

INSTITUTIONAL CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN LEGITIMATE ORGANIZATIONS

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Purpose: The aim of this paper is to (1) discuss current topics related to organizational communication with reference to legitimacy problems described within the institutional theory framework and to (2) show how the proposed solutions may be important with regard to research on communication processes in organizations and for theorists dealing with foundational assumptions for organization studies. As for reaching the core point of processes under investigation in the paper researchers make use of metaphors leading to rising concerns over the appropriate lens used to understand reality, the discussion in the paper is conducted in the light of more abstract considerations over the paradox of agency and assumptions related to epistemological and ontological stances of institutionalists or critical researchers.

Design/methodology/approach: The theoretical scope of the paper covers selected streams of research of institutional theory focused on communication processes, however, some further attention is paid to e.g. possibilities for the critical institutional analysis to emerging. In order to achieve the goals of the paper theoretical analysis is conducted based on selected papers important regarding how institutional theory can develop in the field of communication research.

Findings: Considering the phenomena of legitimacy building based on appropriate communication with external and internal evaluators as a challenging task whose effect may depend on actors' agency opens interesting perspectives from which those relations may be analyzed. Nevertheless, it is also emphasized that each time when attempting to answer posed questions by referring to theories that may turn out not to be the best choice for this task, the researches need to maintain aware that those trials can potentially introduce primarily further ambiguity in arguments instead of clarifications. Thus, conclusions allow for recognition of main ontological and epistemological assumptions lying behind propositions that should be considered when building new ones related to communication. Hence, it becomes possible to outline hints as to when it may be especially possible for successful communication to occur.

Originality/value: The paper addresses the problems related mainly to the communicative stream of research within the institutional theory framework by focusing on the conditions of the appropriateness of using metaphors as a source of inspiration for the advancement of theoretical reasoning. Because of the growing level of sophistication of how processes of communication are described, it is worth doing to indicate not only assumptions behind new propositions but also to delineate boundaries within which those propositions are to be built.

Keywords: institutional theory, critical realism, paradox of agency, communication.

Category of the paper: viewpoint.

1. Introduction

Social constructionism builds on the ideas according to which people are not passive receptors of knowledge, and the social nature of reality entails its construction in social interaction with the emphasis put on linguistic interaction. At the same time institutional theory was thought to a great extent to perceive the social world through the prism of possession its existence outside and independent of the meaningful linguistic activity through which it can be assumed to be constituted¹ (Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2006, pp. 480-481). This approach is different² from the one adopted just by social constructionism whose assumptions indicate the ways in which language (as well as other forms of representation) are used in relationships which allow language and these other forms of representation to gain their meaning (Gergen, 1999 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy 2006, p. 481). In order to better understand how the approach to communication adopted by institutionalists has changed and what have been the consequences of those changes, it is required to both explain the main approaches to communication as well as selected terms (and possible difficulties that may arise when building those definitions) related to the process of institutionalization (legitimization) and the relations among institutions and sensemaking processes occurring within organizational boundaries. The aim of this paper is to discuss current topics related to organizational communication with reference to legitimacy problems described within the institutional theory framework (with special emphasis put on the emerging critical approach developed within this framework) and to show how the proposed solutions may be important with regard to both pieces of research on communication processes in organizations (or even on organizations as communication, however, the stance presented in this paper is a bit distanced from this approach) and theorists dealing especially with foundational assumptions for organization studies. The key terms are explained in the next section, which is followed by a concise description of both approaches to communication-related institutional theory and agency problems which appears to be especially important when taking into account the institutional logic line of thought. Because of the adoption to a large extent of the institutional theory (with the emphasis on a critical stance), the issues of legitimacy³ are outlined in the paper, since it is assumed that all communication processes are directed at building and maintaining the core reasons of why the given organization is to operate.

2. The theoretical background

Before moving to the core of the matter, it is indispensable to pay attention to some definitional issues. Social structure can be defined as recurrent patterns of interaction or the mechanisms (like, depending on the author, e.g. relations – Granovetter, 1985 or combinations of rules and resources - Giddens, 1984) that cause them (Cardinale, 2018). Following Jepperson (1991), Cardinale (2018) defines institutions also as social patterns, but they should be (chronically) reproduced through relatively self-activating processes. It may also be said that institutions are institutionalized social structures⁴. For the considerations included in the paper, it may also be worth emphasizing the distinction that may be assumed between agency (a kind of actor's engagement with structure) and action (what actors do). Institutions may also be said to be "social constructions embodying sets of sanctions that make contradictory actions problematic" and actions are to be affected by a discourse by the production of institutions whose institutionalization depends on the strength of self-regulating mechanisms (Barley and Tolbert, 1997; Jepperson, 1991 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 644). Battilana, Leca, and Boxenbaum (2009) notice that institutions are characterized by the strong power of inertia, however, they can be influenced not only by exogenous shocks but also with the help of endogenous explanations (Battilana, Leca, Boxenbaum, 2009, p. 66). Future interactions and negotiations can be shaped by institutions that acquire the moral and ontological status of taken-for-granted facts in a gradual way (e.g. DiMaggio, Powell, 1991).

It may also be that the term institutionalization is used interchangeably with legitimacy, however, in order to understand how those processes can be communicatively shaped, it is required to take a closer look at the role of agency⁵ (Xiu, Lu, Liang, 2019). What needs attention is the fact that when defining legitimacy, Suchman (1995) claimed that it is a kind of „generalized”, collective perception. As Bitektine and Haack (2015, p. 50) argue it can be interpreted that subjective legitimacy judgments of individuals are aggregated and objectified at the collective level. However legitimacy should not be regarded as being independent of the endorsement of single individuals (Bitektine, Haack, 2015, p. 50). This issue not only does lead to having the problem of agency emphasized, but also directs attention to the next important questions related to the level of analysis and the question of whether and how the problem of micro-macro should be situated with regard to the problem structure-agency.

In addition to this, it is worth doing to emphasize that a shift from old institutionalism (focused on the explicit evaluations of means in view of ends made by strategic actors constrained by different factors) to new institutionalism (focused on institutions providing "preconscious understandings that actors share" - DiMaggio, 1998 as cited in Cardinale, 2018, p. 132) causes the importance of agency to become limited since preconscious understandings put restrictions on possibilities for action (Cardinale, 2018). Although new institutionalism was said to neglect the role of agency, as time has gone by, there became more visible that the issue of agency needs to be taken into account to a greater extent and it can be said that the discussed shift resulted in the call for taking into account microfoundations in institutional theory

(Cardinale, 2018). This is also because the institutional theory has been focused on how actors' environment⁶ can impact their individual preferences, decisions, and behaviors. The fact that patterns of action and organization are not only shaped by institutions means that there is a factor beyond instrumental calculation⁷ influencing actors and their legitimacy needs (e.g. DiMaggio, Powell, 1983 as cited in Battilana, Leca, Boxenbaum, 2009, p. 72).

2.1. Institutional change and communication

When considering what actors can do, or especially how they can engage with structures, in order to shape them in a way advantageous to them, it is worth mentioning the concept of institutional logic. Although the concept of logics provides building blocks to integrate micro-processes of agency with higher-order levels of analysis (e.g. societal sectors like market, state, family, religions, corporation, profession and community they all shape cognitions and behaviors of actors) (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013), institutional logics are also said to be better understood (than as "structures and ideologies"⁸) as "involving configurations of symbolic and material elements" (e.g. beliefs and practices) whose effects can be understood via mechanisms that operate both bottom-up and top-down ways (Hirsch, Lounsbury, 2015, p. 98). What is especially important, institutional logics can be understood as an "institutionalized template for organizing", that is „a field's shared understanding of the goals to be pursued and how they are to be pursued" (e.g. Scott, 1987, Suddaby, Greenwood, 2005, Thornton, 2002 as cited in Battilana, Leca, Boxenbaum, 2009, pp. 68-69).

The content and meaning of institutions are to be defined by a set of belief systems and associated practices to which institutional logics refer - those are the organizing principles shaping the behavior of field participants (Reay, Hinings, 2009, p. 631). Whereas it can be said a lot about roles played by institutional logics (e. g. Bitektine, Song, 2021), it can be emphasized that institutional logics are to provide a link between institutions and actions by describing how logics guide actor behavior, which is why they help to define organizational field which is a community of actors that are held together by their joint values and beliefs (Scott, 2008 as cited in Reay, Hinings et al., 2009, p. 631). Based on those considerations, institutional change can be conceptualized as "a movement from one dominant logic to another" (e.g. Greenwood et al., 2002 as cited in Reay, Hinings, 2009, p. 631). It has been shown that by the use of different means of communication (strictly speaking – interaction modalities – Slavova, Karanasios, 2018) it is possible to cause the move from one institutional logic to the second, as practices present on the level of the unit of organization can disrupt and finally cause institutional logic operating at the macro level to change. That is why it is worth doing to be focused on how institutionalists are to analyze communication processes. What needs to be outlined is that the fact that technology is not neutral causes the mediatization of communication and both creates and institutionalizes new norms, rules, and practices. These are important not only because they constitute new types of actors and actions, but also because the established social interactions (and spaces) are enabled and constrained in novel ways (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 904). From the point of view of this paper, it is required to consider whether and how some

propositions that regard organizations as a communication according to which organizations are treated as the “collective communication behaviors of their members” (and not as “objective structures within which people communicate”) and are based on the belief that realities in which people live are actually created by language and communication (Mumby, Kuhn, 2019, pp. 12, 51) can be helpful with regard to defining institutional conditions for effective communication. Changing ways, in which communication occurs, demands looking for new models of communication, which is why the challenge appears as well as how to adopt appropriate foundational assumptions on which those propositions could be based.

