p. 13). This section comments on the notion of an *everyday situation*. CA developed based on conversational data from American middleclass telephone conversations. Although the studied data have been broadened to include material from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and social contexts, many of the general principles about how people communicate have been proven to be rather general in its applicability (Steensig, 2001, p. 16). However, since Drew and Heritage edited the volume *Talk at work* in 1992 there has been a strong branch of CA studying conversation with an interest

in a specific context, often an institutional setting, which also is the case in this thesis. In the institutional setting there are features that distinguish it from ordinary conversations. Still, there is institutional talk that is *naturally occurring*. See section 5.1. In this account the term *ordinary conversations* is used instead of everyday conversations, when separating it from institutional talk. This is due to the fact that conversation in institutional activities for the institutional representatives is part of their everyday practices. When referring to *naturally occurring* data, we indicate that the data would have occurred independently of the recording for later analysis. This does not guarantee that the participants are completely natural and relaxed.

In relation to Hutchby's and Wooffitt's definition, *talk* has been the main focus especially during the early years of CA, when audio recordings were the only available technique. As the technology to record visual data developed, the analysis has developed into describing the non- verbal aspects of interaction. This is especially important when analysing situations where the participants themselves have access to visual aspects of the interaction.

4.4 Method: How I proceeded

I will now describe how I conducted my study and the specific considerations and decisions I made. When I decided I wanted to understand what is really going on in advisory encounters, I contacted a few advisers working with nature conservation. I described that I wanted to study their communication by making video recordings of encounters in the field. After discussions we decided that I should accompany them on the visits they had planned to do. I wrote letters to the farmers with my query and explained what I wanted to do, that the recording should not affect the length or content of the visit and that the recording would not be used in the evaluation of the farm. I also declared that the names of the participants would not be presented, that the tapes would not be available for unauthorized access, and only be used for research and education. I asked them to contact the adviser with their response, but also declared they were free to ask me to leave the project at any point during the process. For more details about the letter, see appendix 2.

The letter was signed by myself and the adviser, put in an envelope from my university to make it as clear as possible that the choice to participate in the study would be connected to me, and would not have an impact on the evaluation by the adviser (which was also clearly explained in the message). I had received acceptance from three advisers at one County Administration. Since there were so few advisers I also contacted an adviser at an

organisation called *Hushållningssällskapet*[17], who had the commission to carry out this work paid by the County Administration. Based on my understanding of the different commissions of the two types of encounters, I made the judgement that the important topics of the encounters would be more or less the same. Later on in the study I realised there were quite a few things that differed which in some respects were crucial. Hushållningssällskapet had a more open agenda and the legal possibility to adjust the visit in the interest of the farmer, whereas the visit by the County Administration had to circulate around the land-issues comprised by the application for subsidy by the farmer. For more details, see chapter 6. Additionally, Hushållningssällskapet as an organisation and their advisory activities are organised in a different way. The services are to a large extent financed through subscriptions, which infers that the same farmer and adviser have met regularly over the years. For a more thorough presentation, see Waldenstöm, 2001, p. 37. The implications of the different organisational forms on the advisory encounter are further discussed in chapter 8.

When the right time of the year came, making agreements with the third adviser at the County Administration did not succeed. With my camera, I visited 18 farms distributed between three advisers, two of whom were from the County Administration and one from Hushållningssällskapet. On one occasion on arrival at the farm, the farmer declared he did not want me to record the encounter, because the acceptance had been made by another family member. On yet another occasion the farmer did not participate, so I did not record. Table 1 provides the reader with a quantitative overview of the recorded encounters.

[17] The Swedish word for the organisation *Hushållningssällskapet* can be translated *The Rural Economy and Agricultural Societies*.

Table 1: Overview of the encounters in the study

Code	Adviser	Recorded time	Number of present farmers[18]	Number of men/women among farmers[19]	Number of men/women among advisers
A:1	A	176 min	2		
A:2	A	62 min	1		
A:3	A	171 min	1		
A:4	A	90 min	1		
A:5	A	283 min	2		
A:6	A	61 min	1		
A:7	A	80 min	1		
A:8	A	75 min	1		
A:9	A	111 min	1		
A:10	A	191 min	1		
A:11	A	69 min	1		
A:12	A	117 min	2		
B:1	B	38 min	1		
B:2	B	52 min	1		
B:3	B	108 min	2		
C:1	C	166 min	1		
C:2	C	127 min	1		
C:3	C	152 min	1		
	A: 12 B: 3 C: 3	35 hours	22	15 M 7 W	1 M 2 W

During the weeks when I recorded I travelled to the farms in the same car as the adviser. During the journey the adviser supplied me with some information about the forthcoming visit: What kind of land we were about to see and so on. After the visit I asked the adviser about her/his impressions of the visit, if anything was extraordinary and if she/he had the impression that my presence had had any impact on the situation. Immediately after every visit I made notes based on my impressions of the visit and the

[18] The figure represents the number of farmers that participated during either the entire or parts of the encounter.

[19] For ethical reasons I have chosen not to present the information of gender specified for each encounter.

information I got from the adviser that could serve as ethnographic data. Even though conversation analysts scarcely use interviews, one could argue that they would give the researcher a better understanding of the context, which is desirable according to many (but not all!) conservation analysts (Arminen, 2000). Leppänen interviewed both the nurses and patients in the encounters he studied. One motive for this was "to be mentally prepared to find connections between institutional contexts and patterns of interaction" (Leppänen, 1998, p. 45). However, my "interviewing" of the adviser was not conducted systematically enough for me to use it as proper interview data appropriate for further analysis.

4.4.1 Making the recordings to collect data

The production of the recording is one of the crucial parts of the CA since it has immediate bearings on the data. I made the recordings, even though my presence added an alien dimension to the encounter. Letting the participants themselves handle the recording equipment did not seem to be an option, since operating a camera and at the same time accomplish the commission of the encounter would have had too severe an implication on the interaction, i.e. the participants would be hindered in their own projects. Such an arrangement would have resulted in data where the one operating the camera would hardly be visible at all, which would infer severe deficit for the analytic work. In other contexts using a tripod and putting the equipment on the ground would be an option. However, to record from a fixed point would affect the activities, since these advisory encounters are characterised by a continuous transition in the field, guided by maps and the observations of the participants.

The person with the camera will in some respects influence the interaction. The challenge is not to be too dominant. Even so, the participants will notice you and your equipment. This was certainly the case whenever we came across potential physical obstacles during the walk such as fences or dense forests. My approach in instances where I got necessary assistance was to try to be polite and thankful towards them, but otherwise generally stay as quiet as possible during the visit. I portrayed myself as a person who wanted to join the visit as an observer. On arrival I would shake the farmer's hand, but after seeing a few encounters I then declared that I would concentrate on operating the camera. That was generally respected by the farmers. I was sometimes asked questions about my aims with the research project and those questions I answered as well as I could. There were instances where the farmer turned to me with a question, e.g. when having asked the adviser about her dwelling the farmer posed the same

question to me. I considered that a nice way of welcoming both of us as guests at the farm. Examining the referential words used by the farmers, they were sometimes directed just to the adviser (expressed in different versions of the Swedish referential word for 'you' in singular: *du*, sometimes both of us, i.e. the Swedish referential word for 'you' in plural: *ni*). This varied between the farmers and also during the course of the same visit.

My concern with the camera was to be as flexible as possibly. I wanted to avoid them stopping because of my pace of walk. I developed a way of imitating the movements of the participants: When they were walking on a line, I went behind them as the last person in the line, when they were walking next to each other I tried to walk on one of the sides, directing the camera sideways to capture as much of them as possible.

Without any exception, in all encounters the recording was commented in some way by the participants. To notice the camera, and on occasions looking towards it with a smile, is called *obvious camera behaviour* (Duranti, 1997, p. 118). Bergmann (1990) claims these ways of noticing the recording is even a sign of the naturalness of the situation, since most people would at some point notice a camera, which is an unusual element in most situations we encounter. The comments or questions were mostly made while I initially explained my role, but some of the participants later on returned to the issue in humoristic terms. On some occasions the farmer proposed subjects that would qualify for the film, like a nice garden, a beautiful old house or a spectacular tree-house. The jokes sometimes seemed to reveal an understanding of the aims with the recordings or contain a *double entendre*. One farmer joked about matters that should not be put on the video, like politically incorrect statements, or was he expected to change clothes in order to look presentable on the film. Yet another, when I was changing tapes and for a few seconds was unable to catch what the participants did, and the farmer, registering my preoccupation, encouraged the adviser to take the opportunity to say some crucial words. On another occasion the farmer was about to pick up a hidden key to a smithy and the adviser was looking at me, implying a concern about catching this on the film. Since the farmer did not seem to be uncomfortable I kept filming even though I thought the look I got from the adviser was somewhat sceptical.

Earlier research has stated that the recording is not a constraint for the reliability of the data. The participants only pay attention to the recorder and the camera for short instances since the interactional activity is otherwise in focus (Lindström, 2000; Steensig, 2001, p. 32). Lindström recommends that the researcher lets the participants get familiar with the situation of a researcher and a camera before the encounter. In my case, I considered that

being too demanding a task. I had just one naturally occurring occasion to see every pair of participants. The farmers often lived several kilometres distance from the office of the adviser, and since the growing season when the visits and recordings had to be accomplished is short, and already very busy for the farmers, there were no realistic possibilities for me to organise appointments with them in advance. The possibility was offered to the adviser. We talked about the recording while driving and I intentionally let the adviser read out loud the label with the time and day on the tape before the visit. Since the adviser was confident with the camera, it is probable that the relaxed atmosphere was partly transmitted to the farmer.

I used a video camera with a wide angle lens and a microphone designed to have extra sensitivity for the frequencies of the human voice. This presented possibilities for achieving a decent quality of sound even when recording during harsh whether conditions. DVcam tapes were used which should guarantee a good enough quality to enable many sessions of watching over an extended period of time. All tapes were converted into files stored at a Lacie hard disc and in a compressed format on DVDs. When I converted the files I took notes of what was happening in each encounter structured chronologically. This helped me to make a first collection of possibly interesting phenomena. CA as a method of analysing data is inductive. It means that the researcher's work and decisions rely on what is shown to be important by the participants. Therefore, during the data sessions, I got complementary help by the colleagues, whose interest in the interaction was not guided by a competence in nature conservation issues, but by competence in CA.

4.4.2 Making transcripts

The procedure after this is to transcribe sequences that could be of potential interest for further analysis. The time-consuming work of representing the interaction in written symbols is a qualified job that has high demands on the transcriber. The transcription is the first part of the interpretation of the action (Bucholtz, 2000). Bearing that in mind, the work offers a unique possibility to start getting to know your data. Initially the aim is to note virtually all things that are of potential relevance for the analysis. What and how you translate your experience onto the paper however, is already a choice, and the first step in the analytic process. Therefore, many analysts avoid letting others construct the transcripts, but instead discuss their transcriptions with other scholars. To guarantee that your conversation analysis is as close to the real situation as possible, you constantly follow the research process, return to your video files, carefully checking and

comparing them with the written representation. As the work proceeds, the transcriptions develop. When presenting the data in a paper, the researcher has often made a selection of the signs transcribed and adjusted it carefully to be more accessible to the audience, and to highlight the features underpinning the argumentation. This is also the reason why the transcripts presented in the thesis differ in the level of details. In the summary part of the thesis, the analyses presented do not specifically take the non-verbal actions into account, which is the reason for the relatively verbal dominance in the transcripts, compared to the representations in paper III.

All interactions presented in this thesis were originally performed in Swedish. In a few cases I quote what has been said directly in English. This is where I present single utterances that are not interpreted sequentially. In all other cases I present the Swedish original version in the first line with an English translation below to enable a bigger audience get access to the data. When the analyst needs to specifically refer to any nuances in the utterances, the examples are usually translated word-by-word[20] as well as idiomatically[21]. Because of the comparatively general level of my analyses, I only present idiomatic translations. Overlaps between the speakers are marked only in the Swedish version. Additionally, silences, tempo, prolongation of sounds, emphasis, intonation and other qualities of the voice are only marked in the Swedish version. For a key to the more detailed transcriptions - see appendix 1. To facilitate the transcription process I used the Quick time Pro software.

4.4.3 Starting analysing

The analysis of data is the core activity. CA proposes a method that implies working very closely with your data (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984; Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974), in which files and transcripts are comprised. Traditionally the declared ideal within CA is to start the analysis by unmotivated examination of your data (Sacks, 1984, p. 27). Psathas comments on the absurdity in this instruction: "This [unmotivated looking] is, of course, a contradiction or paradox since looking *is* motivated" (Psathas, 1990, p. 24, italics in original). However, the researcher should avoid searching for instances of already described phenomena based on "theoretically preformulated conceptualization of what the phenomena should look like" (Psathas, 1990, p. 24). It is recommended to look open-mindedly at the data from the participants' perspective. Even though no particular analytical goals should be guiding the analysis, the analyst's

[20] This translation does not necessarily make sense in the second language.
[21] This translation does not contain all the information.

understanding will unavoidably guide her interpretation. Ten Have offers a pragmatic motivation: "The fundamental 'material' with which one is working is one's understanding of what the participants are *doing* in and through their talk-in-interaction, and for this hearing and/or looking at the recording, with the transcripts at hand, is still the essential way to proceed (and to check later in the analytic process)." (Ten Have, 2004, p. 104, italics in original). Therefore, it is considered a strength that the researcher has the relevant experiences for the context she studies as long as she also manages to take the participants' perspective.

A recommended strategy proposed by Schegloff prescribes that you start out by formulating what action is being accomplished grounded in the perspective of the participants, and based on that try to explain how a particular practice can yield a particular action (Schegloff, 1996). The analysis takes the proof procedure made by the participants as point of departure. Pomerantz & Fehr (1997, pp. 71-74) have further developed what this means for the analysing procedure. First select a sequence where something distinguishable is happening, then track the start and end of that sequence. After this you characterize the action by answering the question "Why that now?" (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 299; Schegloff, 1997). Furthermore, try to understand how the participants package their action, which could indicate how they themselves consider the action. Then analyse the timing and taking of the turn. Finally, consider what implications the way these actions were accomplished have for the identities, roles and relationships between the participants.

Here, by means of an example I would like to emphasise the importance and consequences of the order in which the analysing process is described. A conversation analyst avoids impinging identities on the participants that are not grounded in the orientation of the participants themselves (Schegloff, 1987). In my analysis there are several identities that are relevant. One relation of identities is considered paramount, and is the only one I have consequently noted in the transcripts: the farmer-adviser identity. Based on these identities actions are interpreted and analysed. An alternative would be to categorize them as the non-institutional and the institutional representative. See section 6.7 for a development of the identity issue.

4.4.4 Ethical considerations

The Swedish Research Council has formulated some ethical principles that should be guiding all humanistic-social scientific research (The Swedish Research Council, 2002). Generally, the inconvenience for the participating individuals should be put in relation to the usefulness of the study for

society. This concern for the individual is formulated in four demands: the demand of *informing*, *agreeing*, *confidentiality* and *use*. These will be elaborated on one at a time.

I informed the farmers in a written letter about the aims of the study and how I thought they might be affected by the study. All the participants had the possibility of refusing to take part in the study: Before, during and after the recording. It is hard to predict exactly what effect the study will have on the individuals, or what thoughts the study will generate in their minds. My belief is that recordings of naturally occurring interaction are less detrimental for the individuals than asking them to perform totally different actions. By recording encounters that would have occurred independently of the recording, i.e. avoiding posing my questions to them, implies that I do not force them to make statements they would not have made normally. I offered them an opportunity to express their feelings and experiences during the recording by giving them my contact information, and invited them to get in touch about any matter after the visit. None of the farmers did. I informed the advisers on the phone about the aims of the study and how I thought they would be concerned by the study. I also interviewed them spontaneously on the return journey. Hopefully both the farmers and advisers felt they were valued as participants in the study and appreciated my interest in their professional activities.

The request for confidentiality is to protect the identities of the participants. To honour this request I have not used the films for any purpose other than sharing them with a group of researchers and to a limited extent in education. When presenting it to students at the University of Agricultural Sciences, my concerns have been great enough to get all the students to sign a paper of assurance of confidentiality, stating that they will not discuss the data outside the classroom in a way that reveals the identity if the participants. The reason for this is that the chances of recognising the participants were considerable, as some of the students were in the same field as the farmers and advisers. A way around this problem has been to present the transcripts without the film.

Throughout the thesis I have changed the information in the transcripts that otherwise could reveal the identity of the participants. Sometimes names of places had to be changed, names and other personal data such as gender or age. In the summary part of the thesis I have made the decision to refer to all farmers using the pronoun "he" and all advisers are referred to as "she". I am aware of benefits and drawbacks of this choice. Taking heed of ethical considerations however, this will minimize the likelihood of the persons participating in the study being recognised. At the same time this

simplification makes the formulations in the text less clumsy. A drawback is that the reader might get the impression that farmers generally are men and advisers women. The reason why I did not give them the opposite gender is that I wanted to align to the gender of the majority of the participants of farmers and advisers respectively in the study. Another risk with my choice is that it will trigger the reader to impose a gender perspective on the analysis of the encounter. Gender aspects have not been a guiding principle for the design of my study, nor for my analysis, since the participants themselves were not specifically oriented towards that.

In paper III where the analytical points were dependent on the body positions of the participants I used representations of the interaction. To lessen the potential inconvenience I made line drawings inspired by Goodwin's work (Goodwin, 2000). Line drawings based on stills from the video recordings offer an opportunity to downplay information that will hazard the anonymity of the participants or distract the focus from the analytical points - something that is not possible when presenting ordinary frame grabs (i.e. pictures) from the video recordings[22].

The restrictions on use mean that I will not use the data other than for research or educational purposes.

[22] The line drawings were made by exporting selected stills from the video files to Photoshop, where the outlines of the participants and the surroundings could be marked as paths. When these paths were stroked with the brush tool, the result was a line drawing showing nothing but the aspects that the researcher consider relevant.

5 Guiding concepts

This chapter presents the important theoretical concepts that have been chosen specifically in relation to the aim and research questions to analyse and present the data in this study; *Institutional talk*, *participation* and *learning*. *Institutional talk* can briefly be explained as a framework that can be used for the advisory encounters to highlight certain aspects believed to have consequences for the interaction. For the activities studied in the thesis, there are expectations on participation and learning to take place. *Participation* is an overarching guiding principle in the policies which also is used as an analytical concept. *Learning* is a process that is desired and assumed to take place, related to participation. The prerequisites for those activities are partly given by the institutional framework and therefore these concepts are interrelated. In the separate papers there are additional concepts that are relevant, but since they are not of equal importance for the overall study and are sufficiently well developed in the papers respectively, they are not presented here.

5.1 Institutional talk as a framework for interaction

When trying to understand the interaction within advisory encounters it is fruitful to consider it in terms of an institutional talk. Some general features are impacting the interaction as soon as the framework of institutional talk is operating. The analysis of particular patterns of interaction is used in order to see the consequences of the tasks at hand in a particular institutional activity (Vehviläinen, 2000). In the following section the foundations of institutional talk will be presented because it influences the participants' interaction and should therefore also be guiding the researcher. Very briefly, the consequences of an institutional framework on interaction consist of a number of restrictions on interaction that can be summarised as constraints

on who can do what and when. These constraints are asymmetrically distributed between the participants and concern them all, but in different ways. One example would be that the adviser as the institutional representative has a higher legitimacy to lead the conversation.

As mentioned in section 4.3 conversation analysis (henceforth CA) started out as a branch of American sociology in the 1960s. The very first studies were made by Harvey Sacks based on suicide telephone calls (Ten Have, 2004). Sacks continued to write articles based on this empirical data and other data from group therapy sessions. Schegloff made his dissertation based on data from calls to a disaster centre (Schegloff, 1968). The fact that these two pioneers of CA made their first studies on institutional data has rendered a mild interest (Ten Have, 2004). The authors moved on to study non-institutional data like telephone calls between American middleclass women, and developed theories on turn-taking described in *A simplest systematics for the organisation of turn taking for conversation* (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). However, the trend changed and from the late 1970s onwards the studies of institutional talk have been given more attention (Ten Have, 2004). In 1992 Drew & Heritage edited the anthology *Talk at work* (1992b) which ever since has been considered seminal in the field. Apart from the fact that they gathered many interesting studies from different institutional settings, they also established the framework 'institutional talk' and a platform for the considerations necessary for relevant research.

