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Stakeholder Dialogue and Regional Engagement in the Context of Higher Education

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

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Cover picture by Petri Hynynen,
University of Kuopio

ABSTRACT

The focus of this research is on the regional stakeholder relationships of Finnish universities. The study explores, firstly, the themes and contexts that determine these relationships. Secondly, it studies the dimensions of responsible academic work in the respective region and, thirdly, why, where and how university-stakeholder dialogues take place and how they succeed. It approaches the phenomenon through three theoretical layers; the regional impact of higher education, corporate social responsibility, and relational dialectics, to gain a holistic view on stakeholder relations and regional engagement. The main thread running through the study is stakeholder thinking, and regional engagement is evaluated through the involvement of stakeholders in the life of the academy.

The main data consist of documentary material and of 23 semi-structured interviews conducted with university and stakeholder representatives in Kuopio, Rovaniemi and Turku in 2006. The approach is qualitative, the method chosen is ethnographic content analysis, and ATLAS.ti software is utilised as a tool for reducing, condensing and displaying data.

The study identified the following themes and contexts that determine university-stakeholder relationships: the national higher education policy, re-evaluation of the responsibilities of higher education, the "third task" of universities, and globalisation. The university- and region-specific determinants of university-stakeholder dialogues were seen to be the identity, profile, and preconditions of the universities and their respective regions.

Responsible academic work from the point of view of the region was seen to mean that the university fulfils its responsibilities towards the state, the students, and the region. Universities must fulfil the contracts negotiated with the Ministry of Education, and provide teaching of high quality. The universities' responsibilities towards the region were two-fold: to respond to concrete needs, and to take a visionary role. In the stakeholder dialogues the main elements of success were trust, commitment, and personal relationships. Deficits were identified particularly in listening, two-way interaction, mutual understanding, structures, equality, and time management. In general, stakeholder interactions take place in traditional settings and emergent, creative dialogues are rare.

Keywords: higher education, university, stakeholders, dialogue, corporate responsibility, regional impact, relationship management, public relations

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PREFACE

I grew up in a family of university lecturers and the academy has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. When as a young family we moved from Helsinki to Jyväskylä in 1967, some of our relatives considered the University of Jyväskylä too radical and peripheral. I started primary school on the university campus and walked to the upper grades through it. Postgraduate studies brought me back to Jyväskylä, so with this thesis the circle is closed.

The red brick scenery and beautiful campus have followed me through the years of study, and along my career as public relations professional, first at the University of Vaasa and then at the University of Kuopio. And, of course, not just campuses and the visual setting, but the inspiring mixture of academic traditions and entrepreneurial spirit that is characteristic of the younger members of the Finnish academy.

I think with deep gratitude, particularly of the influential, encouraging and brilliant professors I have had a privilege to study or work with: professors Christer Laurén and Ilkka Virtanen from the University of Vaasa; professors Matti Uusitupa and Ossi V. Lindqvist from the University of Kuopio; and professors Elisa Juholin and Jaakko Lehtonen from the University of Jyväskylä. They have contributed to this study more than they can imagine with their belief in my professional and academic skills. As my supervisors professors Elisa Juholin and Jaakko Lehtonen have always given me exactly what I have needed, whether profound scholarly thoughts, wild visions, help with a methodological approach, encouragement, or deadlines. Moreover, I thank Professor Elisa Juholin for the pragmatic orientation that arises from her outstanding career among the top communication educators and authors in Finland. I owe her my deepest gratitude for her gentle but resolute guidance towards this doctorate. I thank Professor Emeritus Jaakko Lehtonen particularly for the depth he has given to my work on the basis of his great academic career and international network.

I cordially thank my 23 inspiring informants with whom I had a chance to talk during the spring of 2006 in Kuopio, Rovaniemi and Turku. They included me in their hectic schedules, served coffee and Japanese tea, expressed steadfast devotion to their region and to their university, and delivered such a flood of exciting ideas that only some of these paths could be followed in one thesis.

My study has benefited greatly from the critical but constructive comments of my profound reviewers, Senior Researcher Helena Aittola from the University of Jyväskylä, and Professor Betteke van Ruler from the University of Amsterdam. Dr. Kaarina Mönkkönen and Professor Jari Vuori from Kuopio contributed fundamentally to this study through their ideas on dialogue. Researcher Kari Kuoppala from the University of Tampere/Seinäjoki provided many fruitful references in the field of higher education studies. I thank Professor Michael Shattock from the University of London and Dr. Bjørn Stensaker from NIFU STEP, Oslo, for their positive feedback on my conference presentations and article manuscripts. The father of stakeholder thinking, Professor R. Edward Freeman from the University of Virginia kindly let me use the manuscript of his

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil,
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 23:4

Kuopio, October 2007

Helena Kantanen

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1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the broad rationale for the research topic. It explains the objectives of the study and links it to the current questions being asked about higher education in Finland and across the world. The chapter indicates the research approach and outlines the remainder of the study.

1.1   Background and context of the study

The motivation of the present study arises from increasing demands to include regional stakeholders in the decision-making of institutions of higher education (Goddard 2004). The study focuses on the stakeholder dialogue and regional engagement of Finnish universities. The aim is to gain information and understanding about why, where and how Finnish universities create, maintain and enhance relationships with their regional stakeholders, and about the role of organisational communication in these processes. The study is in line with the current interest of public relations research in understanding the viewpoints of key stakeholders as a basis for the development of effective, collaborative dialogue (Daymon 2002).

All organisations are dependent on their environments. However, little research has been attempted either on social responsibility in the context of public organisations or on universities and their stakeholders. Phillips, Freeman and Wicks (2003, 495) note that little attention has been paid to stakeholder theory outside the contexts of multinational corporations and recommend that the theory be applied, for example, to governmental organisations.

Professor John Goddard (2004) at the University of Newcastle, UK, has been involved in several Finnish university evaluations (Dahllöf, Goddard, Huttunen, O'Brien, Román & Virtanen 1998; Goddard, Asheim, Cronberg & Virtanen 2003; Goddard, Moses, Teicher, Virtanen & West 2000) and considers

regional involvement a key element in the success of an academic institution. He also participated in an international project within the higher education management programme of the OECD that aimed to support the contribution of higher education institutions to regional economic, social and cultural development (OECD 2007). Moreover, the project was designed to "assist with capacity building in each country/region through providing a structured opportunity for dialogue between higher education institutions and regional stakeholders; and clarifying roles and responsibilities" (OECD 2007, 23). Moreover, Lemola (2004, 117) states that when the universities' third task is attached to the development of innovative regions, cooperative networks and their communication become key success factors. The present study is thus closely connected to national and international efforts to bridge boundaries between universities and their regions.

Moreover, some changes or reforms in the national educational policy have forced Finnish universities to focus on their region in a new way. In 2002 the Ministry of Education obliged universities and polytechnics to produce their first shared regional development strategy for 2003-2006. These strategies have now been updated for 2007-2010. In 2004 the Finnish Universities Act was amended to include a third task, service, as an essential part of research and teaching. By this third task is meant that knowledge produced in and by the international scientific community is transmitted and applied to social and regional needs (Virtanen 2002, 76).[1] Moreover, the Productivity Plan of the Ministry of Education for 2005-2009 has forced universities to seek new forms of cooperation with their neighbouring institutions of higher education either in the city where they are located, or even on a wider regional basis. In the public discussion preceding the parliamentary election of March 2007, the theme of the reform of Finnish higher education was one of the most pressing topics and the first steps to thin out the network of universities were taken. Therefore, the present study can be linked to this new phase and the new challenges the universities face both with their regional stakeholders and, in particular, with local institutions of higher education.

The study analyses the situation in Finnish universities, focusing on identity and image (Albert & Whetten 1985, Balmer & Wilson 1998, Gioia, Shultz & Corley 2000), corporate social responsibility (Carroll 1989/1993, Garriga & Melé 2004, Waddock 2004) and dialogue (Hammond, Anderson, & Cissna 2003, Baxter & Montgomery 1996, Grunig & Huang 2000, Mönkkönen 2002, van Ruler 2004). It uses stakeholder thinking (Freeman & Velamuri 2006, Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997) and relational approach (Ledingham & Bruning 2000) as a framework to model universities' regional engagement.[2]

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[1]   The OECD report identifies the following dimensions of regional engagement of HE: knowledge creation, knowledge transfer and cultural and community development (OECD 2007, 11, 22).

[2]   The key concepts of the study and their use are explained in the Glossary.

Identity and image were considered important in this study because of their impact on relationship building and interaction. Strong identities contribute to clear profiles and make interaction easier. Corporate social responsibility was chosen because of the new demands presented to the universities concerning their regional engagement, and because the discussion on CSR, which is particularly lively in the private sector, is being extended to the public sector as well. Dialogue is considered a key tool in regional engagement. In this study, universities are seen to fulfil their social obligations and responsibilities towards the region through their responsiveness to their stakeholders' needs.

The main data of the study consist of written documents concerning regional engagement, and of semistructured interviews conducted with university and regional leaders in Kuopio, Rovaniemi and Turku in March-May 2006, and analysed with the help of ATLAS.ti software.

The author worked as a public relations professional in two regional Finnish universities during 1986-2005. Consequently, the author had a solid foundation, in terms both of knowledge and experience of the academy, on which to conduct this study. However, although the author worked at the University of Kuopio 2003-2005, during the final two years of this research and at the time when the interviews were made, she was not employed by any of the universities included in the study. It is hoped that the study is a dialogue between theories and empirical work, between different views on social interaction, and between professional and scholarly perspectives.

1.2 Philosophical underpinnings and methodological choices

The philosophy behind the present study can be traced to phenomenological hermeneutics, which emphasises the importance of meanings, human experiences, context and community connectedness, communication, understanding and interpretation (Laine 2001, Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004, 34). Consequently, the study is based on a qualitative approach which is connected to the interpretation and understanding of the meanings which people attach to actions, values or other phenomena of the social world. The choice was natural for a researcher of organisational communication because the exchange and interpretation of meanings form the core of communication (Åberg 2000, 54).

The research process advances as an alternating movement between literature, theory and data, and, as presented in the hermeneutic circle, from pre-understanding of a phenomenon towards understanding. Thus the analysis is not the last phase; instead the process is cyclic (Tesch 1990, 95), as described in Figure 1.
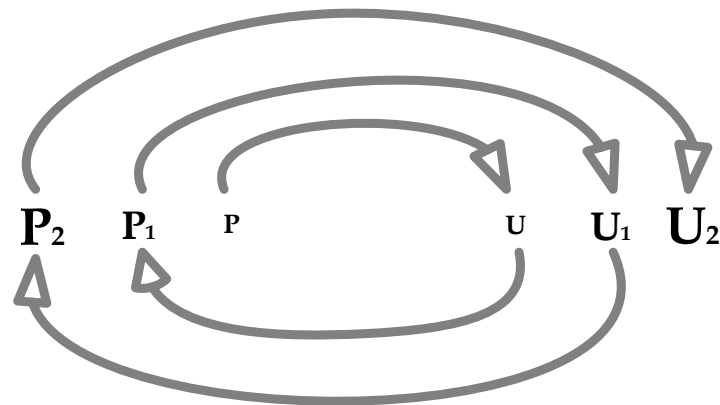
FIGURE 1   Hermeneutic circle. P stands for pre-understanding, U for understanding, P1 for advanced pre-understanding, U1 for advanced understanding, and so on.

Frankel and Devers (2000b, 251) identify the following main differences between qualitative and quantitative study designs: 1) the logic of qualitative approaches is often inductive, not deductive, and consists of describing people's and groups' particular situations, meanings and experiences; 2) qualitative study designs are often emergent and flexible, and the research process is dynamic; and 3) the qualitative research process is non-linear and non-sequential. In this study, the reasoning is neither inductive nor deductive but abductive, which refers to the provisional adoption of hypotheses. In the tradition of phenomenological hermeneutics, theoretical frameworks are not often used because they are seen to restrict the understanding of original experiences of the other (Laine 2001, 33). However, in this study theoretical considerations derived from the literature review guide data collection and analysis but categories and themes that come from the data as the process proceeds are not excluded either. This view also emphasises the interdependence of theory and data. The hermeneutic circle can be considered as interaction between the researcher and the data. Thus the researcher, her experience, personality and contribution interact in a triangular relationship with the theory and data. Moreover, the philosophy behind the method chosen, qualitative ethnographic content analysis, emphasises reflexivity and interaction between the researcher, concepts, data collection and analysis (Altheide 1987, 68).

The two alternative analytical views presented by Alasuutari (1999, 80-86) are the facts-based approach and the sample-based approach[3]. The facts-based approach ponders whether the information gathered reflects the truth, and thus the aim is to capture the reality behind informants' expressions. Different typologies are often constructed on the basis of the data. The sample-based approach, on the contrary, is based on the constructionist view where language is a part of reality as well as a means of describing and constructing it. Thus

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[3]   In Finnish: *faktanäkökulma*, *näytenäkökulma*.

there is no objective reality behind language, either. In this case the research concentrates on the meanings given to phenomena, and to the narratives told.

Alasuutari (1999, 85-86) equates the facts-based approach with two ways of evaluating the truthfulness of information gathered. The data can be evaluated mechanistically, meaning that the investigator is as neutral as possible, avoids reactivity, and does not give any hints about, for example, what other interviewees have said, to the informants. An opposite perspective is the humanistic view where trust between the investigator and the informant is a prerequisite of a successful interview. This study reflects rather the humanistic approach where meanings are constructed in interaction and the interviewer is not an objective observant but an active participant and contributes to the creation of a positive interview atmosphere.

The qualitative approach does not necessarily lead to qualitative data collection only, but quantitative and qualitative data are often combined. However, in the light of the research questions it was assumed that qualitative information would be sufficient.

1.3 Purposes and research questions

Qualitative research designs do not usually commence with hypotheses but rather with relatively wide research questions, or a research task. The research task of this design is to study how Finnish universities fulfil their third task and responsibility towards their region through stakeholder interaction.

The subquestions of the study are:
1. What are the themes and contexts that determine university-stakeholder relationships?
2. What does responsible academic work mean in the region where the university is located?
3. Why, where and how do stakeholder-university dialogues take place and how do the different parties evaluate their success? What is the role of public relations professionals with regard to these dialogues?

First, the wider context where the third task is generated will be studied, including a consideration of what forces are pushing universities towards more intensive regional dialogues. Second, the question whether the concept of corporate responsibility could provide a relevant framework for regional engagement and local stakeholder dialogues will be explored. Third, the processes and success of stakeholder dialogues will be investigated. Finally, the role of public relations professionals in these processes will be studied.

The study also has practical purposes. It is hoped that the results will prove helpful for universities as they work towards more intensive interaction with their regional stakeholders to fulfil their responsibilities towards their

region. The study aims also to produce useful information for the development of university public relations, both from the perspective of public relations as a phenomenon that runs through the whole organisation, and from the perspective of organised public relations, namely public relations offices.

1.4 Theoretical framework of the study

In this study regional engagement is approached from the point of view of interaction between the university and its region. In this view stakeholder identification, as well as the profile of the university, are relevant. Further, universities and their stakeholders are seen as part of a wider network of relationships, as described in Figure 2. These could also be called value-based networks, according to Wheeler, Colbert and Freeman (2003, 14) who state that stakeholders can be grouped into key networks with a common understanding of what is valuable.
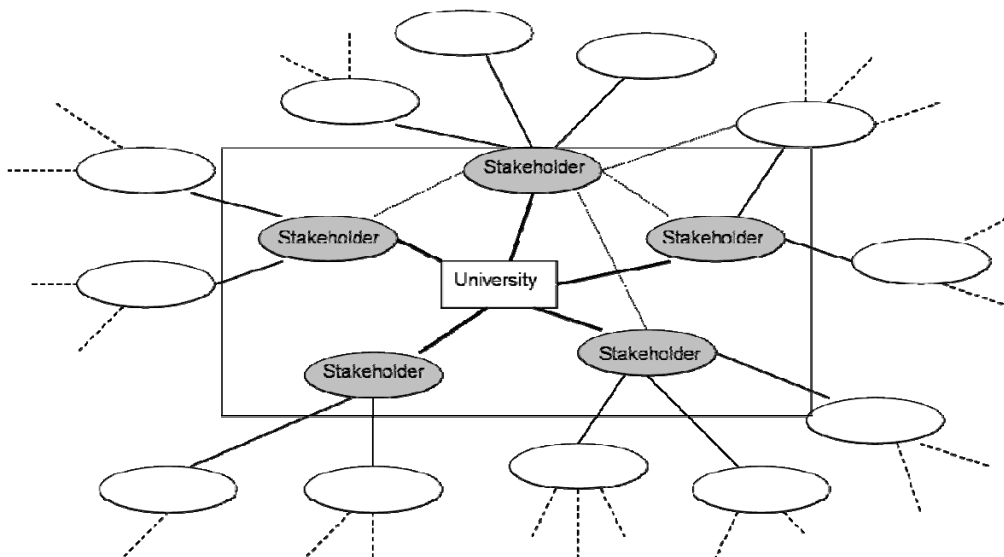
FIGURE 2   The focus of the present study.

In addition to these networks, the university-region relationship is determined by the national (or, increasingly, European) higher education policy, the profile of the university and its relevance to the region, and regional characteristics and preconditions. The motivation for the creation, maintenance and enhancement of relationships between universities and their stakeholders arises from the evolution of the third task of universities and from the re-evaluation of the responsibilities of higher education. In Chapter 5 the elements of the dialogue itself are opened up and the factors contributing to successful regional engagement and stakeholder dialogue revealed.

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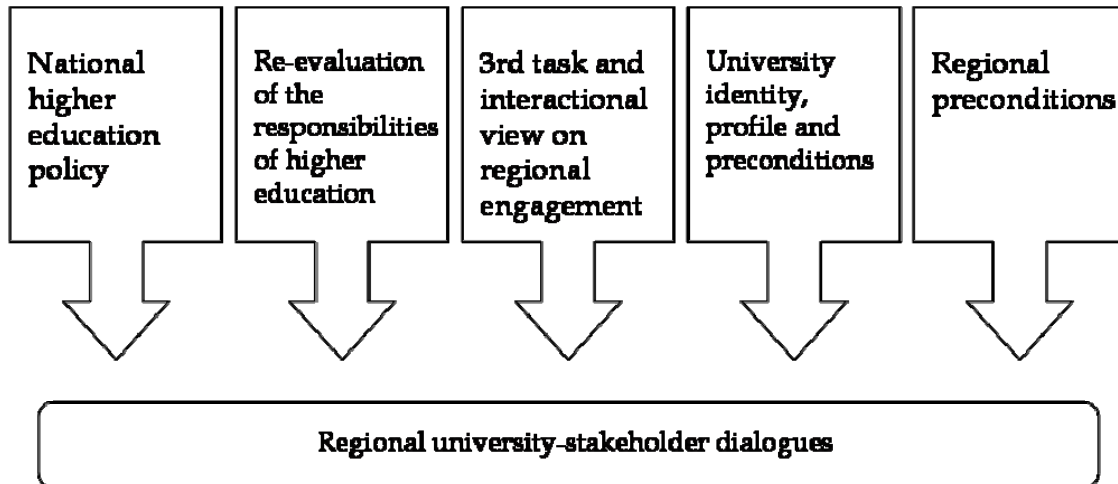
FIGURE 3   Determinants of regional university-stakeholder dialogue in the present study.

1.5 Structure of the study

The study comprises six main chapters. After the introduction (1) and description of the research setting (2) each research question is discussed in a separate chapter (3-5). These three chapters aim to combine both the previous research and the theoretical frame connected to the specific research question, and the results of the analysis. Finally, a model is constructed and the study is discussed, evaluated and concluded (6). The author is well aware of that the design does not follow the traditional conventions of a research report, which usually proceeds from a review of the literature to the empirical study and finally to results and conclusions. However, the present design has been recommended for studies where no grand theory is used but rather a number of separate minor theories. In this way it is possible to avoid the often obvious gap between theoretical ponderings and empirical analysis. (Eskola 2001, 138-140, Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 241-242.)

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TABLE 1   The structure of the present study with research questions, aims, disciplines and key references attached to each main chapter.

1 Introduction			
2 Research setting			
Research questions	**Aims**	**Discipline/perspective**	**Key references**
Chapter 3			
Themes and contexts that determine university-stakeholder relationships? (research question 1)	to map the context of regional engagement and stakeholder dialogue	communication and higher education research with special focus on regional impact and stakeholder theory	Albert & Whetten 1985, Balmer & Wilson 1998, Gioia, Schultz & Corley 2000, Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997
Chapter 4			
What does responsible academic work mean in this region? (research question 2)	to map the contents of CR and its relevance for the academy	communication and management research with special focus on corporate responsibility and stakeholder theory	Carroll 1989/1993, Freeman & Velamuri 2006, Garriga & Melé 2004, Waddock 2004
Chapter 5			
Why, how and where do dialogues take place and how do they succeed? What is the role of public relations professionals? (research question 3)	to map the characteristics of stakeholder relationships and experiences of dialogues	communication research with special focus on relationships and dialogue	Baxter & Montgomery 1996, Grunig & Huang 2000, Hammond, Anderson & Cissna 2003, Ledingham & Bruning 2000, Mönkkönen 2002, van Ruler 2004
6 Discussion and evaluation			

2 RESEARCH SETTING

The chapter introduces the methodological choices and methods of data collection of the study. It presents the choice of research objects and respondents and the procedures of data collection and analysis. Finally, it discusses the criteria for assessing the soundness of the study and research ethics.

2.1 The semistructured interviewing strategy as a method of data collection

From the methodological point of view there are several advantages to be gained from using qualitative data. Collected at a specific situation such data provide, for example, local groundedness, richness and holism, and allows the meanings people give to events and processes to be studied in the context of their social world (Miles & Huberman 1994, 10).

The semistructured interview, also known as the semi-formal, or focused interview, is a flexible interviewing format which lies between the structured survey interview and the unstructured interview in which the conversation flows freely. Interview themes are chosen and they can be given to the interviewees beforehand but their order may vary and other interesting themes can also be discussed. The method emphasises personal interaction between the researcher and the informant, and it is thus recommended that the interviews are conducted face-to-face. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2004, Holstein & Gubrium 1997.)

The semistructured interviewing strategy was chosen because the aim was to investigate university-region interaction as experienced by university and stakeholder representatives. Thus it was considered important to give a voice to the various parties involved and to listen to the meanings they ascribe to this interaction. It was assumed that the qualitative approach would produce richer material and it was also assumed that alternatives such as Internet-form

questionnaires would have been rejected by the target group which consists mainly of executive level managers.

Quantitatively-oriented approaches to interviewing have emphasised the importance of properly asked questions to gain desired, reliable information. However, the social constructionist approach has inspired more recent claims that meaning is socially constituted and thus "the interview is not merely a neutral conduit or source of distortion, but instead a site of, and occasion for, producing reportable knowledge itself" (Holstein & Gubrium 1997, 114). Thus it not just the questions and answers that are important but also the meaning-making process of interviewing.

2.2 Qualitative content analysis as a methodological choice

There are numerous research methods suitable for analysing text data. The focus of qualitative content analysis is on the characteristics of language as communication, and on the content or contextual meaning of the text (Hsieh & Shannon 2005, 1278, Tesch 1990).

Traditionally, content analysis has been the method attached to quantitative approaches, and as a numerical method it cannot be considered a qualitative methodology (Tesch 1990, 25). Early definitions of content analysis show a strong quantitative emphasis; for example, Berelson (1952, 18) defines it as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" and Krippendorf (1986, 21) as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context." Quantitative content analysis is still used to confirm hypotheses about relationships, and research designs proceed serially from category construction to data collection, analysis and interpretation (Altheide 1987, 68). However, as qualitative methods have gained ground, there has also been an expansion in the concept of content analysis. Today it can be considered not only as a single research method but also as a relatively wide theoretical framework for different analyses of written, audio or visual material (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004, 93).

The form of content analysis used in this study is close to what is called ethnographic content analysis, ECA (Altheide 1987, Tesch 1990, 26). Ethnography often refers to intensive field work among the people studied, but it can also be considered as a research style where the focus is on the context studied and interaction between the researcher and research object (Metsämuuronen 2006, 219, 228).

> ECA consists of reflexive movement between concept development, data collection, data coding, data analysis, and interpretation. The aim is to be systematic and analytic, but not rigid. Although categories and "variables" initially guide the study, others are allowed and expected to emerge throughout the study. (Altheide 1987, 68.)

Content analysis has been criticised because of its inability to capture the context of a written text, or the impact of personal or group experiences (Manning & Cullum-Swan 1994, 474). However, Altheide and Johnson (1994, 491) list the following topics that an ethnographic report should include: the contexts (history, physical setting, and environment), number of participants and key individuals, activities, schedules and temporal order, division of labour and hierarchies, routines and variations, significant events and their origins and consequences, members' perspectives and meanings, and social rules and basic patterns of order. The idea is to provide a definition and description of the situation. These dimensions have been kept in mind in this study, too, when they have been applicable. Above all, attention has been paid to context, for example, the regional and political settings of the study.

Mayring (2000, 27) suggests that qualitative content analysis may not be suitable for study designs where the research question is open-ended, explorative and variable, where working with categories would be a restriction, and where a more holistic analysis is planned instead of advancing step-by-step. In the present study the research process is considered abductive and thus, even though the research questions are explorative in nature, the theory is seen to conduct the process. Categories are not considered as a restriction but as a way to generate new understanding and theorisation. The aim is to capture a holistic picture of the phenomenon, and the study design emphasises the interaction between different stages of research. However, even within this frame some straight forward phases were included, for example, the research interviews were conducted step-by-step according to a previously planned schedule.