2.2. Approaches to communication in institutional theory and theoretical challenges

In general, in order to make use of the dynamics of communication to enhance the explanatory power of theories and models of institutions, a broad view of communications is proposed to be adopted as communication can mean "social interaction” that builds on speech, gestures, texts, discourses, and other means" (Cornelissen et al., 2015, p. 11). Instead of being seen as expressions of inner thoughts or collective intentions, speech and other forms of symbolic interaction can be said to be perceived as being „potentially formative of institutional reality” (Cornelissen et al., 2015, p. 11). The question that can be posed now refers to how these „potentially formative” features can be understood. To better outline the background for problems considered in this and the next paragraph it is worth doing to analyze selected aspects of different approaches to communication (table 1)

Table 1.
Communicative institutionalism in the light of alternative approaches to communication

Conduit model	Performative approaches	Communicative institutionalism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assumes that communication operates as a channel (or just conduit) through which cognitive content (e.g. information) is to be disseminated and next to spread across an institutional setting or field - assumes that any act of symbolic meaning constructions is uncomplicated process and the agency that actors may have in communication process is underplayed - language is a kind of both neutral nad external window into cognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assumes that any collective or joint understanding which is thought to form the basis for institutions cannot be simply accessed as being preexisting or shared by individuals - any collective understanding is constantly (re)produced as the language is used and exchanged as a central part of communication - asymmetry due to the fact of its focused mainly on certain actors with key discursive positions - privileged intentions of the speaker - language is (to a greater or lesser extent) formative of both the cognitive basis of institutions and changes to such institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sees communication as a joint activity, understanding of the social relationship and joint understanding is coproduced by both speakers and addresses - institutions are thought to be constituted by communication which has a form of continuous interactions occurring at multiple levels and that they may lead to multiple potential outcomes - introduces the metaphor of co-constitution to describe the relations between language and social reality

Source: Based on Cornelissen et al., 2015; Green, Li, 2011; Phillips, Lawrence, an Hardy, 2004; Thornton et al., 2012; Tuomela, 2002

What is also important is that when assuming social actors' active participation in constructing the social reality, one considers systems of meaning as being made up of a range of elements, e.g. in addition to people also documents may themselves have the power to shape people's behavior in significant ways (e.g. Brummans, 2007 as cited in Mumby, Kuhn, 2019, p. 51). The issue is what approach should be adopted to describe those elements and relations among them, or even further, whether should we speak of relations at all. It requires a further discussion of some foundational problems related to institutions and agency. In order to better understand problems that are to be discussed with regard to research conducted in the field of communicative institutionalism (paragraph 3), it is also worth doing to take a more deep look at the matter of the level of analysis when describing institutionalization, since, as it has been stated in the table, communication as a form of continuous interactions occurs at multiple levels.

2.3. Communication process impact in light of foundational assumptions

Philips et al. (2004) developed (within performative approaches) the discursive model of institutionalization which outlined the relationships among texts discourse, institutions, and action⁹. They highlight that differently than it is in the case of realist ontology within which institutional research was primarily focused on showing the effects of the process of institutionalization, they were not to disconnect organizational practices from the discursive practices that constitute them. They maintain that it is not the action per se that may constitute the basis for institutionalization because the one is provided by texts describing and communicating those actions (Philips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 635). From their point of view for ideas for organizing to be transmitted (the transmission relates to time and space), it is expected that multiple readings by multiple individuals be possible, however, actions do not easily allow for it (Phillips, Lawrence Hardy, 2004, p. 638). Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2004, p. 637) claim that all ideas and objects (like organizations, institutions, and the social world in general) are assumed to be socially produced and language is said to be fundamental to the construction of social reality (e.g. Chia, 1996 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 637). Institutions involve mechanisms that cause those who do not comply with them to incur costs that may be understood with regard to increased risk (economically), with regard to greater thought required (cognitively) as well as with regard to reduced legitimacy and the access to resources made possible by legitimacy (Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, pp. 637-638).

It can be also explained that Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004) develop a form of critical discourse analysis in which discourses are always the subject of some degree of struggle (regardless of how complete they may appear to be) (Grant et al., 1998 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 637). As a consequence of this, actors have some space within which they can follow their interests and make attempts at discursive changes - the social reality is never totally determined by discourses (Mumby, Clair, 1997 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 637)¹⁰. This notion is to be emphasized with regard to further discussion related

to the problem of agency. A common epistemological assumption for performative approaches is the one that speaks of the use of the language which may produce or engender cognitive reactions (Cornelissen et al., 2015, p. 13). In practice, it means that individuals and groups within an institutional setting can be directly impacted by a given choice of words (slogans, metaphors, idioms) as well as by grammatical or stylistic features (Cornelissen et al., 2015, p. 13). But whether or under what conditions should we agree with the statement provided by Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2004) according to which "discourses do not just describe things; they do things" (Potter, Wetherell, 1987 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 636) is to be considered further¹¹.

Lok and Willmott claim that Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2004) mobilize different modes of discourse in an inconsequent way - more often the importance of language in the mediation of "object" and "knowledge" is derogated (and it should not be like that when they would be focused primarily on the constructivist (social constructionist) mode in line with which the attention is paid to how specific interpretation <language> mediates the relationships between text - that is the object of the research - and knowledge of the object). As a consequence of this, components of the discussed models are said to be immediately accessible (Lok, Willmott, 2006, pp. 477-478). Hence, from the discussed perspective not only does this approach remain realist (as the constituted social reality is treated as being independent of the discourse), but the also may not be characterized by relative epistemology which requires admitting that knowledge is to be partial and historical (Al-Amoudi, Willmott, 2011, p. 30; Lok, 2019, p. 341)¹². What is emphasized, Lok and Willmott (2006) argue that one drawback of the approach adopted by Phillips et al. is the lack of indication of awareness of „how the identification of actions, texts, and so forth is itself an articulation of specific (and contested) language games" (Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2006, p. 481 as cited in Lok, Willmott, 2006, p. 478). Partially agreeing with Lok and Willmott, Phillips et al. justify their approach by indicating on special intellectual position according to which concepts and the relationships between them should have a status of being social constructions of a particular kind (and not reflections of some external reality being considered as true ones) (Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2006, p. 481). Those issues are important as they finally may lead to different conclusions with regard to what the reasons and what solutions could be adopted when dealing with discursive practices of a given organization. In addition to this discussed set of difficulties arising when adopting a discursive perspective on communication, the other problems relate to level of analysis.

2.4. Considerations related to the level of analysis

One of the contributions indicated by Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2004) is that their model by identifying micro processes shows how individuals producing texts may affect the discursive realm. On the other hand, individual behavior is shaped by institutions enacted by self-regulating mechanisms (Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 635). By focusing e.g. on how

it is possible that despite "iron cage" of institutional norms and collective beliefs, actors at the micro level can still change institutions, Bitektine and Haack (2015) are to extend discursive approaches to legitimacy (Bitektine, Haack, 2015, p. 50).

Each time when managers by making use of their power and control tend to change evaluators' perceptions they actually need to promote and make reliable the view that at first may be assessed as being deviant. Facing with "iron cage", they have to influence others in order to have actors at the micro level be willing to change institutions (Bitektine, Haack, 2015, p. 50). Firstly the ways for altering institutions by actors looking for legitimacy are to be discussed, next the case of enactment of institutions by individual actors is to be discussed as well. In the end, some issues related to how different kinds of entities can be analyzed are discussed as well, which is important from the point of view indicating how the issue of micro-macro is related to the debate of structure and agency.

Bitektine and Haack (2015) paid the attention that the identity of different individuals is of great importance because when analyzing organizational legitimacy from the point of view of legitimacy judgment formation one is expected to pay attention to both the communication and the nonverbal actions of evaluators. Put it differently, it is especially important to be focused on evaluators' cognition. On this ground, Bitektine and Haack (2015) propose to extend discursive and rhetorical approaches to legitimacy (represented by e.g. Suddaby, and Greenwood, 2005) in such a way that social influence and institutional strategies used by competing actors to impact on legitimacy judgments of individual evaluators be taken into account.¹³ At the same time model proposed by Abdelnour, Hasselbladh, and Kallinikos (2017, pp. 1783-1784) criticize the approach adopted by Bitektine and Haack (2015) for attempting to directly theorize the relation among individuals, agency and institutional change as well as for considering action as being able to induce easily change across levels¹⁴. Nevertheless, as this model provides some additional insights as to relations also among organizational communication (as an example of agency) and changes in the environment (legitimacy building impacting on macrolevel structures), it is to be discussed in a concise way.

The approaches adopted by Bitektine and Haack (2015, p. 64) were focused on how it is possible for the macrostructure (this is where validity statements are formulated) to have an impact on the microlevel (this is propriety judgment affected by validity beliefs), which allowed them to distinguish strategies influencing evaluator's validity beliefs and propriety judgments. Here, the impact on the part of the actions is indirect (impact on e.g. validity judgments formed by institutions) and direct (like changing employee motivation, diminishing investor support).

Although collective actors (like organizations, associations, interest groups and governments) may act upon some "collective" legitimacy judgment (e.g. when government disseminates its judgment as an official approach), attention should be paid to that there are individual evaluators who perceive, analyzes, and makes judgments (Bitektine, Haack 2015, pp. 50-51). Trying to disentangle how legitimacy judgments can be formed it is important to notice that Bitektine and Haack (2015, p. 51) propose to recognize both individual evaluator's

judgment on social acceptability ("propriety") and a collective consensus about legitimacy that is present at group or organizational field level. Nevertheless, they propose that when receiving messages from other actors that convey the validity judgment, individuals form "validity belief" - it is a kind of judgment about what the validated "consensus" is. Their interpretation of the process of legitimacy formation assumes that validity judgment is a primary mechanism through which individual evaluators are influenced by collective legitimacy judgments at the society, field or organization level (Bitektine et al., 2015, p. 51). In order for individual evaluators to be provided with cues, judgment validation institutions (like media, government, the judicial system in this case) make use of different judgment validation texts (written documents in which validated judgment is recorded – e.g. share of voice in the media, regulators' decisions, a judgment of judges or juries). The process of legitimacy may look differently under conditions of institutional change when social norms, values, and judgments change. Especially, then the passive-processing path of the institutional stability loop is weakened or even suppressed. It relates to the fact that conflicting legitimacy judgments (because of disagreement between judgments validated by regulators or legal systems or media in this case) may cause the perception of validity to be weak. Then less trust is present and as a result of this evaluators are more likely to rely on their independent propriety assessment. Deviant judgments are to cause evaluators to make their assessment of their perceptions based on a selected set of applicable norms, which may lead finally to offering a more legitimate alternative to the given (established) institutional order (Bitektine, Haack, 2015, pp. 57-58). What here is especially important, Bitektine and Haack assume that those judgments that are formed by evaluators become consequential to the organization when they are expressed in the evaluator's discourse and actions - here the consequences of actions may refer to e.g. changes in investor support or employee motivation as well as have the indirect impact like e.g. changed opinions (Bitektine, Haack, 2015, pp. 59-60). As the institutionalization of a validity increases, then when making propriety judgments, the individual evaluator takes for granted more norms. What is more, individual evaluators may then to a greater extent suppress the deviant judgments. The possibility of taking into account this heterogeneity of reactions to common institutional conditions is one of the premises why on the one hand it is not a good idea to omit the paradox of agency (paragraph 3) when analyzing organizational communication, and on the other hand, it is not a good idea to make it a tractable problem (paragraph 3). What is more, considering problems across multiple levels of analysis should allow for providing a more direct explanation for how macrolevel institutional meanings persist or change over time (Harmon, Haack, Roulet, 2018, p. 465).