Institutional talk can roughly be said to occur in situations where at least one of the participants represents an institution of some kind and the interaction is task-related (Drew & Heritage, 1992a). It can be further subdivided into settings where the professional/institutional representative meets (a) a non-institutional person, often referred to as a layman or client, (b) someone within the same profession/institution (that is intra professional/institutional), (c) someone from another profession/institution (that is inter professional/institutional) (Sarangi & Roberts 1999a, p. 11). I consider that advisory encounters I have recorded between the farmer and the adviser primarily share the features of (a) above. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasise that the farmer is also a professional with competences that partly overlap, those of the adviser, partly differ from the adviser's. The encounter also has features of an inter-professional interaction as referred to in (c). However, in this institutional encounter it is the adviser's competence that is given higher legitimacy, since she is the only one who is an institutional representative.

Normally institutional talk is taking place in *settings characteristic for the institution*. Most studies of institutional talk are from rigid settings (Sarangi &

Roberts, 1999a), the majority from health care, legal and educational settings (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999a, p. 6). However, relying on the setting as the only feature for identifying institutional talk is contested. Institutional talk can be carried out anywhere, independently of the site (Drew & Heritage, 1992a). The empirical data from this thesis stem from environments where the devices traditionally associated with institutional settings are absent, such as an office, seminar room or other room of dignity. Additionally computers, telephones and other technical equipment are absent. The study's encounters take place at the client's place, in their home and more often still, in a crucial part of the land, often the farmer's pasture.

A few institutional encounters are set in the homes of the clients, Heritage & Sefi's (1992) study of health visitors at first time mothers' home being perhaps the most acknowledged. Heritage & Lindström (1998) have also investigated health visitors at first time mothers' houses. Lindström (1999, 2005) has also done extensive work based on home help services in Sweden where the institutional representative visits the home of the client. Some comparisons are made with home help service in Denmark recorded and analysed by Heinemann (2005). Olaison & Cedersund have also studied home visits of old people (2006) and, besides the fact that the encounter is a visit in the home of the client, the aims of the encounters are similar to those of this study. In the above study the aim of the visit is to assess whether the client and applicant of care qualify for the support. The encounter in the present study also has the dimension of the client being an applicant, and one of the aims of the encounter is to assess whether the farmer qualifies for the category. Interactional studies with recordings in the home setting are abundant when it comes to ordinary - that is non-institutional - settings. The common feature of the above studies as well as the present study is the intrusion of the private sphere of the home in contrast to the institutionally related tasks.

Having concluded that the site for the interaction is not a criterion for whether it is institutional or not, some more reliable features for distinguishing this will be examined. In many professions people's working tasks are dependent on and carried out through conversations (Svensson, 1990, p. 36). Institutional talk is involved in the accomplishment of the institutions themselves (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998, p. 145). There are features of interaction that distinguish these interactional settings from others and that are common independently of the site. Sarangi & Roberts in their anthology *Talk, Work and Institutional Order. Discourse in Medical, Mediation and Management Settings* (1999b) have a somewhat different perspective on institutional talk by referring to workplace interaction. Talk (as far as can be

understood they use it synonymously with interaction) is just one of several practices that constitute workplace practices. Text and social space are claimed to be other. This is another approach which in this study is considered closer to discourse analysis compared with the CA approach expressed in studies by Goodwin where the very interplay between verbal and non-verbal interaction and artefacts is the core of the analytic mission.

Already Goffman (1981) considered the institutional frame as a dynamic context (which is one of the appropriate interpretations of context within CA) for interaction. Drew & Heritage claim that the crucial factor is whether the institutional or professional identities of the participants' are made relevant, i.e. if the participants themselves are oriented towards them as relevant for the interaction to evolve (Drew & Heritage, 1992a, p. 20). Drew & Heritage (1992a) do not present an all-inclusive definition of what institutional talk is, but rather point to some features that are important based on empirical data. These three aspects of interaction are: *Goal orientation*, special or particular *constraints* and *inferential framework*. These are briefly explained below.

Institutional talk is characterised by *orientation of at least one of the participants to some goal, task or identity associated with the institution in question*. The goal is determined by the institution and therefore known in advance. One example from this study is the orientation towards assessing whether the land qualifies for the subsidy that the farmer has applied for. However, a common finding from many institutional studies is that the goals may be just vaguely known to the lay participants (Drew & Heritage, 1992a, p. 23). The institutional activity usually has a specific aim and consequently often an agenda, known to at least one of the participants. Hofvendahl (2006), analysing development conferences in school, describes how the aim is announced but where there are dimensions and constraints of the agenda that are not well clarified. Lilja & Lindström (2003) also present an example where the lack of agenda creates severe problems and frustration for the participants.

Linell (1990, p. 21) states that types of institutional activities are known and ordinary people in society have terms of referring to these, such as "seeing the doctor". The studied data, however, challenges this. It seems as if the farmers have a very vague idea of what they can expect from the institutional encounter. Paper III takes as its point of departure a case where the non-institutional representative demonstrates his lack of experience in an explicit manner. Here the problem seems to be that the adviser is too vague for his good when explaining the aim of the encounter to the farmer. Holmes, Stubbe & Vine (1999) describe the agenda setting as a way of

exercising power. However, to do this without informing the other is here considered even worse than an example of not even providing the client with ideas about how to contribute.

The consequences of an institutional activity on the interaction is a number of restrictions that can be summarised as *constraints of what anyone can do and when*, i.e. what is considered by the participants to be an allowable contribution to the business at hand. The constraints concern all participants although asymmetrically distributed, i.e. the institutional representative is the one who can decide. This asymmetry between participants is more accentuated in institutional talk than in ordinary conversations. Additionally, it is based upon the level of institutionality rather than the personalities of the different participants. In ordinary conversations the participation in terms of the turn-taking at the micro level are negotiated locally (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974) whereas in institutional conversations there are constraints that rely on the institutional identities of the participants. The constraints can vary from strong (as in the case of a court where the procedures of turn-taking etc. are strictly followed) to weak. It can also vary between phases in the same encounter.

The third feature of institutional talk is the inferential framework that is operating. This means that actions that are interpreted in one way in ordinary talk now become interpreted differently by virtue of the institutional framework. One example of this is when the institutional representative withholds expressions that in ordinary conversation would be interpreted as affiliative, as supporting and upgrading a complaint about a third party. However, what the institutional framework does to the interpretation is that the participants interpret the conversation as normal, given that they acknowledge the situation as institutional. The neutral stance from the side of the adviser in response to complaints from the farmer is not oriented to as something extraordinary, as described in paper IV. Another example of the inferential frame-work is that comments that in ordinary conversations would be treated as innocuous are here responded to as threatening. Heritage & Sefi (1992, p. 367) describe such an instance where the institutional representative who visits a first time mother makes the following comment when the mother is feeding her baby: "He's enjoying that isn't he" and the mother responds to it as veiled criticism of her providing the baby with too little food.

Linell (1990, p. 21) claims that the difference between the institutional interactions and ordinary interactions is to do with the format of the interaction rather than the topic. The orientation towards the tasks forces the activity into certain phases (Linell, 1990, p. 22). These phases are

distinguished by their separate aims, topics and format for interaction (Linell, 1990, p. 23) and are to different degrees discernable and separated from each other. Linell describes a few general phases that occur in all institutional interactions: *Opening*, *Identification*, *Examination/deliverance of information*, *Decision/interpretation*, *Formulation of report* and *Finishing* (Linell, 1990, p. 22, my translation). The phases are an evolving structure that the parties orient to in organising their talk. They are "*jointly* oriented to – indeed co-*constructed* – by both participants as involving a task to be achieved" (Heritage, 2004, p. 228, italics in original). An understanding of the phases and activities intertwined with them is essential for the participants to be able to understand which contributions are possible (Levinson, 1992). How these transitions between the phases are negotiated is interesting to study in order to get insights of the participants' understanding of the agenda and the possibilities to participate in its evolvement. In-between these phases, mundane small talk regarding content and form are embedded.

Form and content often become interrelated. Generally the focus in studies of institutional talk has been on form than content. Based on the features above, Heritage (2004) also presents how these features can be traced when looking at interaction, and how form and content are interrelated. He describes how lexical choice can be a part of turn design that is part of sequence organization, and part of overall structural organization. This dominance also occurs in field studies based on narrative analyses. These studies demonstrate that the institutional representative finds it problematic to acknowledge the contribution from the client in terms of content, because of the narrative format in which it is presented (Mishler, 1984).

5.1.1 Asymmetries

There is an alternative way of talking about institutionality that incorporates what has been mentioned above in a way which seems to guide the attention towards relevant matters in the analysis; and where the levels of analysis can be combined and strengthened by each separate part. That is the concept of asymmetry. Heritage (2004) proposes four kinds of asymmetries that are valid in all institutional talk. These will be expanded upon below, since they are all relevant to the analysis in the subsequent chapters.

Asymmetries of participation: This refers to the fundamental feature in institutional talk: That the participants do not participate equally. This is especially true of institutional encounters that can be framed as lay-professional encounters like the advisory encounters in this study. An example of an asymmetry of participation is that questioning (which is a

viable part of institutional interaction) is asymmetrically distributed between the participants. Linell (1990) describes how it is either the client who can ask questions, but more often settings have been described where the posing of questions is dominated by the institutional representative. Ordinary conversations are often misleadingly presented as the opposite, where the participation is supposed to be symmetrical. This distinction is however an oversimplification (Linell & Luckmann, 1991). In ordinary conversations sequences where one of the participants dominates are ubiquitous. A fundamentally valid distinction would be that in institutional interaction the asymmetry is dependent on the institutional identity of the participants which is not negotiated locally, but a feature that persists throughout the whole course of interaction (Heritage, 2004). In ordinary conversations "the participants generally assume that, while they may not always be equally knowledgeable and informed about every topic, such asymmetries will be short-lived and will shift among the speakers from topic to topic" (Drew & Heritage, 1992a, p. 50).

Asymmetries of interactional and institutional "knowhow": This concerns the fact that the institutional encounter is a routine for the institutional representative but a unique – perhaps once in a life time – occasion for the client. Accordingly the access to, familiarity with and understanding of the agenda is asymmetrically distributed in favour of the institutional representative. This is a salient feature of the encounters studied for this thesis. A variation on this occurs when the non-institutional representative knows the agenda and overall institutional activity, but still has problems in understanding the aim of the comprised practices or actions.

Epistemological caution and asymmetries of knowledge: This concerns the caution applied by the institutional representative towards the non-institutional representative when dealing with knowledge. When the institutional representative, involved in her occupation, wants to either achieve information from the non-institutional representative or deliver an assessment, this is done in a delicate way where taking a firm position is avoided.

Rights of access to knowledge: This is a parallel to the previously described asymmetry, but concerns the knowledge of the non-institutional representative. Although having relevant knowledge, the lay person tends to underestimate their own experiences. Clients sometimes try to legitimize first-person knowledge by referring to other persons or sources that confirm their stance (Strong, 1979). This asymmetry is especially relevant when the non-institutional representative is not entitled to the knowledge as if he had gained access to it in a way that was not appropriate.

5.2 Participation as an ambition in interaction

A basic explanation of what participation is can be found when examining the word literally. To participate is to be part of something but what *that* means is an open question one can approach from different perspectives. During recent years *participation* is widely used to describe a desired approach to deal with complex issues like nature conservation. A lot of other current concepts in conservation are ambiguous (Callicott, Crowder & Mumford, 1999). It is argued here that this is also the case with 'participation'.

The concept participation is contested and it appears that the number of definitions is indefinite. For everyone aiming to meet this request there is an urgent need to understand the meaning and implications of participation for each context in question. A few tools will be provided here for the reader to structure the issue and enable comparisons of the different degrees of participation.

Sherry Arnstein presented a much quoted framework for talking about different degrees of participation in terms of different rungs of a ladder (1969). She declares that "there is a critical difference between going through the empty ritual of participation and having the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process" (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216). The levels she describes range from pure manipulation to citizen control. In the first level citizens are to be educated and the participation is rather distorted or absent. Further up, people are informed even though it is too late in the process to have implications. People can also be consulted through being questioned, but without an assurance that their opinions will be taken into account. Approaching the top of the ladder where the degree of citizen power is high, partnerships between citizen communities and the state, delegation to make decisions in specific domains and finally total powers might be given to the citizens. People might also self-mobilise regardless what the rest of society says or does. Underlying the model presented by Arnstein is that the higher the level of participation the better.

Research in environmental communication, rural development and extension has been performed with the belief that participation is the way to handle the particularly complex problems in nature conservation management. Sandström & Tivell (2005) have applied and developed Arnstein's model to local management of natural resources in Sweden, which they describe as ideas of co-management between the state and community groups. This is a level that is present also in the present study case of Upplandsstiftelsen. Methodologies like collaborative learning (Daniels & Walker, 2001), social learning (Blackmore, Ison & Jiggins, 2007), adaptive management (Lee, 1993) and action research (Reason & Bradbury, 2001)

have been developed to serve the aim of participation. In that sense participation is the name of a desired state or goal. Predominantly three rationales for participation are often put at the fore. Firstly participation will lead to better decisions, secondly it will ease the implementation process and thirdly one elicits the democratic right to participate in decision making when concerned by a decision (Ebbesson, 1997; Ljung, 2001; Appelstrand, 2002).

The concept participation is used in a variety of disciplines. Two major perspectives, each complementing the other, are put into the concept of participation. They can be seen as typical for different disciplines but as it will be argued, also as two complementing levels of the analysis.

The first interpretation of participation is used in a branch of social science with linkages to political sciences and development studies. Participation then, is considered an interesting perspective when dealing with phenomena that characterize issues in this field, such as pluralism, uncertainty, interconnectedness and dynamics (Pretty, 1995). One example of this is the theories underlying agricultural extension and rural development programmes today (Leeuwis, 2004). Environmental management, health promotion and integral design of land and technology are mentioned among others as examples of fields of interest (Groot, 2002). Here the emancipatory ideal is strong. The arguments can be seen as normative and pragmatic (Johnson & Wilson, 2000). Within the normative ideal, the connection to democratic ideals is pronounced. The pragmatic arguments rely on effectiveness and efficiency; participation leads to better decisions and to decisions that are valid and accepted for longer time. Also in current Swedish policy documents regarding nature conservation management participation is frequently referred to, and the documents are permeated by the notion in a variety of contexts (see for instance Swedish Gov. 2001/02:173; Swedish Gov. Bill 2004/05:150). The pronounced conviction in these policies is that participation is crucial for goal achievement in nature conservation matters. Sandström & Tivell (2005), Thorell (2005) and Stenseke (2006a, b) are a few of those who have performed research in Sweden and investigated the possibilities for local management. Regarding local management, the related concepts *local governance* and *governance* are sometimes used. The studies in this thesis however, are restricted to nature conservation management where farmers and landowners are concerned, leaving wider administrative issues for local communities aside.

The second interpretation to be highlighted is derived from the sociological and interactional field. Here participation is investigated in terms

of face-to-face interaction between two or several persons. These persons are referred to as participants. The focus is on how they manage to act in a situation on the basis of how they use interactional resources and "do things with words" (to paraphrase the title of Austin's cited work from 1962). This has connections to CA. Studies within this perspective give an understanding of what social processes that are going on and in what detail they are constructed as a form of collaboration between the participants. This understanding of participation is also the point of departure for the theoretical description of how learning can be understood (see section 5.3). Acknowledging the processes on this level also makes it possible to better understand why the outcomes of meetings between people can create the sense of participation in one situation, but not in another.

These perspectives represent two different, but complementary interpretations of the level and methodological approaches to the notion of participation, both applied and relevant in nature conservation management. The second interpretation of participation is often not reflected, by policy makers, conservationists and practitioners. It is clearly more related to practice, whereas the first one is related to policy. It is when putting a principle of participation into practice, for instance when arranging a meeting between landowners and conservationists, that the awareness of the interactional level becomes beneficial, and one perspective can fertilize the other. This is hardly ever done. Instead, there is often a gap between the arguments for participation and the detailed studies of concrete situations where it might occur[23]. That makes it urgent to investigate participatory ambitions through scrutinising the participation specifically. What makes some dialogues innovative and constructive, while others fail in this respect? Possible explanations are related to the uniqueness of each situation and its preconditions. Since understanding participation is considered crucial in order to understand social practices, it is also intimately connected to learning that will be developed in section 5.3.

To add to the confusion, in the Swedish language there are two words for participation; *deltagande* and *delaktighet*. Examining existing policy documents, there seems to be an overlap or even inconsistency in the usage of these words. *Deltagande* has an aspect of action, i.e. the extent of participation noticed by others, whereas *delaktighet* is usually mentioned when the participants' *sense* of participation is in focus. Such a sense of participation arises when participants experience having voice and legitimacy, but also when the participants actually influence the outcome of

[23] This was already noted by Hallgren (2004) studying collaboration in natural resource management and natural resource conflicts.

a decision-making process (see also Senecah, 2001). It can be built on the result that you see, but comprised by sequences of interaction where all participants are contributing. Taking this into consideration, a sense of participation is not possible to guarantee by the means of policy measures, nor is it possible to measure through objective criteria. However, in a variety of ways, from overall process design and the discourse in the documents, to techniques in face-to-face interaction, preconditions both for participating and giving a sense of participation can be created.

One way to understand participation can be to examine the empirical data. I have approached participation from different methodological and disciplinary angles in this thesis. Depending on what you define as participation you put on different glasses implying that you will be able to see things not just from different angles, but also from different distances. That serves the aim of broadening the debate on what participation is and demands a more nuanced application of the concept. In paper I the focus is on how the extent of the knowledge and experience of the farmers has been interwoven in the nature conservation policies. Participation here is seen as consideration. In paper II participation is studied on the level of ability to influence people and their measures. The organisation in focus is working in collaboration with different stakeholders, and that is the starting point for the discussion. Some conclusions are made on a discourse level. However, in papers III and IV a more interactional perspective is used. There activities are investigated, which are obligatory and fixed to their overall frames. The participants meet in a face-to-face encounter with several tasks to accomplish. This is a suitable situation for studying participation on a sequence level.

5.3 Learning through interaction

There is an underlying ambition and expectation in these encounters that learning should take place. There are also ideas of what ideally should be the content of this learning, i.e. *the object of learning* (Marton, Runesson & Tsui, 2004), even though it is not always explicitly stated in the documents. However, the aim is that the farmer should learn how to take measures favouring nature conservation, which has implications on possessing necessary knowledge about nature. The expectations vary between the different studies I have conducted. In the study of Upplandsstiftelsen the learning ambitions range between concerning the farmer or landowner to cases where the aim is to more broadly search for solutions to problems where these solutions are believed to be found in the collaboration between

several actors, sometimes even including the institutional representative. In this case the employee of Upplandsstiftelsen can be considered a facilitator of a learning process. Contrary to this, in the study of the advisory encounters performed by the County Administration connected to the subsidies, the explicit learning ambitions concern the farmer. However, what all studied instances comprised in this thesis have in common, is that concerning the content they are all supposed to deal with nature conservation related issues, e.g. from recognising rare species to knowing how to instigate measures to save them.

Everything learned during the encounter is believed to affect the actions of the farmers. The way to secure this is regulated by the management plans. In these plans both the measures that are mandatory and a prerequisite for the financial compensation and optional measures are described. The changed behaviour carried out in verbal and non-verbal actions in the interaction will be studied. The reasons for this rely on methodological as well as theoretical grounds. Methodologically, it is only what the participants demonstrate through their actions that can actually be studied. Given the study's theoretical perspective on learning, the actions are the key aspects in focus, and will duly be expanded upon. This account will show a somewhat unusual perspective, although a wide range of theories of learning have been applied within the European tradition of Farming and Rural Systems Research and Extension (Cerf *et al.*, 2000).