The narrative approach could have been considered as an alternative for analysis, as the interview data display several narrative features. Unfortunately, the researcher became acquainted with narrative analysis too late to have benefited from a less structured interviewing strategy and working towards narrative forms during the interviews (Holstein & Gubrium 1997, 123). In narrative analysis informants' stories and their personal experiences are respected and the data cannot be divided into fragments as in this study (Riessman 1993). Moreover, given that the interviews are in Finnish and the language of reporting is English, important nuances and even meanings could have disappeared in the process of translation.

2.3 Research objects and respondents

2.3.1 Choice and description of target universities

As the research was to focus on the regional relationships of universities it was natural to study institutions of higher education that have had a strong regional role since their foundation. The aim was to choose universities outside the

Helsinki Metropolitan Area that would have different profiles and different environments. Hence the universities of Lapland and Kuopio were chosen. Moreover, it was considered important to include a traditional, multi-faculty university in southern Finland in the material to study whether, in such a setting, the regional role involves different forms and meanings. For this reason the University of Turku was chosen. The evaluations of the external engagement of universities conducted by the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council FINHEEC, which focused on the universities of Eastern Finland (Dahllöf et al. 1998, Goddard et al. 2003) and on the University of Turku (Goddard et al. 2000), provided valuable background information for this study.

The research objects of this study are thus the universities of Kuopio, Lapland, and Turku and their stakeholders. Next the universities are briefly described in the light of their main strategies.

The quantitative indicators of these three universities are presented in annual reports as follows. Together, they represent about 15 % of Finnish universities in terms of students, Master's degrees, personnel and budget. The percentage of doctoral degrees awarded is 17 % of the Finnish total, probably because of the emphasis on research at the universities of Kuopio and Turku.

TABLE 2   Universities of Kuopio, Lapland and Turku in 2005 (Universities 2005. Annual Report. Ministry of Education publications 2006, 31).

University	Founded	Graduate students	Postgraduate students	Master's degrees	Doctoral degrees	Personnel	State funding MEUR	External funding MEUR
Kuopio	1966	4826	731	473	89	1442	51,3	47,5
Lapland	1979	3925	347	381	18	615	30,9	10,6
Turku	1920	12346	1985	1085	137	2540	107,1	51,2

University of Kuopio

The mission statement of the University of Kuopio is *Health, Environment, Well-being*. The five faculties are Business and Information Technology, Medicine, Natural and Environmental Sciences, Pharmacy, and Social Sciences. The strategy of the university defines the university as

> an internationally respected research-intensive university which offers an innovative learning environment and active development of applications of the newest technologies. The University's profile reflects its focus on health and environmental sciences and professional welfare expertise.

In the re-evaluation report on the third task of the universities in Eastern Finland, the University of Kuopio was said to have "perhaps the most clear-cut profile of the Finnish multi-faculty universities" (Goddard et al. 2003, 44). The University of Kuopio could be characterised as "a science university with an emphasis on an objective and autonomous research community" with some

recent features of "managerialistic and self-supportive entrepreneurial university" (Pirttilä 2005, 192).

University of Lapland

The mission statement of the University of Lapland is *For the North – by the North*. The university is, so far, the only multi-disciplinary university in Finland that is not named according to the city where it is located but according to a larger region. The five faculties are Art and Design, Business and Tourism, Education, Law, and Social Sciences. The strategy of the university expresses the strengths of the university as follows:

> reflection in all its activities, knowledge of Northern society, know-how in providing services and experiences, media and design as part of the science university as well as extensive adult education.

In its vision the university "will be the leading centre of expertise in Europe with regard to the people and society of the North". The University of Lapland would be, or at least it was at the time of its foundation, "a state university that educates public administration professionals and implements political programmes" (Pirttilä 2005, 192).

University of Turku

The mission statement of the University of Turku is *From a Free People to Free Science and Learning*. The six faculties are Education, Humanities, Law, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Medicine, and Social Sciences. The strategy of the university defines the areas of strength as follows:

> The widest area of strength with the most numerous disciplines is the biosciences. Other recognised areas of strength are the research of processes related to interaction of culture and society, mathematical research, research of learning and education, and astronomy and space research.

In the evaluation report of the external engagement of the University of Turku the university was said to "fall squarely in the significant group of European universities modelled on the Humboldtian tradition" (Goddard et al. 2000, 13). According to Pirttilä's (2005) classification the University of Turku would be a combination of "the critical and involved, Humboldtian university" and "a science university with an emphasis on an objective and autonomous research community".

2.3.2 Selection of respondents

A purposive data collection strategy was applied in this study to gain rich information. Miles and Huberman (1994, 34) mention three types of sampling objects with great payoff: typical or representative instances, negative or disconfirming instances, and exceptional or discrepant instances. In this study

the most conventional of these types was used, as the aim was to identify typical stakeholder representatives who have knowledge of the topic.

The respondents for this study were chosen from among two main categories: university administrators in charge of regional relations, and university stakeholders. The division of responsibilities varies from university to university and thus the positions that these people hold also vary. However, at each university, in addition to the rector, one or two administrators who are also responsible for regional engagement were identified.

The stakeholder representatives were chosen from among the universities' definitive, dominant and dependent groups of stakeholders with constant or frequent contacts with the university (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997, 874, Luoma-aho 2005, 106). The categories selected were: students, advisory boards, external members of the university board (at Kuopio and Lapland, Turku did not have any at that time), business, media, and polytechnics. As will be explained later, the plan was also to include representatives of the university cities, but this did not prove possible. However, the data include several representatives of the public sector who, for example, chair the advisory board, or serve as external board members.

The guiding aim was to find informants with experience and insight concerning university-region interaction. If the names were not found otherwise, the public relations professionals of the university were asked for help. This was particularly important with Lapland and Turku, as these regions were not familiar to the author.

It was realised already at the planning stage that the interviews would be conducted mainly with people referred to by the methodological literature as the "elite". The elite consist of decision makers in prestigious positions with high status, knowledge, expressive ability and low accessibility. The elite present a challenge with respect to both the interview requests, preparations for the interview, the interview situation, and post-interview behaviour. At the request stage it may be difficult to bypass various organisational structures and gatekeepers, such as secretaries, and it requires skill and maturity to formulate the request so that the interview is considered worth an hour taken from a busy schedule. It is advisable to gather information about the interviewee and his/her organisation before the interview to be able to avoid irrelevant questions. In the interview situation elite representatives are rewarding because they have good social skills and can express themselves clearly and fluently. On the other hand, they tend to remain at a too general a level and uphold the official policy of the organisation. After the interview the researcher should thank the informants politely, at least with a summary of the results when the research is completed. (Koskinen, Alasuutari & Peltonen 2005, 112-123.) The last stage should, of course, concern all informants.

2.4 The data of the study

The main data of the study consist of strategic documents and interviews as presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3   The data of the present study.

Data	Contents	Purpose	Method and time of collection	Method of analysis
Documentary data	1) Main strategies of the universities of Kuopio, Lapland and Turku; 2) Common regional strategies of the target universities and their local partner institutions of HE; 3) Regional programmes of the regional councils of Northern Savo, Lapland, and Southwest Finland	To gain pre-understanding of the phenomenon; To gather the official views on the universities' profile, third task and stakeholder relationships	Document collection 2005	Ethnographic content analysis with the help of ATLAS.ti program (primary documents P24-P32)
Interview data	23 focused interviews with the target universities and their key stakeholders (Appendix 1)	To give a voice to university and stakeholder representatives in questions of the universities' third task and stakeholder relationships	Research interviews 2006	Ethnographic content analysis with the help of ATLAS.ti program (primary documents P1-P23)
Supplementary data	Issues 8/2003 and 2/2004 of *Acatiimi*, issue 4/2000 of *Academe*, altogether 10 articles (References)	To conduct a pilot study to gain pre-understanding of the universities' third task	Article collection 2004	Content analysis with simple underlining tactics
	The descriptions of the PR professionals of the target universities about their duties and roles	To understand the role of PR professionals in questions of the universities' third task and stakeholder relationships	Simple survey 1989; Brief email questions 2007	Content analysis with simple underlining tactics

Taken to the ATLAS.ti program, the main data comprised 32 primary documents, of which nine were written and 23 spoken. As supplementary data ten labour union magazine articles on the third task of the universities, gathered in 2004 for a pilot study, were included. Moreover, some data on the duties and roles of universities' PR professionals was available from 1989, and this information was also gathered from the PR managers of the target universities in 2007. The research material could be considered abundant for a qualitative study of this type, and saturation, i.e., the phenomenon that new findings consistently replicate earlier findings, could possibly have been achieved with a smaller number of cases (Daymon 2002, 163, Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 62-63).

2.4.1 Documentary data

The documentary research material was gathered simultaneously as the interviews were planned. The strategies needed were downloaded from the websites of universities and regional councils in 2005-2006. The strategic documents provided valuable information about the university-region relationship and could be used as a background material for the research interviews. According to Peräkylä (1997, 205) relevant written documents must be collected and used along with tape recordings to obtain a better understanding of the institution's activities. After reading the strategies the interviewer was aware of specific regional features of the university-region interaction and was able to gain more from the interviewing situation. The strategies were used mainly as background material, but the parts concerning the university profile and regional engagement were also used as research data.

2.4.2 Interview data

The informants were chosen and interview themes sketched in February 2006 (Appendix 1). The first requests for interview lasting about 60 minutes were sent to the informants by e-mail in the middle of March and the last in late April (Appendix 2). As soon as the informant replied, the time for the interview was set by phone either with the secretary or with the informant. It was also agreed that the informant and his/her secretary would receive the interview themes by e-mail a week before the interview to give the interviewee a chance to prepare and thus contribute to a successful interview (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004, 75). The second e-mail message also included a request to record the interviews and this request was repeated at the beginning of each interview.

The interview themes introduced to the informants were:

- historical regional anchors of the local university and how they are realised today
- motives, goals and values of regional engagement
- organisation of regional engagement (structures)
- content of regional engagement

 – experiences of regional engagement
 – development needs and future themes of regional engagement.

There were generally no major difficulties in negotiating access to the respondents and obtaining their consent to the interviews. However, there are three important informants missing: city mayors. In Rovaniemi the city mayor was on sick leave and in Turku it was impossible to find a suitable time for the interview. When it became clear that the mayors of Rovaniemi and Turku were unreachable, also mayor of Kuopio, the former rector of the university, was omitted from the list of informants. To fill in the eventual gap that the lack of city representatives makes in the data, a decision was made to study how the region discusses the role of higher education institutions in its key strategic documents.

The first interview was conducted in Kuopio on March 27, 2006 and the last in Helsinki on May 12, 2006. The first interview was a trial run where the themes and interview techniques were tested and refined. Some scholars recommend several pre-interviews to ensure successful research interviews (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2004, 73). However, as the author conducted all interviews herself and was deeply involved in the questions to be studied, one pre-interview was considered sufficient. Peräkylä (1997, 206) stresses the importance of having good equipment and recording arrangements to avoid frustration caused by poor recordings. A minidisc recorder with a microphone was used in the first interview but after the trial a decision was made to purchase a digital voice recorder to ensure high voice quality and smooth data transfer from the recorder to the laptop computer and, further, to the transcribers.

Seven of the eight Lapland interviewees were interviewed in Rovaniemi during April 3-5, 2006 and one in Helsinki on May 12, 2006, as the latter was on holiday at the beginning of April. All seven Turku interviews were conducted during April 25-27, 2006. As the author lives in Kuopio, the eight Kuopio interviews were conducted during a longer period, from March 27 to May 5, 2006. The interviews were conducted in the informant's office, except the first practice interview, which was done in the researcher's home, and the last which took place in the office of the University Communications of the University of Helsinki. Koskinen et al. (2005, 120) point out that the office of an elite informant does not make the interviewing situation impartial as office designs usually support managerial status and help the manager to maintain the control of the situation. However, the author had gained experience of interviewing managers during her previous assignments as science journalist and so for practical reasons the office of the informant was considered a suitable site for the interview.

The Lapland and Turku informants were greeted with a speciality from Kuopio, a small "kalakukko" (a fish pie with a rye crust), the aim being to relax the atmosphere with an informal topic of conversation and to show that the respondent's time was appreciated. The fact that many respondents knew the supervisors of this dissertation as active communication consultants obviously

increased the credibility of the interviewer and contributed to positive attitudes. Several informants expressed positive attitudes towards the study, whether it was because the topic was interesting, or their spouse worked in faculty, or they had a summer cottage in the Kuopio region.

As indicated at the outset of this study, the interviewer was not a neutral observant but a partner in conversation about a topic of common interest (Kvale 1996, 125). No notes were taken during the interviews to be able to concentrate on the interviewee and the themes. However, Kvale (1996, 29), for example, recommends that the interviewer make an effort to recall his or her impressions of the informant after each interview, as well as the latter's facial and bodily expressions, and also write notes about the quality of the interpersonal interaction to form a context for the transcripts and analysis. Brief notes of this type were taken afterwards and some worthwhile observations made. Some of the informants did indeed hide behind the shelter of their position or were less generous for other reasons. The representatives of the polytechnics in particular were very cautious. The response style of some of the informants was abrupt and it was not easy to tempt them to talk more. In these cases the interviews also tended to follow the traditional question-answer formula rather than that of a conversation. Some informants, for their part, were overwhelmingly talkative. However, a short interview could also be very rich and informative.

It was soon realised that the position of the students' representatives was somewhat problematic in this material On the one hand, they were indeed involved in university life as university stakeholders and members of the academic community, but they also represented another organisation *within* the university – the Student Union – with its own external interests and own stakeholders.

2.4.3 Supplementary data

In addition to the main data, some supplementary data were used. To gain a pre-understanding about the contents of the third task of the universities, a pilot study was conducted in 2004 by searching for articles on the third task in two labour union magazines published in Finland and in the United States (Kantanen 2005). The material includes issues 8/2003 and 2/2004 of the Finnish *Acatiimi* magazine, and issue 4/2000 of the American *Academe* magazine, altogether ten articles (see References). The theme of these periodicals was the third task of the universities.

To enable a rough analysis of the change in the public relations profession in the universities, the data collected for a seminar by the author in 1989 were studied. The data were gathered with a questionnaire sent to university rectors and information officers. As the target universities of this study were included, the answers obtained from the universities of Kuopio, Lapland and Turku were picked out. Moreover, in April 2007 the current public relations managers of the universities of Lapland and Kuopio gave brief email answers to questions about their working conditions, responsibilities and roles vis-à-vis stakeholder relationships and regional engagement. The director of communications of the

University of Turku was one of the informants of the study but also she provided some complementary and updated information by telephone in May 2007.

2.5.   Data analysis

In qualitative research the three streams of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing are all part of the analysis and take place before, during and after the data collection. Consequently, the data reduction and transforming process are considered to form a part of the analysis, as the researcher is making analytic choices all the time when s/he is coding, finding themes and writing memos. (Miles & Huberman 1994, 10-11.)

2.5.1 ATLAS.ti as a tool of analysis

Several software programs exist that are suitable for the analysis of qualitative data. Currently, the most advanced of them are NVivo and ATLAS.ti, both of which enable the effective management of large amounts of textual, graphical, audio or video data (Rantala 2001). ATLAS.ti, invented and developed by German Thomas Muhr, was chosen for this study because the supervisor of this study and another fellow researcher were already using it and thus experiences, advice and support could be exchanged.

The idea of ATLAS.ti is to stay close to the data, and make connecting up, visualisation and memo writing on the basis of data rapid and easy. The program is particularly suitable for grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin 1998) and content analysis, which are coding-oriented research methods, and for the thematic categorising of unstructured or semistructured texts. (Lonkila & Silvonen 2002, Moilanen 1995.)

The ATLAS.ti program proved extremely helpful in managing the data and in the process of indexing, reducing and displaying it. Learning to use the program took a considerable amount of time, but this time was saved later as the program made the research process more systematic and fluent. However, it was kept in mind that it is not the program that analyses anything, but the researcher.

2.5.2 Documentary data

The documentary data covered 280 pages. However, all superfluous parts were left out and only those parts investigated that were considered relevant for this study. For example, from the strategies of the regional councils, only those sections were chosen that discuss higher education in the region. It must also be mentioned that the strategies of the regional councils were at different stages of readiness at the time of the study. In Northern Savo and in Lapland new

strategies for 2007-2010 were in process, while the strategy for Southwest Finland covers the years 2005-2008.

The documentary data were saved in ATLAS.ti. The coding scheme was first developed alongside the interview data and the written documents were coded simultaneously with the interviews in October 2006.

2.5.3 Interview data

The interview data comprised 18 hours 30 minutes of recorded material. The average length of interviews was 47 minutes (4834 words); while the longest was 66 minutes (7886 words) and shortest 28 minutes (2758 words). The region where the interview was made, or the fact that the interviewer knew some of the informants beforehand, did not have any effect on the length of the interview. Neither did the interviews lengthen as the interviewer gained more experience. The length of the interview depended rather on the individual style of expression of the informant. The longer interviews often included rich material but a short interview could also have high information density.

The first interview was transcribed by the author and the remaining 22 by professional transcribers. The verbatim transcripts were completed by May 23, 2006. The transcripts cover 160 pages (font size 8, single-spaced). Although the quality of the transcripts was very good, there were some unclear utterances and spelling errors that the researcher corrected with the help of the original recordings. According to Peräkylä (1997, 207), different researchers hear different things and for this reason correction is useful to ensure the adequacy of transcripts. It was also useful and motivating to listen to the voices of the informants, their emphases and laughter, and to recall the interviewing situations before working on texts themselves. The interview transcripts were read through several times with the aim of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the material and to sketch a coding scheme for computer-aided coding. When reading, attention was paid to various substantive issues relevant to this research. These were contexts, definitions, processes, activities, strategies, resources, relationships, structures and commitment. (Dey 1993, 84, Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2004, 143). The first coding session took place in July-August 2006, when the author was preparing a conference paper for which nine interviews were analysed with the help of ATLAS.ti (Kantanen 2007b).

The interview material was coded for the first time by the end of September 2006 with the help of a coding list sketched in advance on the basis of the interview questions, and new codes were added as the work proceeded. As the process took several weeks, the coding system developed considerably during this time so that the last interviews were coded quite differently from the first. Altogether 59 codes were used in the first coding. Thus there was a need to revise the coding list and to specify the codes since some of them turned out to be too all-encompassing, like the code "example" which produced 156 quotations that exemplified university-region interaction. In practice all 59 codes were split or renamed, which increased the number of codes to 238. However, this detailed coding scheme was a prerequisite for, as well as formed

the basis of, a more accurate thematic classification of the data. The coding list was refined by the end of October 2006 (Appendix 4).

In November 2006 the coding list was changed in the direction of pattern coding, meaning that the summarising segments of data identified in the first coding were grouped into smaller themes and constructs (Miles & Huberman 1994, 69). The 238 codes were classified into eleven categories that subsequently formed the basis for the analysis. The themes and numbers of codes and the quotations attached to them are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4   The thematic categorisation of data and the number of codes and quotations categorised under each theme.

Theme (Code Family)	Codes	Quotations
University	31	724
Public relations	2	24
Regional context	14	310
Context of higher education policy	6	84
Social responsibility	3	76
Dialogue	39	623
Commitment	10	76
Innovations and best practices	3	47
Structures and solutions	36	104
Problems and contradictions	25	79
Success factors	69	163
Total	**238**	**2310**

An example of the process of selecting a quotation, giving it a code name, and categorising the code under a certain theme, or within a certain code family, is given in Table 5.

TABLE 5   Examples on quotations, codes given to them, and categorisation of codes in code families.

Quotation	Code	Code Family
Riepula will be remembered as one of the prominent figures in Lapland [P22:174]	rector Lapland	University
I think the university is responsible to the youth it educates so that they become good people and fit for society, I think that is where the outcome is measured [P21:58]	responsibility	Social responsibility
all doctoral dissertations are noted in the news [P6:134]	media	Dialogue
a consumer-oriented view… we have packaged the education of the four education providers in one and the starting point is that it can be provided in subregions regardless of place and also time [P17:138]	Provincial University of Lapland	Innovations and best practises
we have worked on the productivity plan during the first months of the year and I just can't understand how it can be so difficult [P21:82]	resistance to change	Problems and contradictions
networks and good co-operation connections, especially the connections of management which create a positive spirit that this is an activity worthy of support and should be done [P3:206]	personal relationships	Success factors

The work proceeded thematically. The first phase included analysis of the themes of the regional and political context and the historical roots of the universities' regional engagement. Also, the universities' target profiles and images were analysed. The second phase focused on the questions of the universities' responsibilities and regional engagement. Thirdly, stakeholder dialogues were examined, as well as one of its prerequisites, commitment. Finally, innovations in the field and different structures and solutions were studied, and problems and success factors were analysed.

2.5.4 Supplementary data

A pilot study to gain a pre-understanding of the phenomenon of the third task was conducted in 2004. The contents of the articles focusing on regional engagement found in the issues of the Finnish magazine *Acatiimi* and the American magazine *Academe* were analysed with simple underlining tactics. The aim was to find the core attributes of the third task (Kantanen 2005).

Of the questionnaires sent in the year 1989 to university management and public relations professionals, the answers concerning the universities of Kuopio, Lapland and Turku were analysed. The email answers given by the current public relations managers of the universities of Lapland and Kuopio and the notes made of the telephone conversation with the public relations manager of Turku were studied.

Both sets of supplementary data are small. The article collection comprises ten short articles. The surveys of 1989 and answers of 2007 make in all six pages. Therefore, only manual analyses were performed. However, the role of this material is only to provide background information on the contents of the third task, and about the development of PR offices in universities.

2.6   Criteria of soundness

Since the traditional criteria of adequacy and validity derive from the perspective of positivism and quantitative methodology, they are not applicable as such in a qualitative research setting. Instead, it has been suggested that the trustworthiness of qualitative studies should be evaluated in terms of their credibility (cf. internal validity), transferability (cf. external validity), dependability (cf. realiability) and confirmability (cf. objectivity) (Lincoln & Guba 1985, Miles & Huberman 1994, 277). The researcher must prove that the study has advanced in a trustworthy way through its different phases.

Multiple research strategies have usually been chosen to gain a wider perspective, to enhance reliability, and to reduce inappropriate certainty (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2004, 38-40). Triangulation means that different kinds of methods or data are used to increase trustworthiness. The basic types of triangulation are data triangulation (the use of a variety of data sources), investigator triangulation (the use of several researchers), theory triangulation

(the use of multiple perspectives for data interpretation) and methodological triangulation (the use of multiple methods) (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 68-72). Janesick (1994, 215) adds to this listing a fifth type: interdisciplinary triangulation emphasising the need to "broaden our understanding of method and substance" through interdisciplinary perspectives.

In this study the following types of triangulation have been used:

- data triangulation – different data sources have been used, both written and spoken, and collected at different times
- theory and interdisciplinary triangulation – the perspectives and fields used for data interpretation include organisational communication and public relations, higher education, business management and social psychological interaction research.

Considerable efforts were also made to achieve investigator triangulation, to have a joint coding session with a fellow researcher also using ATLAS.ti software, as check-coding is one of the ways of increasing reliability in qualitative research. Miles and Huberman (1994, 64-65) advise two researchers to code some 5-10 pages of data and to discuss their choices and disagreements. Unfortunately the timetables and interests of two potential fellow-coders never matched those of the author. This can be seen as a defect of the study, although views on the necessity of check-coding vary. However, the fact that the coding was done at different times provided a possibility for internal checks.

In qualitative research the researcher is also a research instrument. Malterud (2001, 483-484) considers relevance, validity and reflexivity to be essential standards in qualitative research. Reflexivity means that it is accepted that the researcher's position and background limit and determine what is investigated, the perspective and method adopted, prioritisation of the findings and the communication of the conclusions. Thus the effect of the researcher must be assessed and shared. As Frankel and Devers (2000a) point out, the researcher must develop and maintain a relationship with the research object. A good relationship can be considered a prerequisite of successful data collection and credible research. Miles and Huberman (1994, 38) state that the instrument is good when the researcher is familiar with the phenomenon and the research setting, when s/he has strong conceptual interests, when a multidisciplinary approach is used, and when s/he has good investigative skills. Her career in the academy had made the author familiar with the phenomenon and the research setting, and a multidisciplinary approach was used. Perhaps the author's experience as a science journalist also contributed on the level of investigative skills. This was at least found helpful in conducting the research interviews.

2.7   Ethical considerations

In any research, and particularly when you work with people, there are several ethical considerations that must be taken into account already at the planning stage. In this study the topics were not particularly sensitive, nor were the kinds of groups involved that for which special procedures would be required, like children or sick people. The main ethical questions are informed consent, confidentiality, consequences, and privacy (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2004, 19-20, Kvale 1996, 259). The National Advisory Board on Research Ethics (2002) also includes in good scientific practice honesty, thoroughness and accuracy during all phases of the research. This is also called research integrity, and refers to the avoidance of "sloppy data recording; insufficient, selective, or misleading reporting of findings; unwillingness to share or retain data; undisclosed conflicts of interest; and inappropriate citation" (Miles & Huberman 1994, 294). Also issues like the worthiness of the whole research project, the competence boundaries of the researcher, data ownership, and use of results should be pondered (Miles & Huberman 1994, 290-295).