As it becomes visible there are demanding tasks for researchers to provide the description of how individuals may influence institutions and vice versa. Emphasizing the role of agency and the importance of macro discourses appear to be of great importance, similarly to attempts to indicate mechanisms specific to institutions that may influence actors' behaviors. The issue that demands clarification appears to relate to how a given way of conceptualization may make it possible to notice new things and make others hidden. When somewhat comparing the approaches to describe institutional change represented by Phillips et al. or by Bitektine and Haack it may appear that in addition to the analysis of different levels (like individuals and collectives) for greater clarity as to how relations among different entities can be described by some notions provided by critical realists. Below there is one proposition that described how the recognition of different kinds of entities may make it easier to understand what kind of conditions need to be met in order for changes possible to be experienced to occur. This approach was used by Delbridge and Edwards (2013, see also Janiszewski, 2018) to provide additional insights into how institutional settings can be inhabited by actors. As it turns out later there are other voices that claim that instead of thinking in line with this metaphor (of actors inhabiting institutions) other views may provide researches with more valuable insights, especially when considering mechanisms for the transmission of institutions considered by communicative institutionalism.

When analyzing discourse and its beyond discursive influences it may be worth referring to critical realism assumptions related to the mode of realities. Critical realism distinguishes four modes of reality, that is four ways in which real entities may be differentiated – material, ideal, artefactual, and social. Discourse is named as the ideally real entity or discourse/discursive entity (similarly to language, signs, symbols, understandings, representations or theories). They are said to be real because they have effects or, putting it differently, they make a difference¹⁵. However, e.g. discursively downgraded skills may be perceived as socially constructed, but in order for a given professional group to be discriminated, in addition to these discursive factors, other factors like extra-discursive (socially real factors) are needed. Critical realists are to claim that it may be that it is not enough to change discursive practices to change socially real entities because they have an extra-discursive dimension and in order to change them it is required to take into account that alongside discursive practices those extra-discursive practices work as well and they can be changed only by changing practical activity (based on Fleetwood, 2004, p. 36). Organizations, social structures or practices are said to be socially real entities, because they do not contain any iota of materiality and they are dependent on human activity for their existence (reproduction and transformation). There is opposition toward making conflation between social real entities and conceptually real entities because as socially real entities can be a subject of discourse, in addition to this, they have an extra-discursive dimension (based on Fleetwood, 2004, p. 35). Problematic on this ground are different poststructuralist views in which „the construction of order (of sensemaking) by people is what gives rise to structure” (Fleetwood, 2004, p. 35). Then meaning like structure being

given to experience causes poststructuralists to claim that „there are no real structures” (Fleetwood, 2004, p. 35). These issues can turn out to be especially important with regard to communication-based so-called impression management techniques. They, by e.g. maintaining the situation of a given organization is not so difficult as it otherwise would appear to be, are believed by managers to help their organizations to maintain legitimacy (Hahn, Lülfs, 2014). Referring back to Bitektine and Haack it may be said that when considering legitimacy as perception, it may be reasonable to assume that when being impacted by constant stream of messages on a given topic, evaluators become to think about the problem in line with those demands. However, it may be doubtful whether such communication can bring stable effects because as it will be shown later in order for institutions to be transferred the kind of communication that is needed assumes that actors (including evaluators) should be more engaged in the sensemaking processes. Taking into account different kinds of structures limiting organizational approaches to communication (and as it will be explained further different ways of conceptualizing those structures) the issues that should be considered relates also to what can organizations really do (including how to communicate) to impact the institutional environment and their evaluators.

3. Agency paradox and metaphors in organization studies - alternative insights for the description of communication processes

The paradox of embedded agency (Holm, 1995 as cited in Battilana, Leca, Boxenbaum, 2009, p. 67; Seon, Creed, 2002) related to the tension between institutional determinism and agency can be considered as being an obstacle to the introduction of agency to institutional theory. When explaining the paradox of agency, Bitektine and Haack (2015, p. 60) emphasize that here the question is how the human agency can be a factor in institutional change when norms and collective beliefs are institutionally determined. The same is formulated by Cardinale (2018) who argues that the core of the matter relates to finding a solution to the problem of how it may be that action unfolds within a structure and is influenced by it and at the same time it remains partially autonomous from it (Cardinale, 2018, p. 134).

Before moving on to a stance proposed by Meyer and Vaara (2020) and consequences that derive from it for the field of communicative institutionalism, it may appear to be suitable to pay the attention to that being strongly attached to embeddedness¹⁶ view Cardinale (2018) proposed the solution to the so-called paradox of agency that was next strongly criticized. Symbolically the areas of investigation can be presented in the figure below (figure 1):

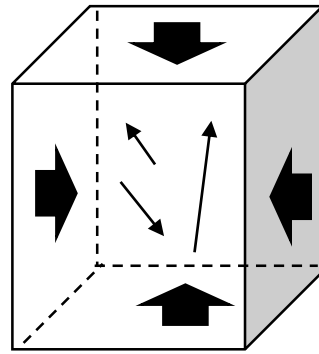


Figure 1. Spatial interpretation of the paradox of agency¹⁷.

Source: Author's own based on Bitektine, Haack, 2015; Cardinale, 2018. Black bold arrows symbolize the impact that structures have on actors who may both undertake actions and engage in interactions with structures (agency) within the set of possibilities defined by structures (symbolized by thin black arrows).

Drawing mainly on Husserl conception of "protention" (with reference to a propensity toward taking some courses of action rather than others) as well as on some notions made by Bourdieu Cardinale (2018) conducted a somewhat inspiring discussion in which he problematized the assumptions of the institutional theory according to which structure simply constrains and enables action and that agency is mostly associated with reflexivity (understood by the prism of the purposiveness of actions, as opposed to habitual action - see also Janiszewski, 2018). He intends to show, inter alia, that it is possible to ascribe a new role to structures, which are said to imprint dispositions that orient action (it means the structure is to make actors more inclined to undertake given actions than other ones) (Cardinale, 2018, p. 134).

Lok and Willmott notice that Cardinale nearly literally reproduces Giddens' metaphorical room and by using the metaphor of embeddedness in such a way it is possible to transform a paradox into a tractable problem. In general, Lok and Willmott referring to Bourdieu and Wacquant's notion of structure and agency being "ontologically complicit" (Bourdieu, and Wacquant, 1992, p. 20 as cited in Lok, Willmott, 2019, p. 471) argue that when the relation between structure and agency is reconceptualized in line with practice theory as "ontologically complicit" it gives rise to doubts of whether this relation should be characterized by referring to embeddedness (Lok, Willmott, 2019, p. 471). Lok and Willmott see the problem formulated as "when and how can people engage in change-oriented behavior" being more relevant for the analysis of organizational life than technical and abstract attempts in searching for mechanisms connecting structure and agency (Lok, Willmott, 2019, p. 471). It becomes actually less relevant when the relation between structure and agency is understood as mutually constitutive (Lok, Willmott, 2019; Seo, Creed, 2002). What is also worth emphasizing according to Harmon, Haack and Roulet (2019, p. 465) who distance themselves from more stringent forms of methodological individualist approach (according to which „all macro phenomena are really just aggregated forms of individual-level behavior“) the differentiation of two kinds of problems (macro and micro as well as structure and agency) can be seen in such a way that structural elements can be "pulled down" for their actions as well as it is possible for local

practices to be "built up" into the structure (Powell, Rerup, 2017 as cited in Harmon, Haack, Roulet, 2019, p. 465)¹⁸.

Emphasizing the importance of the paradox of agency is also due to the risk of committing the so-called ecological fallacy. It relates to the situation that when conducting a multilevel analysis the researchers may try wrongly to infer "relationships at the lower level based on either observations or analysis only at the higher level" (Slater, Snyder, Hayes, 2006 as cited in Bitektine, Haack, 2015, p. 60). When attention is paid to how the consequences of macrolevel consensus around the institutionalized judgment are understood, then taking into account the microlevel of analysis, it may be noticed that the presence of such kind of consensus does not have to exclude that there is a diversity of privately held judgment, which has already been discussed in the previous paragraph (but they are to be suppressed by individuals due to different reasons) (Bitektine, Haack, 2015, p. 60). Here, what is especially important is the microlevel behaviors of individual evaluators that may give rise to new macrolevel validity. As a result, although there have been factors that promote institutional stability, changes in judgments (as well as institutions) may occur. These influences (of microlevel on macrolevel) are to be realized in this view through a nondeterministic competitive process (Bitektine, Haack, 2015, p. 63). Here it may be added that the institutional logic perspective allows for issues of contestation and struggle to be foregrounded and this perspective causes sources and consequences of heterogeneity to become more important than isomorphic processes¹⁹. Attempting to develop a micro-level component of institutional analysis, Schilke (2018, p. 1432) poses the question related to why it happens that being faced with the same environmental pressures to adopt certain organizational practices some decision-makers in organizations resist whereas others conform to them. When moving attention from aspects of isomorphic processes towards issues related to heterogeneity, doubts may arise as to whether hitherto broadly spread metaphor of embeddedness may still play a role that should be as much important as in the past. If no, the issue is what alternative propositions may emerge. By focusing on the ways in which different systems of dominations can be reconfigured, the institutional logic perspective may be somewhat matched to emancipatory possibilities that are the object of interest of critical theory (Hirsch, Lounsbury, 2015, pp. 97-98). While perceiving organizations as communication it appears to be possible to analyze organizations as communicative structures of power by focusing on how tensions between the human desire for autonomy (agency) and organizational play out dynamically through various communication processes (Mumby, Kuhn, 2019, pp. 7-9). While coordination in the field is difficult within organizations, the focus on how processes of communication can be described by the use of different metaphors may allow for additional recognition of extra-discursive elements that may be indispensable for effective communication within and beyond organizational boundaries.

Bitektine et al. (2020, p. 886) propose that spatial metaphor entailing treating actors as operating within institutions could be replaced by another one. It needs to be noticed that spatial metaphor actually underlies important perspectives in institutional theory like the above-

mentioned "institutional embeddedness" or "inhabited institutions" (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 886). It can be said that one of the assumptions of "an inhabited approach" is indicating the embeddedness of institutions and interaction in <obdurate social relations and contexts>" (Hallett, Ventresca, 2006, p. 226 as cited in Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, p. 934). The notion of inhabiting institutions tends to focus on how existing institutions are enacted by situated actors as well as how the meaning and enactment of institutional logics are influenced by local social interactions, but symbolic interactionists underpinnings by emphasizing local and immediate contexts of interactions are led to problems like the pattern of pre-existing logics being obfuscated (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, p. 934).