The theoretical perspective of the study takes the point of departure in the Vygotskian tradition, where the actions of the individual are seen as dependent on the social, cultural and historical context. According to this tradition the world is mediated to us through psychological and physical tools (Wertsch, 1991). This perspective on learning is closely related to situated learning in the sense that learning is seen as developed through and displayed in interaction between participants in a specific situation, given specific resources. Phenomena which predominantly have been understood as individual and cognitive, largely independent of contextual features, have in recent work been explored as social and collective phenomena, embedded within the local, situational context within which they are of relevance (Lave, 1993; Rogoff, 2003; Säljö, 2005). To study negotiation and problem-solving within a situation becomes an integrated part of studying learning (Martin, 2004, p. 19). Lave argues that "There is no such thing as 'learning' *sui generis*, but only changing participation in the culturally designed settings of everyday life". (Lave, 1993, p. 6). A number of scholars (Wertsch, 1991; Säljö, 2000; Rogoff, 2003) further points out that individual and cultural processes mutually constitute each other. The presented project

of this thesis is in accordance with the above statements: That the interaction in institutional encounter can be considered as at the same time constituted by the policy context and concretizing the policy. Defining learning as interactional change is a growing perspective in current theorizing in the fields of learning and social interaction. Although being a perspective primarily developed the last two decades it should be stated that this thinking relies on theories from the early 20th century as in interactionism and the idea of integrating "knowing" and "doing" as developed by Mead and Dewey (Martin, 2004, p. 19).

Learning can neither happen nor be studied without an orientation towards something specific. This orientation, however, can concern a specific content as argued by Marton, Runesson & Tsui (2004) or towards a specific activity as argued by Rogoff (2003). Accordingly, the changes in participation that are of relevance for learning are the ones that are made "in relation to certain activities' contents and actions, rather than in general" (Martin, 2004, p. 57). To learn is then regarded as changing the way of interacting to a more appropriate and meaningful way in that situation. The assessment of what is considered meaningful in a situation is made by the interactants, demonstrated in interaction and thereby possible to investigate for the analyst. This is not necessarily the same issues as in the guidelines for the institutional activity. To be able to participate in an appropriate way, the farmer must be able to understand the frames and prerequisites for participating. It is the challenge to understand the relation between the policy and institutional context and its relation to the advisory activity he is to participate in through appropriate actions, which will be shown in my analysis. We learn by participating in certain activities and evaluate our actions in the interaction with others. This implies a reflective capacity and an opportunity to do so in adjacency to the actions. The adviser is responsible for establishing a "dialogical space" in which the participants can reflect and learn (Waldenström, 2001). This study looks at learning as a practice that takes place in social interaction while testing different ways of participation and reflection. Other concepts on learning that are juxtaposed, but less suitable for describing what has been done in this study are *social learning*, *activity learning*, *joint learning* and *socialization*. To make the distinction between this and a socio-cultural perspective on learning, many of the abovementioned perspectives pay attention to the knowledge production, whereas this study concerns what is happening to the individual displayed in interaction, irrespective of whether the orientation is towards a specific content or activity. It is when combining the participation perspective on learning with the participant perspective on interaction

enabled by CA that the *learning as it develops* is possible to study (Martin, 2004).

I also see connections here to Vygotsky's term *zone of proximal development* (Vygotsky, 1978) and the term *scaffolding* (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976) that both comprise the development from being able to accomplish with help, to being able to accomplish without any help. Goodwin (1994, 2000) and Säljö (2005) write about the resources that can help us see relevant things that can be crucial for understanding our perspective and subsequently to change it. Learning is not solely dependent on the inner mental resources (abilities) of the individual. Coding schemes, highlighting and graphic representations are resources described by Goodwin. Their usage in nature conservation advisory encounters is investigated in paper III. Both Waldenström (2001) and Seppänen (2004) have described the use of documents such as crop rotation plans and inspection documents respectively, in agricultural advisory encounters. Waldenström briefly touches upon the possibility of using the field walk as point of departure for dialogue. Seppänen claims the fields are even more appropriate for directing the interest of the participants than the documents. The present findings however, challenge this, since sequences are analysed where the difference in the participants' professional vision becomes a viable obstacle for the activity at hand.

In this study different actors - a farmer and an adviser or representative from the authorities - might have different perspectives on the land and situation, and need to adjust their ways of thinking and acting. The way for the participants to demonstrate the changing participation is through interaction with the other participant. This both offers a way to try the changed perspective and creates an opportunity for immediate response from the other participant. Consequently it also creates a possibility for investigation for the researcher. In this advisory setting there is an orientation where active participation and learning is highly desirable. This might potentially guide the actions in the encounters. It is important for the adviser to recognize a passive presence and then aim to achieve a more active form of participation from the farmer, which is based on reflective and conscious actions. Consequently, to make this judgement is a dilemma shared by the practitioner and the researcher. Seeing learning as changing participation also requires that the participation in focus is the one described in the preceding section as *interactional*. Here the interaction embedded in the social context is studied, because the phenomena and participation practices are discursively unconscious for the participants.

As described in chapter 2, there are different incentives to initiate change. The major idea the advisory encounters rely on is that knowledge and financial incentives accompanied with regulations will change the actions of the farmer in a desired direction. What happens after the advisory encounter in terms of decisions at the farm level is also dependent on other factors and therefore beyond the focus of this study. The aim of the thesis is to shed light on what happens during these encounters, to discover if learning in terms of changed participation takes place and what it actually concerns. This way of contributing to the practice of advisory activity is enough of a challenge.

6 The encounters as institutional activity

This chapter presents an overview of the main empirical data examined which is the basis for paper III and IV. It is necessary to complement the papers with an overview of the encounters and some additional findings that have not been published or discussed before since I do believe this is needed to fully understand the broader picture. This is also a way of emphasizing the importance of paper III and IV and at the same time put the phenomena focused in those papers in relation to the characteristics of the encounters in general. In this chapter I try to analyse the encounters applying the theoretical concepts from the previous chapter. More specifically I will present the encounters based in the institutional features and make comparisons with other studies of institutional talk. This intention presupposes a conversation analysis bias in the account.

There are different ways of presenting and describing the encounters depending on what is considered relevant. This selection of encounters is not meant to be representative for all advisory encounters of this type and since the number of encounters studied is small, conclusions drawn from this overview should only be applied to other encounters with great care. The reader is encouraged to bear in mind that the findings of the studies are meant to increase the understanding of the institutional activity from a qualitative perspective. A background to the advisory encounters was presented in section 2 and 4.4.

6.1 Phases give structure to the encounter

To a large extent the advisory encounters for nature conservation are divided into phases, even though the phases are not fixed or clearly spelled out. The encounters consist of an opening phase, some kind of identification of where to start, a walk through the pasture that is the object concerned in

the application from the farmer, finishing with the adviser summarizing her assessment and recommendations as well as formulating what will happen next. The walk is the activity where the examination of the land is made, notes are taken and the adviser makes the recommendations. The management plan is the documentation after the visit and is designed by the adviser back at her office.

What Linell (1990) has defined as pre- after- and in-between chat do not appear, but is included as a constantly ongoing activity. During the whole encounter small talk is intertwined with the institutional activity. These instances of small talk can concern the farm without having direct relevance to the task at hand; such as historical or anecdotal connections to places the participants pass during their walk, but also unrelated topics such as weather or family members. It can even concern the adviser - something that is fairly unusual in institutional talk - such as how the adviser works and lives. At this time the constraints on "who can do what" are put at stake.

The interesting question is why the participants let these intermezzos happen and how it contributes to the overall institutional activity. Mundane conversations where the participants tone down their institutional and professional identities might be used to create a higher degree of affiliation between the participants. Worth commenting on is the relaxed atmosphere during the arrival of the adviser. In eleven of the encounters where this procedure is audible, all the advisers only use their first name, even in the few cases when the farmer presents himself with his first name as well as the surname[24]. In paper IV sequences in interaction are described where the farmer produces a complaint about a third party who is not present. In those situations the present party normally shows some kind of agreement with the complaint producer which creates affiliation between the parties present. In the paper it is described how the adviser delicately handles the situation of displaying solidarity towards the present farmer and at the same time demonstrates professional loyalty with the potential colleague who is the object of the complaint. It is likely that the mundane talk that is interwoven with the institutional talk serves the aim of showing affiliation and temporally violating the institutional identities.

[24] Even though this familiarity could potentially be explained by the prior telephone contact between the farmer and adviser, it is interesting to see the difference compared to how Swedish speaking teachers at a Finnish university introduce themselves at the beginning of a course's first lecture. A study by Lindström & Fremer (2003) demonstrates how all of the teachers studied used both first and surname and in some cases also their title although this information must have been announced or at least available to the students in advance.

The transitions between different phases and institutional and mundane talk are not always clearly identifiable. It can be caused by something the participants notice while walking. It is perhaps presupposed that the initiation of the institutional parts is made by the institutional representative. That is however not always the case. The farmer may return to the institutional activity by posing questions, sometimes to clarify the institutional activity they are currently engaged in. How these transitions are carried out in a way that is appreciated by both of the participants could be of value in a study discussing the balance between affiliation and effectiveness in encounters. Seppänen & Helenius (2004) investigating inspection encounters from organic farming raise the same question. They propose the courses during the encounters where the participants (for example due to transportation between the fields) take a breather in the core activity of the encounter which offers possibilities for other valuable activities.

In 8 out of the 18 encounters the participants take a break during the walk and sit down for a drink. They find a place in the shade by the house or indoors. All of the three encounters with adviser C start with a talk like this, and she also mentions that this is the way she normally starts the encounters. Based on the actions from the participants it is likely that the adviser had already suggested an outline in her initiating phone call. In a few more visits the farmer asks if the visitors would like a cup of coffee, but the offer is declined by the adviser. These encounters of refused coffee have in common that the question is posed at the end of the encounter when no obvious questions are left to discuss.

The finishing phase generally holds a summary of the most important matters that have been discussed during the encounter, and the adviser goes through what will take place consequently. This phase could either be defined by the topic the participants discuss or by their arriving back to the farm building. The topic may be initiated before arriving back at the farm or succeed the conversation that occupies the participants at the time of the return. During the finish the participants thank each other. What happens can to a great extent be described as a parallel to what took place on arrival. A few words not connected to the institutional commission are said before the adviser and I as recorder leave: Comments about the weather, the journey back or the business at hand for the participants after the encounter.

6.2 The introduction as a mirror of the expectations of the visit

To describe the introductions of the encounters in detail is considered of crucial importance here, and it is argued that this will establish the frames for participation and influence what happens later. The obvious time to negotiate the agenda is at the beginning of the encounter and to scrutinize opening phases is considered to give illustrative insights into the overall activity that may explain some of the interactional phenomena appearing later on (Poskiparta *et al.*, 2001).

Hofvendahl describes a separate *arrival phase* in the initiating phase in the parent-teacher-student conferences in the Swedish nine-year compulsory school (2006). In this arrival phase the conversation is freer in its form and the participants handle issues outside the institutional activity. The teacher who is the institutional representative welcomes the visitors, invites them to take a seat and often makes a joke. This is also the time when the participants become aware that the encounters are marked by something that Hofvendahl calls doomsday atmosphere (2006, p. 61). There are parallels to this in the nature conservation advisory encounters. The visits are the first ones of this type. To some extent the participants have to state precisely what they mean and refer to. This motivates the participants to agree upon the aim and agenda of the visit. The adviser has participated in encounters with other farmers and has had experiences from those institutional encounters which are applied on the new case, making it easier to understand and possible to handle. To know when to change activities or enter a new phase is yet another skill to be mastered and interpreted.

To detect when the introduction phase is over is based on when the participants initially start moving away from the meeting place. This is considered as a mutual agreement that the obstacles are sufficiently well removed, enabling them to start the institutional activity. The fact that they actually start the walk is an acknowledgement that the frames are sufficiently well known.

Because the phases melt into each other it is sometimes hard to tell when an initiating phase is finished. The phase can vary between 2 and 40 minutes. It is possible to see general differences between the advisers, where A had the shortest initial phases, B a bit longer and C started with coffee and discussion which lasted for half an hour or so. Naturally there is also great variety within the encounters by the same adviser due to the situation and the other participant: The farmer. However, since the adviser is the institutional representative and the person who enables these types of encounters every day, she is the one who most easily influences the situation. The heterogeneity of the introduction of the same adviser is an

argument for saying that the actions of the participants are not predetermined by the organisational arrangement of the encounter.

There are a few examples of where the participants have agreed upon a place to meet that is a certain distance away from the land in question. On those occasions the introductions (at least the first part of them) are settled rather quickly. In three of the cases they must travel by car to the land, in one by boat. The quick start might be because a very concrete part of what must be agreed upon in the beginning is rather uncomplicated: To know where to go. At the same time other things are left to be solved. I will now present an overview of some general features of the openings of the encounters.

Often it is the farmer who takes the first initiative in order to get an account of what is going to happen by posing a question. This makes these encounters somewhat different form many other institutional encounters described in the literature, where the identification phase is an instance for the institutional representative to investigate the reasons for the client to seek advice, e.g. Heath (1981) and Zimmerman (1992). The reason is probably that the adviser is the one who has initiated these encounters, both because she is representing the regulation that has decided this advisory activity should take place when a farmer has applied for a specific subsidy, and because she is the participant who physically intrudes into the occupation of the farmer. The farmer lives on the farm where the encounter takes place and is in that sense hosting the visit. This is mirrored in the absolute beginning where the questions from the farmer hold a wish to fulfil the desires of the adviser. In that sense the farmer is hosting the visit and the adviser is the guest. As mentioned in section 5.1 this is different compared with many other institutional encounters. It might be another reason why the non-institutional representative takes a comparatively greater initiative to welcome and put the aim of the visit on the agenda. In another sense the adviser as the representative of the institution is still hosting the encounter as an institutional activity Leppänen (1998, pp. 67-71.) describes a case typical for his data where the institutional representative is the one who gives an account of the visit and announces the agenda. In that sense the introduction is in clear contrast to my encounters where the institutional representative also visits the home of the client.

Normally the request for an account of the visit or other forms of eliciting the institutional activity comes really early on in the encounters, i.e. with few exceptions within the first minute of the encounter. Sometimes this fits in well with the greetings. The whole issue is treated very quickly at this point, often in one turn by each participant. This is almost seen as a way

of acknowledging that what they are about to engage in is an institutional encounter adhered to certain purposes more or less clear to the participants.

The initiative to introduce the institutional activity is with one exception made by the farmer and formulated in general terms. Often the initiating comment, rather than concerning the aim, concerns the time of the initiation: *Are we to start now directly?* In one case the farmer frankly proposed to launch the activity by saying: *Well, it's just to go ahead then*.

The question is responded to affirmatively by the adviser, but in reality it sometimes leads to a discussion that precedes the start. The formulation of the question only concerns the moment to start and does not take the outline of the visit into account. The outline might be reasonably clear. However, potentially the question can also be used when the only thing the farmer knows is that something - perhaps unknown - is about to be started.

The question can also focus on the starting place: *Where do we start?* This formulation can either be interpreted symbolically, but it only makes sense if we know that one of the aims of the encounter is to look for certain things in the field that implies a walk. The question is approached by the adviser as a request to specify the hands-on outline of the visit and walk rather than the institutional content, framework and obligation for the visit. The answers from the adviser is about the land concerned, and the discussion if this is forthcoming at all, is more specifically about how to find the land which is included in the application, how to detect the borders between them and in which order these different areas are to be examined. Even more interesting are the instances where the question from the farmer is more open, which could give the opportunity for the adviser to give a brief background to the aim of the encounter. It is remarkable that the answers (in these areas) are restricted to suggesting which land the adviser would like to start with. Worth noting is that the standard formulation of what to do, both from the side of the adviser and that of the farmer, is to "have a look at the land" (in Swedish "*Titta på markerna*"). With few exceptions the adviser uses a map of the area, brings it up and looks at it or shows it to the farmer. Sometimes she refers to different areas by pointing in their direction or by referring to the names on the map.

The extent to which the aim was explicated in every single case is an unknown factor. The guidelines for the work of the advisers are not more specific in their recommendations than presenting to "contact the farmer" as one of the things to do in advance (SJV, 2000, p. 5). When the initial agreement is scrutinized, it is striking how little attention it gets in the majority of the cases. Still, this seems unproblematic for the participants at this point of the encounter. However, during the enrolment of the

encounter the farmers show uncertainty in the aim of the encounter and the way they are allowed and expected to contribute. This will be expanded upon in next section. In some instances it is clear that the farmer perceives himself only as a host and questions the fact that he actually has to be present during the visit. This question expresses a view that the adviser is an inspector who has a job to do and where interaction with the farmer is of secondary importance. For example, one farmer asks if he is expected to participate on the entire part. When the adviser answers that she prefers that, he responds with an account of his question. He replies that the pastures on another part of his land are easy to locate and discern from the surrounding land, implying that he is not necessary as a guide for the adviser through that area. This account reveals that so far into the visit the farmer has not yet understood the participation and learning components of the encounter.

In some of the introductions to the visit the formulations reveal that the introduction at the farm is to be considered as a pre-sequence to the core activity of the encounter: the walkabout. This opinion is expressed in the following utterances: "Do you need to know anything *in advance*" and "Are we supposed to fill in some papers *before*". The adviser formulates it in the following terms: "Well I guess there is nothing else to say *in advance*."

There are some differences between the advisers' ways of introducing the encounters. The adviser from Hushållningssällskapet is more explicit in the beginning about the aim and outline of the encounter. These visits start with coffee at the kitchen table where it is possible to develop the outline. The frames of Hushållningssällskapet visits are freer and therefore enable a discussion and adaptation in the interest of the farmer. This makes the discussion a real necessity. Despite this I interpret the adviser's request to describe the aim as an excuse. One of the advisers from the County Administration (B) also tries to explain the aim after the walk has started.

6.3 Understanding and agreeing upon the aim of the encounter

As has been described, the mission in these encounters is extensive. Policy documents present a diffuse commission for the adviser, compromising both giving general advice and assessment of whether the land qualifies for a certain level of subsidy. As a basis for the assessment an examination of the plants and other nature values are carried out. The examination is the responsibility of the adviser, but the farmer should be present to answer questions, participate and learn since these encounters are financed by money for competence development (SJV, 2000, p. 13; SFS, 2000:577). Based on the empirical data I conclude that making the assessment and

giving advice is not unproblematic. Paper IV contains a discussion of how the participants come across dilemmas when complaints appear. Paper III demonstrates how the core activity of the visit is problematic as the participants have different ideas of how to handle that activity. Another side of the dilemma is that the farmers demonstrate that they have problems in understanding the agenda. This is expressed in the following sequence.

Example 6:1 [A:5]

```
01  F:   Va äre ni ska titta på nu alltih↑opa.
         What is it that you will look at now everything

02  A:   A: (.) (just) de de [va två:eh
         Right there   were two

03  F:                        [Mycke gå.
                               A lot of walknig

04  A:   A:heh heh heh heh.
         Yeah heh heh heh

05  A:   Två: skogsbeten å: två: öppna betesmarker.
         Two forest pastures and two open pastures

06  F:   A[:
         Yea:h

07  A:    [°Ska de vara°.
            I think

08  F:   Nä de ä jättebra å veta va vi ska göra.
         Right it is very good to know what we shall do
```

In this course of interaction the farmer poses the innocent question of what the adviser and I as the researcher or person in charge of the camera are there to see[25]. The preceding conversation is about the lovely feeling of being in such a nice area on a day when the weather is so lovely. Therefore the farmer's question might accommodate an anxiety that he is wasting his time since he already has stated that the visit is a bit inconvenient for him in terms of the timing. Based on this it is understandable that he is concerned about the outline of the encounter. He first formulates an open question immediately followed by presenting a candidate answer: "everything" (line 1). However, straight after the adviser's confirmation, before she has expounded on the agenda, the farmer comments that the entire walk will be extensive (line 3). After a short response to the humorous comment, the adviser returns to her presentation of the land in question. The farmer's

[25] This is expressed by the use of the referential word "*ni*" in line 1 which is the Swedish word for "you" in plural.

response in line 8 is however, ambiguous. The way the issue is introduced would indicate that he is still referring to the information about the outline of the visit. However, the emphasis on "shall do" together with his immediate succeeding investigation about the time period for the undertaking, suggest that he now talks about the aim of the encounter.