When the respondents of this study were approached, they were given a short but precise description of the study, the researcher introduced herself and the names of her supervisors were mentioned. Also, the time frame of the planned interview was given. The interview themes were sent to the respondents a week before the interview. The respondents were asked both beforehand and at the beginning of the interview if the interviews could be recorded, and confidentiality was emphasised.

The recorded material was transcribed verbatim to preserve the original content of the interviews. When the material was coded, both the informant's name and a numerical index were used as an identification tag. At the reporting stage the names were removed to guarantee anonymity. Moreover, all information that could enable the respondents to be identified was excised from the quotations. This was also emphasised in January 2007 when all the respondents were asked for permission to publish their names in the appendix. No-one, apart from the professional transcribers and the researcher, has handled the recordings or the transcripts. However, the original recordings, transcripts, and coded ATLAS.ti primary documents are, without the respondents' names, available for anyone to check how the analysis proceeded.

The consequences of this study were regarded as a serious issue since the results may be perceived as harming the organisations involved. In October 2006 the Ministry of Education unveiled plans to form three new university federations. One of them includes the University of Turku and Turku School of Economics, whose cooperation is also discussed in this study. Moreover, in all regions involved in this study, the universities and polytechnics are struggling towards new forms of cooperation, for example, regional consortia to provide higher education. How do the bias and cynicism revealed behind the official

rhetoric affect these plans? Does the study, instead of promoting regional welfare, harm these important regional efforts?

The question of the competence of the researcher is constantly present because a doctoral student with very little previous research experience often feels that s/he lacks the expertise to carry out the study, particularly as a lone researcher without the support of a department and colleagues on a daily, or even weekly, basis (Miles & Huberman 1994, 291). During the present study the author produced five international congress papers, two of which were published in journals and one in a monograph (Kantanen 2005, 2007a, 2007b), gave four seminar presentations, and had frequent and detailed sessions with both supervisors. All these meant that it was possible to evaluate the project, test ideas and alter course when necessary on the basis of the feedback of experienced researchers and colleagues.

According to a suggestion by Miles and Huberman (1994, 296), the habit of writing occasional memos on ethical issues was adopted and several memos were written during the phases of data coding and analyses. The aim was to note latent ethical worries at this stage, not belatedly.

3 THE CONTEXT OF UNIVERSITY-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

This chapter presents the context in which university-stakeholder dialogue take place. It reviews the changing scene of higher education and the increase in importance of the third task, service, in addition to research and teaching. It maps the determinants of university-stakeholder dialogue, such as higher education policy issues, regional and academic identities and stakeholder identification. Finally, it sums up the empirical findings concerning this context.

3.1 What is a university?

The foundations of the academy were laid in the 12th century when the first universities were founded in Salerno, Bologna, Paris and Oxford. The word "universitas" stands originally for a community or corporation of professionals (guild). The traditional university model from the Middle Ages on included faculties of theology, law, medicine, and philosophy. By the year 1500 there were 77 universities in the Western Europe. However, for centuries the main mission of the universities was to maintain and deliver the existing knowledge, not to create new. As late as the 18th century visionaries like the German professor Friedrich Schiller pointed out that the university should be a scientific institution, "a home of philosophical heads", where new ideas arise, scientific knowledge is expanded, the truth is sought after and scientific and national borders crossed. This idea is more commonly known as the Humboldtian university ideal, named after Wilhelm von Humboldt who formulated the principles of action of the University of Berlin, founded in 1810. von Humboldt's ideas led to the profound reform of many universities, in Germany in particular, but also in the United States. According to von Humboldt the leading principles of the university were freedom of research, teaching and studies, the interconnectedness of research, teaching and studies, and

the prioritisation of *Bildung* instead of professional training. (Manninen 1990, 244-246, see also Tirronen 2005, 74-77.)

From the 18th century onwards, European institutions of higher education have coincided with the nation state. Their development has been shaped by educational and cultural policies, national economy, and political values, as well as different philosophical traditions. It has been said that the core of the academic-traditional doctrine of higher education is the autonomy of professors and the autonomy of the university. The universities were for long seen as communities of professors who would know what is best for the university. (Kivinen, Rinne & Ketonen 1993). This was the heritage of the Humboldtian tradition, and emphasis was placed on the importance of academic freedom and research-based teaching. The professional orientation of higher education, however, dates from as far back as the 1820s, when the first successful teaching and research laboratory was founded in Giessen by Justus von Liebig. This pharmacy and chemistry laboratory brought along with it a new form of academic work with teams, a practical orientation and even external funding (Manninen 1990, 248). According to Scott (2002, 63) the European university tradition is often divided into the strands of scientific education, professional education, and liberal education. However, he points out that all over Europe universities have always had down-to-earth origins and goals, like training teachers, doctors and engineers.

What the university is today depends on from what perspective the university is seen. Secretary-General Eva Egron-Polak (2005) states that the question is discussed constantly when new higher education institutions apply for membership of the International Association of Universities (IAU). According to Egron-Polak the only definition agreed on is that the institution must combine research and teaching, it must both create and disseminate knowledge. Officially, the membership to the IAU is open to

> degree-conferring institutions whose main objective is higher education and the development of knowledge. These institutions must be dedicated to the study of several branches of knowledge, and be at the level of higher education, as shown by the quality of their instruction and the preparatory training demanded of their students, as well as by the active participation of their staff in scientific or scholarly research and by the equipment placed at their disposal[4]

Today, the IAU has 580 member institutions. Full membership of another central association, the European Association of Universities, is open to universities with the full power to award doctorates.[5] Thus a university is an institution that

1) has power to confer doctoral degrees;
2) is dedicated to the development of knowledge;
3) is dedicated to the study of several branches of knowledge; and
4) is at a certain level of higher education indicated by its quality of instruction, enrolment requirements, research activity, and facilities.

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[4]   Retrieved October 19, 2005, from (<http://www.unesco.org/iau>).
[5]   Retrieved October 19, 2005, from <http://www.eua.be/eua/index.jsp>.

In Finland, however, institutions of higher education that do not quite fulfil the third requirement, namely technical and business administration universities and art academies, are also called universities.[6]

Higher education institutions are still often evaluated and classified according to their research intensiveness. Egron-Polak (2005, 6) states that while there is a trend towards a more hierarchical system of higher education, the demands of labour markets and society at large call for more institutional diversity. She points out that the hierarchies of institutional prestige are too often drawn up according to research strengths, while the value of institutional diversity based on academic programmes, modes of delivery, and other services, is largely ignored. The Carnegie classification of American higher education institutions has 35 categories of which the traditional universities with doctoral education form four. A multi-dimensional, inclusive, flexible and descriptive typology of higher education is under construction to achieve more transparency, to support mobility, and to increase the competitiveness and attractiveness of European higher education. Therefore, even if research remains as the distinctive characteristic of a university, the concept is changing and adopting new ingredients.

3.2 International direction of higher education

3.2.1 The European scene

All over Europe the central themes of higher education today are globalisation, new technologies, and the knowledge society, the last concept implying that wealth is more and more dependent on the development and application of new knowledge. Answers are sought to questions currently facing higher education, like teaching, competition between universities and polytechnics, massification and globalisation, the rise of individualism and individual choices in education, ICT-based distance learning, multiple sources of funding, and financial constraints (Davies 1997a, Dill 2003, Goddard 1997, 9).

From the Bologna Declaration of 1999 onwards European HEIs have been in the process of harmonising the European degree systems. The aim is to create a common European Higher Education Area by 2010. The Bologna Declaration and preceding Sorbonne Declaration of 1997 and Maastricht Treaty of 1992 not

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[6]   This is also a linguistic question. In Finnish the earlier term for specialised universities was *korkeakoulu* (institution of higher education). When the polytechnics were introduced in 1996 a distinction was needed because these new institutions were called *ammattikorkeakoulu*. Today the Finnish term *korkeakoulu* (institution of higher education) includes *yliopisto* (university) and *ammattikorkeakoulu* (polytechnic). The recent decision of the Finnish polytechnics to adopt the English name of *university of applied sciences* has added piquancy to the terminological debate. In this study the term polytechnic is used simply because it is more practical in the report where these two forms of HEIs are discussed.

only co-ordinate higher education systems on the degree programme level but also bring the European dimension to the different decision-making levels of higher education. The European Commission has also stressed the role of new partnerships across sectors and territories in achieving the goals of the European knowledge economy.

A new commitment to external engagement is required of the universities. Experts agree that the universities are faced with many pressures and expectations and their task is to ponder how to preserve what is distinctive about the university as a site of knowledge production while meeting external roles (Goddard 2004, Harloe & Perry 2004, Hazelkorn 2004, Lemola 2004, Tirronen 2005).

3.2.2 Changing premises of academic work

For centuries, higher education institutions and universities in particular were the main providers and disseminators of knowledge. This is no longer the case. There have been fundamental changes in the premises of academic work during the past decade. In the field of knowledge production, notions of science have changed. In their seminal book *The New Production of Knowledge* Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwartzman, Scott and Trow (1994) presented two different modes of science (Table 6).

TABLE 6   Two modes of science (Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwartzman, Scott & Trow 1994).

Mode 1	Mode 2
Problems are set and solved within self-governing academic communities	Problems are set and solved in a transdisciplinary fashion
Knowledge production within disciplinary boundaries	Context of application with diverse set of intellectual, economic and social interests
Research results communicated through institutional channels	Research results communicated interactively and continuously throughout the research process
Universities are dominant knowledge-producing institutions	Organisational diversity linked together through functioning networks of communication
Research groups homogenous and institutionalised	Research groups more heterogeneous and transient
"Knowledge for knowledge's sake"	Increased reflexivity on the impacts of research and social accountability
Peer review as quality control	Quality determined by a wider set of criteria

The traditional mode of knowledge production is being complemented, if not replaced, by a mode where problems are identified and solved in the context of application. Mode 1 is said to be about 'science and scientists' while Mode 2 is about 'knowledge and practitioners'. Mode 2 questions the premise of academic identity and distinctiveness. Mode 2 recognises the importance of undertaking collaborative and interdisciplinary work, focused on useful application, with external partners, including the wider community (Hazelkorn 2004). Research problems are approached from the standpoints of a wide set of stakeholders,

not only from a discipline-based academic perspective. The production and reproduction of knowledge is no longer the monopoly of universities but new providers such has international virtual learning environments, polytechnics, research institutes and multinational businesses share the market. One means of coping with globalisation, the driving force behind the increased supply and demand for knowledge, is collaboration through mergers and alliances. The Finnish science and education policy already recognises different producers of new knowledge and among others, lists universities and polytechnics, research institutes and business enterprises (e.g., the Finnish science and technology information service Research.fi).

If the fundamental change in the nature of research is present in the changing modes of science, perhaps an equal change in the field of teaching has been the revolutionary development of information and communication technologies and their exploitation in universities. Because of the de-localising potential of ICT-based learning, academic studies are no longer connected to time and place. This, while in line with the increasing emphasis on individual needs, is in conflict with the aim of helping students to identify with the academic community. ICT-based learning is expected to support equality across regions, age groups and ethnic backgrounds. On the other hand it has been asked if a "wired university" is rather a means of saving money than an answer to customer demand (Jacob & Hellström 2003, 52).

American researcher on higher education, sociologist Burton R. Clark (1983) introduced a triangle of coordination (see also Välimaa 1997). He presented three ideal types which reflect the reality in higher education: a triangle made up of a state system, a market system and a professional system. By the state system is meant state control over the higher education institutions through regulations and instructions. An example of a state using this system at the time of Clark's writing was the Soviet Union. The market system refers to competition and choices: agreements, coalitions and trading. This is how higher education works in the United States. The third type, the professional system, or academic oligarchy, can be found in Italy. There power is in the hands of professors and strong chairs even guide educational policy on the state level, which is a reflection of the Humboldtian ideal. Välimaa (1997) suggests that the Finnish state system and American market system may be approaching one another. Rekilä (2006) studied the impact of the state, of the market and of self-regulation in her thesis in the field of public management. Her research setting was based on Clark's triangle of state authority, market system and academic oligarchy. According to Rekilä (2006, 28) the Finnish university system is far from the academic oligarchy ideal type but closer to the state system than market system. Rekilä (2006, 242) maintains that the universities today are balancing between steering by the state, steering by the market and steering by the academic tradition, and attempting to simultaneously be bureaucracies, firms and academic communities.

Jacob and Hellström (2003) maintain that in the present situation, corporate models of organisation could assist universities to adjust their

structures to a situation where demands for different services are increasing and financial and human resources are decreasing. In contrast, Birnbaum (2000) offers a revealing analysis of different managerial fads that have been adopted from the private sector by the academy, like strategic planning, benchmarking, and Total Quality Management. These fads have often been introduced by enthusiastic university managers or government officials, they have been implemented with the help of a legion of planning officers on the central administration level and a heavy work load on the departmental level, and, when it comes down to details, proven to be unsuitable for the university context.[7] The fundamental reason for the failure is that universities are not businesses. Birnbaum states that a management fad may be useful when implemented by experienced managers with insight into the basic values of the university and into what is good and useful in the fad concerned. Just too often the fads overemphasise quantification, create a false sense of certainty, reduce managerial competence, increase cynicism about management, centralise bureaucracy, weaken commitment to education, and create self-fulfilling prophesies. (Birnbaum 2000, 197-206.) In Finland, a performance-based steering system was introduced in 1994 and at the moment the universities are in the process of producing quality manuals.

For Baldridge (1983) institutions of higher education are characterised by goal ambiguity, "people-processing" mechanisms (client service), problematic and nonroutine technology, fragmented professional staffs, and increasing environmental vulnerability. He suggested the term "organised anarchy" (1983, 43, originally suggested by Cohen and March 1974) as a contrast to "well-organised bureaucracy".

> It is an organization in which people talk past each other, in which generous resources allow people go in different directions without coordination, in which leaders are relatively weak and decisions are arrived at through the noncoordinated actions of individuals. Since goals are ambiguous, nobody is quite sure where the organization is going or how it will get there. The situation is fluid. Decisions are often by-products of activity that is unintended and unplanned. (Baldridge 1983, 44).

Baldridge aimed at a less bureaucratic, looser and more fluid university. It is clear that the situation now is very different from what it was in 1983. There are no longer generous resources but better defined goals and a more strategic orientation regarding how to reach those goals. Also, technologies have developed advantageously. However, universities are still professional organisations and their environmental vulnerability has not decreased. If institutions of higher education in 1970s and 1980s were facing "conflicting wishes, demands, and threats of dozens of interest groups" (Baldridge 1983, 42), the number of such interest groups now has multiplied in the global arena.

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[7]   On the basis of their literature review Rinne and Koivula (2005, 114) state that "if the command to change has come from the administrative level, it may indeed affect normative discourse or formal structures, but on the operational level it will remain unimplemented."

Academic cultures change. McNay (1995, 105) categorises university cultures as collegium, bureaucracy, enterprise, and corporation. The collegium culture means decentralised power and operational control and it is dominated by professors and academic self-governance. This could be the Humboldtian culture at its purest. The bureaucracy culture is characterised by weak policy direction and strong administrative control. Strong policy direction but weak operational control is typical of the enterprise culture. The proposition is that individuals and groups need freedom to be creative. The corporation culture has a high degree of centralisation, strong policy direction and control of operational detail. The universities of the past were mostly collegiums and bureaucracies, but the rapid changes of the past decade have moved them more towards acting as enterprises and corporations. A clear preference can be seen for the strong, externally focused enterprise culture with common patterns of shared belief and the ability to respond quickly to external change. Regional collaboration is expected to lead to more convergence between the traditional higher education culture (closed, knowledge-oriented, discipline-based, elitist) and the continuing/technical/business/polytechnic education culture (open, client-oriented, equal) (Davies 1997b, 42). Accordingly, Lehtonen (2002, 57) characterises the university of the new millennium, for example, by the relevance of research findings, social orientation, innovation, client orientation, and stakeholder dialogue. Barnett (2000) describes this era with the word *supercomplexity*. This refers to the pressures universities face, such as their relationships with commerce and industry, the growth of regional involvement, need to generate income from private sources, and the globalisation of student recruitment (Shattock 2003, 110).

3.3 The Finnish scene

3.3.1 Universities in Finland

The first Finnish university was founded in 1640 in Turku as one of the national universities of Sweden during the reign of Queen Christina. In the neighbouring regions Academia Dorpatensis was founded in Tartu in 1632 and the oldest university in Scandinavia, Uppsala, as long ago as 1477. The Academia Aboensis followed the Central European academic tradition and was intended to furnish competent officials for the church and for the state. Thus a professional orientation lies deep in the foundations of the Finnish academy. After the fire of Turku in 1828 the Academia was transferred to the new capital of Finland, Helsinki, and renamed the Imperial Alexander University. At that time Finland was a Grand Duchy of Russia and Emperor Alexander I was eager to enlarge and develop the University, which became the cradle of a strong national movement. Finland became independent in 1917 and two years later, in 1919, the University was renamed the University of Helsinki.

The new winds of free entrepreneurialism produced four new institutions of higher education in 1908-1922: the Swedish-language Åbo Akademi, the University of Turku, Helsinki University of Technology, and Helsinki School of Business Administration. By 1950 there were ten universities in Finland. However, the most far-reaching changes took place in the 1950s when the idea of decentralisation gained ground. The so called Myrberg committee was appointed in 1952 by the Prime Minister's Office to draw up an overall plan for the harmonisation and development of educational policy in Finland, and to consider the possibilities for locating scientific education and research also in regions outside Helsinki and Turku. (Kivinen et al. 1993.)

The debate about the advantages and disadvantages of decentralisation was lively in the 1950s and very similar arguments surface even today when these questions are pondered. Centralisation was initially preferred to ensure sufficiently large and multidisciplinary units and to enable intellectual interaction. The main arguments for decentralisation were the need to avoid the Helsinki-centeredness of the academic workforce and the will to enrich the cultural and social life of rural Finland. Small size and isolation as well as high costs of construction and maintenance and low status were seen as threats to the success of the eventual new universities. The leading Centre Party politicians of the time of the Myrberg committee, and Prime Minister Johannes Virolainen in particular, were enthusiastic about the idea of decentralisation, and the legislation establishing the University of Oulu and the University of Jyväskylä was passed in 1958. This energetic period of decentralisation was over by 1979 when the University of Lapland was founded in Rovaniemi. (Kivinen et al. 1993.) At the moment there are 20 universities in Finland. Ten of these are multi-faculty, six are specialised (technical and business universities) and four art academies. The university network covers the whole country, although eight universities are located in the capital region.

FIGURE 4 Map of Finland with the locations of institutions of higher education: universities, polytechnics, and so called university centres. Source: Centre for International Mobility CIMO.

3.3.2 Higher education policy in Finland

Pirttilä (2005, 192) identifies five models of higher education policy that have guided educational programmes, organisational structures, and academic practice in Finland. These are 1) the critical and involved Humboldtian university[8], 2) the science university with the emphasis on an objective and autonomous research community, 3) a managerialistic and self-supportive entrepreneurial university, 4) a state university that educates public administration professionals and implements political programmes, and 5) a civic university that stresses civic participation and citizen needs. Because of circumstances surrounding the establishment of the first Finnish universities and because Finnish higher education policy from the 1950s on was closely connected to the strengthening of economic competitiveness and regional development, the Humoldtian preference for "civilisation" to a professional orientation has survived rather as a philosophical undertone or ideal than as a part of academic reality (Kivinen et al. 1993, 252). However, Mehtonen (1990), among others, sees a conflict between the Humboldtian philosophy and the view of a university as an institution that should provide services to the society and educate professionals. He quotes the great statesman Johann Vilhelm Snellman who considered the university as a way to science and civilisation.

Jaakko Numminen (1987, 391), a former, long-serving director of the Ministry of Education, stated that the greatest challenge universities will face in the future is how to continue pondering the fundamentals of human life and maintain the eternal search for truth. He saw this also as a key to the founding academic spirit that seems about to disappear in Finland. Numminen saw, almost twenty years ago, that Finnish educational policy was excessively directed towards quantitative developmental measures, resource allocations, and administrative structures. He saw healthy self-respect and adventurous moves by academics as the key to answering the rapidly changing challenges of Finnish society. Kivinen et al. (1993, 220) emphasise that a university can never be a manufacturing plant producing goods and services but that it should also develop and maintain a high level of education.

Finnish higher education policy reflects, naturally, the general educational policies pursued in Finland. Traditionally, in Finland education is highly valued and today's zero level illiteracy and public and free education have their roots in the 1540s, when Mikael Agricola developed the written Finnish language and published the first books in Finnish, and the 1860s, when Uno Cygnaeus laid the foundations of Finnish primary education. Finland has been a top performer in the OECD's Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) surveys of 15-year-olds. Finland led in the study of learning skills among 15-year-olds in the PISA 2000 reading assessment, and in PISA 2003 maintained the same level of reading literacy and improved further its performance in mathematics and science. Finland is among those OECD

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[8]   In Finnish: *sivistysyliopisto.*

countries where standards are high and consistent across schools.[9] However, on the international scale, the costs of education remain moderate. The success achieved in this domain implies a high level and an equal-for-all system of basic education which in turn produces potentially good students for universities throughout the country. About 32 % of the highschool-leaving age group study at universities. In 2003 one third of the Finnish population between 25 and 64 years of age had a higher degree. According to the Annual OECD Education at a Glance 2005 report the proportion was higher only in Canada, the United States, and Japan. Of the countries outside the OECD, only in Russia and Israel was there a higher percentage of university degree holders than in Finland.

Finland, according to several measures, is one of the most developed knowledge societies in the world. In terms of competitiveness, in 2005 Finland was for the third year in succession ranked as the most competitive economy in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report. In addition to the features of a knowledge society, Finland is a welfare state with high standard public services, including education, health and social services. A strong welfare state has been seen to guarantee the stable growth of a new knowledge economy (Castells & Himanen 2001, 181). The Finnish model of the knowledge society is that of an open society based on general welfare as against the "Silicon valley model" (market-driven, open society) or "Singaporean model" (authoritarian knowledge society). (Castells & Himanen 2001, 29.)

In 2005-2006 the most contested questions debated within and about Finnish universities were the Productivity Plan of the Ministry of Education for 2006-2010 and the new incentive salary system. The productivity plan implies, for example, a reduction of some 1500 academic posts by the year 2010. For example, the Finnish Council of University Rectors considered these aims to conflict both with the idea of the autonomy of the universities and with the performance-based management system. The Finnish Government is, however, committed to structural change of the public research system, including, for example, building larger entities to gain synergy, critical masses, and multidisciplinary approaches. As such, there is nothing new in the demands for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector, but on this occasion these demands will inevitably lead to the reorganisation of higher education network. Simultaneously, under the new salary system salaries consist of two components: the demands of the post, and of personal performance. This has been a major change in the academy and one of a number of attempts to increase both efficiency and motivation in the public sector in general. Patomäki (2005) sees the new salary system as a consequence of the New Public Management and as a source of large-scale protests among academics.

At the end of October 2006, the Ministry of Education granted funding to different, pioneering projects in the field of structural development. Two of these projects include universities involved in this study. The University of Turku and Turku School of Economics will work towards new structural cooperation. The University of Kuopio and the University of Joensuu for their

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[9]   Retrieved January 11, 2005, from <http://www.oecd.org>

part will form the new university federation of Eastern Finland. At Kuopio a fundamental motivation for the new structure came from the need to preserve business administration education in the region and make it stronger and more independent. The plans for the Turku University Centre and the University of Eastern Finland were completed in February 2007.

A new institution of higher education, the polytechnic, was introduced in Finland in 1996, and there are now 29 of them. The official policy is that the dual system of higher education will continue into the future. The reasoning behind the dual system is that the universities devote themselves to the production of knowledge, to theorising, and to basic research, while the polytechnics specialise in educating professionals for specific needs, and in R&D. This distinction is not that clear in practice. The fundamentals of the dual system are somewhat problematic, particularly in regions where a professional orientation is built into the university system as well and where the applied sciences play a significant role. As stated earlier, the Mode 2 way of doing research is expanding and the boundaries between basic and applied research are collapsing (cf. Välimaa 2004, 60). Ahola and Nurmi (1997, 149) state that several positions in the society are organised as professions that require an academic education. Moreover, universities and polytechnics are competing for staff, students and funding in Finland today. The productivity plan has increased public discussion over the number of higher education institutions there should be in Finland, and about the need to merge universities and polytechnics, both administratively, and as an educational system. Also different consortia that would bring together, for example, the libraries or administrative services of universities and polytechnics, are being planned throughout Finland.

TABLE 7   Key aims and priorities in Finnish science policy (Research.fi, Finnish science and technology information service)[10]

The key aims and priorities in Finnish science policy

- To effect a substantial increase in research funding and maintain the GDP share of R&D at a world top level. The additional funding will be allocated to strengthen basic research, researcher training and research infrastructure, to promote research careers and to boost social innovation;
- To step up the development of centres of excellence;
- To promote national, European and international networking in research: to make use of EU research programmes, other international research schemes and bilateral arrangements;
- To support research especially in fields relevant to knowledge-intensive industries and services, such as biotechnology;
- To intensify cooperation between the users of the research system and research findings and the diffusion of research findings;
- To promote the commercialisation of research findings and the creation of new business and the utilisation of research findings and technology;
- To make input into impact analysis and the evaluation of the state and performance of the research system.