A proposition to substitute other metaphors for spatial metaphors actually means that the way in which the relations between institutions and actors are seen should be changed. Bitektine et al. (2020) emphasized that conceptualizations based on a spatial metaphor refer to actors who are constrained by institutions or who may try to change (or maintain) them somewhat (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 885). Especially according to Bitektine et al. (2020, p. 886) researchers focused on a spatial metaphor may devote too little amount of attention to how actors internalize institutions whereas this new metaphor may allow for outlining the role of socio-cognitive mechanisms that would be to explain the transmission and diffusion of institutions. Here, is the role of the communication processes, however, again there is no agreement as to what these processes are to include or what is their discursive nature. Nevertheless, by proposing that additional attention should be paid to the aspect of the internalization of institutions, the possible sources of human agency can be better understood as well as the issue of the impact of macro-level on micro is to be emphasized. Not only does this approach may lead to explanations in the field of organizational heterogeneity with regard to "preconscious understandings", but next focusing on how institutional context may enter sensemaking may allow for additional insights related to problems of action formation.

The metaphor proposed by Bitektine et al. (2020) involves inverting the spatial metaphor. The proposed perspective being also named "institutions inhabiting actors" is believed as having the potential to acquire a deeper insight into the above-mentioned socio-cognitive mechanisms explaining the transmission and diffusion of institutions that cover so-called actorhood models and communication (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 886). Here attention is paid to how institutions may be spread among actors as well as how they may have an impact on actors' cognition and emotions (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 887).

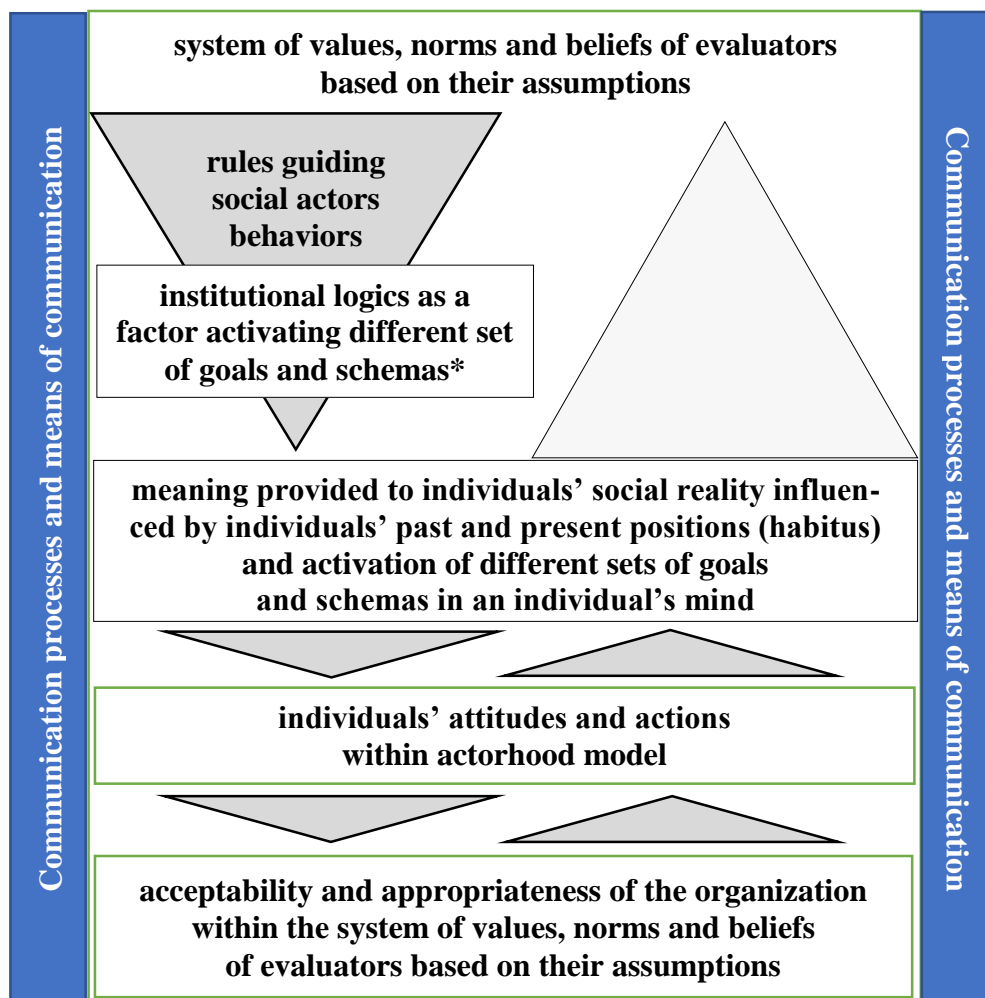
When paying attention to communication as a means to transmit institutions from one individual to another, in general, it can be said that communication in this sense being defined as "social interaction that builds on speech, gestures, texts, discourses, and other means" (Cornelissen et al., 2015, p. 11) is primarily discursive²⁰. The role of both normative social influence and informational social influence is emphasized. The former emphasizes the importance of norms with regard to attitudes to other people's opinions on what a given individual should or should not do, and the latter relates to the situation when consultations are carried out among people aimed at what should be done. Nevertheless, there are points to be

indicated when the analysis of discourse is not sufficient for understanding institutional transmission because the issues of the undervalued importance of social structure, and the not evident role of discourse in the institutionalization of authority are to be noticed. What is more, the above-mentioned actorhood model is understood as the cultural template of acceptable behavior defining the roles that individuals and organizations can legitimately pursue in a given social context (Meyer, 2010 as cited in Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 890) and is related to how institutions may be transferred when people enter into new roles, e.g. professional ones accepting both appealing and undesirable identity elements present within the actorhood model – Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 891 Generally non-discursive social processes are expected to play a role for the emergence and transmission of institutions (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 888).

Supporting the view according to which both reductionism and essentialism should be overcome in institutional theory, Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 898) consider acknowledging that "institutions and social actors are co-constitutive and co-constructed in processes of communication" as a way to achieve this. The view that both institutions and actorhood are social constructions that are inextricably tied to each other is perceived as being "one of the cornerstones of institutional theory" (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 898). They argue that both "inhabiting" and "embedding" metaphors as kinds of hints as to how to think of institutions and social actors cause problems. According to Meyer and Vaara resulting from those metaphors the reification (of actors or institutions) cause micro-macro divide to be impossible to be overcome (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 899). This kind of reasoning suggests that institutions and social actors are separate entities whereas for Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 899) it is not possible to speak of non-communicative processes or phenomena so that e.g. social actorhood is inextricably linked with both institutions and discourses. Communication can also be understood as a fundamental building block in the process of the co-constitution of institutions and actorhood (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 907)²¹. Approach to communication that is adopted by Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 899) is described as a broad one, which means that when a given action becomes socially meaningful and relevant then it means that it involves communication. Institutions that provide structures for communications are communicatively constructed (that is created, enacted, modified, legitimized, transmitted) as well as institutions are organized in discourses (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 900). This dispute around how to describe communication processes when compared with the previous discussion on which kind of metaphor should be used to refer to the paradox of agency may show on the one hand that generally valuable metaphors can sometimes cause researchers to concentrate too much on issues that are not of primary importance. On the other hand, it appears that regardless of how those problems are described, the question posed and related to why people do not engage in some kinds of actions required more attention paid to communication processes and possible (rather) mechanisms that would allow improving its effectiveness. The operation of those mechanisms is to take place on both micro and macro levels and the issue of the appropriate description of interactions among those levels is a task to be resolved.

4. Discussion

To sum up the part reflecting on levels of analysis and how to speak of agency problems in a way allowing for discussing in the most meaningful way issues related to communication processes there is figure 2. In figure 2 the mesolevel is also taken into account as well as processes of mutual influencing of both actors and institutions are considered. Here, the role of communication is of primary importance, nevertheless, as open may be treated questions as to whether all processes are communicative, especially when it can also be assumed that some habits may be transferred through practices rather than discourses (Cardinale, 2018). In figure 2, the issues of institutional logics²² are outlined as the specific interpretation of organizational environment as a meaning system is introduced through the paper. Starting from point 4.1 there are main points discussed that relate to figure 2.



* Bitektine and Song (2021) use the term schema when referring e.g. to the cognitive schema of CSR engagement which can be associated with the market logic. These associations may just affect evaluators' judgments and behavioral intentions.

Figure 2. Communication processes and legitimacy – multilevel view.

Source: Author's own based on Bitektine, Song, 2021; Cardinale, 2018; Meyer, Vaara, 2021; Bitektine et al., 2020, Cornellisen et al., 2015.

4.1. Role of metaphors

According to figure 2 it can be said that on the one hand, in a business environment there is a given set of values, norms, and beliefs that may be a point of departure for evaluators (both outside the organization and inside the organization) to evaluate organizational actions. At the same time in addition to legitimacy as a perception view focused on how evaluators are to assess the organization, it is important to take into account insights provided by legitimacy as a process view related to how field levels aspects are shaped by change agents (Suddaby et al., 2017). At a given point in time one sub-sets of values, norms, and beliefs may be gaining greater importance than another one. Taking into account insights provided by the embeddedness metaphor it can be said that structures are to guide to some extent actor's actions and possibilities for the agency. What is important here is that, as Delbridge and Edwards claim, action is not determined by logics that generally are assumed to activate it (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, p. 934; see also Battilana, Leca, Boxenbaum, 2009, p. 73). This is because both the individuals' actor position and their ability to recognize opportunities are thought to be those two elements of which sources of action are relational features (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, p. 932). The point is that individuals should not be perceived any longer as being reduced to unreflective carriers of institutions (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, p. 928). Here the focus is on how existing institutions and institutional logics are enacted by actors who engage in (re)constructing meaning (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, p. 934), however, the question as to how individual actors' perceptions (as well as judgments and action) is shaped by institutions remains unanswered to some extent (Bitektine et al., 2020). Hence, although the approach inspired by critical realism allows for due attention to be given to the reflexive capacities of the actor (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013), the psychodynamics of human agency and a pre-reflective dimension of it should be taken into consideration as well (Lok, Willmott, 2019). Generally, it may be said that the embeddedness may mean that the current environment is to shape means and ends at any given moment as well as actors' propensity toward some actions over others (Cardinale, 2018). By taking into account that depending on both social conditions and psychological conditions managers may take into account a given path, then admitting that some barriers are impossible to be omitted, it may turn out to be worth doing to ask which factors are actually those that motivate decision-makers whose past experiences are to be of great importance as the pre-reflexive impact may not to be avoided. Hence, those two aspects – one related to the reflectivity of actors and the second related to the possible pre-reflective dimension of their operations demand further attention. From this point of view, it may be said that when defining institutional conditions for effective communication that would enable organizations to legitimate themselves, it can be proposed what follows. Instead of considering the problem from the point of view of isomorphism or simply heterogeneity implied by institutional logics, the introduction in the possible future model latent variables based on notions from considerations on the reflective attitude of actors and above-mentioned near-

automatic perceptual processes (resulting from the reaction on the structural limitations) should allow for the recognition of those institutions that have the greatest possibilities to be transferred among individuals within and beyond organizations in a given context. It may be emphasized that for the transfer it is of secondary importance whether it occurs by the use of discursive or non-discursive processes. However, finally, it should also result in beyond discursive consequences for the organization, that is gaining legitimacy that is independent of the current stream of information transferred to the environment.