Considering the complexity and ambiguity of the commission it is remarkable that the aim of the visit is given so little initial attention by the participants. Concerning the adviser it is remarkable because she is the one who has the overview of the encounter and therefore should be aware of the complexity. Concerning the farmer, he should be given (or should claim) the right to know more about the aim of something that will require his attention for a couple of hours. On the whole however, there is a pattern that shows the aim of the encounters as downgraded by the adviser. Instead of developing the complexity, the adviser is taciturn about it, despite her apparent knowledge and experience. When explaining what she will do she uses diminishing words such as "little", "only" and ordinary words like "have a look" and "peek" instead of *assess*, *examine* or other formal and jargon formulations when giving an adequate picture of the task at hand. This strategy is also described by Bergmann in his studies of psychiatric encounters (1992). There might be pedagogical arguments for not delivering the full complexity at the initial phase when not requested by the farmer. Hofvendahl claims that the aim with the initial phase in the teacher-parent-pupil conferences is to achieve safety (2006, p. 97). Used as a background, we can then try to understand the adviser's actions in the same way. This can be said to go hand in hand with the concrete and easy questions the adviser starts with about the type of animal grazing or other facts regarding the farm. However, when the picture is misleadingly simplified the institutional commission is underestimated.

When the participants have agreed to start the walk, the adviser often returns to the mission and develops it. On several occasions this does not happen until they come across a problem, something that deserves an assessment, discussion or advice. From a pedagogical perspective it might be wise to leave the more complex questions until there is a concrete case to discuss, especially since these instances occur in my data even after a few minutes. Based on what is described in paper III the conclusion is drawn that the explanation is not easily delivered and the problems persist. In the concluding remarks of the paper I recommended the participants to focus on the controversial issues and to take that as a point of departure to stimulate learning.

An interrelated problem is to get the farmer to understand how the application procedure, the undertaking of managing the land and the payment of the subsidy will work. Even though this is described in the written information that has been sent to the farmers, the adviser has to explain as misunderstandings are common. The subsidy is debated in every encounter and is in some of them the main issue. In cases where it seems as if the farmer may have had insufficient, misleading or wrong information, it turns out that there are many complaints about a third party (see paper IV).

On several occasions the adviser stops and bursts into a lecture about something that is typical for the place. The underlying reason can be that the adviser spots a problem that she wants to comment on, often related to management questions concerning the demands for the subsidy, i.e. the nutrient status of the soil, the degree of grazing or the level of overgrowth. The adviser might have a clear rationale behind the choice to stop at that very place to comment on something. From studying instances like this one can argue that it is not always the case that the farmer immediately understands this rationale. In one typical example the participants have reached an area where the trees grow too densely, and the adviser initiates the lecture by describing in general terms the features of the type of land which categorizes the pasture:

Example 6:2 [A:5]

```
01  A:   (M'n) de   som   ä  viktigt   i  ett skogs↑bete   e  att
          But the thing that is important in a wood pasture is that

02       man håller e som en (g-) (.) gle:s ((clears throat)) (.) gle:s skog.
         one keeps it like an o-  (.) open                   (.) open forest

03       (1.0)

04  A:   S'att  de: de kommer in mycke ljus::
         So that lots of light can come in

05       (0.8) ((A puts her piece of paper at the side, points against the
         trees with her hand))

06       (e- m-) ti träden   å   grenarna,
         (e- m-) to the trees and the branches
```

The turn initiating "but" indicates that what the adviser is going to say is opposed to how something really is or has been referred to, and in that sense prefaces a disagreement or dispreferred action (Pommerantz, 1984). What is striking in the sequence and becomes even more accentuated as it proceeds is the absence of response from the farmer (data not presented).

This is interpreted as an uncertainty in what this account implies for the farmer.

6.4 Seeing as the basis for making assessments

The basis for making assessments is to achieve information, which can be done in different ways. In section 5.1.1 it was stated that institutional talk is often characterised by questions and answers with restrictions concerning who puts the questions and who supplies the answers. Both types are described in the literature: Where the non-institutional representative poses the questions and where the institutional representative asks to be able to make an assessment. In the advisory encounters that I have studied, questions are characteristically posed by both parts. However, there are only a few cases where the adviser poses questions whose design enhances learning general things from the farmer, but the questions from the adviser are more often in the form of clarification: How the land has been fertilized, grazed or where the borders of the pastures are compared to the map. The adviser from Hushållningssällskapet had a questionnaire that he used in the beginning of the visit. The questions were more of the kind of closed questions where the issues could hardly be considered delicate, e.g. the amount of hectares and the amount of years the farmer has been running the farm. When comparing the policies' aim of enhancing local knowledge with the practice of posing questions, a considerable gap is noticeable. Although receiving information from the client is a basis for some of the activities within the encounter, the way the process is designed and the type of information that is asked for are not consistent with the participation ambition.

In a lot of the practices described in the literature, the institutional representative struggles to receive the necessary information from the clients (Pommerantz, 1980; Bergmann, 1992; Heath, 1992; Leppänen, 1998; Antaki, Barnes, & Leudar, 2005). This information can be valuable in making the assessment, either because of the facts *per se* or for what the narrative or way of delivering reveals about the client. In many cases the clients are described as reluctant to tell these stories. The abovementioned studies therefore aim to shed light on appropriate or successful strategies (or unconscious acting) used by the institutional representatives. The advisers in encounters for nature conservation do not reveal having any such concerns. One of the purposes of the encounter is to get data in order to judge whether the land qualifies for the application of a higher or lower level of subsidy, or if it is disqualified for any subsidy at all. To be able to accomplish

that institutional activity, the participants must be able to walk about in the relevant area of land.

During the walk the participants talk about what they see in the field and along their path. As they arrive at the area of land included in the application this activity becomes intensified and is more focused on questions that have potential bearings on the evaluation and advice. The points of departure for the discussions are the participants' observations during the continuous examination initiated by any object of potential interest and the information given by the farmer in the application. The adviser is usually the person who notes and comments on anything they pass. The discussions seem to be made in order to help the adviser to better understand the thoughts and actions behind the application from the farmer.

In several of the encounters differences between how the participants would like to walk becomes an explicit issue. Both verbally and non-verbally it is clear that the adviser prefers to stroll around and see also the denser parts and outlying areas, whereas the farmer proposes a quick walk to go across an area. This too is interpreted as perceiving the aim in different ways: To search for specific things or to cross the area as smoothly as possible. This difference is sometimes interpreted as an issue, but does not cause problems. The adviser as a guest and institutional representative is the one who finally decides, just like in the example below where the land in question is applied for as an outland grazing.

Example 6:3 [A:5]

```
01  A:   S' vi kan gå upp hä:r å::: (.) å runda lite (0.2) ↑så:
         So we can go up here and and and go around a bit  so

02       (5.0)

[7 lines omitted]

10  F:   [Så du vill gå upp till sko:gen här då asså.=
          So you want to go up to the forest

11  A:   =Ja:¿ ja vill [gärna se alla (0.5) alla delar heh [he:h.
          Yeah I would like to see all      all parts

12  F:                 [M:                                 [m↑m
```

The adviser's suggestion in line 1 is accompanied by circulating gestures on the map in front of her and during the silence in line 2, she non-verbally repeats her suggestion, translating the circulating gestures when pointing in the direction of the forest. In the utterance in line 10 the farmer demonstrates that he has already registered the adviser's wish to walk into

the forest rather than passing it. Still, formulating it as a question that demands confirmation, he challenges the logic of her idea. The adviser picks up on this as a request for a motivation, which she delivers. The question was formulated as a matter of *desires*, not as a necessity for the successfulness of the encounter. In the adviser's answer her personal desire is even more emphasised ("*vill gärna*" in Swedish in line 11). In line 12 the farmer shows his acceptance. The fact that it is done before the adviser's account is heard demonstrates that his challenge was never intended as a real threat to the suggestion from the adviser. At the same time he starts moving away in the proposed direction, thereby also non-verbally accepting the proposed route.

When examining the gazes and professional vision for paper III I became aware of the farmer's difficulties in noticing and that this was also detectable in the purely non-verbal actions. Although hard to base analytically in the empirical data, I noticed a difference between the adviser's and the farmer's way of looking at the pasture. The adviser seemed to consciously examine the species growing in the field, her gaze focusing on crucial elements such as the poor soils surrounding rocks. In opposition to this, the farmer was often looking towards the horizon to plan for the continuation of the walk, or looking at the ground. A more systematic study would be needed, but I experienced a difference in the quality of the adviser's and the farmer's ways of examining the ground: The adviser's look guided the steps she took in terms of direction and pace as opposed to the farmer's that more passively followed the steps he took. If nothing else, this is an interesting hypothesis for further investigation.

The farmer is undeniably the one who has most experience of the land and the one who can orientate himself best in the area concerned. He often acts as a guide who has more access to the land compared to what the adviser can gather from her maps and documents. However, in several of the encounters the farmer might after a while announce that he does not know in detail what the adviser is looking for and that this is causing him problems about where to go next. The connection between knowing what to look for and where to go is further described in paper III. In that paper I made the point that the farmer exposed his lack of knowledge about the aim of the encounter and presented that as an obstacle for the coming activity. The encounter described in that paper is not the only one where this is done after the on-set of the walk. One example of how this obstacle is discovered was the point of departure and alluded to in the title of paper III when the farmer says: "I don't know what you are looking for". During another encounter the farmer utters: "I don't know what you would like to see, where we should go". In yet another encounter the feeling of irresolution is

turned into curiosity. Notice also that in the question "What is it that *you* should get…?" (my emphasis) the work at hand is formulated as the commission of the adviser. The question is left uncompleted and partly inaudible at the video recording. But analysing the adviser's response to it, she seems to interpret the question as concerning what she expects to find and how she will use that for her further work.

During the entire encounter the adviser makes notes that will assist her memory when making the plan of measures that will be made. This is briefly described in paper III. The most discrete way of doing this is that she from a distance quietly notices what she sees and directly makes her evaluation about whether or not it will influence the evaluation. On other occasions what she sees is commented on aloud to the farmer, or is documented in notes that will constitute the basis for the report of the encounter. Some of the species are documented by taking photos which can be the starting point of a discussion between the participants about where they might stop and examine the species. On several occasions the adviser is forced to request some time from the farmer to stop to allow her to take written notes. This happens at different occasions and places, usually as the participants are about to leave a certain discussion or land area. As briefly commented in paper III, the adviser sometimes mentions what she sees and stops to take a closer look to be able to examine the object properly.

This has similarities with what has been described by Heritage & Stivers (1999) as "online commentary". In their studies of medical encounters they describe a strategy used by doctors when they examine the patients. While examining, they simultaneously pronounce what they see and this behaviour is called online commentary. Here the examination is a way of gathering information. The authors express online commentary as "talk that describes what the physician is seeing, feeling or hearing during physical examination of the patient" (p. 1501). This is not to be confused with diagnosis where the physician also concludes and interprets the findings from the examination. The point with online commentaries is that it prepares the ground for the doctor to deliver the diagnosis, the assessment. When there is no problem, the patient is prepared for this, and resists claiming a treatment. It is as if the examination accompanied with the online commentaries has given the patient enough attention and acknowledgement. Without speculating about the reasons for this behaviour, it is clear that the advisers in the nature conservation encounters often take their notes without benefiting from the opportunity to pedagogically teach the farmer about the consequences of what they have seen. Based on the information in paper III, it is likely that there are many instances where these discussions never arise

and the participants miss an opportunity for learning. When the issue is fully treated they continue the walk, but it may also be the case that the discussion continues as the participants continue walking further on, or that the discussion is taken up again at a later time.

There are also several instances where the farmer is the one who initiates a closer examination, which is described in paper III. There I claimed that the farmer bit by bit understood what the purpose and the accepted way of acting was and in relation to that tried to understand how he himself could best contribute and nominate potentially interesting plants. In that paper I discussed how difficult it seemed for anyone to contribute in an appropriate way, when the interactional resources including knowledge about biodiversity were unevenly distributed.

6.5 Delivering assessments

An inherent feature of institutional encounters is the asymmetric distribution of knowledge. Very often the aim of the encounter is to deliver an assessment. Generally speaking, making the assessment can also be a basis for taking further actions such as ordering the right remedy, deciding whether the client is qualified for something or for the advice to be delivered. What has been described above about making the assessment can be described as work prefacing the decision. I will now discuss the dilemmas connected to the deliverance of an assessment. In many situations, whether the deliverance in question concerns an assessment or a decision does not make much of a difference for the acitivity at hand, whereas in other cases to be able to differentiate between these adds an illustrative aspect to the analysis. In the section below comparisons will be made to previous research and therefore alternating words will be used depending on the word choice of the original source.

The deliverance of an assessment is abundantly described in the literature. This can be a matter of pedagogically explaining the basis for the assessment or decision. Very often this is embedded in delicate considerations. Adelswärd & Sachs (1996) describe how delivering mathematical figures that indicate the health status of the patients can be a complicated matter. The patients' questions reveal their incomplete and different understanding. The authors discuss how the same figures can cause totally different deliveries of interpretations by the institutional representative. One of the explanations they present is that the professionals make the assessment from several data, but reduce the discussion with the patient to include a selection of it. This can be seen as an example of the communicative dilemma to create a

balance between explaining the full complexity and achieving an understanding of a simplified situation. Compare this to Example 6:6 below. Several other studies deal with the dilemma of delivering background information which is enough to satisfy the client and at the same time using this to make a decision. If you supply too much information you risk facing disagreements and if you hold back the background data the client might argue for a re-examination (Heath, 1992).

A number of studies have established that the participants design their actions differently depending on whether the implications for the other participant are positive or negative. Good news is exposed whereas bad news is veiled (Maynard, 2003). The effect of this in terms of the formulations is that good news is delivered directly whereas delivering bad news deserves elaborated strategies (Heritage, 1984, p. 267). These strategies are recognisable for competent speakers and therefore serve as forecasting the type of news that is coming. The aim is to enable a deliverance of bad news in a socially prepared situation (Maynard, 1996). Bad news are foreshadowed in the preceding interaction, can be delayed, softened and accounted for as in a case of announcing a bad pulse value described by Leppänen (1998, pp. 160-161). When the topic is delicate professionals pay extra attention to the response of the client. To design the deliverance so that the client gets the opportunity to respond is one way (Heath, 1992). To pose questions or display uncertainty is another (Heath, 1992). Peräkylä (1995) has investigated the strategy when delivering news and advice to HIV patients. To prepare by delivering a hypothetical diagnosis is one of the strategies used. In Maynard's contribution to *Talk at work* from 1992 he describes the strategy used to supply pieces of information so that the patient or guardian pronounces the diagnosis. Then the institutional representative gets the opportunity to elaborate on the diagnosis, confirm or upgrade it. This strategy[26] can also be seen in my data as in the Example 6:7 below.

The phase where the decision is delivered is not clearly separated in my encounters. The encounter develops into a continuous discussion where the values of the land become more and more clear. Based on the advisory encounter the adviser is supposed to make an assessment whether the land qualifies or not and in cases of non-approval recommends that the farmer withdraws his application. Sometimes she needs to consult other colleagues before making the decision and no decision can be delivered during the

[26] *Strategy* is here used to denote a recurrent course of action in the way described by Hofvendahl (2006, p. 14), irrespectively of the speaker's level of consciousness about it. He claims this is the ordinary way *strategy* is handled within CA research and lists some of these studies.

encounter. The farmer however, is responsible for the decision about which action will be taken. This procedure causes many discussions and attempts of clarifications during the encounters. The point here is that the adviser sometimes delivers her assessment as a decision, although the decision to formally withdraw the application is to be taken by the farmer. How these decisions are delivered has not been systematically investigated, but it seems as if they generally follow the pattern of delivering bad news as described in the literature by Maynard (1992, 2003) Peräkylä (1995) and Leppänen (1998). The occasion for the deliverance seems to be at the time of leaving a pasture or at the end of the visit. In the following example at the end of the encounter, the confusion of the farmer is explicitly demonstrated verbally. Note the subtle shift in the answer between presenting the encounter in terms of consultation in line 10 and as the County Administration making the decision in line 23.

Example 6:4 [A:3]

```
01   F:  För att de måste väl (.) Hur eh hur ä gången s↑en då (.)
         Cause that must          How    how is the procedure then

02       när de s'att säga Besl↑utar du de här (0.3)
         when it so to say Do you decide about this

03       å sen så ställs man inför faktum eller äre så att
         and then one is presented with the facts or is it so that

04       du ger liksom (.) ae: m:: (.) De här ä va du kommer fr↑am till
         you kind of give             This is what you end up with

05       å sen så får man möjlighet att diskute[ra liksom va man gör (.)
         and then one gets the opportunity to kind of discuss what to do

06  A:                                          [°M°

07  F:   va man gör utifrån de h↑ä:r situa[tionen.
         what to do based on this situation

08  A:                                    [Preci:s (.) A:.
                                           Exactly     Yeah

09       (0.3)

10  A:   De e ju en rådgivning å sen [ä re helt [upp ti dej
         It is a consultation and then it is entirely up to you

11  F:                               [.hja      [M:
                                       yeah

12  A:   om du vill (1.0) göra re enligt stödreglerna
         if you like to do it according to the subsidy rules

13       eller (.) [eller gå ur å (.) å sköta re,
         or         or leave and      and manage it
```

14 F: [M

15 (1.0)

16 F: De blir inge sånt där [länsstyrelsebeslut som kommer ((*makes en explosive sound with the lips and a gensure possibly imitating a gavel symbolizing that a decision has been made*))
There won't be any County Adminstration decision that comes

17 A: [fritt.
independently

18 A: Nä:e du har [Du ha:r betänketid i tre: vecker (.) två (.)
No you have You have time for consideration for three two

19 F: [he:h

20 A: tre vecker [he:h he:h he:h
three weeks

21 F: [Ae a:¿
Right

22 (1.0)

23 A: Sen beslutas de.
Then the decision in taken.

The advisers sometimes deliver the evaluation as if having the status of an objective decision, sometimes as an issue for discussion. The evaluation is mostly responded to by the farmer as a non-controversial matter. However, in the example below the adviser has announced that she is not sure of her final assessment. When the farmer requests the basis for the assessment (line 1), she designs an answer that demonstrates her professional competence to make the decision (line 12-16 and a few following lines not presented). This is in clear contrast to the mundane formulation of the farmer in line 1.

Example 6:5 [A:8]

01 F: Hur mycke grejer ska de va: he:lst då.
How many things should there be preferably then

02 (0.7)

03 F: Ett tietal eller.
About ten or so or

04 (1.0)

05 A: De e svårt å sä:ga så::,
It is hard to say that way

06 (2.5)

07 A: (Hm),

```
08       (0.3)

09  F:   [(xx xx)

10  A:   [(xx xx)

11  F:   Inga speciella bestämmel[ser.
         No special regulations

12  A:                           [Nä:e de äre inte utan de
                                  No there aren't but it

13       (1.6) (de e) en bedömning som man får göra å ta in
                that's a judgement one has to make and consider


14       (2.0) man ska inte bara tänka på växter utan (.) ta
               one should not only think of plants but take

15       in alla (1.0) natu:rvärden    (.)    som ä:
         all   nature values into consideration that are

16       kopplade till betesmarker.
         connected to pasture land
```

Quite apart from whether the design was conscious or not, the effect on the farmer is that his participation becomes restricted to minimal responses. After the lines presented, the farmer proposes another site for investigation. He adds the disclaimer that he is not sure whether there is anything of interest there.