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[10]   Retrieved November 17, 2006, from < http://www.research.fi/en/sciencepolicy>

3.3.3 Evolution of regional engagement

Regional development in the context of higher education dates back to the 1960s when all over Europe new higher education institutions were being created along with the expectations that they assist regional development. The universities support local economic development, for example, through technology transfer, development of skills and by attracting new investment. Having a university of one's "own" is also a matter of considerable pride and identity formation within a region. A new phase of regional involvement has been evident since the late 1990s both in Finland and elsewhere in Europe. Evaluations with special emphasis on the regional role of universities have been conducted, and since 2002 universities and polytechnics have been requested to produce and implement common regional development strategies.

Goddard (1997, 8) holds that there are three agendas regarding the university/region interface. The first is the agenda of those concerned with regional development. The second consists of the concerns of industry and commerce, and the third is the agenda of the universities, who consider the region as a source for new students, research contacts and sponsors. Kanter (1995, 354) suggests that, to become world class, organisations should pay attention to the three Cs – concepts, competence and connections (see also Goddard 1997, 11). Concepts include the incorporation of the latest knowledge and ideas into goods and services. Competence means the ability to produce goods and services to the highest standard. From the point of view of organisational communication, the third C is relevant, as it refers to maintaining relationships which provide access to the resources of other people and organisations around the world.

According to Lundvall (1996, 2-3), a learning economy indicates an economy where the success of individuals, firms, regions and national economies reflect their capability to learn (and to forget which is often a prerequisite especially for learning new skills), where change is rapid and where the rate at which old skills become obsolete and new ones are demanded is high. Knowledge includes skills and, fundamentally, learning is a process of building competencies. Learning is an activity that is taking place in all parts of society. In a learning economy, four types of knowledge can be identified: know what (facts), know why (principles and laws), know how (skills and capabilities), know who (social capability to forge links with others to draw on their expertise). Networks that depend on the transfer of knowledge can be considered a quintessential characteristic of a learning economy or region. Thus the evolution of the regional role has also increased the value of networks and other cooperative contacts.

It is written into Finnish law that the duty of the universities is to promote free research and scientific and artistic education, to provide higher education based on research, and to educate students to serve their country and humanity (Universities Act 645/1997). In 2004 the Universities Act was amended to include a third task, service, as an essential part of research and teaching: "In carrying out their mission, the universities shall interact with the surrounding

society and promote the societal impact of research findings and artistic activities" (Amendment 715/2004 § 4.) The amendment was motivated, in addition to fact that the same development was afoot in other European countries, by new stakeholder expectations. The third task is expected to strengthen the social role of universities and promote the social impact of research findings. The Act legitimates the service function and implies more structured regional engagement and more effective transfer of research findings to serve the common good. However, the mission is not tripartite as in many other European countries, where research, teaching and service are considered equal. In Sweden, for example, the service element, interaction with society, was already written into the Universities Act of 1998, and at the same time a new model of regional development contracts was introduced. Higher education institutions have played a central role in implementing these new instruments of development. (Virtanen 2002.)

The amendment of the Finnish Universities Act and the evolution of the regional role have not been greeted with applause only. One critic is Vähämäki (2005), who, for example, criticises this development, claiming that the universities and free academic research have become too tightly bound to the demands of society. He does not consider it as a democratising feature of the universities that external members chosen for the university boards tend to represent corporations or cities. Kolehmainen, Kautonen and Koski (2003, 105) state that the academy is afraid that putting the emphasis on social and regional impact endangers, for example, academic freedom and the freely making public of scientific knowledge.

The report of the OECD/IMHE (Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education) project on the regional engagement of higher education, which comprises reviews from 14 regions and 12 countries, was published in the autumn of 2007 (OECD 2007). The preliminary findings suggested that initiatives to promote the third task are often not well integrated with teaching and research, the heart of the higher education institutions (IMHE Info April 2007, 1). From this point of view it was a positive solution in Finland to emphasise the inclusiveness of service in research and teaching instead of seeing it as a separate function.

Tirronen (2005, 123) considers the third task the number one challenge of higher education in Finland. In entering into external engagement with business and the community, the third task presents also the management of higher education with major challenges. Modern ways of knowledge creation and exploitation involve close relationships between universities and their partners on the local level. As Goddard (2004) puts it:

> The university has a key role in local and civil society, joining up separate strands of national policy relating to learning and skills, research and innovation, culture and social inclusion…The university's effective engagement with the region involves bringing together teaching, research and service to the community in a coherent manner and establishing effective mechanisms for bridging the boundary between the university and the region.

The new interest in regional engagement from the 1990s onwards led to the university evaluations conducted by the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC), with special emphasis on the regional role of universities. The universities of Eastern Finland, including the University of Kuopio, and the University of Turku have been among the two objects of these evaluations (Goddard et al. 2000, Goddard et al. 2003). Moreover, a brief background report on the possible criteria for the evaluation of the regional role of the universities was published by FINHEEC (Kinnunen 2001). FINHEEC has since conducted several evaluations that focus on polytechnics, or university centres in Finland. Consequently, these evaluations have increased the importance of the regional role and brought it into the everyday life of the universities. Procedures and measures of regional engagement, or social interaction, are currently also included in the quality manuals produced by universities.

3.3.4 Dimensions of regional engagement

Gunasekara (2004) identifies two bodies of literature concerning the third task of universities. The first concerns the triple helix model of university-industry-government relations, and the second the literature on university engagement. As Leydesdorff and Etkowitz (1998) put it, the earliest stage of the triple helix model concentrated on the spheres of the academy, industry and government and on the knowledge flows between them. The flow is mediated by offices that specialise in contracts or industrial liaison. In the more recent triple helix models the institutions of university, industry, and government do not only perform their traditional tasks but their roles mingle, as universities also create enterprises and organise regional innovations. The triple helix model suggests that

> universities generate development and growth opportunities directly, through knowledge capitalisation and other capital formation projects, centring on academic entrepreneurial initiatives, such as incubation, firm formation and science parks, as well as other boundary-spanning mechanisms that are designed to capitalise knowledge created, or co-created, by universities, often, with government and industry support (Gunasekara 2004, 203).

In this model universities are considered as generators or drivers of regional development. However, Atkins, Dersley and Tomlin (1999) point out that not even technology transfer is a narrow, linear matter of patents, licences and new equipment, but a complex, holistic process involving multiple partners, and crucially dependent on the quality and nature of the interactions between the human beings involved.

The perspective of the university engagement literature is broader and the approach is developmental. The point is to make teaching and research more regionally relevant, for example by contributing to regional knowledge needs through teaching programmes or regionally focused research. The best known application of university engagement is probably service-learning, where community service is combined with classroom instruction to promote

reflective thinking and civic responsibility. The aim is to prepare students to live as engaged and informed citizens, and, on the other hand, prepare the university for a role as a civically engaged institution. Americans, in particular, stress the importance of engaging both faculty and students as members of an academic community and as citizens in democratic society. Social responsibility and civic engagement is one of the central themes of the Association for American Colleges and Universities (Checkoway 1996, Borden & Evenbeck 2005, Bringle & Malloy 1999, Ehrlich 2000, Vickers, Harris & McCarthy 2004).

The Finnish literature on regional impact and regional engagement identifies at least the following approaches: regional development, educational impact, science and technology policy, and interaction between the institution of higher education and the region (Kinnunen 2001, Mäntylä 2002). Moreover, cultural and social impacts have been discussed (Virtanen 2002). The first point of view involves the investigation of the central measures of regional development, such as indicators attached to population, employment, geographical location, and industry. The educational impact approach emphasises questions attached to students, where they come from and where are employed. Moreover, it is interested in whether technology transfer produces new enterprises and new jobs. The third point is connected to the impact of national science and technology policy on regional renewal. The fourth approach, the interactional approach, emphasises the identification of stakeholders and partners, structures created to advance these relationships, orientation (adaptive vs. proactive) and the transparency of policies. (Kinnunen 2001, 12-13, cf. Kankaala, Kaukonen, Kutinlahti, Lemola, Nieminen & Välimaa 2004, Virtanen 2002). According to Kinnunen (2001, 13), the interactional perspective reveals the many dimensions of interaction between higher education institutions and the region. In the present study the focus is on the interactional approach, although some of the elements of the other approaches must also be discussed to understand the wider context.

For the purpose of undertaking a preliminary mapping of the current content of the third task and civic mission a pilot study was conducted in 2004 by searching for articles on the third task in two labour union magazines published in Finland and in the United States. We should not forget, however, that there are 20 universities and 29 polytechnics in Finland and some 1700 research universities in the United States and the systems are difficult to compare. (Kantanen 2005.)

The Finnish magazine *Acatiimi* is published 10 times a year by the Finnish Union of University Professors (FUUP) in association with the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers (FURT) and the Finnish Union of University Lecturers. Issue 8/2003 was devoted to the theme of the third task. This was also the topic of the 2004 annual *Communicatio Academica* meeting organized by the FUUP and the FURT. The meeting was reported in *Acatiimi* issue 2/2004. *Academe* is the bimonthly magazine of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Issue 4/2000 was entitled *Are We Good Citizens? Civic Engagement and Higher Education*. The strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities and threats of the third task identified on the basis of these sources are presented in Figure 5.

Strengths
- stakeholder expectations
- regional expectations
- need for new income sources
- economic competitiveness
- employment and welfare
- need for new research and teaching methods
- contribution to scientific merits
- fostering citizenship
- help with decline in democratic participation
- sustainable development
- responsibility as a prerequisite of academic freedom

Opportunities
- autonomy and academic freedom
- interaction, dialogue
- service remains subordinate to research and teaching
- external advisers in university management
- structures, information, collaboration, leadership
- internal and joint strategies for regional development
- regional HE collaboration
- international scientific interaction
- marketing of research results to society
- conceptualisation of research as common good
- integration of civic content to curriculum
- knowledge accessible to the public

Weaknesses
- market dictates
- teaching = instruction
- lost sense of civic purpose
- disengagement from public life
- positivism, detachment and objectivity vs. engagement
- professional role vs. public intellectual role
- research and teaching must remain distinct from service
- regional engagement held in low regard and has few rewards

Threats
- the 3rd task reduced to regional mission and enterprise partnerships
- cultural values are forgotten
- cynical attitudes: the amendment does not change anything
- the amendment does not lead to any resource allocation
- confusion of the contents of the 3rd task
- tension between faculty and stakeholder expectations

FIGURE 5   Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the third task identified in recent academic discussion.

According to this very preliminary pilot study the triple helix concept dominates views on the third task in Finland. The academy seems to agree on the fundamentals of the third task: the knowledge produced in and by the international scientific community should be transmitted and applied to social and regional needs. However, the discussion is clearly centred on the welfare-producing regional impact factor and industrial cooperation while the civic purpose of higher education, community engagement, and dialogue are not considered that important. In Finland the service role has traditionally been assigned to the applied sciences, to career services, or to continuing education. At the time of the pilot study the Finnish universities lacked overall strategies of regional involvement which would include curriculum development and community service as well as technology transfer.

3.4 Stakeholder thinking and the university context

Organisational identities and images are important in this study because they are evaluated by stakeholders and have an impact on university-stakeholder relationships and dialogue. Different elements of identity are reflected in stakeholder relations but identities can also be built through stakeholder negotiations.

3.4.1 Organisational identities and images

The etymological roots of "identity" are in the Latin *idem* (same) and *entitas* (entity) (Hollway 2004). The concept of identity has been borrowed by management and communication studies from psychology and social psychology where the concept is also not unambiguous. A plain textbook definition says that identity means those personal and social qualities that are included in a person's self-image and have their origin in that person's identification with individuals and groups (Helkama, Myllyniemi & Liebkind 1998, 380). Czarniawska and Wolff (1998, 35) make a distinction between two schools of thought about identity: the psychological and essentialist, and the sociological and structuralist. The first point of view assumes that identity is one's true "I", while the second perspective assumes that the self is created in interaction with others. The authors point out that earlier the psychological and essentialist approach was dominant in organisational theory and thus an organisation's identity was "seen as that which its members believe to be its distinctive, central, and enduring characteristics". During recent years, however, more interaction-oriented views have been presented.

The success of the identity metaphor in organisational contexts can be explained by its adequacy for both organisation members and researchers (Gioia, Schultz & Corley 2002, 270). However, there has been a pungent debate about the identity metaphor and whether there is enough conceptual similarity between individual and organisational identity. Advocates argue that because the referent of the metaphor is the individual self, it provides a very rich framework for research into complex organisational life (Gioia, Schultz & Corley 2002). Opponents claim that, for example, such notions as "selfhood" or "central character" are not transferable to the organisational level and that neglectful use of metaphors and concepts lead to confusion (Cornelissen & Harris 2001).

However, identity is a central construct in the research on organisational behaviour. What makes it relevant today is the change in organisations toward flat hierarchies and organic structures. This often means that the traditional ways of showing "who we are" are neglected and, accordingly, organisational identity should live "in heads and hearts" of the members of an organisation rather than in written documentation or organisational structures (Albert, Ashforth & Dutton 2000, 13). Moreover, the boundaries between the external and internal are collapsing, and the environment and external relations are

more involved at all levels of organisational life (Hatch & Schultz 1997, Kiriakidou & Millward 2000).

"Identity is people's source of meaning and experience" (Castells 1997, 6). Castells makes a distinction between three forms of identity according to how they are built: legitimising identity, resistance identity, and project identity. Legitimising identity produces a civil society by generating organisations that reproduce the dominant structures. Castells reminds that originally the notion of civil society implied structures like churches and unions that support the state but are also rooted among people. The identity of resistance produces communities. This defensive identity is often built in situations where senses of alienation or unfair political, economical or social exclusion are experienced. Project identity produces subjects, meaning the importance of personal histories and individual lives. (Castells 1997, 8-10).

Several scholars, such as Balmer and Wilson (1998), distinguish between organisational identity and corporate identity, mainly on the grounds that organisational behaviourists discuss the former and marketing researchers the latter. Hatch and Schultz (1997, 357) hold that organisational identity is the commonly shared understanding among its members of an organisation's values and characteristics while corporate identity focuses on leadership and visual presentation. In their classic paper on organisational identity Albert and Whetten (1985) consider identity as the central, distinctive and enduring values of the organisation's employees. van Rekom (1997) holds that corporate identity consists of essential features of the firm (cf. central values), distinctive features (cf. distinctive values), and of the continuity of these features (cf. enduring values). According to Balmer and Wilson (1998), this school of thought studies to what extent the personnel identify with the organisation, and what they identify with.

Organisational and corporate identities have been considered enduring (Albert & Whetten 1985, van Rekom 1997), unstable and changing (Gioia, Schultz & Corley 2000, Wetherell 1996), multifaceted and complex (Balmer & Wilson 1998, Christensen & Askegaard 2001), and planned and purposeful (Alessandri 2001). They can be realised on the personal, interpersonal or collective levels (Brickson 2000) and in visual and behavioural cues (Markwick & Fill 1997), and formed through organisational images (Gioia, Schultz & Corley 2000) or stakeholder negotiations (Scott & Lane 2000).

In the business literature in particular corporate identity is often wholly linked to the aesthetic output of the firm. Concepts of identity and image are also often confused, despite the fact that the distinction between identity (what the organisation is) and image (how the organisation is perceived) was made as long ago as in 1970s. In her extensive mapping of the different definitions of corporate identity, presented by both practitioners and scholars, Alessandri (2001) found a common theme: corporate identity is linked to the company's public presentation. Her conceptual definition of corporate identity is "a firm's strategically planned and purposeful presentation of itself in order to gain a positive corporate image in the minds of the public". A coherent and pleasing

corporate identity can thus produce a positive image and positive reputation in the long run (see also Balmer & Wilson 1998). Not only do experiences of the organisation's identity produce its image, but mediated information about the organisation, such as what other people, or the media, have said about it, also affect its image. Thus the organisation has control over its identity but not its image. (Alessandri 2001, 177.) Cornelissen (2005, 65) holds that the right way to conceptualise corporate identity is as the totality of all corporate expressions.

Balmer (2001) distinguishes between the strands of corporate identity, organisational identity and visual identity, and introduces the encompassing concept of "business identity", which includes public and non-profit organisations as well. Whereas Albert and Whetten (1985) defined identity as central, distinctive and enduring, Balmer identifies the driving forces of leadership, values, tradition and environment and would replace "enduring" with "evolving". Balmer's exhaustive definition of identity is:

> An organisation's identity is a summation of those tangible and intangible elements that make any corporate entity distinct. It is shaped by the actions of corporate founders and leaders, by tradition and the environment. At its core is the mix of employees' values which are expressed in terms of their affinities to corporate, professional, national and other identities. It is multidisciplinary in scope and is a melding of strategy, structure, communication and culture. It is manifested through multifarious communications channels encapsulating product and organisational performance, employee communication and behaviour, controlled communication and stakeholder and network discourse. (Balmer 2001, 280).

Also the connections between corporate identity and corporate culture, and their interaction have been extensively studied (Hatch & Schultz 1997, Moingeon & Ramanantsoa 1997).

Complex external environments have led to the increasing importance of images. When the environment or an organization is hard to perceive and understand in its entirety, it is easier to rely on images (Lehtonen & Chaker 1998, 10). Images of an organisation are formed among an organisation's audiences or publics through the experiences, perceptions, impressions and information they receive of the organisation, either directly or through mediators like the media or other people. Organisational identity appears to the organisation's publics and creates images through different cues that can be deliberately planned by the organisation, or accidental (Markwick & Fill 1997). The concept of image can be considered equivalent to the concept of "perceived identity" used by Kiriakidou and Millward (2000). The authors warn of a discrepancy between the reality (the actual identity of an organisation) and the "ideal identity" (cf. target image or profile) communicated through mission statements and visual solutions. The artificial label often attached to the concept of image originates from attempts to build a personal or organisational image on something other than elements of reality. Examples can readily be found in both business and politics.

Thus the concept of image has not been very popular during recent years and it has been at least partly replaced among both scholars and practitioners by the concept of reputation. Reputation has taken root, particularly in Finland

where the verbal culture is much more deep-seated than the visual. Reputation is considered to connect more with actual deeds, to refer to stakeholders' collective evaluation of the organisation and to include both identity and image (Davies, Chun, da Silva & Roper 2003, Karvonen 1999, Luoma-aho 2005). Images are said to change more rapidly, while reputations are more durable and are built over time (Cornelissen & Thorpe 2002, Markwick & Fill 1997). Reputation is seen to consist of images based on the organisation's behaviour, communication and symbolism (Gotsi & Wilson 2001). Cornelissen and Thorpe (2002, 175) make the following distinction:

> An *image* is the immediate set of meanings inferred by a subject in confrontation/response to one or more signals from or about a particular institution. Put simply, it is the net result of the interaction of a subject's beliefs, ideas, feelings and impressions about an institution at a single point in time.

> A *reputation* is a subject's collective presentation of past images of an institution (induced through either communication or past experience) established over time.

However, despite the recent popularity of reputation, the concept of image continues to remain useful, considering the present-day emphasis on the fast tempo of change, immediacy, spectacularity – and images. Moreover, professional profile or image improvement must always be anchored in real deeds, and this requires long-term planning and patience. In this study the term profile refers to the target image, the component of organisational identity that the organisation deliberately foregrounds, for example in mission statements. In this study it is also relevant to investigate whether and how the elements of identity – leadership, values, traditions, and environment – are reflected in stakeholder relations, or whether academic identities are in fact built through stakeholder negotiations (Balmer 2001, 280).

3.4.2 Stakeholder identification

Images of different publics are not of equal value to an organisation. In the university context it may not be so crucial what the image of the university is among high school students in Lapland if the main recruitment area is Eastern Finland. Stakeholders are publics that count. They can be persons, organisations, societies, or even the natural environment (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997, 855). The core idea of stakeholder thinking is that there are other values in business besides the return to shareholders. These concern the stakes that different interest groups have invested in or their expectations of an organisation. Consequently, higher education institutions are not accountable only to the government but also to stakeholders outside the academy. The stakes in question may be tangible (like money, time, property, and legal rights) or intangible (like trust, moral claims, prestige or even emotions).

Stakeholder theory is "a theory of organisational strategy and ethics" and "addresses morals and values explicitly as a central feature of managing organisations" (Phillips, Freeman & Wicks 2003, 491, 481). Or, more properly, it

is not just one theory but rather a research tradition with elements borrowed from different fields, like ethics, philosophy and organisational social science (Wheeler, Colbert & Freeman 2003, 15).

The acknowledged father of the stakeholder approach, R. Edward Freeman (1984, 46) stated that a stakeholder is "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives". This is also called the broad view of stakeholders. The narrow view on stakeholders implies that stakeholders are the groups that an organisations depends on to survive (Mitchell et al. 1997, 856). Different stakeholder groups have been identified and weighed, for example, according to whether they are considered primary or secondary, whether they appear in internal or external coalitions, or on the basis of their wants or needs, or on their power, legitimacy, and urgency (Carroll 1993, Clarkson 1995, Mitchell et al. 1997, Näsi 1995). Mitchell et al. (1997) develop their theory of stakeholder identification through the variables of power, legitimacy, and urgency, and categorise stakeholders by seven D's: dormant, discretionary, demanding, dominant, dangerous, dependent, and definitive. The construct of power means that in a relationship one actor can get another actor to do something that he or she would not otherwise have done. Legitimacy refers to the assumption that the actions of an organisation are acceptable within the prevailing system of norms and values. Urgency refers to the stakeholder requirement for quick moves. (Mitchell et al. 1997, 869). The more the attributes of power, legitimacy and urgency can be attached to the stakeholder, the more important it is for the organisation. At the heart of the stakeholder typology model lie the definitive stakeholders, the salient group that represents all three attributes, and should thus always be prioritised. Stakeholders also move through different levels of salience, and thus environmental scanning is required to identify the status of different stakeholders.

Luoma-aho (2005, 104) criticises this stakeholder typology because it does not recognise the different levels of attributes, because the attributes given intertwine and are difficult to distinguish, and because the typology does not consider the aspect of frequency. She considers frequency of contacts a central element contributing to stakeholders' trust, loyalty and commitment to the organisation, and has modified the typology of Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997, 874) to include frequency, as presented in Figure 6.

Carroll (1991, 47) maintains that the areas where stakeholder thinking has been particularly valuable are business ethics and strategic management. In both areas stakeholder thinking has helped scholars and practitioners to describe, analyse and prescribe organisation-environment relationships within a useful framework. The author himself has been given credit for connecting stakeholder thinking to questions of business and society. Carroll saw stakeholder thinking as a key element in developing business ethics and social responsibility (Näsi 1995, 21). Also in the present study stakeholder thinking is considered a prerequisite of responsive and responsible regional engagement of institutions of higher education.
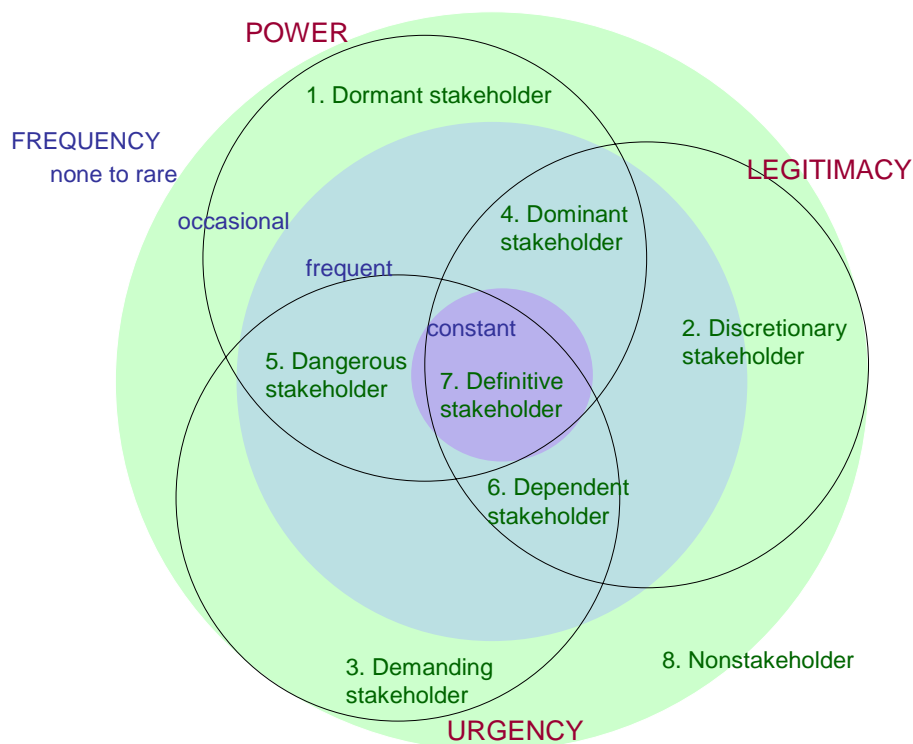
FIGURE 6 Stakeholder categorisation according to Mitchell, Agle & Wood (1997, 874) and Luoma-aho (2005, 106).

The stakeholder concept is relatively new in the field of higher education, although universities have always operated in complex local, national and international networks. In the context of public organisations, stakeholders cannot be considered as a counterforce to shareholders for obvious reasons, although in 2005 the first moves were made in Finland to enable the establishment of university-driven companies. During the years 2001-2005 the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) of the University of Twente in the Netherlands conducted a research programme "Higher Education and the Stakeholder Society". The starting point of the programme was the notion that higher education institutions were no longer accountable only to the government but also to stakeholders outside the academy. The government may thus represent the opposing force (cf. shareholders) to other stakeholders in the university context.