Field-level processes can be shaped by change agents in such a way that depending on business goals attempts are to be made to activate projects run in accordance with different business logics that are to be directed at different stakeholders. Here the attention may be directed to the point of view provided by institutions as inhabiting actors' metaphor. What needs to be outlined is the necessity to take into account that individuals are not here to be regarded as persons, but by the prism of their (e.g. professional) roles and skills, because they can exercise their agency when possessing resources, rights and obligations that are to be matched to their positions (Abdelnour et al., 2017). Hence, on the one hand, they have some toolkit (Swidler, 1986 as cited in Seo, Creed, 2002, p. 237) to remain active. On the other hand, it is also important to notice that actions undertaken by actors who have different accumulated experiences through their lives, need to be meaningful for them, which is why even routinized actions cannot be perceived as being "automatic" (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 901). As Bitektine and Haack (2015) assume, there is a variety of judgments that can be suppressed, so it may be interesting to pay the attention to those micro processes that may lead to minor changes being introduced in practice as a consequence of the emergence of those suppressed judgments (among both evaluators inside the organization and evaluators outside the organization), which as time goes by, may lead to great institutional changes at the macrolevel. Hence, it appears reasonable not only to assume that when absorbing²³ those institutions' actors can modify them to some extent (which may be especially possible when institutional complexity is taken into account²⁴), but also to pay greater attention to the ways by which this absorption occurs. Again, the transmission of institutions here can occur or/and be impacted not only by socialization (above-mentioned processes of normative social and informational social influence) or discursive communication but also by non-discursive social processes as well as factors like actors' emotions should be considered. Here it is important to see that there are such institutional processes and phenomena as social action, cognition, and emotions which being related to communication remain distinct from it. Hence, using communication to explain them may turn out not to be sufficient, because e.g. the impact on the part of communication may depend on "the extent to which communication and persuasion attempts can be accommodated within existing belief systems" (DiMaggio, 1997 as cited in Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 889). What is more, in order to gain a more broad view on factors that may have an impact on how people may transmit institutions the issue of means of communication is to be taken into account as well (Bitektine et al., 2020, pp. 888-889). That is why this aspect is emphasized in figure 2.

4.2. Role of means of communication

When defining institutional logic as both describing the way a particular world works and providing the opportunity for agency and change (Thornton, Ocasio, 2008 as cited in Slavova, Karanasios, 2018, pp. 778-779), Slavova and Karanasios (2018) argue that it is worth doing to pay the attention to microlevel practices of individuals and organizations since the introduction of ICT artifacts may provoke shifts in beliefs, norms and activities. Hence, when discussing the problems related to institutional conditions of organizational efforts to be legitimate, the importance of communication appears to be still of great importance. This is also because it may turn out that not only may new norms be a factor constraining organizational responses to external pressures, but also they may influence organizational approaches to how it controls their employees so that employees themselves should be interested in features of institutional order that is being shaped. When taking into account this broad view on communication, those aspects related to how both materiality and communication together can make difference deserve further attention. Being back to the approach adopted by Slavova and Karanasios (2018) who decided to align information artifacts with activity theory and following Vygotsky and Leont'ev (2018) they assumed that human activity (being understood by the prism of a subject <person, collective> acting upon object <the problem, situation>) is mediated by means of material artifacts and their symbolic elements. When being internalized this symbolic meaning may influence the behavior. Hence, the conceptualization of information artifacts can be consistent with their serving as complex (material and symbolic) mediators (Ruckriem, 2009 as cited in Slavova, Karanasios, 2018, p. 779). When being understood in such a way, those artifacts are said to possess the property of making visible (Kuutti, 1996 as cited in Slavova, Karanasios, 2018, p. 780) to actors' specific symbolic elements of their cultural-historical environment. As a consequence, in order to capture this property, Slavova and Karanasios make use of the term "interaction modalities". Interaction modality is here understood as a classification of the channel²⁵ for an interaction. This interaction is considered as occurring "between an information artifact and its user" (Saroja et al., 2011 as cited in Slavova, Karanasios, 2018, p. 780). What appears to be of greatest importance when explaining the concept of interactions modalities is that when serving as signs they are to be reflected in behaviors (or procedures) and they can be linked to institutional logics. For example, when interacting with ICT information artifacts and being provided e.g. instant notifications that are to embody meanings such as e.g. punctuality and professionalism people are to perceive such meanings and behave in compliance with expectations resulting from those meanings. This leads their behaviors to become institutionalized (Slavova, Karanasios, 2018, p. 780). Hence, it can be shown how linking to given interaction modalities may entail a change in institutional logics (e.g. from one characterized by personalized trading relationships to one that entails relationships being governed by the use of text-based documents as is shown by the research conducted Slavova, Karanasios, 2018). Thus, it may be noticed as well that the notion of modality includes

interpretations, perceptions, and expectations. They all are said to arise from actors' interactions with information artifacts with the use of different channels. What is important as well, interaction modality is to take into account subjective elements related to using information artifacts, and what is related to it, reflective mediation. Remaining with the framework of activity theory, Slavova and Karanasios (2018) claim that interaction modalities allow them to take into account the process of subjects decoding institutional meanings and next transmitting them in their subsequent activities (Slavova, Karanasios, 2018, p. 780)²⁶.

As it has already been stated, Bitektine and Haack (2020, p. 890) pay the attention to that even objects, which do not have their meaning being overlaid by communication (due to being non-semiotized objects) and that do not serve any signaling purpose (such as e.g. physical distance) may have an impact on institutional transmission. Then material practices and artifacts can play a role in the process of institutional change and maintenance (Bitektine, Haack, 2020, p. 890). In order to extend this view, it can be mentioned that according to Orlikowski and Scott's new approach to studying materiality (which involves reframing conceptual concerns away from human-centered approaches) should be regarded as a bold move leading to disruptions in long-standing assumptions that have informed many areas of management research (Orlikowski, Scott, 2008 as cited in Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, p. 698). The ideas for including broadly materiality is articulated by Orlikowski and Scott strongly, as they approach practices as ontological, which is why bodies, spaces, and objects are not separable from (as well as detached from) practices (discursive practices or material phenomena are not possible to be said to be ontologically or epistemologically prior²⁷) so that e.g. discourse in the form of written email does not pre-exist its specific material production as email in particular times and places (Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, pp. 698-699). The question now can be asked how may those views be interpreted. It is a good occasion to be back to figure 1 which discussed the risks stemming from the literal treatment of the embeddedness metaphor. Orlikowski and Scott refer to Hardy and Thomas' work whose intention was to show the importance of „the discursive effects of the material, and the material effects of the discursive” (Hardy, Thomas, 2015 as cited in Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, p. 698). However, a title like this assumes that discourse is located within a material world – unlike Orlikowski and Scott, Hardy and Thomas were to assume the entanglement of discourse and material as being empirical (it means that discourse and materiality are ontologically separable although they can be said to be inextricably intertwined – here they are distinct although overlapping) and not ontological (it means that discourse and materiality are inseparably entangled) (Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, p. 699)²⁸. Resigning from making a priori distinction between the discursive and the non-discursive means that e.g. when conducting research one should not be focused on identifying relationships between distinct entities or asks questions about the correspondence between descriptions and reality (Barad, 2003 as cited in Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, p. 700). Instead, the attention should be directed at the configuration of reality by constitutive material-discursive practices which are performative (Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, p. 700). Instead of

emphasizing the importance of e.g. interactions of entities with discourse, attention should be paid to "how discourse is materially enacted in practice" (Introna, 2011 as cited in Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, p. 700). In this place, it may be said that when applied to study hotel evaluation processes this approach allows Orlikowski and Scott (2015) to argue that the introduction of a change (in the way in which guest feedback is materialized in practice) can be considered as performative because it is by changing guests, and next both hoteliers and hotels to reconfigure all the industry (Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, p. 703). Next, the issue of co-constitution of institutions and social actors can be discussed in greater detail.

According to Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 901) inseparable triad is formed by institutions, actors and scripted actions. By expanding epistemological and ontological assumptions, Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 900) can claim that in addition to being central to the transmission of institutions (it is what Bitektine et al., 2020 have admitted), communication could be thought as being central both in the socialization of new members into the community and for formation, instantiation, replication, transformation, and legitimation of so-called "typifications" (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 901). Based on the social phenomenology of Schütz, Berger and Luckmann, Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 900) consider institutions as just reciprocal typifications of actions and actors through which activities of individuals (that are unique and occur in an ongoing stream of events) become socially meaningful, members share them and they as being a part of socio-cultural heritage serve e.g. as a scheme of interpretation (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 900).²⁹ At the same time from the point of view Meyer and Vaara (2020) there is no need for typifications to be taken for granted (although institutions are said to be strong to the extent to which their typifications guide interpretations and give orientation) - it is sufficient that those typifications are available to guide actions (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 901). Then institutions can be considered as „externalized and objectified meanings" (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 902). For Meyer and Vaara being focused on communication makes it possible to open up for analysis of institutionalised orders as discursive formations - in order for objectified meanings to be externalized, objectivated and transmitted, communication is required (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 902). Multimodality should involve remaining „understanding meaning construction in its entire complexity" (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 903). This should allow recognizing how those different modes of communication combine with each other to co-constitute institutions and actors. Especially the last challenge requires that multimodal signs should be a unit of analysis, which is also believed to help to overcome the dichotomy of microfoundations and macrofoundations (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 903).

However, in this place the question that can be posed concerns advantages (or disadvantages) stemming from introducing discussed research approach according to which instead of considering interactions that would allow two separate entities to shape each other, attention should be paid to material enactment (Orlikowski, Scott, 2015). The question is related to focusing on the final practical consequences of a given set of changes. But when being posed in such a way, its consideration may not allow us to take into account the interaction of humans

with information artifacts and based on it to better understand which conditions can be assumed to generate given actions when taking into account the subjective dimension of human interaction. As the work conducted by Hahn et al. (2015) has shown there are many opportunities to discover interesting relations between external or internal changes on the one hand, and decisions made by individuals who can possess differentiated cognitive frames. The insight offered by taking into account what may individual propensities be to make a given decision can be sometimes interestingly combined with less used (whereas not exotic) perspectives. For example, with regard to clear connections to critical management studies strand of research, Lok and Willmott draw on the social theory of hegemony³⁰ to make use of negative ontology that "accounts for why every endeavor to institute social realities, including the construction and solidification of identity, is inherently vulnerable to disruption" (Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 215). Here, the subject is thought of as a lack within the structure - it causes identity not to be conceived as "positioned by the structure", but it is understood as the outcome of an ongoing process of identification (Critchley, Marchart, 2004 as cited in Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 227). Lok and Willmott offered their perspective on the solution of the problem of mutual aversion of different groups of employees which involves „pragmatically effective” consent, which not necessarily needs to be unconditional or calculated (Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 222)³¹.