Connected to this, is dealing with normality as described by Adelswärd & Sachs (1996) and Bredmar & Linell (1999). Since the norm is normality, the institutional representative often makes en extensive job to formulate the assessment in terms of normality. This of course is done to avoid unnecessary anxiety for the patient. At the same time as described in Bredmar & Linell's study (1999) of midwife encounters, the deviation from normality sometimes infers an extra action or attention from the client. This balancing act appears to form the actions of the advisers in my data. On one hand they do not want to disappoint the farmers with the fact that the land is not qualified. On the other hand they have to encourage the farmer to accept that their land did not qualify and consequently withdraw the application and take subsequent measures. Formulating the situation in terms of the commonplace nature of the situation can be one way of dealing with a delicate matter. Below follows a rather extensive sequence where bad news that the land is not qualified is delivered. Note the elaborated job the adviser puts in to prepare for the decision. The Swedish words for the basic level of subsidy, "*grundersättning*", and the higher one, "*tilläggsersättning*" are not translated in English.

Example 6:6 [B:2]

01 A: Men då om man tittar på (.) hur (.) de hä:r skiftet här
But then if one looks at how this area here

02 som hör till [(2.0) ett a: rå de:: (4.0) e:::h (0.5) om- om
that belongs to one a then it if if

03 F: [A:
Yeah

04 A: man (säger) dom här två ersättningsnivåerna [som fanns
we take these two levels of subsidy that we had

05 F: [O:kej.
Okay

06 A: >grundersättning å tilläggsersättning< så (0.4) på
grundersättning and tilläggsersättning then on

07 grundersättnings- (0.3) e::h niv↑ån (.) så då ställs de inga krav
the grundersättning level then there are no demands

08 på vi:lk↑en flora som finns [(0.2) i: betesmarken medans på
on which type of flora there is in the pasture while for

09 F: [Nähe?
Really

10 A: tilläggsers↑ättning (.) >då ska de finns ett< fodervärde bara
tilläggsersättning then there should be only a forage quality

11 (.) å de gör de ju absolut hä:r,
and that is absolutely true here

12 F: Ja[:? °visst°.
Yeah sure

13 A: [E::h (0.8) om man ska få den härа (.) h↑ögre ersättningen då
if one is to get this higher subsidy then

14 tilläggsersättning så (0.2) så ställs de ju de här kravet på
tilläggsersättning then then there is this demand on

15 floran å då ska re va:h (0.3) på ungefä:r sjuttifem proc↑ent av
the flora and then there should be on approximately seventyfive percent of

16 (.) hagens (.) yta (.) ska re finnas dom här typiska
the pasture's area there should be these typical

17 betesgynnade arterna (0.3) å de: kan va: (0.8) de finns flera
grazing-enhanced species and that can be there are several

18 olika sorters gr↑ä::s de kan va: (0.2) blåklockor å prästkragar
different sorts of grass it can be bellflowers and oxeye daisies

19 å::h [(0.3) de finns: otr↑oligt mycke olika sorter [men de

```
          and         there are incredibly many kinds but that

20  F:        [Ha                                          [°Ha°
               Right                                        Right

21  A:    kanske ä (0.3) vanliga sorter som man känner ig↑en.=
          might be       common types that we recognise

22  F:    =H↑a
           Yeah

23  A:    .h E::hm (.) tillexemp- den hä:r (0.4) rödklint ä en sån som
                       for example this one brown knapweed is one of those that

24        (0.3) som trivs på lite magrare marker.
                thrives on poorer soils

25  F:    A:¿
          Yeah

26  A:    Men hur som helst så de e ett ganska h↑ögt ställt krav .h oche:h
          But anyway that is a rather high demand and

27        (0.2) den h↑ä:r marken ä (0.3) >just eftersom den ha va:rit< åker
                this land is       just this because it has been arable land

28        tidigare [(0.4) å även om de e lä:nge sen så finns de härа e-
          earlier         and even though that is long ago this

29  F:             [J↑a
                    Yeah

30  A:    (0.2) effekten kv↑ar.
                effect is still there

31  F:    H[a
          Yeah

32  A:     [E::h (0.5) Så: nu har vi (ju) inte gått igenom hela marken å
                       So now we have not walked through the entire field and

33        tittat då men ja skulle nog (.)  kunna säga att (0.2) .h De blir
          looked then but I would probably be able to say that     It is

34        gr↓undersättning på den härа mark[en.
          grundersättning for this land here

35  F:                                     [De blir de,=
                                            It is

36  A:    =A:¿
           Yeah
```

In my advisory encounters many of the applications are disqualified by the adviser. The deliverance of bad news is generally made in a cautious way. Deliverers try to avoid blaming the client when delivering bad news, which requires an effort (Maynard, 2003). If bad news is too deliberate this may be

interpreted as an attribution of blame on the client (Pomerantz, 1978). One strategy could be to describe the bad result as dependent on something in the situation, thus avoiding putting the blame on someone (Maynard, 2003).

In the institutional setting whereby encounters are framed, the bad news is never as bad for the client as for example the news described by Silverman & Peräkylä (1990) and Peräkylä (1995) that the client in an HIV counselling encounter is positive. Nevertheless, apart from the economical implication denial of subsidy and implied devaluation of the nature values of the land, the judgment has moral implications. The farmer can be held morally responsible for trying to benefit from the political system by making the application claiming the pastures are suitable for a high grade of nature values and financial reward. Supposing the suspicion that the mistake was intentional could be put aside, the competence of the farmer is nevertheless seriously damaged. Even though the adviser does not intend to accuse the farmer, the observation can be responded to by the farmer as an accusation. In example 4 presented in paper IV, it was in this morally loaded context that the farmer declared he had been encouraged by a consultant to fill in the application the way he did. In the complaint sequence that follows, the farmer shifts the blame on to the consultant.

The professionals report bad news to the patient by using what Heritage & Stivers call "evidential" formulations (Heritage & Stivers, 1999). This means that the doctor mitigates the lack of symptom by using the disclaimer that he "cannot see" any X. The case in my study presents an interesting parallel, where the bad news is formulated as an *absence* of some desired feature. In the case of nature conservation encounters the aim is to find indications on biodiversity and high nature values. In the deliverance formulations containing words with sensory components are common like "smell", "feel" and "hear" (Chafe & Nichols, 1986). By that communicative strategy the claims are down-graded (Chafe, 1986). This is very similar to the communicative strategy I have noticed from my advisers when they prepare for bad news because of too few interesting species.

Example 6:7 [A:11]

```
01       (9.0) ((A takes notes, F walks and stops so that he is besides A))

02  A:   ((breathes in through the nose))

03       (2.0)

04  A:   .t Ja hittar såna här fi:na:eh (0.3) fläckar av (0.5) där de ä
         .t I find better                    patches of       where it is
```

```
05       magrare å fina (0.5) växter,
         poorer and good      plants

06       (0.5)

07  F:   A:¿
         Yeah

08       (0.7)

09  A:   Men (1.0) ändå s- helhetsintrycket eller större delen (0.5) ↑äreh
         But       anyway the overall impression or the major part    it is

10       (0.5) näringspåverkath från nån gammal gödsling [(0.5)   lå:ngt
               nutrient affected from some old time fertilization long ago

11  F:                                                    [A:¿
                                                           Right

12  A:   tibaks i tiden.
         back in time

13       (1.0)

14  A:   Å de: medför att ja: inte kan ge den h↑ö:gre ersättningen,
         And that implies that I can't give the higher subsidy

15  F:   Nej,
         Right

16  A:   Utan [(0.5)(de får va den lägre) (0.3) som e på tusen kroner per hektar
         So it will have to be the lower one that is a thousand crowns per hectare

17  F:        [De blir den lägre (0.2) A:¿
               It is the lower one     Right

18  F:   A:¿
         Right
```

In some cases the adviser motivates her evaluation based on the regulations or guidelines for the subsidy or encounter. One strategy used to do this is to pose the hypothetical question to the farmer: What does he think an inspector would say if inspecting the land? This strategy is used in 7 out of the 15 encounters where inspection activities might be a reality (i.e. the encounters with adviser C from Hushållningssällskapet excluded). This strategy seems to be used without the risk of questioning, which of course is a security for the adviser. I have not come across this strategy in any other institutional context. A somewhat similar strategy is the conditional *if-then strategy* described by Leppänen (1998). There the proposed action is formulated as the logical thing to do on the situation as it is framed. In the example below the adviser has assessed the land as too densely covered by trees. That assessment was questioned by the farmer and then the adviser introduces the inspector as an agent portrayed to share her opinion.

Example 6:8 [A:7]

```
01  A:   <Ja man får ju tänka (.)  hur en (.) kontrollant
          Well one has to consider how an     inspector

02       skulle> (.) bedöma.
         would      judge/assess

03  F:   Va:=
         What

04  A:   =En kontrollant från länsstyrels[en hur dom skulle bedöma,
          An inspector from the County Administration how they would assess

05  F:                                    [A:¿
                                           Right

06  F:   A:
         Right

07  A:   Och (2.0) då tro:r ja: (.) elle ja ä ganska säker på att de
         And       then I think     or I am pretty sure it

08       skulle bli (.) li:te avdrag för (.) igenväxning,
         would be       some deduction for   overgrowth

09  F:   M:

10       (0.5)

11  A:   Här.
         Here

12  F:   M:

13       (0.5)

14  A:   ((clears throat)) Å de e inte så: (.) så roligt å,
                           and that is not so  so great
```

Another benefit is that this strategy makes it possible to make an assessment by portraying the inspector as the bearer of the bad news therefore a common enemy. The strategy enables the adviser to portray herself as "the good cop" forewarning the farmer of the detrimental effects of "the bad cop", i.e. the inspector, in a potential inspection situation. In the previous example the adviser explicitly expressed her care for the farmer in line 14, thereby portraying herself as an empathic person. The next example demonstrates how this strategy can be used in interactional environments where the adviser underpins her recommendation to withdraw the application for the present year since the pastures are not sufficiently grazed. The first resistance from the farmer expressed by the minimal responses in lines 4 and 6 and his non-verbal disagreement in line 9 triggers the adviser to

once again mention the potential inspection assessment. This time the argument is acknowledged by the farmer in line 16. However, the adviser continues to underpin her recommendation by other arguments.

Example 6:9 [B:1]

```
01  A:   å egentligen så äre väl (.) tve:ksamt om dom hä:r
         and in fact it is           doubtful if there

02       för de här va så pass dåligt betat så de här
         cause here it was so badly grazed so this

03       skulle ru åka dit på om du fick kontro[ll.
         You would be failed if you got an inspection

04  F:                                         [Mhm

05  A:   Som inte god[känt.
         As not qualified/approved

06  F:               [M

07  A:   S'att egentligen skulle ja rekommendera dej att ta bort
         So in fact I would recommend you to remove

08       den ur ansökan i år också.
         it from the application this year as well

09       (1.0) ((F makes a gesture of disagreement with head))

10  A:   .t Just bara för att den ä: så pass obetad fortfarande.
            Just only because it has not been grazed yet

11  F:   M

12  A:   Meneh (.) deteh,
         But       it/that

13       (0.5)

14  A:   Föreh (.) a: (0.5) om de blev kontroll så skulle re bli:
         Because well in case of an inspection it would be

15       hundra procent som va: inte okej.
         a hundred percent that was not OK

16  F:   Ja[ha.
         Really

17  A:     [För att de är (.) F'att de ska va: För att de lå:g ju
          Because it is Because it must be Beause it was lying
```

6.6 Giving advice[27]

Giving advice can be a delicate matter due to the fact that it implicitly is to state that the other person is less competent than desired. This is true for mundane conversation (Jefferson & Lee, 1992) and for institutional interactions (Heritage & Sefi, 1992). The principal work within the institutional literature on advice giving is the already mentioned *Dilemmas of advice* by Heritage & Sefi (1992). Their study has similarities with mine as far as it describes visits in the home of the client, where the mission is a mixture of making an assessment and delivering advice.

Heritage & Sefi define the sequences they have focused on as "sequences in which the [institutional representative] describes, recommends, or otherwise forwards a preferred course of future action" (1992, p. 368). Explicit investigations of giving advice have not been included in the work of this thesis. In the definition offered by Heritage & Sefi they do not explicitly account for the response of the client, which is normally put forward in alignment with the reliance on the third position for the interpretation of what has been done (Ten Have, 2004, p. 113). The first verb in the quoted definition - *describe* - admits a low degree of agency for the client since it just implies that things could be better. However, Heritage & Sefi also state that giving advice has moral dimensions because of its inherent implications (1992, p. 368). Several other studies investigate the normative dimensions of institutional encounters (Bergmann & Linell, 1998; Hall *et al.*, 2003; Hall, Sarangi & Slembrouck, 1997, 1999; Mäkitalo, 2005).

Heritage and Sefi's (1992) study of first time mothers describes both how advice is initiated (sometimes requested, sometimes not) and responded to. Generally, a major reason for contacting an institution is to benefit from the competence of the institutional representative, and hence receive advice. However, there are institutional encounters containing features of surveillance where the clients demonstrate resistance to advice. The reluctance to reveal their dependence and lack of knowledge is proposed as an explanation why clients so seldom request advice (Heritage & Sefi, 1992). The clients prefer to portray themselves as knowledgeable. Similar rationales in the case of nature conservation encounters are likely, but beyond the scope of this study. On the one hand, since the farmer already has applied for the subsidy he should have an amount of relevant knowledge. On the other hand, the encounter is framed as competence development in nature

[27] This way of considering giving advice differs from what Leeuwis (2004) calls *advisory communication*. The latter is an institutional phenomenon initiated by the farmer where the adviser acts as a consultant or counsellor whose competence is explicitly requested. The former concerns a practice that is a more or less implicit part of the institutional encounter.

conservation management, which would be an environment where initiations of discussions would be welcomed. In the studies of the health visitors, the majority of advice given in the encounters is initiated by the institutional representative. The tendency to give advice even when not requested is explained by the authors as legitimizing the visit, as a "ticket of entry" for a nurse visiting first time mothers. However, the deliverance of advice in order to making oneself useful might even have the opposite effect, when advice is not requested, Heritage & Sefi (1992) claim.

The advice giving activity does not appear isolated in one phase of my encounters, but scattered in the courses of interaction. Explicit requests of advice by the farmers are not frequent. The official reason for the encounter is not a request for advice from the client's side. The findings show that they do sometimes request it, but also that sometimes the adviser seems reluctant to offer just that. By using hesitation marks and disclaimers she marks that she is not the one to make the decisions about which measures to take[28]. In the following example the farmer requests the adviser's opinion about what to do with a snag in the forest, i.e. to get rid of it or to keep it because of its importance as a substrate for biodiversity.

Example 6:10 [B:3]

```
01  F:   Va säger du om en sån d↑ä:r då ska man låta d↑en
         What do you say about such a one are you supposed to let it

02       stå kv↑a:r eller.
         stand there or

[4 lines omitted where the participants comment on a small incident]

07  A:   Ja:::eh[::
         Well

08  F:           [°En sån (0.3) torraka ska man låta d↑en stå
                   Such a       snag are we supposed to keep it

09       kva:r för insekter å så (där eller)°.=
         for insects and the like or

10  A:   =J↓a: de:t ä ju garante:rat masser mä insekter i den
          Well there are definetely loads of insects in it

11       dä:r men ja: kan inte säga dej v↓icka som finns
         there but I can't tell you which ones there are
```

[28] The management plan the encounter will result in is supposed to contain both demands that the farmer is supposed to be aware of already at the encounter, and advice on what measures that would be desirable. In Swedish the words "*villkor*" and "*råd*" are used respectively (SJV, 2000, p. 23).

12 där.
there

13 A: Mene:h (2.0) visst när den där blir solexponerad å
But sure when it gets exposed to sunshine and

14 varm så kommer dom säkert (att) tycka att de ä:
warm they will surely think it is

15 ↓ännu bättre.
even better

[15 lines omitted]

31 A: Ja↑a (1.0) Ja skulle nog kunna säga att (.) spa:r
Well I would probably be able to say keep

32 den.=
it

33 F: =Ja:¿
Yeah

34 A: Me v- men visst ja mena k↓ä:nner du att näe (0.3)
But but sure I mean if you feel that no

35 den passar inte hä:r i min hage så äre ju:: (i-
it does not belong here in my pasture it is

36 (0.5) [(x)

37 F: [Då får ja ta bort de[n s↑en i så fall.
Then I can remove it later in that case

38 A: [Ja:: den ä inte
Yeah it is not

39 A: fri:dlyst på nåt vi:s den [där men visst ska man
protected by law in any way that one but sure one should

40 F: [Nä
Right

41 A: tänka på alla organismer som kan tänkas finnas i
think of all organisms that possibly could be found in

42 ens hage >så ja mena< då: (.) då kan ja väl
one's pasture so I mean then then I can

43 rekommendera dej att i:nte ta ner den.
recommend you not to remove it

44 A: E::h

45 (2.0)

46 A: Mene:h (1.0) A:
But Well

47 F: M:

48 A: De finns (.) en hel del värden i ren (2.0) de: de-
There are a whole bunch of values in it it it

49 (.) ja (.) så ä:re ju.
yeah that is for sure

As seen in the example the adviser presents the pros and cons for keeping the snag but leaves the decision for the farmer to make. Based on interviews with farmers Waldenström (2001) argues that there are different opinions about the demands on the adviser. While some farmers value autonomy and conceive the adviser as someone to discuss with to get support for one's own ideas, others persist in their wish to listen to the adviser's expertise and her recommendation of one of the alternatives (Waldenström, 2001, pp. 122-129). As will be clear from example 6:11 below, this particular farmer seems to be of the latter kind.

In her study of counselling encounters in career guidance training, Vehviläinen differentiates between counselling and giving advice in stating that "the counsellor should not influence the student's decisions but rather facilitate her or his decision-making" (Vehviläinen, 1999, p. 167). Pilnick relies on a similar definition, but claims the difference in terms of directiveness is not of vital importance for the professionals (Pilnick, 2003, p. 835). Often in Vehviläinen's encounters the counselling and advice giving are intertwined. She also describes a few instances where the explicit request for advice is rejected or rather withheld. This is interpreted by Vehviläinen as waiting for a more appropriate environment for the deliverance of the advice. The motives for withholding the advice in the nature conservation encounters are not available from the study made. Still, the advisers' accounts can vary from wanting to first consult a colleague due to the complexity of the decision, to wanting the farmer himself to be responsible for his own decisions instead of taking certain actions because the County Administration said so. Instead of taking decisions for the farmer, the adviser wants to give advice about how he could reach his goals. This is stated explicitly in the next example.