It can be difficult for an organisation to define and, in particular, to prioritise, its stakeholders. Attempts have also been made to define the stakeholders of higher education institutions, such as that by Henderson (2001), who discusses the educational system as a whole. Moreover, if communication is considered a strategic resource by a university, the key stakeholders should also be included in the strategic planning and strategic documents of the university[11]. For their study of stakeholder impressions and images of the

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[11] Strategic communication in the university context was the focus of research and topic of several seminar papers of a dear colleague and fellow student, Tarja Timonen, who died of a tragic illness in August 2004.

University of Jyväskylä, Chaker and the university administration chose nine stakeholder groups: students, staff, graduates, upper secondary school students, study counsellors, financiers, community influencers, small and medium sized businesses, and large corporations (Lehtonen & Chaker 1998). The grouping remains still valid, with some additions. A central group that is missing is the government, or the Ministry of Education (state influencers). This group is comparable to that of shareholders in the world of business. Another missing group is the media, or journalists, which has possibly been neglected because of its double role as both stakeholder and mediator. Moreover, a relevant addition would be other institutions of higher education. Research is global by nature, its quality is constantly being assessed by the academic community, and research networks are dense both within disciplines and across them. On the local level, universities and polytechnics are engaged in multi-faceted cooperation, including questions of regional development as well as international teacher and student recruitment.

Chaker (1998) did not classify the different stakeholders according to their primary or secondary nature, or on the basis of their power, legitimacy or urgency. The definitive stakeholders of the university, the core, are certainly the governmental actors (shareholders), staff, students, and the academic community at large. Also local decision makers may belong to this core because without them regional institutions of higher education would never have been established. However, the significance of other stakeholders, for example, the importance of financiers, is increasing, given that half of the university budget can come from sources other than state funding. In Figure 7, the previous model of stakeholder classification is combined with the supplemented stakeholder list presented by Chaker (1998).

Grunig and Hunt (1984, 141, cited by Gregory 2001, 39-40 and Bélanger, Mount & Wilson 2002, 227) divide organisational publics into enabling, functional, normative, and diffused linkages. Enabling linkages permit the organisation to exist (state influencers, financiers). Functional linkages "feed" the organisation and utilise its outputs (staff, students). Normative linkages are formed with colleague organisations (other higher education institutions). Diffused linkages are created with those groups that do not have any formal relationship with the organisation, but are interested in it (media, business, schools). Publics could also be classified according to the bonds they have with the organisation, such as geographical, social or economic bonds (Wendelin 2004).

Buchholz and Rosenthal (2005) criticise stakeholder thinking because, although stakeholders are taken into account in managerial decision making, they are nevertheless considered isolated entities, outsiders and instruments, rather than integral identity builders of the organisation. According to these scholars, the reason for this is the atomic individualism, characteristic of traditional economic theory, embedded in stakeholder thinking. Instead the writers suggest a pragmatic approach "that offers a philosophical foundation for a relational view of the self and the communal nature of corporate

relations". This approach means that communities are constructed through the "communicative adjustment" of individual and group perspectives. (Buchholz & Rosenthal 2005, 142-143). The writers argue that to achieve harmonious and enriching stakeholder relations, stakeholder perspectives must be internalised in the corporation's network of perspectives.
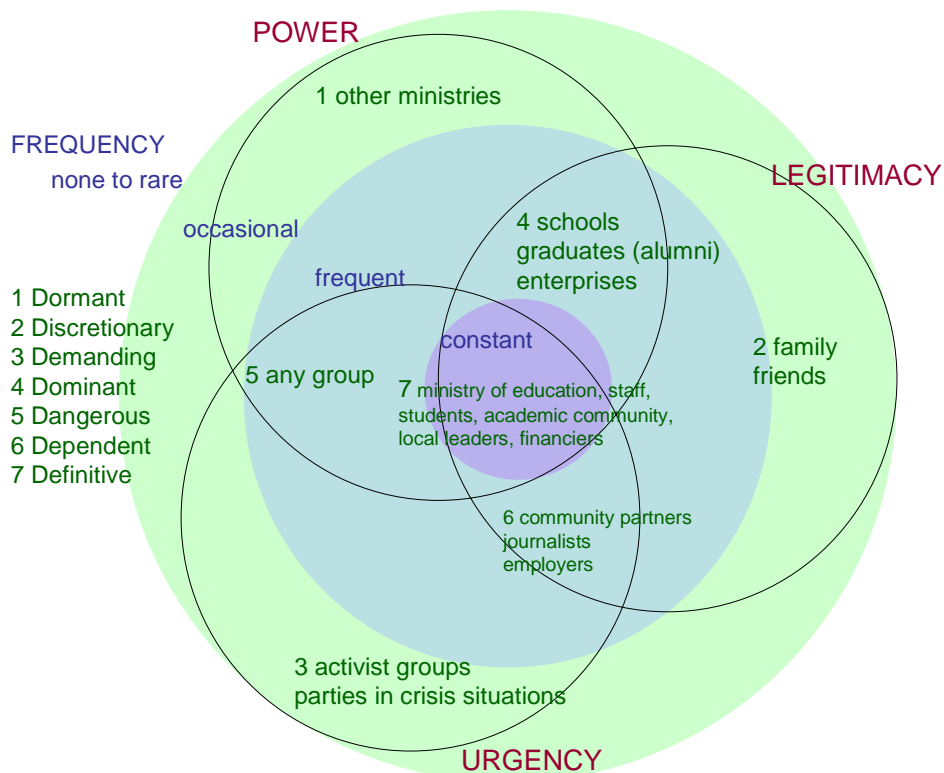
FIGURE 7 University stakeholders (Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997, 874, Luoma-aho 2005, 106 and Chaker 1998, 25).

Behind stakeholder thinking is the idea that satisfied stakeholders legitimate the existence of an organisation. Thus satisfied stakeholders legitimate the existence of a university. However, the analogy is not as straightforward as in business, where shareholders form the critical stakeholder group. Universities exist, basically, to produce new specialised knowledge, and to disseminate it. Under the pressure of increasing expectations from all quarters universities may be at risk of forgetting the kernel of their work and the order of priority of stakeholders (cf. Kankaala et al. 2004, 135, Lemola 2004, 120, Rinne & Koivula 2005, 113). A lesson to be learned from business may be that of prioritising. Stakeholder identification and prioritising can be considered as the first step towards advanced relationship enhancement programmes.

3.4.3 Images of the academy

According to Lehtonen and Chaker (1998, 11) the added value of image components is particularly important when we have a product with a high level of abstraction and when differences between competing products are small. This is obvious in the university scene where "products" like research and education services develop in the process of knowledge creation and dissemination. In Finland, which has state universities only the differences between universities are not decisive either. Stensaker and Norgård (2001, 489) point out that universities face a continuing struggle between innovation and standardisation. On the other hand, they should stress their distinct profile; on the other hand they should integrate with the network of a standardised higher education "industry". Shattock (2003, 176) points out that a good institutional image is a more important corporate asset than universities may realise. Levine (1997, 32) concludes that in the United States higher education is not at the stage of growth any more but a mature industry with stable or declining resources. As a result, higher education institutions "are moving from something akin to full-service department stores to more sharply focused boutiques". In this situation it is extremely important to know what makes a university unique and irreplaceable, to justify the answer on the basis of its organisational identity and actual deeds, and to communicate the distinctive profile of the boutique effectively to the key stakeholders. Thus image management resembles branding, which Balmer (2001, 281) attaches to "the conscious decision by senior management to distil and make known the attributes of the organisation's identity in the form of a clearly defined branding proposition." Bélanger et al. (2002, 226) consider branding as a strategic management tool for higher education institutions and hold that addressing multiple audiences with targeted messages is no longer possible but, instead, there is "an urgent need for coherence in projecting an institutional image, in coordinating all aspects of communication and services, and in identifying with a credible set of values and type of behaviour".

On the other hand, the nature of the university does not support the one-form-for-all idea. Certain strategic, operational and managerial decisions can be made on the university level, even on the faculty level, but ultimately, professors and their departments and groups are independent; unlike in any other organisation they are the core of the university. Moreover, there is reason to claim that these innovative, self-managing, entrepreneurial groups, when given the resources to explore and educate, contribute to a positive university identity and positive university image. They may be offered strategies, structures and services and provided with tools for communication or relationship building but, still, they will do the work. A bottom-heavy collegial structure has been typical of the traditional universities, although this has increasingly been replaced by tightly managed top-down structures (Shattock 2003, 19). Shattock (2003, 176) stresses, however, that in successful universities the academic departments and their initiatives are essential building blocks.

Grunig, Grunig and Dozier (2002, 281-282) also point to some characteristics of marketing communication theory that differ from the public relations approach; for example, the idea of "speaking with one voice", a preference for managing publics instead of changing organisational or managerial behaviour, and the idea that reputation can be controlled by managing the production and distribution of messages. Instead, in their view, members of an organisation should speak and listen to different publics to get new ideas, behave in a way that inspires confidence, and engage in two-way symmetrical communication to develop relationships of trust with their different publics. Grunig et al. (2002, 125) consider both image and reputation to be concepts hard to define and would rather discard them. They would prefer attributes such as reciprocity, trust, credibility, mutual legitimacy, openness, mutual satisfaction, and mutual understanding. We shall return to these in Chapter 5 of this study.

Images of the academy are formed on the basis of how well the universities succeed in fulfilling their basic responsibilities of research, teaching and service. International ranking lists are almost exclusively based on research merit, which may be easier to count, for example, in the form of publications or citations in prestigious journals. Baden-Fuller, Ravazzolo and Schweizer (2000, 625) analysed the research reputation of business schools on the basis of their peer-reviewed articles published in 1995-1998. They assume that research output is a reflection of the work of talented individuals and a positive research culture supported by organisation structures. This approach has been criticised as merely scratching the surface of reputation and as not valid because no long-term stakeholder assessments are taken into account, and because the assessment concentrates on only one dimension of higher education, research (Cornelissen & Thorpe 2002, Egron-Polak 2005). However, it serves as an example of what is considered a feature of a good research university. These rankings have an effect on the university's image within the international academic community. These evaluations reach the international stakeholder group called academic staff and also, research students seeking a springboard for their academic careers. The dark side of the emphasis on publication frequency is "publication frenzy", which may lead to template writing and decrease the value of academic work (Jacob & Hellström 2003, 51).

Teaching has gained increasing attention on the university level in Finland during the past decade and pedagogic development and student and curriculum evaluations have become an essential element of the quality management systems developed for the academy. The quality of teaching is, of course, a matter of significance to students, whether they are young full-time students who have come straight from upper secondary school or experienced professionals complementing their education in the Open University. The quality of teaching is also evaluated by the employers who see what graduates are able to accomplish.

How images of the academy are formed through the third task, service, is much harder to define and fewer measures have been developed for that

purpose. This study intends to fill a part of that gap through evaluating the regional stakeholder relationships of universities. Some studies, indeed, have concentrated on the role of stakeholders in university governance. Experiences from Belgium and the Netherlands provide an interesting parallel. In the Netherlands stakeholders have genuinely entered university governance at all levels, and the traditional "intra-university democracy" has been replaced by an "externally-oriented, management-driven structure" during the past decade (Maassen 2000, 449). These decisions have been made on the basis of the need to respond to environmental pressures and societal needs. As far as Belgium is concerned, stakeholders have been represented in the governing bodies for over 30 years but their influence is informal, not decisive. Professors are still considered the most important decision makers in universities and no direct stakeholder influence is allowed. (De Wit & Verhoeven 2000.)

The image of a given university can be different in the eyes of a high school student (a clumsy website may produce a clumsy image) or a professor (modern research approaches may produce a modern image) or a local businessman (continuous solicitations for money may produce an exploitative image). In Chaker's (1998) study stakeholders associated the University of Jyväskylä with such attributes as developing, tidy, reliable, high quality teaching, highly regarded, and successful throughout the population sample. There were, naturally, differences in the evaluations of different stakeholder groups. For community influencers, for example, the university was accessible and friendly, while financiers appreciated innovation, youthfulness, and development. It is striking, however, that Chaker did not find any connection between cooperation and perceived positive or negative image. This adds weight to the considerations that, also in the university context, relationship building and maintenance should be the focal managerial and communicational concerns, rather than attempts to manage public opinion or images.

Images become a relevant question if there is a real market environment with competition. Clark (1983) discussed the ideal types of the state system, market system and professional system. According to Clark the markets of higher education are consumer markets, labour markets, and the markets of higher education institutions. The existence of the third market situation is most evident in the United States where universities compete openly with regard to faculty, students and research funding. In the markets of higher education institutions the less valued institutions try to imitate the most valued and adopt their modes of action. This "academic drift" also pushes colleges towards university status. (Ahola & Nurmi 1997, 149, Välimaa 1997, 27.) This tendency is also evident in Finland, where polytechnics are adopting the modes of teaching and research of the universities, and changing their English names to "universities of applied sciences", not to mention the UK, where academic drift led to the granting of university status to all polytechnics in 1992. The image of a prestigious institution of higher education still seems to be that of a university.

3.5 Research results: Context of regional engagement and stakeholder dialogue

In this study particular emphasis was given to the context where university-stakeholder dialogues take place. This aim is also analogous with the attempts of qualitative studies to understand the framework in which particular interviews take place. Through the analysis of the data, answers were sought to the first research question: What are the themes and contexts that determine university-stakeholder relationships? Four such were identified: higher education policy, regional characteristics, historical roots and the profile of the university.

3.5.1 Higher education policy

The increase in the general level of education in Finland was aptly described by an interviewee who concluded that today the value of a doctorate equals that of a Master's degree in the 1930s, and that we have more people with Master's degrees today than we had high school graduates in the 1950s. This also reflects the shift towards a knowledge society in Finland that has taken place during the past 50 years.

The political context of the study was primarily reflected in reactions to the Productivity Plan for 2006-2010 of the Ministry of Education. This was considered an enormous challenge for several reasons. In Turku the aim to combine the University of Turku and Turku School of Economics and Business Administration aroused mixed feelings. On the one hand, close cooperation between the institutions of higher education has a long and fruitful history in Turku, and thus the idea was not new as such. But, on the other hand, the plans of the Ministry of Education were considered to constitute a risk to this well functioning existing cooperation between the Turku institutions of higher education. The Ministry was seen to *throw a monkey wrench into this cooperation* and to *dictate*. Also several informants stressed that things look very different from Helsinki, and the capital region was given friendly advice to start a merging process there where eight of Finland's 20 universities are located.

> Yes I can quite see that when you look at it from Helsinki or somewhere, well it looks pretty obvious that it's the easiest thing in the world [merging universities], it's located on this campus and just beside us. It would be the size of one of our faculties. Of course it looks like an easy job. As if you hardly needed to do a thing. Only it was established in 1950, and in a way it's the darling of Turku business life. [P1:34] [12]

> The School of Business Administration is a really small unit, there are 2 000 students and we are so close here just over the street and such structures are already in place. [P4:114]

Structural development was referred to as *hair-raising play-offs*, which indicates the threats included in the recent discussions of higher education policy.

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[12]   The reference stands for primary document (P) number 1, line 34 in ATLAS.ti.

However, the new challenge and new competition was also seen as a chance to make cooperation between the university and its stakeholders *more sinewy.* Moreover, the model of *university conglomerates* was seen as a possible course of development.

In Lapland the idea of merging the University of Lapland with the University of Oulu was *particularly sensitive, for the whole of Lapland.* The plan was followed by a Lappish *explosion* and it was aggressively rejected, not only within the university but also by key stakeholders, and the media. The plan was also seen to belong to the continuum of losses that Lapland has experienced during recent years. The fear was that *the bigger would swallow the smaller.*

> When there was this workgroup from the Ministry of Education they set about making plans for the universities of Oulu and Lapland to be merged, well this gave rise to such a great furore here and very wide operations, that no way. It makes no sense to merge units located over 200 kilometres away from one another. But of course there can always be cooperation. [P21:94]

This discussion also reveals the role of having one's own university as a source of remarkable pride in the region, to the extent that the university becomes merged in regional and even personal identities.

> It was grand to experience the 'uprising' over this which to my mind had nothing to do with whether we're useful or whether we're some sort of cash cow for the people in Lapland but rather as a matter of identity, that is, that people feel that the identity of Lapland is being damaged and that the university is part of this Lapland identity. [P16:70]

Another central theme of higher education policy discussed in the research interviews was that of the polytechnics. The first common regional development strategies between universities and polytechnics were drafted in 2002 at the request of the Ministry of Education. It was mentioned that *rhetorical means were applied consciously to create positive attitudes and to enable cooperation.* However, when the new productivity goals of the Ministry of Education, which meant merging institutions of higher education, were launched, the polytechnics were blamed, and the political line-up behind the two different institutions was speculated on:

> Here the universities are suffering from the fact that the polytechnic is not meeting the expectations people had of it. A costly system, too extensive, it doesn't respond to the challenge of practical education. [P1:86]

> There may well be a political aspect, the polytechnic has been elevated above all by the Social Democrats, and then on the right wing there's more emphasis on the scientific university and its role as a trailblazer. [P6:158]

Decisions made within the framework of higher education policy have determined the development of universities' stakeholder relations. At Turku the Faculty of Medicine was said to have the most advanced alumni relations because when dental education was closed down in 1992, the value of having a network of friends and supporters increased in importance. The topical themes

of higher education policy thus determine the creation, maintenance and enhancement of relationships between universities and their stakeholders.

3.5.2 Regional characteristics

The characteristics of the regions where the target universities are located are given below on the basis of the regional programmes and statistics available. The citations in the titles are taken from the interview data.

Kuopio and Northern Savo – "The Best is Yet to Come?"

The region of Northern Savo with its 251 000 inhabitants has been one of the Finnish regions with a declining population. This negative process has, however, slowed down during recent years. The rate of unemployment has also decreased but was still 10 % in 2005 in comparison to the national unemployment rate 8,4 % (Statistics Finland). The level of education in the region is lower than the Finnish average. The region considers competence development as the most important goal of regional development and thus hopes to increase the well-being, attractiveness and competitiveness of the region through new enterprises and new chances of employment. (Regional Programme of the Council of Northern Savo 2007-2010, draft of September 2006.) The main fields of employment in the region are social services (35,6 %), industry (16,2 %), commerce, tourism and catering (13,2 %), financial, real estate and other services (10,5 %) and agriculture (8,1 %).

The informants brought out the lack of big companies in the region, and the tendency towards a declining population. The future of the region was not considered positive in all its parts. The region around Kuopio was seen as growing and prosperous while *the situation in the northern and northeastern regions is much more difficult*.

Rovaniemi and Lapland – "Reindeer Wall", "Border of Civilisation"

The region of Lapland with 185 780 inhabitants has many special features in addition to its exotic natural environment. The region is large, comprising 29 % of the area of Finland but only 3,6 % of population. The average population density is at only two per square kilometre, the lowest of all the regions in the European Union. The population has fallen heavily during the past decade, according to some calculations by 14 800 people. The largest group of emigrants are 15 to 29-year-old young people who move southwards in search of better education and employment opportunities. Consequently, the population of Lapland is aging; at present 16,5 % are over 65 years old. The large geographical area and diminishing younger age groups present special challenges for the provision and quality of education. (Regional Programme of the Council of Lapland 2007-2010, draft of June 2006.) The rate of unemployment was 14,2 % in 2005 which is considerably higher than the Finnish average of 8,4 (Statistics Finland). The main fields of

employment are social services (37 %), private services (33 %), industry (14 %), primary production (6 %) and construction (6 %).

The picture of Lapland given by the informants is not very bright. The losses suffered in recent years have been heavy.

> There has indeed been a whole lot taken to the South. There have been cuts in government jobs here, the same civil servants who were once here, and whose jobs were discontinued here, well in Helsinki they created more posts in the ministries, so that the bureaucracy grew at that end. This is very difficult to understand. [P22:206]

The average educational level is low. The population is decreasing and aging, and there is lack not only of work but also of workers. The business environment was characterised by *a low number of firms, strong polarisation* and *fragmented SMEs with mainly very small firms* and only a few major companies like Bombardier, Kemijoki and Lappset. The public sector was considered strong and entrepreneurial spirit weak. It was argued that the environment does not provide long-term mental or financial resources for university cooperation either.

The regions comprising Lapland are not developing equally. The centres, tourism centres and areas close to main roads, in particular, were seen to have chances. In contrast, the problems of the fringe areas are even more acute than in Northern Savo. Eastern Lapland was a major concern in several interviews. However, Lapland was also seen to have a chance as a region in the European Union.

> We take the view that Lapland has good changes as a region in Europe. We have good preconditions for development, actually better than many other regions, if we know how to benefit from them. [P23:82]

Turku and Southwest Finland – "Not Helsinki"

The region of Southwest Finland with 454 000 inhabitants is one of the major areas of agriculture, industry and education. It has also deep historical roots, as Turku was the first capital of Finland and the home town of the first Finnish university, founded in 1640. The population of the region has been growing for a long time, and the growth has accelerated during the past decade. However, here too the level of education is slightly under the national average and the population is aging. The rate of unemployment is below the national level (7 % versus 8,4 % in 2005 according to Statistics Finland). The proportions of the different fields of employment in the region are services 65,2 %, industry 21,8 %, construction 6,5 % and agriculture 4,2 %. (Regional Programme of the Council of Southwest Finland 2005-2008.)

In Turku it became clear that there are constant comparisons going on between Helsinki and Turku, in all fields, not just between universities. The region defined itself in comparison to Helsinki as *the second important, the second biggest economic region* of Finland. Economic diversity is the strength of the region, which also makes it less vulnerable.

3.5.3 Historical roots

The history of the regional engagement of the Finnish universities was exhaustively described by the following informant:

> This Finnish university system in the '70s was as it were "regionalise", I mean, there was the concept of development policy, now you could say that in the '90s people woke up to it again, that is, we started demanding such regional strategies from all universities, then when the polytechnic system came along in the 2000s the demand emerged for these joint regional strategies and that even in the university, as it were, everyone has had to face at the end of the '90s and beginning of the 2000s once again, even those whose origin is not so much based as ours is on the concept of regional higher education policy taken on board in the '70s. [P16:30]

Today universities other than those founded at the times of decentralisation during 1950-1970 have also had to evaluate their regional role. It is worth mentioning that of the universities' stakeholders the local newspapers played an active, or even decisive role in the foundation of the university in all three regions (cf. Vuorio 2006, 36).

University of Kuopio

The respondents agreed on the importance of the foundation of the University of Kuopio in the 1960s for the development of Kuopio and the region of Northern Savo. The region was in a desperate state at that time with heavily declining population.

> The university came into being as a result of concern, a common concern which was widely felt and therefore all those involved went for it strongly and unanimously. And as could be stated today, that now there is the very same need and the same setup, of course now can be seen that this was enormously important, but in the same way it can be seen when you look forward a bit that the university continues to have a chance of being the engine of this region. And again now as in those challenges to which we had to respond, when the much discussed globalisation is rattling these regions. [P12:94]

The university developed quite slowly up to the beginning of the 1980s when it started expanding. It was stated that a strong will and wide regional support were a prerequisite of a good start to the academic life in the region. From the very beginning it was considered extremely important that young people could study close to their homes and also become locally employed. A central motivation was also to educate physicians to supply the urgent need for medical experts in Eastern Finland, where health problems were becoming serious.

> Back then at the beginning this so-called third task was surely the very first task. [P12:34]

In the 1960s the region strove to create a multidisciplinary university with the humanities and engineering sciences, but the former was then given to the city

of Joensuu and the latter to the city of Lappeenranta, and the educational suppliers of Eastern Finland were thus three.

The city of Kuopio had a decisive role in the 1960s, and still does. The central elements of those days still prevail.

> As a city Kuopio was energetic in its support for this university at the time and donated land, in a way gave the first impetus to the whole university. And on the other hand the history started with the medical faculty. You could say that they are the two distinctive things this very day, if you look at the University of Kuopio, we operate in the city of Kuopio, in the subregion of Kuopio and we continue to be a markedly medical university. [P9:27]

University of Lapland

Regional universities were considered as *the greatest achievement of regional policy during the era of Finland's independence*. Universities were seen to belong to the regional infrastructure. Regional universities produce regional equality. All regions should have equal opportunities to develop their intellectual capacity.

> We got the comprehensive school system. It was started up in Lapland, which for Lapland was the first real impetus as a civilizing influence and producer of equality so that suddenly these children could see that even though mother might be poor and father in the forest, they could still go to school. Then came the university, which increased this equality and those who had been through the comprehensive school system actually had to choose whether to go to the poly, to reindeer herding or to the university. [P22:186]

The University of Oulu was seen to pave the way for the expansion of the Finnish network of higher education institutions. All the regional universities had their origin in a strong local will and activity. For northern Finland the division of labour between Oulu and Rovaniemi was such that Oulu focused on natural sciences, medicine and engineering and Lapland on social sciences. At the beginning the University of Lapland was given education, law and social sciences with the aim of producing a work force for the public sector and conducting research in those fields. Since then the university has expanded, in particular towards the private service sector.