It is also worth noticing that both the abovementioned Lok and Willmott as well as Realy and Hinings paid their attention to the interesting forms of cooperation which may make it possible to have tasks done regardless of the fact that different groups operate within different institutional logics (professional logic vs business logic as in case of research conducted by Realy and Hinings) or within different identities (educational values vs business values as in case of research commented by Lok and Willmott). In the first case they collaborate in a pragmatic way (it means that groups work together as there is not other way which groups would consider as being possible to accomplish particular tasks – Reay, Hinings, 2009, p. 631) whereas in the second case they are to form temporary alliances and develop transformative actions to overcome impasses (Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 223). Those aspects appear to be especially valuable with regard to discussed topics as they can provide researchers with examples of conditions under which there only limited transfer of institutions occurs (or it does not occur at all) but some kind of coordination is possible. But in order to understand conditions like e.g. the necessity of overcoming phenomena like “jouissance” it is required to be strongly focused on both reasoning processes or near-automatic perceptual processes and how they make sense-making processes in the organization (rather) interact with institutional context based on both discursive and non-discursive ways.

4.3. Role of sensemaking processes and institutions

When discussing types of action that are more likely to produce texts, Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2004, pp. 639-640) paid their attention just to two types of action that can be distinguished with regard to this criterion. In addition to actions that affect an organization's legitimacy, there are also actions that may lead to novel or surprising actions. This second type of action (that produces texts next embedded in the discourse) finally has an indirect impact on the production of institutions and is related to sensemaking whose importance needs to be outlined, especially when one realizes that although two influential streams of research (those are sensemaking and institutionalism) have been developing independently, they are said to be „ripe with intriguing connections” (Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1640).

Taking a deeper look at how this process can be conceptualized with regard to its connections with institutions may allow for the development of understanding of issues presented by above-mentioned Meyer and Vaara (2020) as well as Bitektine et al. (2020) who agree with each other (in this case) claim that language is considered to be construed as co-constitutive of both actors and institutions. Firstly, the classic view on sensemaking is to be presented, and next the issues related to multimodal sensemaking will be discussed. This is because Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 907) in their paper argue for communicative institutionalism that is to cover issues like the co-constitution of institutions and actors as well as multimodal discursive resources and their affordances³². The feature of communicative institutionalism in a view presented by Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 907) is that it should incorporate multiple interacting sign systems (which involves using different modes of communication like e.g. verbal language or visual communication which all possess their specific features – Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 902) and other modes of modern communication technologies. This perspective should provide alternative insights to approaches favoring either micro-level or favoring macro-level (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 907), which is why they are considered as being valuable and presented in this paper as well.

As it has been already said (footnote no. 22), when analyzing institutional logics from the point of view of microsocial level attention is paid to that institutional logics should help actors „make sense of the organizations” (Kroezen, Heugens, 2019 as cited in Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 4). Similarly, what is worth mentioning is that by assuming that there is "a considerable discretion" for the decision-maker when deciding about the extent to which an organization should be isomorphic with the environment, the decision-maker is granted "the ability to subjectively make sense of the environment” (Schilke, 2018, p. 1432). However, the question is what does it mean? Actually, institutional logics are to help actors “identify, express, and justify particular means and ends” (Kroezen, Heugens, 2019 as cited in Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 4). This is achieved by providing individual actors with ideational elements like implicit schemas and norms considered as cognitive and normative tools (e.g. Friedland, Alford, 1991 as cited in Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 4). The assumption is that so-called priming is to activate

particular institutions (like norms, stereotypes, schemas or implicit theories) in the individual actor's mind. As a result of this, a complex pattern of interrelated concepts, norms, role schemas, and implicit theories is argued to be brought to the fore (e.g. Glaser et al., 2017 as cited in Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 4; Thornton et al., 2012). The important issue is to correctly understand this priming mechanism in light of other ways in which institutions and sensemaking processes may be linked to each other, which is to be explained below.

As it has already been mentioned, being the point that differentiates so-called "old" institutionalism from "new" institutionalism, a focus on cognition has led to works that explore shared thought structures or cognitive representations (which generally may be labeled as logics, but also as schemas, templates, or e.g. scripts) - their common feature is that when considering given organizational settings, the legitimate ways of acting socially are constituted by them (Schneiberg, Clemens, 2006 as cited in Cornelissen et al., 2015, p. 11). By perceiving the institutional environment as a meaning system it is meant that due to the fact that institutions are to penetrate (or actually inhabit) actors to the extent that the institutional environment constructs their identity and agency, actors can be perceived as those who internalize institutions (Glaser et al., 2017; Berger, Luckmann, 1967 as cited in Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 887). Both Weick and Scott shared a view that linked the emergence of new institutions with collective sensemaking activities (Weick, 1995; Scott, 2001 as cited in Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1642) and in contrast to top-down mechanisms, this line of thought was more often repeated by researchers (Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1642). In addition to research on institutionalization processes, when taking a look at the contextual dimension of institutions, it is important to notice that in addition to the traditional cognitive constraint mechanism (recognized among top-down mechanisms) there are additional (top-down) mechanisms such as priming, editing and triggering (Weber, Glynn, 2006).

The aim of Weber and Glynn analysis was to show how sense can be made by actors with institutions and not by actors outside institutions or by actors despite institutions (Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1642). This may further be compared with e.g. Cardinale's view on actors' agency limited by constraining (or even additionally orienting) structure to conclude that while being analytically distinct (Delbridge, Willmott, 2013), structure and agency should not be strictly opposed to each other. Sensemaking can be seen as being a process theory as it maps mechanisms and sequences within a general perspective - parts that constitute a sensemaking process (perceptions, interpretations, actions) are perceived primarily as part of an ongoing cycle of revisions (Weber, Glynn, 2006, pp. 1641-1642). Weber and Glynn (2006, p. 1654) claimed that institutional theory is informative of sensemaking and research drawing on Weick's sensemaking perspective should take into account institutional context explicitly (Weber, Glynn, 2006, pp. 1654-1655). It can be claimed that cultural-cognitive institutions (as an element of context) can be considered as a component of Weick's depiction of sensemaking, that is three main moves like the above-mentioned perceptions, interpretations, actions – Daft, Weick, 1984 as cited in Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1641³³).

According to mechanisms proposed by Weber and Glynn (2006, p. 1641) institutions can be considered as being both antecedent to and emergent from sensemaking. As it has been indicated the latter is related to the presence of transformational mechanisms (like typification, and institutionalization) via which institutions can emerge from sensemaking. The former means that institutions residing at the macro level of extra-subjective structures (Wiley, 1988 as cited in Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1641) can be considered as contextual mechanisms for sensemaking that at the micro level of inter-subjective processes is to pivot on mechanisms of action formation (Wiley, 1988 as cited in Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1641). As it has been signaled, in addition to the recognized contextual mechanism of internalized cognitive constraint leading to narrowing how and what sense can be made by institutions (Barley, Tolbert, 1997 as cited in Weber, Glynn 2006, pp. 1641, 1648) there are other mechanisms like priming (here institutions provide social cues³⁴), editing (here institutions act through social feedback processes) and triggering (here institutions are said to pose a puzzle for sensemaking that results from endogenous institutional contradiction and ambivalence) (Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1644). These three mechanisms in contrast to internalized cognitive constraints do not work through the preclusion of potential alternatives. The important consequence of this fact is seen when paying the attention to the fact that only when alternatives appear to be unimaginable or implausible, do actions that are in line with institutions follow automatically. In the case of mechanisms like priming, editing as well as triggering, the enactment of deviance is not precluded (Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1641).

Commenting works on sensemaking provided by Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (2005) as well as by Weber and Glynn (2006), Höllerer, Jancsary and Grafström (2018) consider sensemaking through the prism of "bracketing specific instances from the ongoing flow of experiences" (Weick, Sutcliffe, Obstfeld, 2005 as cited in Höllerer, Jancsary, Grafström, 2018, p. 618). Those are next encapsulated in stable social categories. What is important here, uncertainty is reduced in this way. Also Höllerer, Jancsary and Grafström pay attention to sensemaking as a generative process - not only are existing objects of knowledge perpetuated but also new objects of knowledge are created³⁵ (Weber, Glynn, 2006 as cited in Höllerer, Jancsary, Grafström, 2018, p. 618). Being focused on time during and after the global financial crisis Höllerer, Jancsary and Grafström (2018, p. 618) refer to the multimodality in the institutionalization of novel ideas when exploring ways in which objectification (in the early stages of which two impossible to be separated processes of sensemaking and sensegiving <the latter is described as intentional attempts to establish dominant ways of understanding previously unintelligible experiences (e.g. Maitlis, 2005 as cited in Höllerer, Jancsary, Grafström, 2018, p. 618)> accounts for crucial elements) can be facilitated by the combined use of verbal texts and visual texts. Multimodality relates here to that when being focused on sensemaking, researchers should not take into account only written and spoken text. In addition to verbal discourse, it is important to include more different "modes" such as visual and material artifacts. The view is that meaning construction is achieved "through the simultaneous presence,

interrelationships and mutual influence of multiple modes" (Höllerer, Jancsary, Grafström, 2018, p. 619). Then sensemaking (and sensegiving) should combine resources provided by multiple modes in the most suitable way for the specific issue, context and audience (Höllerer, Jancsary, Grafström, 2018, p. 619). Those other modes of communication can serve as mechanisms of institutional transmission. These are non-verbal communication, material artifacts, rituals, and even movement (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 889). Put it up differently, current contributions to understanding the microfoundations of institutions show that language is of secondary importance when institutional change or maintenance occurs through material practices (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 890).

5. Conclusions and future research

The main points of this paper include the review of how institutional perspective deals with the issues of communication and how current propositions related to the most appropriate ways of conceptualizing communicative processes can be shown in the light of other disputable issues that researchers adopting institutional or critical perspective deal with as well. The considerations in this paper may appear to be infiltrated with some doubts related to the metaphor of co-constitution because of some anxiety as to ontological issues that arise when building on it. Nevertheless, as with other metaphors, their main role of it is to inspire to look for new ways of interpretation and description. That is why relatively much space was devoted to the interesting conception of inverting the metaphor of inhabited institutions. Although being commonly use, the metaphor of embeddedness may cause some interpretational difficulties. In general, the seemingly trivial question may be posed of whether it is a metaphor in itself that may appear to be problematic or the way in which it is used. What may be emphasized is the call for paying greater attention to how (especially but definitely not only) modes of communication can mediate human action and agency. Last but not least, it needs to be noticed that when discussing issues related to macro-micro relations, some additional attention is paid to the concept of institutional logics whose potential with regard to explaining (or even defining) the process of institutional change appears to be relatively clear. Nevertheless, some additional effort needs to be put into in order for it to become more broadly used in the combination with terms specific to research conducted in the field of communication processes.