Example 6:11 [B:3]

01 A: .h Sk↑o:gen tycker ja: d- de e lite svå::rt så där
The forest I think th- that is a bit hard

02 för där handlar de så mycke om va du: känner atte:h
cause there it is so much about what you feel that

03 (0.7) va du vill,
what you want

04 (2.0)

05 F: A [ja ha ju inte tänkt å bli nån skogsbr[ukare
Well I haven't planned to be some kind of forester

06 A: [A:¿
Yeah

07 A: [Nä:e¿
Right

08 F: de hade ja inte tänkt [va meheh.
that I had not planned

09 A: [Nä: men man skulle kunna (xx)
No but you could

10 lämna den bara som den ä:r också (.) e:h mena ja
leave it just as it is also I mean

11 >(ja mena)< om du känner atte:h (.) .h visst r↑unt
mean if you feel that sure around

12 fornminnena dä:r så kanske man får va li[te
the ancient monuments there one possibly must be a bit

13 F: [M

14 A: försikti[g e::h (0.5) ocheh (4.0)
careful and

15 F: [M

16 A: .h Ja ha lite svå:rt å bara (s-) liksom sä[ga du ska
I have a bit of a problem to just say you must

17 F: [.h:::

18 A: så hä:r=
like this

19 F: =Nä: m[en (0.5) utan (.) asså (.) g↑e: mej en
No but but well give me a

20 A: [E::h he:h he:h he:h he:h

21 F: åtgärdspla:n [å så (.) så: >ja mena< vi kan ju::
plan of measures and then then I mean we can

22 A: [M:::¿

23 F: >naturligtvis träffas< en gång t↑ill [å diskute:ra å
of course see each other again and discuss and

24 A: [M:¿

25 F: s[å men (man) (.) så att j↑a: har nånting (0.3) [att
so but one so that I have something to

26 A: [.hja
yeah

27 A: [S-

```
28  F:   följa efter va ni: [har tänkt er ↑också s[å (.) för
         follow according to what you have intended too so because

29  A:                      [°M::::¿°

30  A:                                              [M::¿

31  F:   att ja menar de ä du: som är expertisen h↑ä[r å
         I mean you're the expert here and

32  A:                                                [.hn

33  F:   inte j↑ag (1.0) å å [ja: har (j) jättest↑or re[spekt
         not me           and and I have great respect

34  A:                       [M

35  A:                                                   [M:¿

36  F:   för er.
         for you
```

The adviser's reluctance to establish rules for the farmer's future measures is challenged by the farmer. He requests a management plan presupposing the advice will be spelled out there and then. His suggestion in line 21 and 23 to meet again to discuss the plan is not realistic given the scarce resources allotted for this activity. The farmer underpins his argumentation by acknowledging the professionalism of the adviser. Based on ethnographic data, it is likely that the adviser as a representative of the County Administration would prefer to avoid being accused later for recommending measures that have not been successful or worse, detrimental. In the next example with the same farmer and adviser, the latter overtly goes against the request to declare her opinion. Her motivation to base the measures in the wishes of the farmer is placing the responsibility for the decisions on the same.

Example 6:12 [B:3]

```
01  F:   å[: å (.) ge   mej (0.4) s'att säga tips o[m   eller
         and and   give me        like suggestions about or

02  A:    [Ja:
           Yeah

03  A:                                              [A:¿
                                                     Yeah

04  F:   hu- hu- hu:r du  tycker att  man b↓orde restau[r↑era
         ho- ho- how you think one should restore

05  A:                                                   [M::¿ .h

06  F:   [den  här  marken.
```

this piece of land

07 A: [Men de där ä så mycke ((*clears throat*)) (1.0) <va man bo:rde> de
Well (that) it is so much hrrm what you should it

08 (1.7) de b'ror på li:ka mycke (0.5) va d↑u: känner
it depends just as much on what you feel

09 att d↑u: vill mä din mark för j↑a: kanske tycker
that you want to do with your land because I might think

10 en sa:k (2.0) å så: (1.0) >tycker du< nä men d↑e: e
one thing and then you think no but that is

11 inte alls va du vill.
not at all what you want

12 F: Ja men [då FÅR VI JU DISKUT↑E:RA DE I SÅ FALL IG↑E:N
Well but then WE'LL HAVE TO DISCUSS THAT IN THAT CASE AGAIN

13 A: [s' att ehe:h he:h he:h j↑a:h ha:h ha:h
well ehe:h he:h he:h yea:h ha:h ha:h

14 F: [(j)a men(a).
I mean

15 A: [Ja: nä: >men om vi- v- va< ja me:na de va: att de e
Well no but if we w- what I meant is that it is

16 så viktigt att (.) de d↑u: känner att de bli r↑ätt
so important that what you feel that that turns out right

17 hä:[r. A- att de e så:: för annars så: (2.0) hrm Men
here. T- that it is so cause if not hrm But

18 F: [Ja:¿
Yeah

In the research by Greatbatch & Dingwall they support the idea that the institutional representative should avoid taking a stance (1999, p. 288) even though their institutional setting is family mediation. In that setting the institutional representative has the delicate task not to favour any of the conflicting parts. A neutral stance from the side of the institutional representative seems to be preferred by all participants in that setting. The authors claim neutrality to be a generally desired feature and refer to a number of studies (1999, p. 288). The alternatives in the example above seem to be not between the conflicting parties, but between different alternatives for the same farmer.

The abovementioned balancing between delivering "advice" in terms of answers to the farmers' questions and prescribing future actions is inherent in the advisory encounters studied and connected to the double agenda. It is oriented towards as a dilemma by both participants. The borderline between

advice giving and inspection is vague, as has been described by Seppänen (2004). That the borderline between advice and obligations becomes unclear, has also been stated by a survey of the farmers' impressions (SJV, 2003b, p. 30). This raises important questions about the possibilities for participation within these encounters, which will be the focus of scrutiny in section 8.2.

At this moment I would like to draw attention to a similar dilemma of participation from institutional encounters within health care. Recently a large number of studies have investigated the growing belief in client participation (Guadagnoli & Ward, 1998; Stevenson *et al.*, 2000; Poskiparta *et al.*, 2001; Kettunen, Poskiparta & Gerlander, 2002; Jones, 2003; Mitcheson & Cowley, 2003; Pilnick, 2003; Collins *et al.*, 2005; Gaston & Mitchell, 2005). It is widely argued that patient-centered encounters where patients are empowered and even participate in the decision making "enhances patient satisfaction and improves the outcome, at least as measured by compliance with decisions and commitment to action plans" (Poskiparta *et al.*, 2001, p. 70). The parallels to the argumentation within nature conservation are striking. These studies apply conversation analysis and give examples of how the institutional representatives through the interaction can encourage the client to participate in the activities. Kettunen, Poskiparta & Gerlander (2002), Jones (2003) and Collins *et al.* (2005) explicitly argue for the fruitful contribution to the practice that conversation analysis enables. Other studies demonstrate the difficulties in realizing the guidelines' ambitions. They deliver explanations residing in the willingness to apply the participatory methods, as well as a lack of understanding of the meaning and implications of the proposed approaches (Stevenson *et al.*, 2000). To enhance this development training programmes are recommended (Poskiparta *et al.*, 2001; Kettunen, Poskiparta & Gerlander, 2002).

6.7 Identities: Institutional, professional and lay

The perspective that is dominating the conversation analysis literature is that identities are locally produced and transformable at every moment of interaction (Schegloff, 1987, 1991; Drew & Heritage, 1992a). This view has revolutionized the traditional perspective that identities are fixed social facts. Identity work is an active work of the participants themselves, constantly in progress, developed, negotiated and reconstructed in interaction. On the other hand, the words used here for the participants in the advisory encounters are predominantly *farmer* and *adviser* regardless of the various situations I describe. A fruitful and clarifying distinction between different

ways of considering identities is offered by Zimmerman (1998). He separates *discourse identity*, *situational identity* and *transportable identity*. Discourse identity is the most temporary one that shifts with the actions at hand, the sequential organization of talk-in-interaction. An example is the pair speaker-listener. The situational identity is the one that is relevant for the activity at hand, like the discussion about the subsidy between the institutional representative and the non-institutional representative. These identities are the most relevant ones to organise the advisory encounters in this text. There are also the types of identities that are constant independently of the situation and these are called transportable. That does not mean there is one single identity for a person. One person can be both farmer and rural inhabitant[29]. Nevertheless, as will be demonstrated below, even the transportable identities can be at stake in the advisory encounters dependent on how relevant they are considered by the participants. The distinction between the concepts *institutional* and *professional* has been rather poorly developed in the literature. The institutional identity could be considered as referring to your expertise in the administration, is dependent on your commission and what you represent in the situation, whereas the professional identity enhances the expertise in the subject area. Applying Zimmermann's distinction the institutional identity is more at the level of a situated identity whereas the professional one is more of a transportable identity.

The identities of the participants are considered important when they themselves are demonstrably oriented towards them. Throughout the encounters the identities of the adviser and farmer are changing. One way to analytically identify the identity that is relevant at any single moment of interaction, can be to examine the words the participants use to talk about themselves. Drew & Heritage (1992a, p. 30) report from the work of Sacks that the institutional representative use "we" when identifying herself as a member of the institution whereas using "I" when talking as herself. According to Drew & Heritage this phenomenon is ubiquitous. In two examples taken from the same encounter in this data, the adviser refers to different identities when talking about herself. In the first example she affiliates to her institutional identity where examination of the nutrient status of the soil is a routine part of their practices.

[29] There are also farming activities in the proximity to urban areas and the person managing the farm might live in an urban area irrespectively of where his farming activity is located. In Sweden, however, the farmer – rural inhabitant identity relation is valid in most cases.

Example 6:13 [A:8]

```
01  A:   Vi tittar ju på hureh (.) närings- (.) hur mycke
         We look at    how         nutrient-    how much

02       näring de ä: i marken,
         nutrients there are in the soil
```

In the second example she refers to herself as "I" (line 1). This is a way to make her utterance more situated in the local, specific context of the encounter. At the same time, it is proposed that this sequence should be understood as a response to the question from the farmer posed four minutes earlier. That sequence is presented analysed as example 1:1 in paper III. The argument for this is that the adviser re-uses the formulations from the farmer: "look" ("*letar*") and "I" ("*ja*") in line 1 below. Her response is an acknowledgement of the relevance of the question. Additionally by using the pronoun "I" which is the grammatical equivalent to "You" in singular (used in line 1 in example 1:1, paper III) she accepts the professional identity proposed by the farmer.

Example 6:14 [A:8]

```
01  A:   För dom (.) växter som ja le:tar efter de ä ju sånna
         Because those plants that I look for are the ones

02       som gynnas av  (0.5)  av bete å tram[p å:   (0.5) dom
         that are favoured by  by grazing and tramping and they

03  F:                                       [A:
                                              Yeah

04  A:   konkurreras  (ju)  ut   när de  blir (.) mer (.) högvuxet
         are driven out of space when it becomes  a   taller vegetation

05       (0.2) som skuggar.
               that shades
```

Several studies involve institutional settings where the identities vary and are contested throughout. Examples from Heritage & Sefi (1992), Heritage & Lindström (1998) and Bredmar & Linell (1999) deal with encounters and institutional missions where the role of the institutional representative shifts between being an adviser or an evaluator of the clients. This dilemma is vital also in the encounters of nature conservation, as should be clear from the previous sections. The adviser shifts between giving advice about which measures to take for the development towards higher nature values and assessing whether the land currently has nature values rich enough to qualify for the higher level of the subsidy.

On the other hand, more than one identity is often implicitly requested and referred to by both participants. There are also occasions where the adviser can initiate a discussion where other parts of her identity are made relevant such as someone living in the neighbourhood, someone who keeps the same animal as the farmer or someone who is a guest at the farmer's place. This can be contrasted to Hall, Sarangi & Slembrouck's (1999) description of how the institutional representative tries to stick to the identity of professional authority. Such instances are also found in this study, but seem to be relatively downplayed compared to the adviser's desire to affiliate with the farmer.

In paper III it is claimed that the identity of the farmer as producer of food or nature values is negotiated and a crucial part of the discussions. There are also instances where the farmer is portrayed as an applicant for the subsidy by the adviser but where the farmer himself also acts as a landowner and highlights the situation of a part time farmer. In the example below the farmer describes how he has had help from a consultant, referred to as Göran, to fill in the application and the consultant's lack of serious attitude towards the amount of work.

Example 6:15 [A:5]

```
01  F:   För  då: när man prat↑a me: Göran å   han fyllde då:  nä: men
         Because then when you talked to Göran and he filled in well but

02       de va ju bara (å) sö:ka liksom å  de: de va ju bara si: å så: å,
         that's just like to apply and that    that's just to so and so

03       (0.8)

04  F:   A men v↑arför vi arb↑etar ju, Vi hinner ju inte m↑e: de: å d[e:
         Yes but why   we are working  We don't have time for that and that

05  A:                                                                [Nä:
                                                                      Right

06  F:   >A men >de e ju< f↓em år   men f↓em år  (e) de  e: inte lå:ng tid.
          well but that is five years but five years that's not a long time
```

Being an applicant dependent on the categorization by others is the focus of a study where old people argue at home for their right to home help care (Olaison & Cedersund, 2006). The burning issue is whether the applicant can be categorized as dependent on help or not. The decision made by the institutional representative is based on what they see in the home, but also on the way the clients portray themselves and how this is responded to by

the institutional representative. There are several similarities in the above cases to this setting, where the categories are negotiated. However, in the case of nature conservation advisory encounters it is not the categorisation of the person that is primarily and explicitly debated, but the categorisation of the land.

7 Synthesis of the study

In this section the main findings of the papers are presented and integrated with a synthesis of the entire study.

Paper I is an analysis of literature about farmers' knowledge and attitudes towards nature conservation and agri-environmental schemes. Many of the analysed studies establish that in the programmes examined the knowledge, experiences and interests of farmers are not sufficiently accounted for. For the success of future programmes, a deepened knowledge and consideration is necessary about how farmers view their land and commission, and how they implement nature conservation. The paper establishes that nature conservation is a secondary concern for most farmers. The analysis concludes that economy is not the sole important factor either. The principal concern is generally to be able to run the farm in the future, consequently the entire situation of the farmer must be considered in the design of the programmes.

The farmer's attitude is presented as crucial to the result of the agri-environmental schemes. The paper critically reflects on the concept *attitude* and the risk of taking a stated attitude as a guarantee for a certain future action. In the paper, a model is presented to show how attitudes of the farmer and the farming context where agri-environmental schemes are included influence how the farming community affects nature and biodiversity. Recognising that nature conservation management is dependent on the farmer, one can state that for nature conservation the "management of the farmer" is crucial.

In paper I, the importance of taking the geographical region and the individual farm into account is emphasized. This is primarily based on purely ecological arguments. Local adjustments or even alternatives to the programme concerning flora and fauna would give a better result on the biodiversity level. The farmer's local knowledge will result in more applied management solutions. However, despite the rhetoric of the new

management of nature conservation, in practice there is a long way to go. This raises demands for flexible approaches in future agri-environmental schemes in order to deal with complexity. Regardless of the programme's flexibility, the communication with the conservationist or administrator of the programme is seen as an important factor for the subscription to a programme and a means for change, something that is also enhanced in other studies (Harrison, Burgess & Clark, 1998; Cooper, 1999; Juntti & Potter, 2002; Siebert, Toogood & Knierim, 2006; Prager & Nagel, 2008). Therefore it is relevant to study how the policy will be implemented in real cases. The subsequent papers show a way of getting the work started, and how communication involving farmers can be carried out.

With the aim and ambition to analyse new and innovative ways of working with nature conservation Upplandsstiftelsen was investigated, which is the study underlying paper II. The characteristic feature about this organisation is that it is organised outside the state-financed frames. In a pre-study (Bergeå & Ljung, 2002) there were signals that this organisation had a more innovative way of approaching the area compared to traditional, state organised institutions. In a discourse analysis of written text we concluded that the County Administration mainly focused on presenting itself as an organisation, its mandate and what people can expect from the organisation. In contrast to this, Upplandsstiftelsen presented itself as an active participant and formulated their written presentation in terms of what they can *contribute* to and *offer* to people, rather than what they *expect* from people. The rhetoric showed that this institution based their work on the new participatory ideas for nature conservation. With this background, in 2004 a more thorough study of Upplandsstiftelsen was made. A framework developed by Lipsky (1980) was applied where the employees of the organisation are described as street-level bureaucrats. However, out in the field where ecological and social systems are operating, the level of uncertainty is high and it is difficult and questionable to find general management solutions. Flexibility regarding the local circumstances is even more urgent for the street-level bureaucrat. To deal with this situation it is argued that participation from the landowners' side is a key factor. To mirror this aspect of the bureaucrat's commission, we choose to call them *field-level bureaucrats*.

The study describes how the employees are skilled in using the space for action that is set aside in their directives, to find solutions that are adaptive. The paper investigates how the employees discuss participation in nature conservation issues and which possibilities they see in nature conservation management where farmers and landowners have a more active role to play. The findings of the study are based on the stories of the employees, gathered

primarily through semi-structured interviews regarding the approaches and routines of Upplandsstiftelsen. The employees at Upplandsstiftelsen are open-minded when it comes to project management. This is already seen in the initial phase of a project. A culture is described where farmers and other stakeholders are listened to and are given the opportunity to describe what they would like to achieve. The institution coordinates the ideas, is available as a resource and provides help in financial matters.

The employees' conception of communication and advice in their working practices was also investigated. Despite the collaborative approach, in the interviews an expert-culture was evident through the examination of the stories. There is a desire among some of the interviewees to focus the projects on deepening the knowledge about individual species and biotopes. This is not surprising because part of the commission for Upplandsstiftelsen is to monitor and make inventories of specific areas. However, for the survival of these species it is of importance that these areas are managed appropriately. The human dimension of the management does not seem to be acknowledged by all the employees, i.e. not by all the experts in different fields of biological specialisation. Other employees work specifically to help citizens develop closer contact with nature via outdoor activities. From the analysis of how the participants express participation and orient towards the concept, it is clear that the informants are not discursively conscious of the perspective that non-expert persons can be of valuable help in the work of implementing and adopting nature conservation measures. The interviewees seem to underestimate the importance of the mental pictures that are constructed by the way we talk about something and that how we express and frame something has impact on relevant future actions. The study describes how some of the interviewees talk about nature conservation management as if it were a business where the farmers are not included. Nature conservation is expressed as in opposition to what farmers think and work for. In extension activities, this constructs the identity of the farmer as someone who is not an active part and initiating force in nature conservation management.

Paper II claims that participation in nature conservation must be approached on several levels simultaneously in order to benefit the overall aim and thus have a real impact on the actual outcomes. The finding is that the interviewees see the farmers' driving force as different from that of the employees at Upplandsstiftelsen and prioritize production of food and viability rather than nature values. This finding correlates with the findings from paper I, but is now based on the perspective of the institutional representative from an innovative organisation in a Swedish context. Paper

II discusses the discursive aspect of participation in nature conservation, which might be a crucial challenge in the encounter between the farmer and field-level bureaucrat of a nature conservation organisation. With this as a platform, it becomes interesting to see how discussions and negotiations about nature conservation are handled in a real face-to-face situation where a farmer and a representative of an organisation with an interest in nature conservation management meet. Such an encounter is a possible site for the study of how the differences are expressed and handled by the participants in an authentic advisory situation. This was the purpose of the next case study.

To apply a communicative perspective on extension means more than acknowledging the importance of communication. It also implies a focus on how the communication - or *interaction* which has been the preferred term throughout this thesis - is carried out. Therefore the major part of the thesis has been precisely focused on this by presenting analyses of the interaction from naturally occurring encounters in real face-to-face situations between the farmer and the adviser. That is the data of the last two papers. Conversation analysis is the method applied.

Investigations of advisory encounters were carried out by the County Administration who commissioned sub-programmes for biodiversity and extension for nature values executed by Hushållningssällskapet. These extension activities have a concern for nature conservation management in common, as well as the demand that the farmer *at least* has some interest in nature conservation management. The farmer has either assessed the land worthy of a higher level of compensation (as in the County Administration case) or decided he wants to take extra care of the nature values on the land in a voluntary capacity.

The focus of this case study was an organisation that traditionally has been working with extension as an implementation tool and where encounters with farmers are part of their working practices. Throughout these studies the perspective presented is that by investigating how interaction is carried out we can understand the institutional activity and its prerequisites on a general level. Institutional activities can also be understood through examination of the negotiations, accomplished by instances of interaction between the participants. This adds a complementary perspective to the discussion about the new policies. The County Administration is an actor in the implementation process in Sweden, and operates in many fields and the advisers can be considered representatives of the entire institution. How the new paradigm of participation is talked into being can be studied due to the design of the study. In these encounters the core concepts expressing and organising participation are negotiated: Identity, solidarity,

inclusion, asymmetries, responsibility and control of the agenda. Through detailed analyses of how people interact the study shows how we can describe the actions that are carried out as co-ordinated action, see paper III and IV and chapter 6.