University of Turku

The first Finnish-speaking university was founded in Turku in 1920, only three years after Finland gained independence, with the aid of 22 040 private donors. The university had recently been pondering whether the motto *From a Free People to Free Science and Learning* that stands on the wall of the main building had become old-fashioned. They found, however, through discussions with the personnel, that since universities are the only institutions in society committed to the ideals of free thought and free research, and since they need to strike a balance between the expectations of the ministry and other stakeholders, including the EU, it is valuable to stress this basic commitment. New meanings thus became attached to the original mission statement and it was considered

very relevant indeed. It is also explained in the strategy of the university that the university *has from the beginning upheld its founding message as its starting point* [P24:18].

Some 20 years ago it was not considered appropriate for scholars to become involved with the surrounding region, and particularly not with business. Also the third task was considered as some kind of threat until it was realised that it has been a part of the university mission for decades, if not centuries. The traditions of university education are deep in Turku, dating back to 1640.

3.5.4 Stakeholder identification

Stakeholder identification was generally considered easy but not always. Deficits in stakeholder identification and in stakeholder cooperation were also recognised.

> In a way they are vague [stakeholders]. We have such groups, but we do not hobnob systematically with them, nor do we look for bilateral feedback and development notions. [P9:51]

At the time of interviewing the University of Turku was at the launch phase of a systematic stakeholder programme which was to focus on the regional stakeholders in particular.

The stakeholders identified by the different universities showed considerable overlap. At the national level, the Ministry of Education and Members of Parliament were perceived as important, as were the central authorities in ministries and other national organisations, prospective students, financiers, journalists and the other universities. At the local level the stakeholders were the university's home town and particularly its managers and decision makers, other towns in the region, regional councils, state provincial office, institutions of higher education, employers, financiers and foundations, research partners, enterprises, rural districts and local journalists. At the university level the key stakeholders were personnel, students, and alumni.

At Turku and Kuopio, both of which have faculties of medicine, the hospital districts and university hospitals were cited as important stakeholders. The Archbishopric of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland is located in Turku and thus was one of the university's local stakeholders.[13] At Lapland the importance of the rural districts was seen as considerable because the university is literally the University of Lapland, not of Rovaniemi. Of course, there too, the home town was equally valued, and, the other way around, the university was important to the home town:

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[13] On the other hand, the Archbishopric of the Finnish Orthodox Church, as well as the Synodal Office are located in Kuopio, but they were not mentioned as university stakeholders. This is probably because there is no Faculty of Humanities at the university.

> It is indeed very important for the city if we think of its employment effects alone, today there are 670 people working and almost 5 000 studying, and the international element which thereby also comes through the university, oh yes, it's important alright. [P19:42]

The internationalisation process that the membership of the European Union has accelerated since 1995 is reflected in these data, too. The representatives of the University of Turku mentioned the increasing importance of international stakeholders. The regional development policy of the European Union had brought the concept of partnership to Lapland, which was considered positive, particularly the contacts between the university and the regional development authorities.

The strategies of the three universities do not say much about their stakeholder relationships, except at Kuopio where *strong relationships with strategic partners* are emphasised. Strategic partners are those *whose interests coincide with our own*. It must be noted that partners cover some groups of stakeholders but not all. The strategic partners of the University of Kuopio include

> other universities and higher education institutions, national research bodies (VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, Finnish National Public Health Institute, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Geological Survey of Finland, Finnish Meteorological Institute), individual enterprises and communities and also public sector organisations [P26:334]

Stakeholder thinking includes the idea that stakeholders are not always friendly. Stakeholders also consist of groups that can be surprising and demanding or even dangerous, if they are not recognised in time through environmental scanning. Also the universities studied here recognised some stakeholder groups that can cause harm. The questions of animal testing and gene technology have been sensitive in Kuopio and targeted by activist groups. In Lapland the rights of the only indigenous population of the European Union, the Sami, have caused heated debate but this has not harmed the university; on the contrary, the university has occasionally had a mediating role. The universities seem not to have, at least not at the managerial level, any guidelines on how to conduct dialogue with demanding or dangerous group of stakeholders.

3.5.5 Target profiles and perceived profiles

Target profiles

It was assumed that the target profile of the university would be found, firstly, in the mission statement of the university, and secondly, in the university's key strategic documents. A good mission statement would profile the university, combining its roots, its current state, and vision for the future, and would thus reflect the identity of the university (Åberg 2000, 134). A good mission

statement is also a brand proposition, a promise to the organisation's publics about its tasks and commitments.

All three universities have mission statements; however this is not the case across the academy. The main fields of the University of Kuopio are medical and health sciences, reflected in its statement *Health, Environment, Wellbeing*. Also the strategy of the university emphasises the focus on health and environmental sciences and professional welfare expertise. The University of Lapland has always focused on the Nordic dimension and profiles itself with the slogan *For the North – by the North*. In its strategy the university aims at being the leading centre of expertise in Europe with regard to the people and society of the North. The mission statement of the University of Turku, *From a Free People to Free Science and Learning*, reflects the historical roots of the university as explained in Chapter 3.5.3. The university is, however, in the process of developing new core messages and a new mission statement for its external relations and branding purposes.

The key strategic documents of three Finnish universities reveal that they all aim at high quality, national and international recognition and an inspiring learning environment. The Turku strategy emphasises the role of talented and skilled people and their commitment to the university community. The University of Turku also stresses its multidisciplinarity and response to society's needs and development of the surrounding society.

Perceived profiles (images)

The images of the universities were evaluated by university representatives and by stakeholder representatives.

The University of Kuopio had deliberately increased the visibility of its activities. The university representatives were of the view that a clear profile helps the environment to know what the university is. To them the image of the university reflects its research-intensiveness, international networks, innovative approaches and future orientation. The small size of the university was considered as an eventual weakness. Moreover, the international scientific profile was seen to have the effect of making the relationship with the region a bit vague. The image of the university had suffered from some well-publicised cases of scientific fraud in the late 1990s but was evaluated to be positive today. However, journalists were still asking about these cases and their negative effect, but the university was said to be so strong that such cases cannot harm it. On the other hand, these cases were felt to have led people to think ill of the university and this was reflected in occasional unfriendly jokes about the university among stakeholders.

To the stakeholders of the University of Kuopio the university is relatively small for a university, but suitably so, as students also can have some power and the distance to the administration remains short. Despite the fact that a university is a rigid organisation as such, Kuopio was perceived as a young, good, international and dynamic research university. Its profile as a university committed to well-being was considered recognisable and successful. On the

other hand, the university was expected to live according to its mission of Health, Environment and Well-being, for example, in terms of making environmental friendly choices and avoiding pollution. The university was seen to have some narrowness yet also depth in its fields of competence. The stakeholders were still reminded of the previous case of scientific fraud unexpectedly but this was less often than before. The university was given credit for its ability to refine its top competence into products and new enterprises. The fields of the university were considered relevant for the future and for the region.

> The same dynamic spirit that there was at the beginning, has endured, because all the time the university is becoming markedly internationalised and has sharpened its profile, sought its own path and in my estimation also found such strengths in research and expertise in which to rise to the international level and specifically in those areas where there is demand and, to put it in commercial terms, markets. [P12:26]

At the University of Lapland the university representatives felt that the university's commitment to the northern dimension is so obvious to its stakeholders that the university is automatically invited to all activities connected with regional development. On the other hand, the image of a regional university had also been a burden and limitation to that of the university when compared to an international scientific university, but these roles were not seen to contrast today but rather to overlap.

The stakeholders of the University of Lapland considered the university to be a small, convenient, flexible and relaxed community. Its small size makes it easy to settle matters and brings students close to the teachers. The university was characterised as very dynamic and development-orientated, courageous, extremely important, popular and appreciated. The university had acquired legitimacy as a university. However, the university was seen to be in adolescence and only now in the process of becoming mature and adult. The northern, arctic profile was clearly recognised and the university name, the University of Lapland (not Rovaniemi), was seen to imply a regional role. A certain conservativeness appeared in the form of resistance to new productivity plans.

The university was seen to have had a notable regional and social role for the development of Lapland, and had become increasingly effective in this task. A new role was expected to be found in the wider Barents region. The efficiently built campus area, 25 years under construction, profiled the university strongly. The profile of the university had also been under construction as the needs of the region and of society had changed. It was only during recent years that the university had been active in fields that could benefit, for example, the business life of Lapland.

> I suppose the University of Lapland has gone quite a long way along the line of development, that it was established for the education of civil servants for Lapland who at the moment are surely not needed. We were supposed to train lawyers since it was not easy to get judges to come to Lapland and then administrative officials.

Now the way things are going they will certainly not be needed, so in 20 years the university has needed to take another look at what it's actually training people for. [P21:102]

One week after the interviews in Rovaniemi were completed in April 2006, the University of Lapland was to elect a new rector. The situation was exceptional since the same rector had been in office since the foundation of the university 27 years earlier. The long-term rectorship of a strong, colourful, radical and hardworking leader and active politician profiled the university strongly, and the change to come evoked both hopes and fears among stakeholders.

There's been the same rector for 27 years, who built the infra and all the houses and cleared the wilderness and then the university a great change… maybe change is expected. [P19:162]

He is a pretty overbearing man so that it will be interesting to see what pressures are relieved when this long term ends. He has been extremely efficient and such a lobbyer that he has obtained enormous amounts of funding and direct connections to the Social Democratic Party… without those social connections the University of Lapland would never have been built as it was. [P21:138]

You don't achieve anything unless you have a bit of edge. [P22:178]

The stakeholders were so attached to the rector that they had suggested that the university would establish a new chancellor's post to keep him available and to benefit from his contact network. The university, however, did not forward the initiative.

At Turku the university representatives were of the opinion that the university's image is based on its strong tradition of research and education, multidisciplinarity and internationality. Image was considered important, for example in student recruitment. The image of the university had long been conservative and protective and attempts had been made to create a more dynamic and flexible image, yet on the basis of long traditions. The long tradition within the humanities had contributed to an image the university wished to correct: poor employment of graduates was not true. Moreover, the long traditions and conservativeness had contributed to the trustworthiness of the university. This trustworthiness had been challenged, however, by a serious case of scientific fraud which received enormous attention and media publicity in 2001.

It was recognised that at a multidisciplinary university profiling has special features. Sharpening the profile means focusing on some fields and not on all, which can be a problem for the scientific community.

For the stakeholders of the University of Turku the university was among the best in Finland, of high quality in education, internationally renowned for its research, multidisciplinary, very active and innovative, and an engine of development in the region.

We do indeed have a good university where you can take a degree as you choose and the choice of minor subjects is really big, and it is just that liberal education and

> academic freedom that you can educate yourself and then offer that in a way to working life. [P4:250]

The University was seen to have positively approached the media, business and the rest of society and to currently be in close interaction with local companies.

> Earlier the image that came across was that it had withdrawn into its shell, in formal terms into its ivory tower, but now there is much lively interaction with the rest of society. [P6:50]

On the other hand, the long history of the university was seen to partly restrict flexibility in terms of change and external relations.

3.6 Summary and conclusions

In this chapter the context where university-stakeholder dialogues take place was sketched through the previous research on regional engagement. An interactional view on regional relations was adopted and stakeholder thinking and organisational profiles were discussed. On the basis of the main data, the themes of higher education policy, regional characteristics, historical roots and the profile of the university were seen to determine the university-stakeholder relationship.

It was surprising that the current themes of national higher education policy determine the university-stakeholder relationship to such a great extent. Is it that the productivity plan and structural development that are now being implemented are something new, never before experienced, or is this always the case? The recent plans that aim at higher productivity from higher education institutions through mergers and federations are extremely interesting in the light of this data. At Turku these efforts were considered risky since they were seen to threaten the existing well functioning cooperation between the local universities. At Lapland the university had become so important to the identity of the region that when the autonomy of the university was perceived as in danger, the Lappish identity was also perceived as endangered. In contrast, to preserve a branch of education considered important to the region, business administration, the University of Kuopio chose to work towards a federation with the University of Joensuu. The consequences of this federation from the point of view of regional stakeholders are worth considering.

Regional characteristics frame the university-stakeholder cooperation. In Lapland the conditions for development are very poor compared to those in Southwest Finland, the first suffering from a loss of population, long distances and a fragmented business life, the latter being among the most powerful growth areas of Finland and an educational centre with three universities and two polytechnics. In Lapland in particular the expectations held of the

university are enormous and the strategic question is: How do we keep this region alive?

Even the age of the institution of higher education would appear to determine stakeholder contacts. The universities studied were 86 years (Turku), 40 years (Kuopio) and 27 years (Lapland) old in 2006. Turku is an old university in the Finnish context, but in the international ranking lists, for example, the top universities tend to have some hundreds of years of history behind them (e.g. Shattock 2003, 10). The age of the university appeared in utterances about the University of Turku as somewhat inflexible and as a prisoner of its history but nevertheless in the process of opening up towards the surrounding society, about the University of Kuopio as middle-aged and self-confident, and about the University of Lapland as an adolescent still searching for its role. The foundation of all three universities had been preceded by unanimous regional – or in the case of Turku, national – efforts.

The stakeholders recognised very well the distinct profiles of Kuopio and Lapland. Moreover, the Kuopio profile, with the focus on health and wellbeing, and the Lapland profile, with the focus on northern questions, were considered successful. It was also an interesting result that the profile of the university was perceived by its stakeholders to have adequate regional relevance, even if there had been a need to rebuild it several times during the history of the university and with changes in the environment. This was particularly the case in Lapland and in Northern Savo.

The University of Turku was recognised for its high quality research and teaching and for its success in different evaluations, both national and international. The university is so large that it was mainly evaluated by the stakeholders through the contacts they had had, either with the rector, or with a specific faculty. High quality and research were attached to the Turku profile perhaps more clearly than to the other two universities who also aim at high quality and international recognition. However, all three universities had succeeded in delivering their target profile to their regional stakeholders in a consistent way. At the regional level, there was no clear sign of fragmentation or incoherence in the university profile, or discrepancy between the communicated profile and stakeholder impressions. The universities of Kuopio, Lapland and Turku thus have a solid basis for their marketing efforts.

It is not, perhaps, surprising that the stakeholders recognised the central features of the university profile, as most of them shared a history of over 20 years with the university and knew both the university and the region thoroughly. In their evaluations they could rely on their knowledge, personal experiences and perceptions. Moreover, these stakeholders were all friendly stakeholders with positive attitudes towards the university. Therefore, both the geographical and mental distance to the university was short. It can be assumed that as the geographical or mental distance grows, the importance of images increases. This means that the further the reach, the more attention must be paid to the consistency and coherence of messages and actions. This was

discussed at Turku in particular, where the institutions of higher education were planning new international outreach activities.

However, although it was natural that the stakeholders interviewed knew their partner university thoroughly, they also evaluated it within a wider framework. These people are all involved in several regional, national and international professional and private networks and are thus able to assess the university from distance, in comparison to other partner institutions, and to other institutions of higher education. Yet the dedication of regional stakeholders to their university is so unconditional that it can be asked whether the universities have fully comprehended what a resource and what steadfast support they can draw on. Furthermore, it can be asked if their loyalty is taken for granted rather than appreciated and cherished. All three universities or professors from them had recently been in court for different reasons, including misuse of significant amounts of research funding. These cases were mentioned in the interviews in passing but they did not diminish the trust in the university in the region. However, because such cases tend to become breaking news they were seen to damage the university image on the national level.

Thus, it is not enough that the top management of the university is responsible in its deeds and relationships, but the whole organisation must be. This is a reminder of the role of values as one of the four cornerstones of organisational identity. The other three are leadership, tradition and environment. It became clear that the identity of a higher education institution still appears to its stakeholders through their managers, traditions and campus environments. The impact of the top management and campus environment on the university image was particularly evident at Lapland, where a change of rector was a topical question after 27 years, and where the campus had been under construction for almost as long.

It is obvious that not only the definitive stakeholders (those who are already there) but other stakeholders are also marching into the academy. Stakeholder identification is a start but not enough. We should know what they think of our organisation, what kind of needs they have, what kind of communication they expect and how often they wish to be contacted (Juholin 2001, 163). In these turbulent times the concept of identity and its reflection in the university's environment may become enormously significant for the university's stakeholder contacts. The university personnel contribute to the identity of the university and thus to the external profile. Pihavaara (2007) brings interesting viewpoints to bear on the questions of identity and profile in her Master's thesis on the profile of the University of Kuopio. She finds that even though the personnel consider the profile of the university to be clear and unique, they do not commit to this profile unreservedly. Particularly those who experience that the profile does not include their field of research, find it hard to see their work as important since they do not feel that they are a part of the strategic future of the university. Macfarlane (2005, 309) concludes that the state of academic citizenship is unpromising. He suggests that the collegiality of faculty life is strained, for example, by ever more fractured and specialised

discipline-based communities. Today it may be hard to commit even to one's own department. As university organisations become more complicated, their staff and students increasingly come from more and more heterogeneous backgrounds, and their responsibilities are being diversified, it is relevant to ask what actually is the organisation and the profile that its members identify with, and whether there are notable gaps between its external and internal messages.

4   CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

This chapter aims to answer the second research question: What does responsible academic work mean in the region where the university is located? This chapter draws parallels between the business concept of corporate responsibility (CR) and the responsibilities of public organisations, universities in particular. It links stakeholder theory to the larger concept of CR and emphasises the usefulness of stakeholder theory when outlining the meaning of CR in the context of higher education. It equates the concepts of community involvement and regional engagement. The chapter looks at the motives and prerequisites of community involvement and maps the implementations of CR in HEIs.

4.1   Corporate responsibility and related concepts

The theme of responsible academic work is approached through the concept of corporate responsibility (CR)[14] and multifarious variants and interpretations of it. Today the concept of corporate responsibility is seen to include economic, environmental and social dimensions and this so called triple bottom line contributes to the performance of a company (Juholin 2003, 44, Frankental 2001, 19). It is examined here whether the concept is applicable in the context of higher education. The aim is also to explore stakeholder theory in connection with CR thinking and bridge these two theories.

There is reason to ask whether CR can be applied to a public organisation. The origin of CR is in business and in the demands of stakeholder theory to

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[14]   The term corporate responsibility and initials CR (in Finnish *yritysvastuu*) are preferred here as an overarching concept for an organisation's economic, environmental and social responsibilities. Yet, as in many academic articles the overarching concept is corporate social responsibility (in Finnish *yhteiskuntavastuu*), CSR is also used. The terminology is confusing, particularly in Finnish where CR refers directly to a business concept. (See also Marsden 2006, 39.)

satisfy not only shareholders' needs but also the needs of other stakeholders in the society. Although CR in the private sector has been studied intensively during the past few years, the public sector has remained unexplored. The idea of responsibility has been embedded in the basic values of public service, and it has been taken for granted in democratic societies. Public organisations are a part of this society and the demands of responsible behaviour, benefiting society are deep in the roots of public organisations. The change in thinking during the past decade has, however, revived debate about what public services are for, who should be served, and how.

In the past, public organisations took care of functions that were not seen as suitable for private enterprise, such as health care or social services. There has been a marked, even dramatic, change in thinking during the past decade. Public organisations also used to have a monopoly in the field in question. This is not the case today, and nor is it in the field of higher education. What remain are the goals and basic values of a democratic society, such as equality, fairness and shared responsibility (Nieminen 2000, 111). The idea of social responsibility thus fits public organisations today better than ever. Public organisations may even need a reminder of their social role now that business economics trends, like performance-based management, have been introduced, with the accompanying threat that managerialism may take over the traditional values of public service. Higher education institutions are being challenged to develop a new civic engagement as well.

Denhardt and Denhardt (2001, 400) outline some of the principles of the new public service. Public servants must help citizens articulate and meet their shared interests rather than attempt to control or steer society in new directions. The goal of public service is to create shared interests and shared responsibility. According to Denhardt and Denhardt, policies and programs meeting public need are most effectively and responsibly achieved through collective effort and collaborative processes. What is in the public interest is the result of a dialogue about shared values. Hence public servants should focus on building a relationship of trust and collaboration with and among citizens. Further, public servants must be attentive to more than the market, for example to statutory and constitutional law, community values, and citizen interests. Public organisations and their networks are more likely to be successful in the long run if they are operated through a process of collaboration and shared leadership based on respect for all people. And, finally, the public interest is better advanced by public servants and citizens committed to making a meaningful contribution to society than by entrepreneurial managers.

In relation to some of the central attributes cited above, some of the principles that could steer the development of organisational communication in modern public organisations can be outlined, such as shared responsibility, collective effort and collaborative processes, dialogue about shared values, relationships of trust and collaboration, community values and citizen interests, respect for all people, and commitment to making a meaningful contribution to society.

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4.1.1 Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a fruit of the 1950s and Bowen's book *Social Responsibilities of the Businessmen* (1953). Academic debate on the concept dates back to the 1970s, but since 1990 there has been a steady increase in the number of publications in the field (de Bakker, Groenewegen & den Hond 2005). McGuire (1963, 144, cited by Carroll 1989/1993, 144) states that the idea of social responsibility supposes that the firm not only has economic and legal obligations, but also certain responsibilities to society which extend beyond these obligations. The concept has developed from an awareness of social and moral concerns to particular issues, like product safety, or honesty in advertising. Archie B. Carroll's trailblazing four-part definition of CSR, presented in Figure 8, contains economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic (or voluntary or discretionary) responsibilities.

PHILANTHROPIC
Responsibilities
Be a good corporate citizen.
Contribute resources
to the community;
Improve quality of life.

ETHICAL
Responsibilities
Be ethical.
Obligation to do what is right, just,
and fair. Avoid harm.

LEGAL
Responsibilities
Obey the law.
Law is society's codification of right and wrong.
Play by the rules of the game.

ECONOMIC
Responsibilities
Be profitable.
The foundation upon which all others rest.

FIGURE 8   The pyramid of corporate social responsibility (Carroll 1991, 42).

Since the academic research in the field has been characterised by the proliferation, bordering on the chaotic, of the conceptual terminology. The field has also reached a stage where these concepts have been described and analysed in detail (de Bakker, Groenewegen & den Hond 2005, Garriga & Melé 2004, Matten, Crane & Chapple 2003, Waddock 2004). For example, social responsibility has, at least partially, been replaced by social responsiveness or, alternatively, by corporate citizenship (Waddock 2004). It has been argued that "responsibility" emphasises motivation rather than performance, while "responsiveness" would be more dynamic and action-oriented. Sethi (1975, cited in Carroll 1989/1993, 40 and Wheeler, Colbert & Freeman 2003, 10) suggested in as long ago as the 1970s a three-stage schema for the classification

of corporate behaviour in responding to social needs: social obligation, social responsibility, and social responsiveness. Social obligation means meeting minimum standards, such as legal obligations or the needs of the market forces. Social responsibility means bringing corporate behaviour in the line with the prevailing social norms, values, and expectations. Social responsiveness, for its part, means recognition of the corporation's adaptive, anticipatory and preventive role in the social system.

Frederick (1998) outlines the development of CSR through four stages. He calls the ethical-philosophical view on corporate social responsibility CSR_1, the action-oriented managerial concept of corporate social responsiveness CSR_2, the ethics and morality-based concept of corporate social rectitude CSR_3, and includes religion in CSR_4. The theory of corporate social performance for its part extends Carroll's domain of social responsibility, includes the stakeholders, and draws attention to social consequences (e.g. Boyle 2004).

Professor Sandra Waddock (2004) from Carroll School of Management clarifies the corporate responsibility-related terminology as follows. She also asks whether some rationalisation or consolidation of terminology would not be appropriate.

TABLE 8   Key terms/competing ideas in the evolution of corporate citizenship (Waddock 2004, 6).

- Corporate social responsibility (CSR — CSR1)
  - a   Corporate social responsiveness (CSR2)
  - b   Carroll's pyramid of corporate responsibilities
  - c   Corporate social rectitude/ethics (CSR3)
  - d   Corporate social religion (CSR4)
- Corporate social performance (CSP)
- Alternative CSR3s
  - a   Corporate social relationships
  - b   Corporate social reputation
- Corporate responsibility (CR)
- Stakeholder approach/theory
  - a   Instrumental, descriptive, normative, narrative
  - b   Stakeholder management
  - c   Stakeholder relationships
  - d   Stakeholder engagement
- Business ethics and values, including nature-based values
  - a   Economizing
  - b   Power aggrandizing
  - c   Ecologizing
  - d   Attunement
- Boundary-spanning functions including:
  - a   Issues management
  - b   Public affairs
  - c   Employee relations
  - d   Investor relations
  - e   Public relations
  - f   Customer relations
  - g   Supplier relations
  - h   Corporate community relations (CCR)
- Corporate Community Involvement (CCI)
- Corporate citizenship (CC)
     Business citizenship

Waddock (2004, 10) holds that the definition of corporate citizenship (CC) integrates two streams of thinking: corporate social responsibility and stakeholder theory. This term has gained popularity, particularly in business but it is still questionable whether an organisation can act as a citizen. The terms corporate citizenship and corporate responsibility (CR) are usually interchangeable. According to Waddock corporate social responsibility (CSR) implies, as a subset of corporate responsibility, a firm's voluntary community involvement activities, focused on improvement and development. Corporate social performance (CSP) for its part includes the idea of outcomes and assessment. De Bakker, Groenewegen and den Hond (2005) made a bibliometric analysis of 30 years of research and theory on CSR and CSP. They note that for some scholars CSP is an overarching concept which includes responsibilities, responsiveness, policies and actions. They conclude that CSR is today a managerial and strategic speciality, yet vibrant and developing. (de Bakker et al. 2005, 284, 310.)