One possible path for future research is the one that involves paying attention to the internalization of institutions. Here the assumption is that different means of communication map onto and resonates with individuals' cognition. What can be explored further is whether and how this process occurs. Here, it is advisable to refer not only to different means of communication but also to different possible cognitive frames of managers. To the author's best knowledge, there is still not prepared the scale for which Hahn et al. (2015) postulate.

Combining notions from research on managerial cognitive frames and priming³⁶ of different practices that may expose given individuals to different institutional logics may turn out to be fruitful. Since legitimacy may help organizations to increase their chances of having performance enhanced and survival (e.g. Baum, Oliver, 1991 as cited in Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 6), it is understandable that organizations may try to influence evaluators' judgments in order to increase their legitimacy (Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 6). Although efforts put to achieve this goal by organizations may be successful (e.g. Kim, Jensen, 2014 as cited in Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 6), it is argued that still there is a lack of knowledge as to how signals of different kinds sent by the business organization can affect external and internal evaluators' legitimacy judgments, Bitektine, Song 2021, p. 6).

Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 904) emphasize the need for a better understanding of the roles which are played by actors and communication technology in processes of institutionalization and de-institutionalization. The core of the matter here is that in addition to being communicative, with the use of modern communication technology social construction of reality became also mediated and mediatized (Couldry, Hepp, 2016, p. 904 as cited in Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 904). As it has been emphasized the notion of the social construction of reality in itself should be treated with some caution in order to avoid conflating entities whose ontological status is different. Nevertheless, those processes of mediation and mediatization cause that contemporary social interactions as well as individuals' everyday experiences cannot be perceived as being "here and now" (Berger, Luckmann, 1967 as cited in Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 904) but they become "there and now" or even "there and then" (Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 904). The important phenomenon being discussed is that currently, social interfaces become increasingly platform-driven. As a result of using new communication technologies and digitalization, there are new institutionalized areas with distinct typifications and genres created (Meyer, Vaara 2020, p. 904). This accounts for new challenges in the field of communications in organizations as new or renewed institutions may appear whose description will demand further research effort to be put into as new challenges with regard to building theoretical frameworks will be present as well. Here it may be added that according to some researchers it is argued that agency as a reflective capacity should be clearly distinguished from individuals, otherwise, scholars risk "succumbing to the lure of methodological individualism". This may lead to conclusions that social phenomena result from the actions of atomized (socially unconnected) individuals (Abdelnour, Hasselbladh, Kallinikos, 2017, p. 1776). Although these notions should be treated as a kind of simplification relating to the concepts of agency and institutions, it should be emphasized that in line with currently promoted propositions that link macro and micro level (which does not have to be identified with structure and agency problem), the growing attention is devoted to microfoudations. Even though there are still some disputes about how they should be understood (e.g. Lok, Willmott, 2019) the extended view of reasons why (primarily professional) individuals undertake some actions (be it the result of deliberate reasoning or near-automatic perceptual processes) is regarded as one whose

importance will be growing in the future. That is why conclusions drawn on it are to be of great importance when searching for institutional conditions for effective communication.

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Footnotes

- ¹ Constitution is a metaphor as well. It is useful because of the suggestions that actors themselves (in and through interactions) construct a common base of understanding impacting them (McPherson, Sauder, 2013). As Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004) tried to emphasize not only the effects of institutionalization, but the process of institutionalization demands attention. Nevertheless, as it will be shown propositions of metaphors of co-constitutions appear again to direct greater attention to results than to mechanisms.
- ² The issue to be discussed is whether actually more relativist approach on the part of epistemological assumptions is sufficient to say that institutional theory can be critical, e. g. Lok (2014) claim that some references to forms of social constructionism like those made by Philips, Lawrence and Hardy or Meyer and colleagues are actually in line with realist approaches on the part of ontology (Lok, 2014, p. 340). Nevertheless, a more relativist approach to epistemology may make institutional theory to become somewhat more critical (Lok, 2019; see also Fleetwood, 2014 for the explanation of relativism and Suddaby (2015), Hirsch and Lounsbury (2015) for other arguments)
- ³ The meaning of the term legitimacy that is of greater importance for the discussion in this paper is related to legitimacy as a perception because legitimacy in this approach retains the notion of legitimacy as a property (but understood in a specific way as assessment) and also retains the notion of legitimacy as a process, however, instead of macrolevel processes occurring through discursive interactions at the field level, it focuses on what happens mainly at the individual, microlevel (Suddaby, Bitektine, Haack, 2017, p. 463).
- ⁴ To illustrate the meaning of institutionalization, it can be said that judgments become institutionalized when they become a part of objective reality. It involves the externalization of propriety judgments (made by individuals on their own) through the actions and discourse of evaluators that are next habitualized, which causes they may be reproduced not demanding much effort being put into it (Berger, Luckmann, 1967 as cited in Bitektine, Haack, 2015, p. 53).
- ⁵ Debate on agency refers to who are people - are they rather only institutional carriers (and in this case, they are not expected to do anything more than reproducing their external world)? or are they active human agents able to resist their environment having it interpreted earlier (Schilke, 2018, p. 1432)? By the prism of sensemaking the task for so-called institutional carriers is to "move institutional content" across places and across time (Scott, 2003 as cited in Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1644).
- ⁶ In general the word „actor" in this paper depending on the context may refer to either individuals or organizations or both of them.

- ⁷ Instrumental calculation may refer to the fact that one characteristic feature of actors is related to their intentionality (Bromley, Sharkey, 2017 as cited in Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 886). However from a different tradition, but importantly from the point of view of the broadly understood communication process, Habermas considering instrumental reason paid the attention to monological thought process, which entails subjectively set goals and in general means the most suitable means for achieving a given goal. The other kind of reason is related to the possibility of making revisions to the rules in line with which daily interactions occur (Edgar, 2006).
- ⁸ It may be noticed that Delbridge and Edwards when discussing emergent properties of structures, say about "emergent properties of structures (including logics)". At the same time, social structures are here considered as "generative mechanisms" (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, p. 944), which are understood by critical realists as one component alongside other causal factors that all may be said to create a casual configuration which can be said to have a tendency to something (Fleetwood, 2004, p. 47).
- ⁹ It should be emphasized that the meaning of the word text here is not limited to written transcriptions, but it also covers "any kind of symbolic expression requiring a physical medium and permitting of permanent storage" (Taylor, Van Every, 1993 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 636), including also e.g. a talk, as it can be assumed that for the text to be generated it is sufficient to be inscribed - e.g. verbal report can also have a material form and to become accessible to others (Taylor et al., 1996 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 636). Discourse is to be "a system of statements which constructs an object" (Parker, 1992 as cited in Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 636).
- ¹⁰ In order to see in a more direct way what is the difference between the criticality of the approach which may be possible within the framework of institutional theory and one represented by critical theory, it may be worth doing to consider shortly assumptions according to which discourses are always the subject of some degree of struggle. On the one hand, institutions are always inherently unstable. The reason for that may be that there is a "constitutive lack" of the discourse through which they are reproduced. On the other hand, it is to occur in this way even when objectification causes them to be considered to great extent as being "taken-for-granted" or "structurally embedded" (e.g. Müller, 2013 as cited in Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 342). Questions of why it occurs like this are to be posed by critical researchers but not by critically oriented institutionalists. For representatives of critical theory it is obvious that when being interested in emancipatory engagement through produced knowledge, they should start with a critical examination of "the constitutive, political nature and effects of such knowledge" (Lok, 2019, p. 340).
- ¹¹ Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2004) explained how it can be understood that discourse affects action on the example of the discourse of multidivisional firms that were popularized at the time of Chandlers' book. Numerous texts related to e.g. the effectiveness of multidivisional firms caused managers to have thought about their companies in line with multidivisional forms' assumptions and next they (possibly also with regard to the threat of having legitimacy lost) introduced changes that were to have brought the multidivisional form into being (Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 639).
- ¹² Actually Lok and Willmott argue that by making theoretical claims as to how social reality is constituted by "discourse" or "institutional structure", approaches adopted by Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy or Meyer and Jepperson actually consider social reality as being "independent from their own constitutive discourse as social scientists" (Lok, Willmott, 2006 as cited in Lok, 2014, p. 340). For Phillips et al. it is justifiable to theorize in a traditional academic fashion (to the extent that they propose a set of propositions that they claim could form the basis for a set of testable hypotheses – Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 647) when applying social constructionist approach. Nevertheless, it is necessary for the concepts and relationships proposed to follow (or be consistent with) an understanding of reality as socially constructed (Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2006, p. 481).
- ¹³ Although this model is primarily focused on external communication, it may be noticed that similar processes like shaping employees' attitudes by organizational systems of control or possible impacting of employees on changes in the field level are to take place within organizational boundaries.
- ¹⁴ This is because in the model discussed by Bitektine and Haack (2015) organizational and field-level change is to be induced by individual-level cognitive judgments. In general, Abdelnour, Hasselbladh and Kallinikos (2017, p. 1783) emphasize the need to explicate the social mechanisms inherent in moving between levels each time when the analysts assume that agency is attributed to both individual and collective levels.
- ¹⁵ From this viewpoint it cannot be said that e.g. weather as a materially real entity can be said to be dependent on discursively shaped understandings. At the same time, this weather can be dependent on different people's actions. What is more, people's understandings of the weather similarly like e.g. organizations are here understood as social objects and as such are discourse dependent (Fleetwood, 2004, pp. 32-34).
- ¹⁶ When describing the way in which the actions of individual actors have an impact on the discursive realm, Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004, p. 640) use the verb "embed" in new or existing discourse to describe how texts with meaningful traces may socially constitute a discourse, enact institutions and shape the actors' actions. Here, the extent to which a given text is adopted and incorporated by other organizations (and at the same time becomes part of generalized meanings) refers to embeddedness (Phillips, Lawrence, Hardy, 2004, p. 643).