One of the main tasks during the encounter is to discuss what among all the things in the farmer's land that are of relevance for the subsidy applied for. This negotiation between the participants is described in paper III. It becomes obvious that the same specimen of a plant can have different meanings to the adviser and the farmer. By applying Goodwin's concept *Professional vision* it is described how the participants see the land or the plant differently and talk about these in different ways. Pointing, map reading and a specific terminology are all frequently used in the encounters and described in the analysis by applying Goodwin's terms *highlighting*, *graphic representation* and *coding scheme*. These resources which are used to accomplish the professional vision are described in the text.

A phenomenon in the advisory encounters described in paper III is that the participants see different things when walking through the same piece of land. It is also shown how the participants demonstrate that seeing is intimately correlated to knowing where to go. The uncertainty and hesitations of the farmer when it comes to transfer in the field can be considered an uncertainty concerning the institutional activity. The phenomenon of seeing different things can be noted in other contexts, and the analysis of this therefore has a general interest. However, analysing the practice of seeing is specifically suitable for the study of nature conservation advisory encounters because the fulfilment of the institutional commission presupposes discussions of what the participants see. The assessment that the adviser is designated to make is dependent on the participants' nomination of candidates for potentially crucial things. This is carried out in an area that is familiar primarily for the non-institutional representative.

In paper III it is argued that both participants have reasons for arguing the way they do. The study empirically shows however, that the adviser's perspective is the one that is acknowledged by virtue of the institutional legitimacy and knowledge of the agenda (outline and aim). The study shows that these are aspects which have impact on the participation of and contribution to the activity, here favouring the conservationist perspective. Since conversation analysis is based on what people demonstrate, it becomes relevant to study and describe how this is handled by the participants. This in part can be seen to reinforce the picture from the study of Upplandsstiftelsen (paper II): That the professional vision of the farmer is not necessarily that of the nature conservationist's. This nuances the picture by

presenting the farmer's producer-perspective as a legitimate one. The problem is not in the farmer perspective per se, but in the fact that his perspective is not the one which is given legitimacy and acknowledgement in the encounter. The paper presents a few solutions in terms of asymmetries and resources that should encourage a more fruitful discussion for shared perspectives in the encounter.

In paper IV another unexpected problem is discussed which appeared during the encounters although not explicitly related to the aim of the encounter: Complaints about absent third parties. When the participants in nature conservation encounters meet it becomes clear that each of them have different identities. The adviser is at the farm as a representative for an authority whose framework she has to know and be able to apply. She is also there because she is experienced in nature conservation issues and hopefully also with knowledge of agriculture. The farmer runs an agricultural enterprise, often has an interest in nature conservation, but is also the applicant for the subsidies. Since that application addressed to the County Administration is the reason for the encounter, the farmer is also the non-institutional representative. The adviser may have personal experiences of encounters with what for her is unfamiliar institutions, and may have experienced what it is to be the non institutional participant. She may be able to draw on these experiences in the encounter where she is actually the institutional representative. In one sense the participants also meet as fellow human beings, which in paper IV is demonstrated to have implications for the interaction. In complaint sequences these identities are put up against each other and affect the actions of the participants.

For the adviser this is a delicate balancing act between on one hand the institutional identity where the professional loyalty towards colleagues is strong, and on the other hand as a sympathetic fellow human being. This is noticeable when the participants handle a complaint. Complaints about absent third parties are generally a delicate matter. To make a complaint about an absent third party is generally said to create affiliation between the present participants. However, there is always a risk that the present party will have another opinion and take the opposite standpoint, especially when he/she knows the third party. The situation is even more accentuated and delicate when there are professional identities to consider. Paper IV presents several examples of this. In one sequence the adviser is agreeing with the complaint, in contrast to others where the adviser finds a very neutral way of handling the question. On another occasion she starts to explain the behaviour of the consultant who is the object of the complaint. Detailed

studies like the one presented increase the awareness of these aspects of the institutional encounter, aspects that must be managed by the participants.

The frequent occurrence of complaint sequences can be seen as an indication of the farmers' general frustration with the system. Many of the complaints express confrontation between the prerequisite, situation and ambition of the farmer, and the demands from the surrounding society and authorities. This is seen both in the content and in the local context where they occur.

Paper IV is an example of how urgent, but unforeseen questions are handled in the encounter. This can in itself be an argument for the importance of the contact between the farmer and the adviser, although the situations as described in the paper show how delicate an issue complaint sequences are, and that the participants must be aware of them as such. Complaining is described not just as an unreflective action of the farmer, but as a highly coordinated activity where both participants pay attention to the context and reaction from the other in terms of timing of the ongoing interaction. The complaint sequences are also described as instances where the identities of the participants are negotiated.

Below are some general findings about the encounters. The latter have been analysed within a framework of institutional talk. This goal-orientation is described to form the interaction into different phases, where the opening phase is specifically analysed and claimed to be a mirror of the expectations of the encounter. These different phases are intertwined and mixed with non-institutional, ordinary talk. The asymmetry between the institutional representative and the non-institutional representative is however, a dominant feature of the interaction. When applying this framework, the adviser is seen as a representative of the institution rather than a professional expert. The discussions in focus in papers III and IV claim that the adviser argues on the basis of her institutional identity. The adviser primarily portrays herself as representing the nature conservation system. This is described in terms of the practices of seeing crucial things in the land, which is the basis for making assessments about the relevant matters in question. In cases where she is forced to deliver a negative assessment stating that the land is not qualified for the subsidy, a strategy is used which down-plays her institutional identity. By referring to what an inspector would say, she becomes the "good cop" who turns telling the bad news into concern for the farmer.

The specific practice of giving advice creates problems for both participants, judging by how that activity is initiated and responded to. Giving advice can be understood as rebuking somebody, which might result

in the advisers presenting their advice with reservations and disclaimers, hesitation marks and so on. This may reinforce the farmers' impression in the sense that they also perceive the activity as delicate and inconvenient. This acting also gives the farmer signals that it is a delicate situation. In some cases it is the urgent requests from the farmers for advice, recommendations, tips and clear answers about what measures to take. That causes problems in terms of hesitations and a reluctance to deliver from the side of advisers. This is interpreted as an indication of the fact that the responsibility for making decisions is not clearly defined, and that the space for action is vague for each of the participants in different parts of the encounter.

The farmers express frustration about not knowing enough about the encounter. This was seen in paper III and emphasized in the overview of the encounters. A conclusion is that it is problematic to have several aims within one institutional activity. The requested participation of the farmer is suppressed by asymmetries in knowledge, powers, and the double and unclear agenda. The restricted access to the agenda makes it hard for the farmer to contribute to the discussion and participate in a relevant way. These findings challenge the idea that institutional activities are generally familiar to the public, and especially to the non-institutional representative in the situation (Linell, 1990). The uncertainty about the agenda and the roles is often expressed when the encounter has already started. These findings put in relation to Lipsky's theory (1980) about street-level bureaucracy show that there is a space for action for the individual adviser in these encounters. In this situation the different interests and aims are balanced through the actions. In the commission for the institutional activity performed by the County Administration the borderline between advice and inspection is unclear. This both offers and demands a space for action and a creation of routines. In the typical case, the representative of Upplandsstiftelsen does not have these conflicting interests and aims and therefore has a less complex situation to handle in terms of participation and learning.

The role of the adviser, apart from giving advice in nature conservation management matters and assessing the land, is to represent the institution. The farmer however, needs someone he can have a discussion with, and from whom he can receive answers and get recognition.

Different methods in paper I and II lead to the same conclusion: The importance of the interaction between the farmer and adviser for participation and learning in nature conservation advisory encounters. However, the empirical studies of actual encounters shed light on the complexity and unforeseen nature of this endeavour as particularly expressed

in paper III, IV and chapter 6. In next chapter these major findings will be further discussed in relation to the research questions and other advisory services within agriculture.

8 Discussion

In this chapter the findings are discussed in relation to the research questions and previous studies. The purpose is to critically reflect upon the type of advisory activity focused on in the thesis. A comparison of the prerequisites for participation and learning with other ways of organising advisory activities in Sweden is presented to the reader. The interdependence between the structure and the action that can be seen at different levels is discussed. Some critical comments on the possibilities for improvements within the advisory system and outside, if we are to reach the desired goal in nature conservation are presented. The important role of communication is emphasised, as well as the need to give higher acknowledgement to the interaction in the face-to-face encounters.

The aim of this thesis is to see how implementing the environmental objectives can be done when participation is a guiding principle and to analyse the learning that takes place. How it is carried out through interaction has been the focus of the thesis. One might question the choice of core concepts and their application in the thesis. Both *participation* and *learning* are used, i.e. concepts that are debated and loaded with different meaning depending on the discipline. The study has an interactional approach which enables an understanding of how both participation and learning are carried out in real situations. Learning is intimately dependent on participation. Judging from previous research on extension, analysing participation and learning with an interactional approach such as conversational analysis (CA) enables, is not the common choice. The discussion is primarily concentrated on the advisory encounters which constitute the major part of my empirical data and which have been the focus of the analysis.

8.1 The learning that is expected and the one that takes place

To enhance biodiversity the scientific knowledge needs further development, not least regarding management measures on the agricultural land on farm level. There is a curiosity in every sane society to know more and be safe in the knowledge that the measures are the most up to date and reliable. However, the accumulated knowledge within research today is more impressive than ever before. To improve nature conservation management, that knowledge must be implemented. Knowledge and information are traditionally claimed to be spread through the contact with advisers. Although the trend, both in nature conservation policies and extension research, has been to call attention to local knowldege and collaborative learning, there is still strong faith in the dissemination of information and learning that takes place when the farmer encounters the biological expert. The type of extension in focus in this study is special in several regards. It is accomplished with the ambition of offering the farmer competence development in biodiversity and nature conservation, matters that are prioritised by society. Therefore, it is financed by the state and can be seen as part of the implementation process for enhanced biodiversity. In the County Administration case this service is conducted by an organisation that also has the responsibility for the inspection of compliance.

Based on these studies, it is concluded that learning is taking place in these encounters between farmers and advisers. Nature conservation nevertheless, is only occasionally the object of learning. This has been shown through all the papers and the summary part of the thesis in different ways: Paper I concluded that the contact with the representative of a conservation programme is important for the success of the programme. The crucial matter is to find solutions that take the local circumstances into account. This dialogue between the farmer and adviser therefore is highlighted. Whether these contacts deal with the grounds underlying nature conservation or the programme *per se*, is not clear from the literature studied. In paper II the employees learned about local adaptations and circumstances in the encounters with the farmers. To some extent this can be considered as learning about ecology. However, the discussions are, to a large extent, concerned with how the administrative solutions of problems can be found in co-operation between farmers and advisers. The difference between success and failure in these ambitions is described as the communicative competence and the desire to find common solutions. Based on this, the case study of actual advisory situations in field visits was conducted. In paper III and IV and in chapter 6 of the summary part of the thesis the learning aspect is even more accentuated.

There are episodes in the encounters where the participants are oriented towards learning about what would generally be considered as the core of nature conservation. A few examples from the present data will illustrate what is considered "the core of nature conservation": The participants discuss the ecological values of the sallow tree, how to keep valuable trees when thinning, or how to recognise herbs that indicate poor[30] soils. A frequent topic is the rare and acknowledged species found on the land, and which are also noted by the adviser. (See paper III). Often these instances have the format of the adviser giving a lecture for the listening farmer. In paper III, example 3:2 is part of a more extensive sequence of what could be considered an example where the focus is on valuable species. However, as claimed in paper III, this example and a considerable number of these lectures influencing discussions are pervaded by the ambition to learn what is accountable and valuable *within the given institutional frames*. The content of the discussion is not open for debate, but instead oriented towards what qualifies for subsidy within the regulations of *tilläggsersättning*. Here the participants' coaxing to achieve the subsidy seems to be given higher priority than the policies in general. The focus of the participants is on how to adjust the reality to the subsidies, which guides the discussions of what they see, notice and discuss. One could easily argue that the opposite would be a more humane ambition for regulations. This is an example based in empirical data, of how the regulations and the agenda for the encounter establish the preconditions for learning. With good regulations this is a perfectly accurate means. However, this raises high demands on the regulations. The findings from the study can be taken as a warning example of how regulations which are too inflexible, far from being in the interest of the farmer, will evidently delimit the learning about other issues of relevance for nature conservation. Individual advisory encounters like the ones in focus of this study generally have a great potential pedagogically, to concretise policies and adjust to local prerequisites and ambitions at farm level.

Papers III and IV demonstrate how the farmers struggle to understand the rules and regulations and how to acquire an appropriate way of participating in the encounters. This learning is not primarily about nature conservation, but about how to participate in advisory encounters within a programme for nature conservation. The finding becomes corroborated by the data

[30] From a nature conservation perspective poor soils in pastures are generally indirectly rewarded, since they often accommodate rare species. These are species dependent on measures and conditions that have decreased due to modernisations in the agricultural landscapes.

presented in section 6.1 about the phases of the encounters. In the initial phase of the encounters it seems to be the rule rather than the exception that the farmer demonstrates his problem in understanding the aim and frames of the encounter. In several of the encounters this uncertainty pervades the interaction and reappears throughout the encounter. The farmer puts a lot of effort into ways of figuring it all out.

In an earlier phase of the thesis the relation between adviser and farmer was considered as an expert-layman relation. That terminology claims that the adviser is the one who has the knowledge. Today it is reformulated into the adviser being the one whose knowledge is *considered relevant* and appreciated, at least in this type of encounter. This is primarily due to the fact that the adviser is a representative of the institution. The farmer though, is certainly not a layman. It is because of his profession that he is part of the institutional talk. However, when discussing the mission for the institutional activity, he is a layman. The fact that the institutional representative often keeps the documentation and other interactional resources for herself, diminishes the farmer's possibility to collaborate. He becomes insecure and hesitates to put his knowledge at the fore. The farmer volunteering to present his perspective of the matter in question would therefore be an unlikely scenario.

8.2 Prerequisites for participation and learning

What follows are the prerequisites for participation and learning in the study's encounters compared with the prerequisites given in previous studies of other types of advisory activities in Sweden: Advisory activity in the encounters with advisers from the County Administration with the encounters made by Hushållningssällskapet, Upplandsstiftelsen, advising to small-firm managers as described by Johansson (1997) and contract advisory encounters as described by Waldenström (2001). Since the last two types have not been investigated in this thesis, below is a very short presentation of these studies, focusing on the aspects they will subsequently be compared with.

Anders W Johansson (1997) investigates financial advice to small-firm managers who are not necessarily farmers. He states that many farmers can be considered small-firm managers, especially from an economic perspective. He clearly states that he as a researcher draws on experiences from being an agronomist and adviser for small-firm managers who are farmers. Therefore, the findings and discussions in the study are to a large extent applicable to farmers as well. Johansson's focus of interest is to understand why the request

for advice is not in proportion to the stated demand. He is interested in the ambiguity of asking for help and at the same time be considered in need of support. Based on literature and research on management as well as what is stated in SOU:s[31], and his own experiences as an adviser and consultant, he claims that the client is considered to be in need of help, and the adviser as the professional provider of help. Johansson interviewed the clients and based on the different narratives, he depicts different types of clients. Interestingly, he describes a type of client who strives for independence and autonomy. Additionally, he makes a Foucaultian reading of a few audio recorded advisory situations, and claims the micro-practices of power that are used in such situations construct the entrepreneur as a client in need of help. In Johansson's way of analysing and formulating this, he even talks about the agreement in the dramatic terms of an *imprisonment*.

Based on interviews and participant observation, Cecilia Waldenström (2001) has studied a subscription advisory programme in crop production. Her focus is on the capacity of participants in conversation about constructing a shared context for their own interaction. By communicatively constructing shared contexts, expectations of each other as well as utterances may be interpreted in more adequate ways. She describes how contextual resources are used to achieve such shared contexts and gives examples of this: "narrative constructions, joint experiences in a concrete surrounding environment, the use of tools for planning, as well as by conversations on topics related to the farmer's lifeworld or confirming a joint lifeworld" (Waldenström, 2001, p. 194). She further states that such intersubjective understanding is something that develops in long-term advisory programmes. Waldenström proposes the idea that the primary responsibility of the adviser is to establish a "dialogical space" in which opportunities in production may be explored. Her accounts of what happens between the participants in the advisory programmes she studied are rather positive in terms of participation and learning.

What these five types of advisory services, i.e. the County Administration, Hushållningssällskapet, Upplandsstiftelsen, giving advice to small-firm managers as described by Johansson and contract advisory activities as described by Waldenström, have in common, is that they all exist in Sweden and concern farmers[32]. However, there are also important differences between these studies which will be discussed below.

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[31] SOU, *Statens offentliga utredningar*, is a series of published documents of reports and other working material from the state committees.

[32] This last feature is not formally valid in Johansson's study as explained above.

One distinct feature in Waldenström's study is that the farmer and adviser meet many times on a regular basis over the years, due to the subscription. The farmer pays for the service, which includes a facility covering extensive advice. He is able to put a wide range of questions to the adviser and discuss these. The encounter takes place on the initiative of the farmer, who is free to influence the content of the discussion. Contrary to this, the advisory encounters video recorded for this study consist of single occasions initiated by the adviser. This means that the advisory activity free of charge is supposed to be part of the knowledge development demanded when applying for the subsidy in the case of the County Administration, or if the choice is to produce organically in the case of Hushållningssällskapet. In that sense the studied encounters are obligatory thresholds which must be passed in order to qualify for the subsidy. The farmer is expected to be present during the encounter, but formally it is the management plans that are the compulsory criteria. The *åtgärdsplan* contains some obligatory demands on measures that the farmer is obliged to fulfil, whereas the *skötselplan* contains suggestions for voluntary measures where the level of compliance will not be controlled.

The encounters with someone from Upplandsstiftelsen are often initiated by their own employee, but the case might also be the opposite. Since the study of the advisory activities conducted by this institution ranges over both types, it is hard to make generalisations. The theme of the advisory encounter might be either pre-arranged or left open. Since the organisation is still fairly small and the employees have different domains of responsibility, it is often the case that the same institutional representative administers a matter on a longer time basis. This enables beneficial opportunities of creating a shared understanding similar to those in the subscription advisory programmes.

Just as for Upplandsstiftelsen, in the case of the small-firm management advisory services, the frames for the encounters are not completely clear. The issue in Johansson's study is primarily negotiations about investments, so in that sense the topic is predefined. Acceptance of the money that the entrepreneurs can get from the state is connected to an agreement about future inspections and sanctions if necessary measures are not taken. However, contrary to the adviceing activity investigated in this study, the motive for the client to engage in investment advice seems to be well in alignment with his own idea of developing the company. The hindrance, as described by Johansson, is about identifying oneself as in need of help. In the studied case the reason for the farmer's state subsidy is to compensate him if

he takes measures in alignment with the environmental policies, but these policies do not necessarily have to be in alignment with the farmer's ideas.

The prerequisites for exploring new perspectives as described by Waldenström, are joint comprehension and agreement over some common tasks. She describes how shared understanding and learning happens as the participants together create the crop-rotation plan and that becomes the vehicle for understanding. Compared to this, the advisory encounters with the County Administration suffer from several drawbacks. It has been shown in the study how the farmer has had to struggle to understand the aim and frames for participation of the encounter, as opposed to encounters with someone you know and a type of encounter that you are familiar with. This causes asymmetries for the interaction even greater than necessary, especially since the opportunity to share the agenda and interactional resources sometimes seems to be disregarded by the adviser. Considering the negative consequences for the encounter, the advisers often seem to underestimate the importance of sharing the agenda and prerequisites for participation. These obscurities sometimes constitute such an obstacle for the activity that there is never time for the core issue of finding the ideal management solutions. On the contrary, what the participants are engaged in is conversation about the rules and finding enough data, often in terms of species, to make the assessment of whether the land is qualified for subsidies or not. Money is at stake and the approval dependent on the success of the search in combination with accordance between the application and the measures taken. This participation in search of the right species occupies the participants. Hence learning in terms of changed participation is orientated towards how to participate appropriately in this institutional activity. If the aim is to stimulate learning about how to manage biodiversity, the design of the advisory activity must be different than the one described in this thesis.