Waddock (2004) illustrates the root concepts of corporate responsibility and its different practical implications by the following schematic diagram (Figure 9). It does indeed help in mapping the field and perceiving the development of CR thinking.
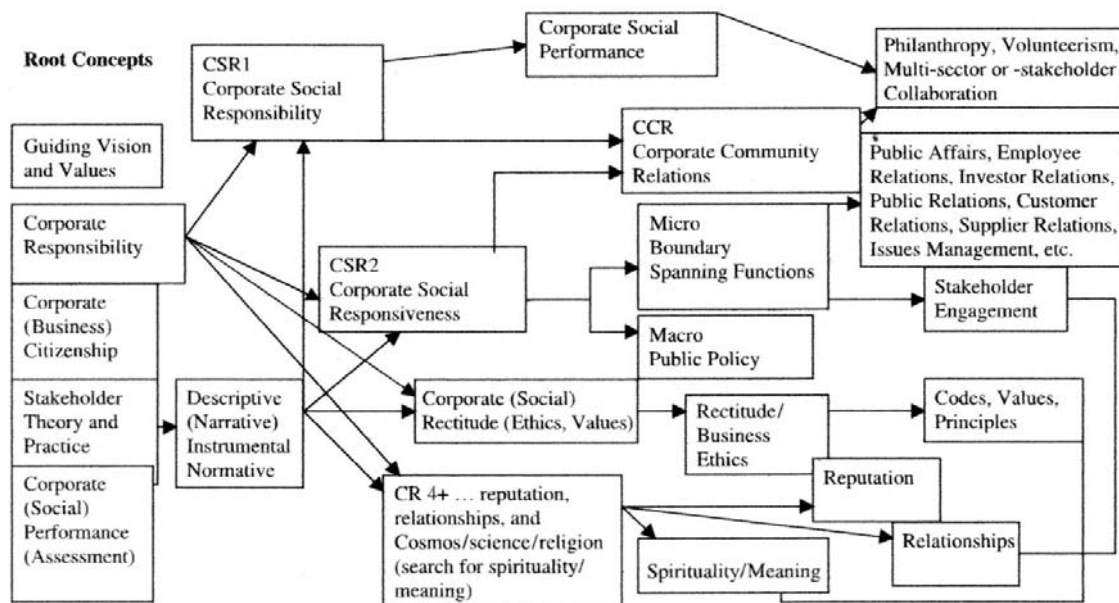
FIGURE 9   A schematic diagram of corporate citizenship/responsibility (Waddock 2004, 12).

Garriga and Melé (2004) made an extensive survey of corporate social responsibility theories with the focus on the interaction between business and society. Their assumption is that CSR approaches are focused on one of these aspects of social reality: economics, politics, social integration, or ethics. They divide CSR theories into instrumental, political, integrative, and ethical theories. Instrumental theories consider CSR as means to profits. Political

theories emphasise the social power of corporation. Integrative theories consider that business must integrate social demands. Ethical theories recognise that ethical values are embedded in the relationship between business and society. (Garriga & Melé 2004, 52-53.)

Various arguments have been offered against CSR thinking. The most famous are probably those of Milton Friedman, which appeared from the 1960s on. According to Friedman social matters are not the concern of business but should be resolved either by the free market system or by the government through legislation. (Carroll 1989/1993, 37.) Advocates of corporate responsibility thinking claim that because it is also business's fault that social problems arise, they should also play a role in ameliorating these problems. It is in firms' self-interest to act responsibly in the long run. A proactive orientation to problems is less costly than a reactive one. (Carroll 1989/1993, 37-39.)

The acknowledged father of stakeholder thinking, Ed Freeman, has also joined the critics and claimed that CSR has outlived its usefulness. Freeman and Velamuri (2006) argue that CSR supports the so called separation thesis, that business is something separate from ethics or society. According to them it is destructive to think that companies need to do good works because the underlying structure of business is not good, or is morally neutral. Another criticism is that "corporate" refers to large corporations, not to any business. Hence, the authors suggest the idea of "company stakeholder responsibility" which would provide, not just semantics, but "a new interpretation of the very purpose of CSR", and integrate business, ethics and societal considerations (Freeman & Velamuri 2006, 11). This view is particularly well-suited to the purposes of this study on public organisations, and will be discussed later in this chapter.

Critical voices have been heard arguing against the linking of corporate responsibility and public relations. For example Frankental (2001, 23) considers corporate social responsibility as the invention of public relations professionals. He argues that real substance for CSR can be found through fundamental improvements, such as that all stakeholders should be included and the implementation of CSR should be benchmarked and audited and open to public scrutiny. He objects to the fact that in organisational structures CSR is located in public relations departments, which he calls "peripheral activity" (2001, 22), and in efforts to achieve external recognition for the firm's community engagement instead of embedding CSR across the organisation horizontally and vertically. Peter Frankental is an Amnesty International officer, and his view is that of the non-profit organisation. However, an established public relations scholar, Jacquie L'Etang (1994, 122) has pointed to the problematic nature of the relationship between public relations work and CSR. She says that if the requirements of propaganda-type tactics become too dominant over two-way symmetrical communication and Kantian respect for others, then ethical problems will arise. These problems are connected to the motivation of the firm, to the moral value of CSR programmes, and also to the role of public relations in society. As a response to this critic, Juholin (2003, 47) argues that

organisations can do the right thing and enhance their reputation at the same time without these goals being contradictory.

4.1.2 Corporate citizenship (CC)

The notion of corporate citizenship (CC) has become synonymous with corporate responsibility during recent years (e.g. Waddock 2004). Carroll (1998) for example defines CC through the same economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic factors as he used to define CSR in his earlier writings (Carroll 1989/1993, see also Maignan & Ferrell 2001). Garriga and Melé (2004) classify corporate citizenship thinking under political theories. Waddock (2004, 10) considers corporate citizenship as a root concept of CSR and holds that corporate citizenship attaches stakeholder theory to CSR. She says that scholars who think that corporate responsibility or citizenship is manifested through impacts on stakeholders tend to integrate CSR and stakeholder theory.

Matten and Crane (2003, 10-11, 2005) in their provocative article explain the rise of corporate citizenship through globalisation, claiming that it has shifted some of the responsibility for protecting citizenship rights away from governments, and that corporations have increasingly filled that gap. Thus corporations and citizenship would meet at the point where the state is no longer the only guarantor of citizenship. Corporations should not be considered as citizens like individuals are, but as administrators of some aspects of citizenship for individuals. Consequently, corporate citizenship could be conceptualised through the social role of the corporation in administering citizenship rights as a provider of social rights, as an enabler of civil rights, and as a channel to political rights. (Matten & Crane 2003, 13.) For example, corporate citizenship initiatives like helping deprived neighbourhoods or schools struggling with tight budgets were originally government tasks. The authors write from the British perspective and refer to the neo-liberal revolution of the 1980s which led to a policy of cutbacks. In Scandinavia the situation is quite different and governments are still able to take responsibility for these duties. However, some of these developments can be recognised there, too, and the consequences of tight budgets in the fields of education, social and health services crop up in the news on a daily basis.

Matten and Crane have also met with sharp criticisms and the idea has been considered speculative and lacking in empirical evidence (van Oosterhout 2005). van Oosterhout asks, whether corporate citizenship can be fitted into the central feature of citizenship, symmetry between rights and responsibilities (van Oosterhout 2005, 679). However, the discussion reveals the need of definition and elaboration within the field of CSR and related concepts.

4.1.3 Company stakeholder responsibility

Stakeholder theory can be considered as an ethically based theory ever since Ed Freeman's *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach* was published in 1984. The theory is a theory of organisational strategy and ethics, as it considers morals and values to constitute a central feature in the managing of organisations (Phillips, Freeman & Wicks 2003, 480-481).   The principles underpinning stakeholder management are to achieve maximum overall cooperation between all stakeholders and corporate goals, and to apply effective strategies that deal simultaneously with issues affecting multiple stakeholders (Garriga & Melé 2004, 59).

Donaldson and Preston (1995, 66) claim that even though stakeholder theory can be justified from the descriptive, instrumental and normative perspectives, the normative base is the underpinning of the theory. The basic ideas of the normative core are that

> (a) Stakeholders are persons or groups with legitimate interests in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity. Stakeholders are identified by their interests in the corporation, whether the corporation has any corresponding functional interest in them. (b) The interests of all stakeholders are of intrinsic value. That is, each group of stakeholders merits consideration for its own sake and not merely because of its ability to further the interests of some other group, such as the shareowners. (Donaldson & Preston 1995, 67.)

Waddock (2004, 11) concludes that in stakeholder theory stakeholder relationships are the very basis of value added and strategic initiative. According to her stakeholder theory has been connected to CR or CC when it has been recognised that the company's responsibility is manifested through its decisions, actions and impacts on stakeholders or on the natural environment. Stakeholder management is seen to consist of specific attitudes, structures and practices as recommended by stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston 1995, 67, 87).

The Clarkson Center for Business Ethics at the University of Toronto (1999, 4) has, on the basis of research into stakeholder theory and of hundreds of comments from the Center's network of researchers and practitioners, developed a set of principles of stakeholder management where the focus is on what managers should do. Managers should acknowledge and monitor the concerns of legitimate stakeholders and listen to and openly communicate with them. They should adopt processes and modes of behaviour that are sensitive to stakeholders. They are presumed to recognise the interdependence of efforts and rewards among stakeholders, and work cooperatively. Managers should avoid activities that might jeopardise human rights or give rise to risks, and acknowledge the potential conflicts between their own role and their legal and moral responsibilities for stakeholders and address these conflicts, for instance, through open communication.

Freeman also emphasises in his recent articles the managerial approach and adopts that view that stakeholders have names and faces, which shifts the

emphasis from generic stakeholder groups to individual relationships. While the normative approaches concentrate on how the stakeholders legitimate the existence of the organisation, managerial approach concentrates on value creation and on the interests of the stakeholders affected its decisions. (McVea & Freeman 2005, 60-61, Freeman & Velamuri 2006, 13.)

Freeman discusses managing for stakeholders instead of stakeholder management, meaning that the central aim of the company is to make stakeholders better off, and to understand how the relationships between different stakeholders work (Freeman, Harrison & Wicks, Forthcoming, 9). Freeman et al. would replace the concept corporate social responsibility with the concept of company stakeholder responsibility, which they see as consisting of four levels of commitment: the basic value proposition, principles of sustained stakeholder cooperation, broader societal issues, and ethical leadership (Freeman & Velamuri 2006, 21). Moreover, they present ten principles of company stakeholder responsibility, as presented in Table 9.

TABLE 9   Ten principles for company stakeholder responsibility (Freeman & Velamuri 2006, 22).

(1)   We see stakeholder interests as going together over time. The process of value creation is a joint process.
(2)   We see stakeholders as real people with names and faces and children. They are complex. (see also McVea & Freeman 2005)
(3)   We seek solutions to issues that satisfy multiple stakeholders simultaneously.
(4)   We engage in intensive communication and dialogue with stakeholders, not just those who are 'friendly'. Critics are especially important dialogue members.
(5)   We commit to a philosophy of voluntarism – to manage stakeholder relationships ourselves, rather than leaving it to government. An organisation must, of its own will, undertake to satisfy its key stakeholders.
(6)   We generalise the marketing approach. Marketing techniques are needed to segment stakeholders to provide better understanding of their needs and marketing research tools to understand the multi-attribute nature of stakeholder groups.
(7)   Everything that we do serves our stakeholders. We never trade off the interests of one versus the other continuously over time.
(8)   We negotiate with primary and secondary stakeholders. Groups which have some power must be taken into account.
(9)   We constantly monitor and redesign processes so that we can better serve our stakeholders.
(10)   We act with purpose that fulfils our commitment to stakeholders. We act with aspiration toward our dream and theirs. If a business can find a purpose that speaks to the hearts and minds of key stakeholders, it is more likely that there will be sustained success.

Wheeler, Colbert and Freeman (2003, 10-11) distinguish three different organisational cultures in relation to attitudes towards stakeholders and value creation, as presented in Figure 10. Culture here means the values, beliefs and assumptions of an organisation. The first level stands for a compliance culture where stakeholders are not specifically paid attention to but basic norms are respected. The second level implies a relationship management culture where good relationships with key stakeholders are valued. The third level is a sustainable organisation culture where interdependencies between different

actors are recognised and value creation is maximised in economic, social and environmental terms. This framework has its roots in Sethi's (1975, cited in Carroll 1989/1993, 40 and in Wheeler, Colbert & Freeman 2003, 10) three-stage schema of social obligation, social responsibility and social responsiveness.
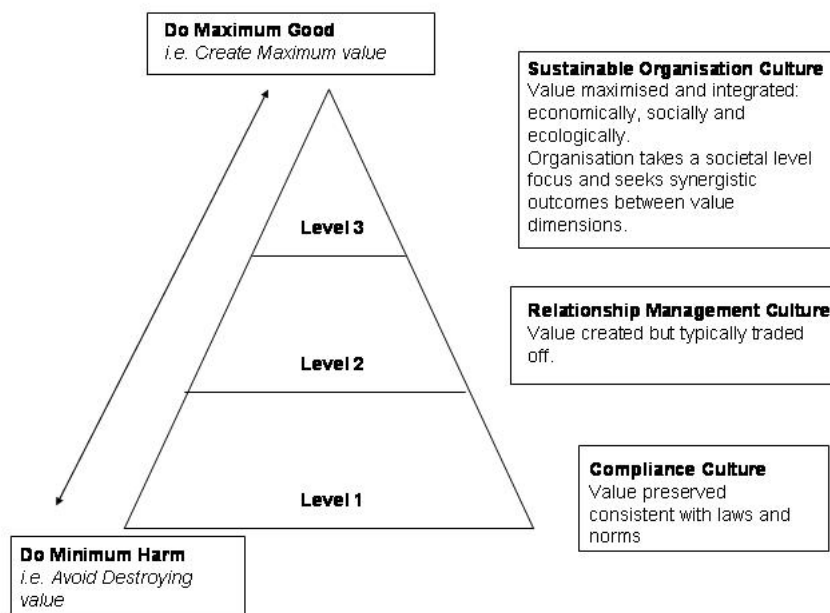
FIGURE 10   Framework for classifying organisational cultures in relation to responsibility and sustainability issues (Wheeler, Colbert & Freeman 2003, 11).

4.1.4 Corporate community involvement (CCI)

It is not always easy to define "community". This has also been recognised by stakeholder theorists who claim that community has remained undefined and broadly interpreted (Dunham, Freeman & Liedtka 2006, 24). Communities can be tied together by geography, interaction, or identity. Geographic closeness does not necessarily mean interaction between residents. Interactive communities for their part can be place-based but they can also function otherwise, on the Internet for example. Communities that share an identity have a sense of belonging based on shared beliefs, values, or experiences (Dunham, Freeman & Liedtka 2006, 28). However, the traditional meaning of community refers to the geographic community, to people living in a particular area, or, broadly, the area itself. Here community is explored as a community of place, meaning the close geographical surroundings of the organisation. Community involvement or community relations is defined as "an institution's planned, active, and continuing participation with and within a community to maintain and enhance its environment to the benefit of both the institution and the community" (Peak 1998, 117).

Waddock (2004, 11) describes corporate community involvement (or corporate community relations) as a corporate function that is boundary-spanning and encompasses such practices that aim at positive relationships

with the surrounding society on the local, state, regional, national and global levels. According to her "corporate community involvement (CCI) can be thought of as the processes associated with company interaction with community-based stakeholders, at whatever level of community is appropriate." This definition allows us to equate the region and the community and, consequently, regional engagement and community involvement. In this study community stands for the geographical region the organisation, university, is located in, and regional engagement is considered synonymous with community involvement.

Community involvement is usually considered as a part of the larger corporate responsibility agenda, as presented in the diagram of Waddock (Figure 9). However, it is a meaningful part because it is "the face of corporate social responsibility in practice" (Theaker 2001, 147). Of the three dimensions of CR, social, environmental and economic, community involvement usually falls into the category of social responsibility, which is seen to include such elements as personnel competence and well-being, good working practices, product safety and consumer protection, corporate networking, and collaboration with the local community.

On the practical level, the British organisation Business in the Community (BICT) has developed an Excellence Model for ensuring the effective planning, implementation and measurement of community involvement within the framework of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). The EFQM Business Excellence Model is presented in Figure 11.
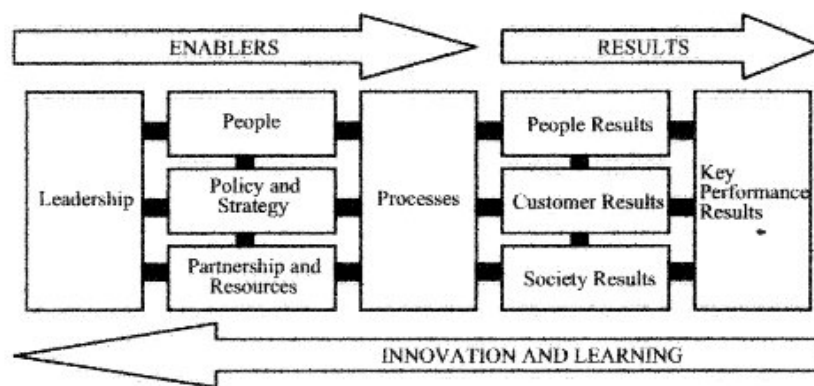
FIGURE 11   EFQM's Business Excellence Model (redrawn from EFQM, van Marrewijk, Wuisman, De Cleyn, Timmers, Panapanaan & Linnanen 2004, 85).

The first five points of the excellence model are enablers of successful community involvement, and the last four are results. The enablers are seen to form half of the value of a partnership, and results form the other half. The principles of CCI include the following:

1. Leadership – top level support for CCI, how leaders create a culture where CCI is an integral part of the organisation
2. Policy and strategy – how the organisation implements its CCI mission through a clear focused strategy, supported by policies

3. People – how CCI is used to manage and develop employees at an individual, team and organisation-wide level
4. Partnership and resources – how the organisation manages and costs its CCI investment, both cash and in kind
5. Processes – how CCI activities are managed and motivated to create value for stakeholders
6. Community partner results – what the organisation is achieving in relation to its community partner, and whether the needs of the charity are being met
7. People results – what the organisation is achieving in relation to its own employees, and whether their expectations are fulfilled
8. Society results – what the organisation is achieving in relation to the communities in which it operates, and whether their needs are being met
9. Key performance results – what the organisation is achieving in relation to its planned business objectives (Theaker 2001, 156-158).

Community involvement or engagement is a central concept for the study and, therefore, its practical implications and guidelines for its evaluation are also of interest. All the Finnish universities are currently in the process of developing their quality manuals, and one of the universities studied, Kuopio, has already achieved an ISO quality certificate for its teaching. Consequently, it can be asked why not adopt these existing guidelines for the measurement of regional engagement.

4.2 Ethics and motives for corporate responsibility and community involvement

4.2.1 Ethics

Western ethical thinking is largely based on Aristotelian and Christian ethics. The major ethical approaches usually presented in connection with corporate responsibility (CR) are the deontological and teleological approaches (e.g. Määttänen 1995, Nordenstreng & Lehtonen 1998, Somerville 2001, Takala 1993). Deontology, also called Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative, refers to a sense of duty, motivation and understanding of right and wrong and emphasises rational reasoning. Humanity should never be treated simply as a means but as valuable end. The idea can be compared to the Christian recommendation: Do as to others as you would have done to you. The Kantian ideology is also called the non-consequentionalist perspective. (Määttänen 1995, Somerville 2001, 108-109.)

Teleology does not evaluate acts on the basis of the conviction or rationality behind them but on the basis of their consequences (the consequentionalist perspective): how much human life is improved, or how much good or bad will result to mankind. In the ethical utilitarian approach proposed by John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), the aim is the greatest felicity for the greatest possible number. The Enlightenment (e.g., Thomas Hobbes 1588-1679 and John Locke 1632-1704) has represented the dominant line of Western thinking during the past few centuries. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), in

turn, represented a more community-centred thinking, like Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) and Karl Marx (1818-1883). Since the fall of communism, this ideology has become popular, particularly in the United States and is called communitarianism. Emphasis is laid upon the community and social responsibility as a counterbalance to individualism and commercialism. (Nordenstreng & Lehtonen 1998, 258.)

According to Leeper (2001) communitarianism can provide a metatheoretical basis for public relations. He combines public relations models, the concept of publics, CSR, and ethics under the umbrella of communitarian thinking. The philosophy of communitarianism asserts that the provision of individual rights requires responsibility on the part of all members of the community (Wilson 2001).

4.2.2 Motives

Motives are goal-directed forces induced by threats or opportunities related to one's values (Lewin 1951, cited in Batson, Ahmad & Tsang 2002, 430). There is a plethora of both individual and organisational motives behind community involvement and they can be difficult to analyse. Some pragmatists argue that if the goals set are achieved, it does not matter if community relations are developed to benefit the business, or of sense for responsibility. However, to ensure the success of responsible business conduct, and the idea of community involvement as a part of it, an organisation may benefit from recognising and admitting its motives. Motives for community involvement can be sought, at least, on the individual level, on the public relations practitioners' level, on the organisational level and on the societal level. Explanations can be found also in philosophies that are deeply rooted in our political systems, such as Christianity, or the Enlightment, or communitarianism.

Where individual citizens are concerned, Batson et al. (2002, 429) introduce four types of motivation for community involvement: egoism, altruism, collectivism, and principlism. They consider promising strategies that combine appeals to either altruism or collectivism, with appeals to principle: "For egoism, the ultimate goal is to increase one's own welfare; for altruism, it is to increase the welfare of another individual or individuals; for collectivism, to increase the welfare of a group; and for principlism, to uphold one or more moral principles."

According to Ledingham and Bruning (2001, 532) community relations can and should be managed for mutual benefit. The community benefits from the organisation's community involvement, community investment, and community commitment. The organisation benefits from increased loyalty towards the organisation. The British Business in the Community movement motivates community engagement (they use the term community investment) by the following: generating public goodwill, building a committed workforce, and building common ground with national and local opinion leaders. In Juholin's (2003) interviews with representatives of seven Finnish organisations social responsibility was clearly motivated by long-term profitability.

With respect to inter-organisational relationships, organisations tend to enter relationships because they depend on other organisations for resources. This perspective is called the resource dependency theory. The exchange theory in turn describes relationships as voluntary transactions that result from domain similarity and lead to mutual benefit. In relationships the parties exchange information, energy or resources. (Broom, Casey & Ritchey 2000, 13-15.) Physical and psychological resources can be viewed as costs and rewards. Community rewards include economic, societal, civic, and environmental benefits, and the organisation gains community support for its own organisational goals (Ledingham & Bruning 2001, 530-532).

According to Wilson (2001, 522) community involvement has even been seen as a solution to global problems caused, for example, by greed, exploitation, or racism. She claims that corporate success in the 21st century may be based on the quality of the relationships built. She underlines the importance of a shift from bottom line thinking to the development of business and society. This would mean a shift from financial gain to an emphasis on the interdependent relationship, the goal of which would be the common good, far beyond solely financial factors.

From the public relations practitioners' perspective, motives for the development of community relations also arise out of the expectations set for public relations professionals. As Daugherty (2001, 389) says, public relations practice today means "the development of strong relationships, consensus building, and socially responsible behaviour". Practitioners are expected to take the role of community builders and link social, political, geographical and cultural interests. On the other hand, cynical comments have also been heard to the effect that PR practitioners have invented corporate social responsibility as a new means of marketing (e.g., Frankental 2001).

Public relations makes an organisation more effective when it identifies the relevant strategic publics, and when it uses symmetrical communication to develop and maintain quality long-term relationships with them (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier 2002, 548). Development of community relations can thus be motivated and the value of public relations demonstrated from the point of view of organisational effectiveness. In the higher education context, Teune and Plantan (2001) discovered that a significant difference was found in terms of effectiveness and in the scope and penetration of universities' community outreach initiatives, depending on whether they were integrated into the institutional mission or relied upon the activities of university staff acting on their own initiative. The university's contributions to community life could make an impressive list, but there was a lack of institutionalisation and coordination.

4.2.3 Ethics and motives in higher education

Although the world of science has always been international, higher education institutions live today in a global setting on a scale never experienced before. World-wide issues, whether they be environmental questions or social

problems, are on every university's doorstep, challenging research, teaching, and service. Increasing student and staff mobility personalise these questions, give them a human face. Universities today ask what is the community or region they are responsible for. Is it the globe, the continent, the country, the town, or the immediate neighbourhood – or is it a combination of all of these? Should we contribute to resolving global problems through research into our community; or should we seek to translate our international research results into fruitful activities in our community?

At the same time, higher education institutions are facing trenchant criticism of their increasing specialisation and narrow fields of research that, seemingly, have no relevance to the real world. Scholarship of engagement realised in interdisciplinary community projects has been one way to shed the ivory tower image. Polytechnics in particular have eagerly adopted new teaching methods like service-learning, while research universities have been less interested in improving their teaching effectiveness. However, there has been a notable change in this phenomenon during the past decade, both in the U.S. and in Europe (Furco 2001, 73-74). Changes seldom take place without attractive incentives, either in the form of material rewards or other recognition such as career enhancement.