- ¹⁷ Spatial metaphor is defined following Boroditsky (2000) and Lakoff and Johnson (1980) as the one that "has space as its source domain ('within') and maps the structure of space onto an abstract target domain (the relationship between institutions and actors - emphasis added), thus encouraging scholars to consider the target domain in spatial terms (Boroditsky, 2000; Lakoff, Johnson, 1980 as cited in Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 886).
- ¹⁸ With the reference to the discussion included in the previous paragraph, here it may be added Harmon, Hack and Roulet (2019, p. 466) noticed that instead of focusing on problems related to macro meanings and micro behaviors, Cardinale (2018) actually "misunderstands the very essence of microfoundational research" (Harmon, Hack, Roulet, 2019, p. 466). However, they notice that by introducing the notions of "social positions and habitus" Cardinale interestingly refers the issue of meso level, however, he does not develop this issue any further (Harman, Haack, Roulet, 2019, p. 466).
- ¹⁹ What is more, it is even said that by focusing on the ways in which different systems of dominations can be reconfigured, the institutional logic perspective may be somewhat matched to emancipatory possibilities that are the object of interest of critical theory (Hirsch, Lounsbury, 2015, pp. 97-98).
- ²⁰ What can also be interesting, Bitektine et al. (2020) argue also that when online platform algorithms govern interactions between buyers and sellers (e.g. on eBay), then it can be said that both the emergence and transmission of institutions may not be reduced to discursive processes (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 889).
- ²¹ In this way the view presented by Bitektine et al. (2020) who claim that institutions inhabit actors (or generally vice versa) is challenged by Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 898). Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 899) comment that turning around the metaphor of „actors inhabiting institutions” make it possible for Bitektine to "elaborate on how institutions are manifested in actions" (Bitektine et al. 2020 as cited in Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 899). According to Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 899), however, in the approach adopted by Bitektine et al. (2020), the authors do not appear to explain what are the implications of their (strong) communicative view on actorhood and institutions. According to Bitektine et al. (2020) the remark related to unexploration of micro-level mechanisms refers also to the approach adopted by Meyer and Vaara (2020) in which actually institutions again are assumed to be absorbed "somehow...through education or socialization" (Bitektine et al., 2020, p. 886).
- ²² The problem of institutional logics can be analyzed also at multi-level way. From the point of view referring to macro-social level the researchers' interest in the topic can relate to e.g. the exploration of the competition between conflicting institutional logics at the organization and field levels (e.g. Lok, 2010 as cited in Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 4). From the point of view of the micro-social level, attention is paid to the that institutional logics should help actors „make sense of the organizations” (Kroezen, Heugens, 2019 as cited in Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 4).
- ²³ When considering symbolic elements of means of communication it can be noticed that by internalizing meaning generated by them people may attempt to meet expectations resulting from it. Those can next be institutionalized, so that become a part of a set of values, norms and beliefs to which individuals are to react. Then by shaping the rules of making use of those means, it may again be possible to influence the choice of ends and means, which is why the impact on the part of the structure is so important (Slavova, Karanasios, 2018).
- ²⁴ Weber and Glynn (2006) emphasize one of the features of sensemaking process according to which individuals are to make sense of their actions retrospectively, and in general, they look for information confirming their prior beliefs and worldviews so that it can be further assumed that their actions are not so rational as those engaged in them would like them to be (Mumby, Kuhn, 2019). The assumption is here that when there is not a clear way how to behave, those tendencies may be more visible. Delbridge and Edwards (2014) emphasize that when workers are to participate in different project arrangements (actor positions) and when being exposed to different institutional logics, workers are not to act in a complete complicit way with those logics but by being simply placed within a kind of specific relationships with each of the logics they can be informed about how they can respond or how they might act to change those contexts (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, p. 933). This remark is important from the point of actors' reflexivity which is emphasized by Delbridge and Edwards (2013). In the case of the strand of institutional theory related to institutional logics the assumption is that the plurality of accessible logics affords agents some degree of autonomy of action from structure - then for ordinary individuals or organizations, it is possible to act outside the confines of their immediate institutional environments (Thornton et al., 2012). Similarly, Xiu, Lu and Liang (2019, p. 108) conceptualize that when there are multiple, different types of institutions shaping how the organizational field develops, then the pressure for legitimacy is low. Also, Seo and Creed (2002) based on the dialectical understanding of frames and logics, claimed that there is a positive link between institutional heterogeneity (or interinstitutional contradictions) and the likelihood of praxis (mechanism of human agency that is a "collective human action situated in a given sociohistorical context but driven by the inevitable by-products of that context - social contradictions – Seo, Creed, 2002, p. 230).
- ²⁵ Here it needs to be explained that this channel may be technological as well as non-technological. It means that among interaction modalities, there may be discussed those based on ICT (that are offered by mobile phones or the Internet) and those offered by old technologies like printing. In addition to this other kinds of modalities may be offered as well by either organized interactions led by local authorities or informal interactions with friends (Slavova, Karanasios, 2018, p. 775). See footnote no. 32 for the explanation of similar concepts (affordances).

- ²⁶ See also Janiszewski (2018) for the more broad discussion of activity theory.
- ²⁷ Orlikowski and Scott draw on Barad's work on agential realism, which assumes the importance of the notion of material-discursive that emphasizes that discourse and materiality are inseparably entangled and materiality does not 'bring' anything to discourse (or vice versa) (Barad, 2003, p. 822 as cited in Orlikowski, Scott, 2015, p. 699).
- ²⁸ To maintain this highly abstract style of reasoning it appears that when being back to the problem of structure and agency, those notions may cause researchers to think about structure and agency problem in line with actor-network theory, as Latour has claimed that it is possible to assume that social processes are not being made of agency and structure at all, they have the property of being a circulating entity. ANT is a theory that did not aim at occupying a position in the agency/structure debate because the debate is assumed to lead to dissatisfaction related to changing the perspective from micro to macro and vice-versa (Latour, 1999, pp. 16-17). Nevertheless, this flat ontology is criticized by critical realists (Fleetwood 2004), since in line with critical realist ontology, agency and structure are treated as analytically distinct phenomena and the danger of conflating action and structure is exposed (Delbridge, Edwards, 2013, see also Janiszewski, 2018).
- ²⁹ What is important here, is to know that according to Meyer and Vaara (2020, p. 902) understanding institutions as multimodal accomplishments (e.g. Höllerer et al., 2018 as cited in Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 902) causes that people are perceived as being co-constructed as social actors in equally multimodal ways (by a particular placement in physical space, visual appearances or verbally by the use of different categories which denote activities (like e.g. lecture), label them as particular type (like e.g. teacher) or typify their relationships to other social actors (like e.g. students). To understand the idea of typifications it may be referred to the situation when e.g. during voting people assume different typified actor roles such as candidates, voters, observers and pollsters – Meyer, Vaara, 2020, p. 901.
- ³⁰ The term hegemony within the field of critical tradition is often (and Lok, and Willmott refer to this definition as well, however, admitting that Gramsci did not patent the meaning of hegemony – Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 222) defined following Gramsci as to „characterize the process by which a group transcends its particular <economic corporatist> interest to provide <intellectual and moral leadership> to diverse groups within society (Gramsci, 1971 as cited in Klimecki, Willmott, 2011, p. 130). One of the features of STH as a critically oriented theory is that it shows how by resisting the unwanted orientation of organizations, at the same time, employees produce consent for this orientation to be possible (Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 222).
- ³¹ Here the phenomenon, described by the Lacanian term "jouissance", which is derived from forms of e.g. scapegoating, was said to cement false identifications and disidentifications limiting the possibilities to explore areas of common cause in case of organizational impasse (Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 216). The jouissance can be interpreted as the paradoxical satisfaction in dissatisfaction that results from the repeated failure to obtain the full enjoyment that subjects are promised in hegemonic discourses (Müller, 2013 as cited in Lok, Willmott, 2014, p. 216). Referring to negative ontology it is possible to see that in addition to having subject position within the structure (like "teacher", "manager") actors also have the subjects as an attempt to (ful)fill lacks. The task for actors is to lose impasses in organizations by accomplishing of traversal of fantasies (related to that there is something, like getting rid of a scapegoat, which can yield an absent sense of fullness) as well as by paying the attention to equivalences that are based on similar viewpoints, goals, and mutual respect for each other as human beings (Lok, Willmott, 2014).
- ³² The concept of affordances is said to be borrowed from Gibson and refers to a given mode's potential in representation and communication. Affordances are said to be relational, which means that their effect depends on relations among text producers, audiences, texts, and contexts. With regard to their potential for meaning-making affordances are said to be both enabling and constraining, so that when being realized they suggest (however not determine) particular processes of interpretation and possibly action (Meyer et al., 2018, pp. 396-397). The previously discussed concept of interaction modalities is said to be similar to ideas of affordances, however, by emphasizing the subjective element in the use of information artifacts as well as the process of reflective mediation is said to differ from affordances (Slavova, Karanasios, 2018, p. 780).
- ³³ Hahn et al. (2015) analyze the phenomenon of sensemaking on the example of managers facing ambiguous issues (related actually to sustainability). In line with their description during the three stages of the sensemaking process different issues are being considered. These stages include managerial scanning (here the issues of depth and breadth of scanning are considered), next interpreting (here the issues of sense of control and issue valence are considered), and next responding. From the point of view of undertaken action during the last stage, the importance of stance is emphasized. Hahn et al. (2015) admit that organizational responses (especially to sustainability issues in the case of Hahn et al. paper) cannot be determined by individual decision-makers alone, however, the predisposition of an individual to act in certain ways that result from the mental attitude toward the issue (stance), should be taken into account, e.g. while approaching the difficult issue like sustainability pragmatically, managers are to be focused on selected aspects for which they are to look for solutions of limited scope that can be introduced swiftly, and do not require that new skills should be useful (Hahn et al., 2015, p. 31, see also Janiszewski, 2021).

- ³⁴ Cues are extracted by perceptual filters and the next identities, frames and role expectations for particular situations are activated by these cues (Weick, 1995 as cited in Weber, Glynn, 2009, p. 1648). The propensity to act in particular ways as well as to subjectively experience a situation in a specific way is an output of this process (Weber, Glynn 2009, p. 1650).
- ³⁵ When discussing emerging institutions and transformation mechanisms, Weber and Glynn (2006, p. 1642) emphasize that this line of thought has been elaborated by Crossan et al. (1999) from a learning perspective (4I organizational learning framework, in which institutionalization (again) is explained as a process when "prior learning becomes embedded in the organization and begins to guide the actions and learning of organizational members" (Crossan, Lane, White 1999, p. 529). When discussing institutions as the substance for sensemaking, Weber and Glynn (2006) pay attention to the fact that the "institutional constellation of identities, frames and expectations" can have variations introduced as a result of a recombination of the institutional elements themselves - those are expected to lead to surprise as well as to sensemaking (Weber, Glynn, 2006, p. 1645).
- ³⁶ Currently, experimental ways of conducting research are considered a way to identify elements of a given logic. Here the individuals who have been primed with different institutional logics are observed when reacting to stimuli that fit (or not) with particular cognitive schemas. Based on theoretical developments those schemas are thought to be included in a given institutional logic. As a consequence, signals that address cognitive schemas absent in a given institutional logics are believed to be ignored when at the same time those signals that address schemas forming part of the activated logic are believed to affect the judgments and behavior of individuals who have been primed with it (Bitektine, Song, 2021, p. 5). That is why the combination of this approach with the one focused on individuals' propensity shaped by experiences and psychological factors to react to some kind of stimuli appears to have the potential to more fully explain why in given institutional contexts decisions are made.