During the encounters made by the County Administration, the risk of being the object of future inspection is always present for the farmer (See section 6.5). This risk is sometimes exploited in a "doomsday" rhetoric by the adviser to emphasise her argument. There seems to be a conscious strategy to portray this imaginary inspector as "the bad cop" to be able to be "the good cop". The importance of inspecting all the state financed activities is currently abundant in the EU. Although it is never the same person who gives advice and formally inspects, they represent the same institution. Accordingly, it is reasonable that the potential confrontation with the inspector and previous experiences of inspectors from the same institution induce a negative attitude to the present adviser and the nature conservation project in focus.

In these studies the overall impression appears to be that the advisers have some reluctance to represent the institution when the rules and policies are too abstract, far from the farm level and the farmer's situation. This creates a scenario where the adviser's role becomes difficult. One example where this is demonstrated is where the adviser seems to avoid giving advice. A possible explanation for reluctance may be that the institutional representative would prefer not to prescribe measures that hinder the farmer's ability to make his own decisions based on his own experiences and ambitions. Due to the risk of inspection, the adviser should not be held accountable for measures, and therefore avoidances of taking a stance in front of the farmer do occur. Contrary to this, the adviser willingly adopts the role of teaching about nature conservation. Explaining ecological connections in general terms does not imply a specific action from anyone, and weakens the incentives to learn. The only opportunity to participate offered to the farmer is in the activity of "being the good pupil", which implies that he learns to be "a good audience". Whether there are sane incentives behind this approach from the adviser is not analysed in the study. The approach might rely on an idea that competence development (which is what the activity is labelled at the County Administration) will inspire and encourage the farmer to make his own decisions irrespective of the approval of the subsidy. However, such a situation would be hard to handle pedagogically, since the general orientation in the encounter is towards the prerequisites for qualifying for the subsidy. The farmer requests rules about how to take the appropriate measures within the institutional context. This is a drawback of the top-down arrangement of the encounter: The concern for an irreproachable inspection routine with no ambiguities has created rules which are too strict and impinge on the object of competent development. The state moves further away from the farmer, who has to make the approach to the state instead of the opposite.

However, even in cases where the farmer decides not to negotiate the undertaking, his measures are still affecting society. The engagement of farmers and the resulting management is absolutely necessary for society's ambition to reach the environmental goals "A varied agricultural landscape" and "A rich diversity of plant and animal life". This represents a challenge for the adviser. Additionally, this situation is interesting from a research on institutional talk perspective. The advisory activity described in this thesis has clear asymmetries typical of many institutional settings familiar to a wider audience. If the patient walks away from the doctor and rejects the advice given, he himself will suffer from that decision. The implications of whether the farmer enters the undertaking or follows the advice might vary.

Nevertheless, there is a unique dependency of society on the farmer's measures in biodiversity enhancement, with or without the undertaking proposed by the institutional representative. How this is reflected in the institutional talk has been touched upon in the thesis. For example, when the adviser delivers the bad news that she has not found enough nature values, she uses evidential formulations such as "I don't find…". This opens up for the chance of future discoveries or the possibility that there might be values she has missed (see section 6.5). Thus, it contains implicit encouragement to carry on with measures for nature conservation. Instances of such delicate balancing would make interesting further studies.

8.3 Where and how improvements are to be managed

The entire findings of this study present a clear picture showing that the implementation of environmental objectives in nature conservation for agriculture suffers from several shortcomings. These are explained both as having structural grounds and as a consequence of the participants' actions. The theory presented reveals that the space for action is a result of the structural preconditions, and that these in turn are reproduced by actions. The implications of this interdependence can be seen at different levels. These levels are not isolated from each other, but will be further discussed in this section according to the following outline:

- The societal commission to implement the environmental objectives of nature conservation in agriculture.
- The organisational preconditions inherent in the advisory encounter and their management by the participants, e.g. to share the agenda, to achieve a more symmetrical participation and a shared responsibility for relevant objects of learning.
- The interactional level where structures in interaction are aimed at by the participants at the same time as they through their actions contribute to the evolving organisation of talk.

Since there are two sides of the coin, i.e. structure and actor, improvements must generally be made both in the former and by the latter.

I would like to make clear that my impression of the encounters between farmer and institutional representative was that the atmosphere was relaxed and familiar. The non-institutional talk was recurrent and nicely intertwined with the management of the institutional tasks, characterised by features of institutional talk. (See Chapter 6). I further got the impression that the

farmers not only really appreciated the contact with the adviser, but seemed to both enjoy and need it to understand the system concerning the application. However, during the analysis of the interaction when the institutional tasks were at stake, a more problematic picture emerged. Everyday dilemmas of institutional interaction have been the focus of the thesis, which is the reason why the reader might have the impression that the contact between farmer and adviser is rather destructive. These conflicting pictures can be fused into something more meaningful. The advisers are field-level bureaucrats who are competent in handling the advisory situation from a general "human" perspective. However, in situations where their institutional identity becomes more important and where they are supposed to represent the policy and regulations, the advisers become trapped between conflicting loyalties. The approach they choose is to make the best out of it, and sometimes admit openly to the farmer that the administration is problematic. This might result in a more positive opinion of the adviser as an individual, but hardly of the fundamental idea regarding the underlying system. The participants may even experience a shared sense of despair and helplessness over the arrangements.

The agenda for the encounters with the County Administration is to give advice and make the assessment whether the land is qualified for the subsidy or not. What measures that are taken afterwards, i.e. the decision to subscribe to the undertaking and apply the management plan are the responsibility of the farmer. To receive financial support from the state connected to advancement of knowledge, is a phenomenon not valid in this specific social context. The argument could be to make sure the money will go to activities in alignment with the goals for the public good. If society wishes to enhance knowledge development, it is not just any development, but in a preferred direction, something believed to be achievable through advice. Subsidies, competence development and voluntary regulations are the incentives used in the case of implementation of environmental objectives of nature conservation. The economical compensation as incentive set aside, it is the desire and ambition of the farmer that is believed to be crucial for the management of nature conservation. Hence, today the "participatory approach" is of limited application on the very operational level in the situation. Participation is reduced to get compliance from the farmers in alignment with the environmental objectives and according to the fully fledged ideas about how these goals should be managed. This begs the question whether society is ready to learn about nature conservation management via the experiences of the farmers. Such collaborative learning could be enhanced by organising the farmers to participate in more than the

operational level of the policy. For example, at the creation of new policies and programmes farmers could be invited to participate and their specific situation considered in the design of the process. Efforts could be made to make it easier for them to leave the farm in terms of where and when the meetings take place. Additionally, the overall farming situation could be taken into account in a more appropriate way, in order to avoid the isolation of nature conservation issues from the general running of a farm. It is worth re-emphasising that participation increases the chances of long-term engagement.

Throughout this thesis it is claimed that the advisory situation can be understood in terms of asymmetries, something that both Johansson (1997) and Waldenström (2001) already mention, but do not develop in close relation to empirical data. Based on empirical data from video recorded interactions I agree with Johansson and Waldenström in saying that there is an uneven possibility to participate based on such asymmetries. In this account the advisory situation has been described as a co-construction between the farmer and the adviser. Consequently, it is emphasized that they are both contributing to the evolvement of the interaction and thereby the creation of the encounter. The best way of improving farmers' participation is not by accusing anyone or moralising about who has done wrong, but to help farmers and advisers become more aware and to reflect upon their actions and the structures around them. This would assist them in making conscious choices, based on deeper levels of self-reflection and learning. The framework of asymmetry that is a foundation of an institutional setting, enables us to describe what happens, while minimizing the risk of blaming specific individuals or groups of individuals.

One particular problem elicited in the encounters is the amount of effort needed from the non-institutional representative to understand the agenda of the encounter. I emphasize what has been suggested in paper III: The importance of sharing the agenda and presenting the frames for participation more openly to the farmer. This would hopefully save time and be a step in the direction of a common contextual ground on which the participants can share perspectives. Paper III was based on the framework of Goodwin where the resources for professional vision - *coding schemes*, *highlighting* and *graphic representations* - were described. Here the adviser could make a bigger effort to share these with the farmer, being the one who is used to these encounters and can be said to develop professionalism in these institutional talks. This would result in participation from the farmer's side that would enhance learning, not just of the institutional encounter, but of the principles behind the assessment to be made. This would indirectly lead to

learning about nature conservation. Another dilemma described is the double agenda operating: To give advice and to make assessments. The double commission makes this advisory activity somewhat peculiar compared to the extension which is generally the focus of agricultural extension research. Irrespective of the official commission, when empirically analysed, the encounters have aspects of delivering assessments in a way that comprises elements of surveillance. The demand on surveillance has increased in Sweden (SOU, 2004:100, pp. 13-14) which has created a debate about the importance of separating advice and surveillance within the same authority. This study demonstrates that this separation is far from clear, and perhaps not possible in real situations. The double agenda is an inherent feature of these encounters and have a confusing effect on the activities. It is therefore recommended that the advisers state the situation of the double agenda more clearly. This would at least make the situation easier to interpret for the farmer, even though the frustration might still remain.

It can be a delicate enterprise to assess the balance between what is discursively conscious or not for the participants. The latter do many things of which they may reasonably be claimed to be discursively unconscious. These actions are the result of yet unconscious choices. However, these choices make all the difference for the interaction. Changes at this level are not easily made, but there has to be an awareness of constantly making choices. The ambition of the thesis in this matter is to provide the reader with an eye-opening terminology that distinguishes and denominates the things people do. Having the vocabulary and the opportunity of discussing these things further, both with a colleague[33] and the farmer during the encounter, can be a starting point to develop the interaction in a better way, so that more choices can be made consciously. Such suggested meta-communication needs to be practiced if it is to be functional. The next section focuses on the importance of acknowledging the professional competence in communicating.

[33] This suggestion is probably more applicable to the advisers. Farmers might of course organise groups for sharing experiences from encounters with advisers or institutional representatives. It is even more probable that these specific contacts with this type of advisers will never alone be a sufficiently important part of the farmer's everyday concerns to sacrifice time to discuss it on a regular basis with other farmers. These experiences will merely be added to the general impression of the contact with authorities.

8.4 The importance of the face-to-face interaction in advisory encounters

Improvement of policies and programmes requires a lot of resources. In this study the focus has been on the *interaction* between the participants in this implementation process. If we ignore focusing on conversation as such, it is nevertheless affecting what is happening. Talk-in-interaction constitutes our daily life, not least when discussing institutional talk such as advisory encounters. The power and crucial importance of the interaction will remain, disregarding the policy, institutional organisation or arrangement of the encounter and interaction. The face-to-face interaction is potentially an efficient instance where the policy is reconstructed and concretized for the specific situation. Here the general formulation of the policy is given its proper proportions in relation to all the other contextual factors at the farm and farmer's situation. In that sense, the advisory encounter is the first authentic situation in the implementation process, where the field-level bureaucrat meets the person ultimately responsible for the operations. The power to create meaning is in the hands of the participants. It is in these encounters that important concepts are negotiated through interaction. The prerequisites for the institutional activity set the platform, but it is the power to use the space for action that is interesting and in the hands of the participants as actors. Despite the shortcomings of the institutional encounters described in the thesis, it is claimed that the encounter and personal face-to-face contact with an institutional representative is of utmost importance. It is in these conversations that possible management solutions are to be found and on an interactional level where the differences in perspectives are to be approached. This could remove the invisible fences between the institutional representative and the farmer, and leave them both with a sense of a positive outcome of involvement.

It is reasonable to believe that when diminishing the resources for personal face-to-face interaction we are just replacing the problem. This claim is supported by the fact that things happen in the encounters that are not planned for, i.e. the complaint sequences (the focus of paper IV). Although not officially intended to be an instance for handling complaints, it is used as such by the participants. The complaints sometimes consider the core of the institutional encounter, but often more adjacent topics or even some outside their scope. It is claimed in the study that the reason why these complaints appear, is that there are aspects of the institutional arrangements that the farmer is expected to manage. That the advisory encounter is exploited for the needs can be seen as indication of there being no other satisfactory opportunities for managing these problematic matters offered to

the farmer. This in turn could be taken as an incentive for enabling good possibilities for handling these matters in the present contact with the adviser. This raises demands on developed communicative competences of the adviser. How these experiences of handling complaints are taken care of by the adviser after the encounter is beyond the scope of this thesis. Creating learning and feed-back opportunities within the organisation among colleagues, would be a method of increasing the competence of handling complaint sequences, as well as managing the problems elicited by the farmers.

Independently of the commission, financial resources or the policy, and the constitutive as well as the instrumental function of communication are always central for the adviser. Based on this information, there appears to be a need for developing these skills. Nowadays as the technical development is progressing rapidly, it is easy to get the impression that people such as individual advisers will decrease in importance. However, opposite trends show that the personal contact and service are now perhaps even more important, especially in such a solitary profession as farming (Waldenström, 2001; Nordström Källström & Ljung, 2005). Therefore it is important to emphasize that advisers have a profession where the communicative skills are highly important. The type of advisers studied also needs to be included in the group of professions whose communicative skills are normally recognized; i.e. doctors, nurses, social welfare officers, psychologists, teachers, priests and lawyers (Svensson, 1990, p. 37). In order to develop this basic and continuous training is needed. This would better reflect the situations the advisers actually face (see paper III & IV), as they themselves describe it (paper II), and as acknowledged by farmers (paper I). It would be more successful and in the best interest of the farmers, themselves, society and biodiversity. Advisers in agriculture need to realise that they are part of the group of professions where dialogue is ubiquitous in the practices that constitute the activity, and therefore must be acknowledged and accounted for. This study has provided an input to this development.

9 Future research challenges

The previous chapter was primarily directed at farmers, advisers and policy makers, whereas this one is addressing the research community. A few suggestions for future research are listed here.

The thesis presents a method, conversation analysis (CA), which has potential for developing advisory activity in the field of nature conservation management. For the future it is suggested that the development of the advisory activity described in this thesis, and extension in wider terms, should, to a greater extent, be based on research on interaction of these activities. It is urgent to investigate how this type of finding based on interactional studies, can help practitioners. This could possibly be carried out by designing a process where findings like these are discussed with the participants, or other farmers and advisers working with related issues in the field. One small-scale way of reflecting on the interaction would be to ask a colleague to be the observer during an encounter. However, that approach has drawbacks compared to asking a researcher to video record the encounter. Firstly, even though a third party observer can register matters which the participants themselves are not discursively conscious of, the recorded files enable a detailed analysis of the actual interaction. At the same time the participants are offered the possibility to distance themselves from the interaction. Secondly, it is likely that the observer would be a colleague of the adviser rather than of the farmer. There is a risk that the analysis will be biased towards the perspective of the adviser.

Conversation analysis is here considered as a fruitful method for application to other questions in the field of environmental communication where it would assist understanding the courses of action people take. Action research based approaches would benefit from being complemented by ambitions to describe and present how the learning is co-constructed between the participants in interaction. That would also help facilitators to

develop their competence by providing a terminology which may help them to become more discursively conscious of their actions.

To make further studies of field visits from other institutions operating in the field of nature conservation management would increase the understanding of the advisory activities in general. A comparative study of Upplandsstiftelsen could also serve as a triangulation of the differences between the institutions presented in the thesis. It would be interesting to compare the difference of the visit's character in terms of participation. When the frames for participation are more flexible, and the organisational approach more innovative compared to that of section 8.2, a higher degree of participation is to be expected. If this were the case, it would make an interesting study within an interactional perspective. This study has focused on advisory activities connected to the state financed nature conservation management. It would be interesting to see how nature conservation management based on dependence on earning money would change the advisory activity. When more money and fulfilment of the farmer's expectations are at stake, it is reasonable to believe that the willingness to pay for the advice is greater. That in turn might influence the advisory activity as such, but in what way is not known.

The present study has empirically raised the dilemma of the overlap between advice giving, surveillance and the presence of the potential inspection within an encounter. This relationship would be suitable for further investigation applying conversation analysis. It could be done using the conceptual framework of street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 1980) in combination with conversation analysis. This would enable the understanding and comparison of the officially presented commission of the institutional representative, what that person perceives to be the space for action and how the actions in an authentic situation are carried out. It would be of relevance for the activity studied, but also on a general level for many public authority contexts and activities in society as a whole.

Finally, there are inherent interactional features in these encounters that would be of theoretical interest to investigate further. As in many other institutional settings, these encounters contain inherent asymmetries in the interaction between the institutional representative and the non-institutional one. Generally it is the institutional representative who has the agenda and knowledge and therefore the power to act. The roles are a bit different here. It is true that the adviser has the agenda and the relevant knowledge for the encounter. However, society, represented by the adviser, is dependent on the future management by the farmer to enhance biodiversity. The actions that are subsequent to the encounter, irrespective of the advice and

assessment of the adviser, are a concern of our society. What strategies the adviser can use to influence the farmer in order to enhance biodiversity are just sketched upon in this thesis. It is proposed that the strategies will smooth the way in terms of convincing, pedagogically teaching and inspiring the farmer. A closer examination of these strategies is needed, and would be a valuable input to the debate on participation at different levels. An in-depth study of these encounters with complex asymmetries could improve and broaden the general understanding of institutional talk.

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Uppsala, November 2007
Hanna Ljunggren Bergeå

Appendix 1
Transcription conventions

(0.5)	Length of silence in seconds
(.)	A silence shorter than what is measurable, ordinarily less than 0.2 seconds
[	Overlap of speech between two speakers
=	No discernible silence between the speech
> <	Rushed talk
< >	Outstretched talk
-	Proceeding sound is cut off
:	Prolongation of the sound proceeding them; the more colons the longer the prolongation
_	Emphasis
º	Talk is markedly quiet or soft
LOUD	Talk is markedly loud
.	Full stop is not used grammatically but to indicate falling intonation
,	Intonation of continuation
¿	Moderately rising intonation
↑↓	Sharp rises or falls in pitch
h	Audible aspiration, may represent breathing, laughter and the like
.h	If the audible aspiration is an inhalation, it is indicated with a dot before it
.t	Sound of smacking one's lips or clicking one's tongue
( )	Indicates uncertainty on the part of the transcriber
(( ))	Used to mark the transcriber's description of events rather than representations of them

Appendix 2

Förfrågan om samtycke till att deltaga i forskningsundersökning om rådgivning

Bäste markägare och/eller lantbrukare!

Vi kontaktar dig angående en undersökning om rådgivning kopplad till naturvård och biologisk mångfald. Projektet syftar till att kartlägga och beskriva rådgivningssamtal inom naturvården och kommer bl a mynna ut i en doktorsavhandling. En viktig del i arbetet är att forskaren får vara med under själva rådgivningen. Därför ber vi nu om din tillåtelse att få vara med och spela in rådgivningsbesöket hos dig när din rådgivare besöker dig för att upprätta åtgärdsplan. Du kommer att ingå i ett av flera andra par av lantbrukare-rådgivare som vi har bedömt som lämpliga att delta i studien. Man har aldrig tidigare på detta sätt i Sverige studerat rådgivning inom lantbruket, men har goda erfarenheter av liknande inspelning inom helt andra områden, t ex sjukvård, skola och omsorg.

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Vi uppskattar om du hör av dig så snart du bestämt dig till [rådgivarens namn]. Om vi inte hör något ifrån dig räknar vi med att du är intresserad. [rådgivarens namn] kommer att kontakta dig för att avtala tid för besöket. Skulle du av någon anledning ha missat att meddela ett nej kan du alltid säga ifrån direkt när vi kommer ut för besök. Hanna Bergeå svarar också gärna på dina frågor på telefon eller e-post. Under semestern fram till 2 augusti når du henne på hemnummer 018-51 21 20 där det också går bra att lämna meddelanden.

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FD Magnus Ljung, forskare vid SLU och handledare i projektet, kan också svara på frågor kring projektet. Han nås på tel. 0511-67 117 eller e-post Magnus.Ljung@lpul.slu.se .