Not only narrow specialisation but also various ethical problems have impaired the confidence that the environment has traditionally had in the universities. Even in Finland there has been serious misuse of research grants and unethical research methods. Scholars suffering from tight budgets are reaching out to business for money for their scholarly work, rather than seeking equal partners, a move which may be perceived as exploitation. The Finnish National Advisory Board on Research Ethics is an expert body nominated by the Ministry of Education. It was founded in 1991 to address ethical questions related to scientific research and to advance research ethics. The Board published in 2002 a document *Good scientific practice and procedures for handling misconduct and fraud in science*. All 21 Finnish universities have expressed their commitment to the document, and the majority of the polytechnics as well. According to the guidelines, the responsibility for abiding by good scientific practice rests with the research community as a whole. If the academic community is truly committed to high ethical standards in all its basic functions, those values are most likely also to guide individual decision making. In Sweden, for example, Umeå University has published a paper on ethics and morality in higher education to spark debate on these matters (Fjellström 1999).

Hersh and Schneider (2005) discuss the dark side of American campus life today: cheating, alcohol and drug abuse, violence, depression and self-destructive behaviour like anorexia, bulimia, and suicide attempts. They claim that personal and social responsibilities are inextricably linked, involve a moral obligation to self and community, and rely upon such virtues as honesty, discipline, respect, loyalty, and compassion. The community culture influences the formation of these virtues, and the community's integrity depends on the

values and behaviours of its members. McCabe and Treviño (2002) report significant increases in serious cheating in tests and exams among American university students and point out that numbers of offenders are much lower in the universities that follow special codes of honour that are also effectively introduced to new students.

On the European level, the Bologna Process is changing the whole higher education scene and is also having an impact on issues of social responsibility. Indeed, questions of responsibility and sustainability have been on the Bologna agenda, as will be described later.

One motivation often given in the context of higher education is educating for democracy. Educational philosopher and Chicago school scholar John Dewey (1859-1952), who is also one of the forefathers of communication research, has often been cited in this context (Harkavy 2006, Heikkilä 1998). For Dewey democracy is a way of life, a moral standard, based on continuous interaction between an individual and his community. In his opinion society exists in interaction and communication. Democracy requires the development in the individual ethical thinking and the moral features that support democracy. Actually, Dewey saw communication as a key to achieving democratic communities with equal participation in decision-making. Harkavy (2006, 9) claims that American higher education has failed in realising its democratic mission because Plato's aristocratic theory of schooling gained ground and Dewey failed to institutionalise his educational philosophy. According to Harkavy the elitist philosophy still dominates Western educational systems. Roots can also be found in the German university ideal, where the academy was to remain independent and free from the bonds of society (Furco 2001). Ira Harkavy (2006, 24), who is one of the distinguished community partnership pioneers, puts it thus: "Universities can significantly help overcome the terribly harmful effects of disciplinary fragmentation and conflict, narrow specialisation, bureaucratic barriers…by identifying and actively trying to solve a highly complex, highly significant, real world, local community problem which, by its very nature, requires sustained interschool and interdisciplinary collaboration".

Ostrander (2004, 74) motivates the relevance of community involvement by appealing to the needs of "grounding academic knowledge in real-world conditions, connecting knowledge to practice, bringing academics and practitioners into closer relationships, improving conditions in local communities, and building democracy and civil society." According to her, faculty often suffer from the lack of public interest in academic work and thus seek more attention and respect for their efforts through community engagement. (Ostrander 2004, 77.) Thus community involvement benefits both parties.

> In sum, forces pushing today's campuses toward increased civic engagement include (a) an effort to deal with increasing criticisms of higher education and contradictory views of educational goals, (b) an apparent consensus about the importance of reinvigorated national civic participation and the university's responsibility in relation to it, (c) a renewed call for relevance of academic knowledge paired with a

growing sense among college faculty of isolation from real-world questions, (d) ever more critical and pressing public concerns, and (e) more mundane matters such as space and town-gown relations (Ostrander 2004, 78).

In the United States public land-grant colleges were founded for public purposes, and thus their civic engagement derives from both their roots and from their current mission (Maurrasse 2001, Ostrander 2004). This is also the situation in Finland, where, in particular from the 1960s on, new higher education institutions were created to assist the cultural and regional development of rural areas.

4.3 Views and implementations of corporate responsibility in higher education

How do CR theories function in the context of higher education? Is there any chance at all to apply them when, as in Finland, universities are state-run? Is the idea of social responsibility so self-evident in the context of public organisations that CR with its roots in business is inappropriate and misleading? Businesses may be considered responsible to society but if public organisations represent society, how can they be responsible to themselves?

Professor Ken Peattie, the director of Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society at Cardiff University, argues that the public sector is not engaged enough with CSR. He reiterates that the word "corporate" does not mean commercial or large but refers to the formalisation of a body. Also, "universitas" was originally a corporation or community of professionals. For Peattie the view of CSR best applicable to both the public and commercial sectors, is to view CSR as the professional and responsible management of relationships with key stakeholders. Peattie is therefore in agreement with Freeman's recent writings (Phillips, Freeman & Wicks 2003, Freeman & Velamuri 2006). Whereas in the private sector shareholders have invested financial capital in the firm, in the public sector they have invested political capital. In both cases shareholders expect organisations to provide ever-increasing returns.[15]

4.3.1 Faculty motivation

In her study of civic engagement on five American campuses Susan Ostrander (2004, 82) found that the main factors affecting the establishment of civic engagement initiatives were the presence or absence of a historic commitment of the university to public benefit, and a clear statement that considered civic participation and connecting theory and practice as strategic objectives. Further, motivation and skills were needed to improve learning and integrate civic

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[15]   Retrieved December 14, 2005, from <http://www.brass.cf. ac.uk/>

engagement into the curriculum. Faculty governance provided structures through which faculty could work and so institutionalise civic engagement. Moreover, the neighbourhood had to provide both reasons for the university to become involved and partners to work with.

One of recent key findings has been that successful civic engagement must be tied to the activity that faculty value most: research and knowledge creation (Furco 2001, Ostrander 2004). Ostrander points out that earlier writings stressed aspects of social responsibility and the third task of universities, and student learning through public service. She says that a social, ethical and educational rationale is not enough but to "fully integrate, normalise, institutionalise, and thus sustain university civic engagement, it must build on a solid intellectual rationale that addresses and defines the intellectual project of university civic engagement". This is particularly important in the top research universities (Ostrander 2004, 84).

Glassick, Huber and Maeroff (1997, 9) return to the Ernest Boyer's (1990) famous *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate,* where Boyer suggests four new dimensions of scholarship: discovery, integration, application and teaching. According to the authors discovery resembles research, including creative work in art academies. Integration means making connections within and between disciplines and fights against isolation and fragmentation. Application refers to obligation to the larger society and responding to the issues of the day. Teaching does not mean providing students with theoretical substance only, but also "the best values of the academy, enabling them to comprehend better and participate more fully in the larger culture." However, the authors emphasise that there is no way to broaden the meaning of scholarship if there are no clear standards for evaluating this work. There is no way to motivate new forms of scholarship if there are no rewards. (Glassick, Huber and Maeroff 1997, 5, 21.) Braxton, Luckey and Helland (2002, 27) state that in addition to teaching and research, service is always mentioned among the priorities of a professoriate, but it is not "a driving force behind achieving tenure or promotion to full professor". Glassick, Huber and Maeroff (1997, 22-36) suggest six criteria to evaluate all four forms of scholarship: clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation and reflective critique.

In sum, although this study focuses on the university-stakeholder relationship, and on this at the managerial level, the faculty consist of individuals and their motivation is of great importance in regional engagement. Examples from abroad show that the central prerequisites for successful regional engagement are a clear connection to research and appropriate standards for evaluation.

4.3.2 Stakeholders and partnerships

CR as responsible stakeholder relations is a fruitful way to look at CR in the context of higher education. Community engagement and stakeholder relations are closely connected as stakeholders represent the community.

As indicated earlier in this study, Carroll considers stakeholder thinking as a key element in developing business ethics and social responsibility (Näsi 1995, 21). Thus an organisation committed to CR should search for the strategic questions presented by Carroll: Who are our stakeholders? What are their stakes? What opportunities and challenges are presented to us by our stakeholders? What responsibilities do we have to our stakeholders? What strategies or actions should we take with respect to our stakeholders? (Carroll 1989/1993, 66-67).

David Cox, director of the Center for Urban Research and Extension at the University of Memphis recognises three groups that are involved in or affected by university-community partnerships: those representing neighbourhood interests, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders who may be geographically distant but still powerful (Cox 2000, 11). The shared goals of the partners have often concerned the resources and processes of community improvement, resources meaning financial, physical, and human resources, and processes meaning how these resources are applied. To fulfil neighbourhood expectations universities are supposed to act their third task: to disseminate knowledge for the improvement of society. Universities are notable local employers and produce financial and technical resources for community improvement through the capacity of faculty and staff. Cox holds, with good cause, that an expert-client orientation has very much characterised university-community relationships and local residents have been either research objects or clients for instruction or service. Particularly in the U.S. there has been a lot of criticism of universities' expert-based and even exploitative approach to neighbourhoods. In recently developed partnership models local residents have a participatory role in community improvement efforts (Cox 2000, 13).

On the basis of previous research in the field Cox (2000, 10) summarises the outcomes of university-community partnerships: *human capital* when the assets of individuals in the neighbourhood are improved, *social capital* through networks and cooperation for mutual benefit, and improvements in the *physical infrastructure*. The improvements in the *economic infrastructure* can mean better job opportunities; the *institutional infrastructure* refers to the development of local institutions, and *political strength* refers to the voice of the community being heard. Cox suggests that these six constitute the framework for organising and understanding university-community partnerships. University-community activities may range from business incubators to large development programs, but the outcomes usually include improved relations between universities and their communities – neighbourhood residents, local enterprises, and state organisations.

Cox (2000, 15) says that effective partnerships require interaction, and that they should be characterised by collective definitions of the issues, searches for information, and collaboration in selecting and implementing solutions. In the best cases these partnerships can lead to new sources of use-inspired basic research (a term introduced by Stokes, cited by Cox 2000, 16) and new challenges for both application and theory development. Also a new way of

disseminating knowledge can be developed through this interaction, in addition to publications and education programs. Effective partnerships make universities more responsive to the issues of their communities and thus transform their role in society (Cox 2000, 19).

4.3.3 University citizenship

Mary-Ellen Boyle (2004, 46) from Clark University claims that non-profit organisations are particularly vulnerable in questions of moral legitimacy, because they exist to promote the public good, their goals are intangible, and social acceptance determines their success. Boyle who has studied business schools and their legitimacy introduces the concept of business school citizenship (BSC). Judith A. Ramaley (2000, 238), president of the University of Vermont, says that universities are considered to be good citizens in their communities when they assist with community development and revitalisation. Could Boyle's idea be translated to university citizenship (UC), or higher education institution citizenship (HEIC)? Waddock (2004) says that citizenship is manifested through stakeholder relations and that citizenship thinking combines corporate responsibility and stakeholder theory.

In this study the focus is on the responsibilities of universities and their stakeholder relationships and how these relationships legitimate the existence of the university. However, the citizenship metaphor is not used. A university organisation is such a complicated system that comparison to a citizen is not appropriate. Neither is there either such a need for concrete community revitalisation around Finnish universities as there may be in the neighbourhoods of American institutions of higher education.

4.3.4 Sustainability

Sustainability is also a concept frequently used in the public sector since the discussion about sustainable development in the so called Brundtland Report, which was published in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development. The Brundtland Commission called for a form of sustainable development which meets the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, 40). Since the Brundtland Report the concept of sustainability has been extended and is today often considered synonymous with CR, encompassing social development and economic growth and equity in addition to conserving natural resources and the environment (Garriga & Melé 2004).

Sustainability programmes have also been developed and implemented for institutions of higher education. In Great Britain, a programme called *Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability* (HEPS) was carried out in 2000-2003. Its aim was "to establish a pioneering partnership group of higher education institutions seen to be achieving their strategic objectives through positive engagement with the sustainable development agenda, and to generate the

transferable tools, guidance and inspiration that will encourage the rest of the sector to do likewise". Although the term used was sustainability, it was defined as furthering social, economic and environmental goals at the same time. Four objectives are to be met at the same time: social progress which recognises the needs for everyone, effective protection of the environment, prudent use of natural resources, and maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment. (On course for sustainability 2004, 9). After four years of intensive work with 18 higher education institutions, the programme shifted to the phase of implementation with a grid as a tool for operationalising sustainable development in a university setting (On course for sustainability 2004, 14-15).

On the European level, the so called COPERNICUS programme (Cooperation Programme in Europe for Research on Nature and Industry through Coordinated University Studies) was launched in 1988. The network currently consists of 324 member institutions of higher education. The programme aims to share knowledge and expertise in the field of sustainable development. In 1994 the programme established the COPERNICUS University Charter for Sustainable Development, which is the main instrument to further universities' commitment to sustainable development. Twelve Finnish universities have signed the charter. Of the universities included in this study the universities of Kuopio and Lapland are among the twelve.

The preamble to the Charter states that "Education at all levels, especially university education for the training of decision-makers and teachers, should be oriented towards sustainable development and foster environmentally aware attitudes, skills and behaviour patterns, as well as a sense of ethical responsibility. Education must become environmental education in the fullest sense of the term." The action principles of the COPERNICUS charter include institutional commitment, environmental ethics, education of university employees, programmes in environmental education, interdisciplinarity, dissemination of knowledge, networking, partnerships, continuing education programmes and technology transfer (COPERNICUS Campus, The University Network for Sustainability). [16]

The question of higher education and sustainability is also high on the agenda in the Bologna Process, which aims at creating a European Higher Education Area (EHEA). European Ministers responsible for higher education gathered in Bergen in May 2005 to discuss how to incorporate issues of sustainable development into the Process. The consultation paper, published by COPERNICUS, states that in addition to structures, there is also a social dimension to the Bologna Process, when seen against the background of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). The paper presents some questions for open debate, such as how to incorporate sustainable development into methodology, curricula and studies, how to develop quality standards for sustainable development, and, of particular interest, how to influence students' lifestyle to make them aware of individual

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[16]   Retrieved January 2, 2006, from <http://www.copernicus-campus.org>

responsibilities to a sustainable society, how to encourage them to make responsible choices and respect diversity, and how to get them involved in political activities, participation and democracy. Although these documents discuss "sustainable development", the concept seems to involve all aspects of corporate responsibility. (COPERNICUS-CAMPUS 2005.)

In January 2002 a programme of education for sustainable development *An Agenda 21 for Education in the Baltic Sea Region – Baltic 21E* was approved by the Ministers of Education in the Baltic Sea Region. The aim of the programme is to make sustainable development a permanent feature of the educational systems of the Region through long-term commitment. Consequently, the Finnish Ministry of Education appointed a committee to carry out the Baltic 21E programme and the committee drew up a starting-up plan for the programme. After several pilot projects, the final proposal for a national plan of implementation is at the moment under construction. The theme is relevant, considering that the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development has just started. However, the committee has already realised that there is actually no way to force independent universities to include sustainability in their curricula. The Ministry of Education can only give recommendations. (Education for sustainable development, The Baltic 21E programme. A proposal by the ESD committee for a starting-up plan for the programme.)[17]

It is quite likely that there is uncertainty in the universities about what sustainability stands for. On the larger scale, it seems that the terminology used has become old-fashioned. Today the concept corporate responsibility encompasses economic, environmental and social aspects, while sustainability has traditionally referred to environmental questions and environmental awareness. There is also evidence on that in business, too, during the early days of CR the focus was very much on environmental questions (L'Etang 1994, 111).

4.3.5 Service-learning

Service-learning is an American trend of higher education and "a form of engaged learning that uses community issues for accomplishing educational goals" (Braxton, Luckey & Helland 2002, 31). The pedagogy of service-learning (or pedagogies of community-based learning, experiential learning, active learning or internships) means a possibility for students to link theory and practice and learn lessons in civic responsibility (Thomas 2000, 67). Classroom learning is integrated with service projects and, at the same time, students learn about democracy and citizenship. (Corporation for National and Community Service)[18]. Service-learning has been considered central in educating ethical graduates (Procario-Foley & Bean 2002).

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[17]   Retrieved January 2, 2006, from <http://www.minedu.fi/julkaisut/julkaisusarjat/
        36_02keke_Baltic21E/36_02kuvailu.html>
[18]   Retrieved January 2, 2006, from <http://www.learnandserve.gov/about/service_
        learning/index.asp>

It has been suggested that effective service-learning programs improve grades, increase attendance in classes, and develop students' personal and social responsibility. Service-learning is seen to help students because it includes active participation in service experiences, provides structured time to reflect by thinking, discussing and reporting on the service experience, and it fosters a sense of caring of others. Its advantages for universities and their communities include effective collaborative partnerships, meeting community needs and engaging both adults and young people in cooperative projects. (Corporation for National and Community Service.)

On the other hand, the need for service-learning pedagogy has been considered as a sign of a number of weaknesses of American society. According to Speck (2001, 5), the American social order is fragmented, lack of community has produced injustices, higher education perpetuates injustice, and it must be transformed to produce citizens that can promote justice in democratic society. In the United States over 1 100 institutions of higher education have become members of the Campus Compact coalition of universities, founded in 1985 and committed to helping students to develop the values and skills of citizenship through participation in public and community service. In 1998 the number of members was 528, and thus the growth of the movement has been significant. Campus Compact aims at deepening members' understanding of the value of civic engagement both among the society as a whole and in institutions of higher education. A central goal is to create capacity building relationships between communities and higher education, not only through service-learning but also through other forms of cooperation. Campus Compact has its focus on fostering citizenship and democratic renewal (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, Rosner & Stephens 2000).

As experiences have been gathered and research conducted about Campus Compact projects during twenty years, a knowledge base exists about how these programmes succeed. The institutionalisation of service-learning is more likely to succeed if there are long-term visions about the goals to be achieved, and these goals are in line with other institutional goals. Moreover, faculty, students and community members should be active, involved, and equal partners. There must be adequate staff and funding for coordination, policy making and assessment of activities and advancement. Also, service-learning should be considered as a valuable asset to other forms of campus work. (e.g. Furco 2001, Ostrander 2004, Ramaley 2000.) In general, these are the basic requirements for the institutionalisation of any philosophy to be introduced in a university setting. Andrew Furco (2001) concludes that to advance service-learning on any campus one must develop a critical mass of faculty who support and promote its use. Faculty members must know that if they develop and implement innovative pedagogies, it will be valued both by their colleagues and by the university administration.

Seemingly, the pedagogical applications closest to service learning used in Finnish universities are problem-based learning (PBL) and case study methodology, and, of course, there are different internship periods in many

degree programs. There real-life problems are solved with the already acquired theoretical knowledge. Students are active learners instead of targets of instruction, choose their problems and set their own goals and decide the methods to reach them. The course instructor is rather a tutor than a teacher. The idea of fostering for citizenship has, however, not gained much ground in Finland, probably because in the Nordic countries the welfare state is responsible for the sick, the poor, and the homeless. In all the Nordic countries, however, and in Finland in particular, an important measure of civic participation, namely voter turnout, is declining, so the need to educate for democracy is not a remote idea at all, as has also been noted in the COPERNICUS campus charter.

4.4   Research results: Corporate responsibility in the university context

In the research interviews the questions on responsibility were discussed in connection with the motives, goals and values of regional engagement. The respondents were asked whether they considered the concept of corporate responsibility relevant in the context of higher education, to whom a university is responsible, and how it should carry out its responsibility. Answers were sought to research question two: What does responsible academic work mean in the region where the university is located? The codes identified to answer this research question were "relevance of CR", "responsibility", and "implementation of CR". The last-named produced information about to whom universities are responsible, that is, about the key stakeholders.

4.4.1 Relevance of corporate responsibility

Three different reactions to corporate responsibility were found among the informants in answers to the question on the relevance of CR thinking in the context of higher education. CR was considered either irrelevant to higher education institutions, relevant but seldom used, or as a useful tool of development and reporting.

Some informants considered it difficult to connect corporate social responsibility with universities, as the concept is traditionally attached to business, and universities are autonomous institutions.

> That is a rather theoretical question to consider in general, what social responsibility is and for the universities it has never even been asked. [P21:62]

> I do not consider the discussion appropriate to the world of higher education. We in the academy must define our own area of responsibility for ourselves. [P23:70]

The second group were those who thought the concept could apply to the academic world even though it is seldom used there.

> The term social responsibility would be more appropriate than a third task or societal interactivity. Social responsibility would be eminently appropriate to the university institution, which has a basic task through teaching and research, through those tasks it exerts influence and carries out the social responsibility. It would be an extremely apt term, but is not used at all. [P9:39]

In Rovaniemi the local newspaper, together with the university, had arranged a one-day seminar on corporate social responsibility in 2005. The seminar, which included prestigious speakers like the former President of Finland, Mauno Koivisto, was considered successful.

Thirdly, some informants and their organisations were committed to the systematic development of CR thinking in their institution. The most advanced approach was found in Turku where the polytechnic had adopted CR thinking and had published its first, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)-based, corporate responsibility report in 2003. In the report corporate responsibility is approached through a comprehensive set of economic, environmental and social principles, termed the sustainability reporting framework. Turku polytechnic is the first Finnish institution of higher education, and among also the first in Europe, to have adopted this framework.

The regional strategy of the institutions of higher education in Turku also mentions social responsibility as one of the four major lines of action to be implemented in 2006-2012. Social responsibility is seen to mean that those institutions of higher education will together contribute to regional welfare, social and cultural capital and sustainable development. In practice the social responsibility of the Turku higher education institutions will include the promotion of the health, welfare and social capital of Southwest Finland and its inhabitants, a new network of research, education and development that specialises in CSR in business and operates through the Turku School of Economics, and high ethical principles in all actions. In education the aim is to support students' growth towards participatory and active democratic citizenship (cf. American discussion about the importance of educating for democracy). The means are public discussion, promoting education and research that support civil participation, and finding new channels of influence.

4.4.2 Responsibilities of the university

If the concept of corporate (social) responsibility itself was difficult for many informants, they had clear views on responsibility itself and on what responsible academic work means in the region.

The university was seen to fulfil its social responsibility simply through its *existence in the region*. In a more demanding view, social responsibility was seen to mean *active participation in, support for and development of the surrounding region*. Such responsibility was fulfilled through *expertise based on research* and *through teaching*, that is through the basic functions of higher education.

> Our competence is actually in research activity, the associated expertise, then the education based on it and providing that education, primarily a service obligation to

society is based on this expertise and that is our main responsibility that we take care of. [P3:90]

The *social obligation view* was reflected in the interview data in references to how legislation determines the responsibilities and fields of education of a specific university and in the intention to fulfil what the law requires. On the other hand the universities were also seen to have an *innovator responsibility* that should question, for example, political decision making.

> One should not only be providing support for political decision-making but also call it into question and thereby reform society. So it does indeed have a great deal of significance. We should not let a situation develop where the universities are considered to be a brake on the development, but rather that the universities should be the engines of that change. [P8:54]

In Chapter 3 university stakeholders were presented as they were mentioned in strategic documents and informants' listings. The question of responsibility adds new dimensions to this stakeholder view. It can be assumed that the groups the university is seen to be responsible to, are also the most important stakeholders. In this data, the predominant responsibilities were, first, responsibility to the state, and thus, indirectly, to society at large, and, second, responsibility to students. These primary responsibilities of universities are named *shareholder responsibility* and *educational responsibility*.

Shareholder responsibility was motivated by the receipt of state funding, performance-based steering, general requirements of productivity and efficiency, and with the history of universities and the role given to them by the Finnish people. In Turku the polytechnic saw their social responsibility report as an answer to the accountability required by the financier of public organisations and thus also of institutions of higher education.

> It [responsibility] in one way or another reverts to society, in the last instance, that is, to the state. It is now the main financier and in many ways regulates the operations of the universities. So of course it follows naturally from this as it does anywhere else that "responsibility through ownership" occurs, the responsibility rests with the owner. That is, it is necessary to fulfil those tasks on which agreement has been reached with the "owner", I mean the Ministry of Education. So that when those negotiations are held the things that have been agreed on are done. [P13:62]

In addition to shareholder responsibility, educational responsibility was recognised as the second important responsibility of a university. The university was seen to fulfil its responsibilities best as a good community of learning that provides society with competent members who have high moral standards.

> Responsible also to those students, groups of students who come to us and we carry the responsibility for what they learn and what we are making out of them and provide them with learning so that they become fit for society and they can get into working life. [P9:47]

It is interesting that the importance of educating socially engaged citizens was noted by some informants. It is indeed mentioned in the university legislation

that universities must educate the students to serve the nation and humanity (Universities Act 645/1997). However, educating for participatory democracy has been rather an undertone than a precise goal in the Finnish universities, unlike in the United States where movements with an emphasis on fostering citizenship, like Campus Compact, flourish.

Universities were also expected to fulfil their promises to students. Degrees should be relevant to working life. The universities were expected to select their students in a responsible manner, meaning that those enrolled have the prerequisites needed to complete the degree they aim to study.

In addition to these main responsibilities, the responsibility to the region was articulated vividly and emphatically.

> I have stressed that if the University of Lapland and the Rovaniemi Polytechnic do not carry their responsibility for the future of central and upper Lapland and even farther afield, then nobody will carry that responsibility. [P23:50]

The universities should educate the local young people and help them stay in the region and thus contribute to the development of the home region. The informants believed that serving one's own region means also serving society at large.

The employer responsibility of universities was mentioned only in passing, in the notion that the university is an important local employer. Of course, the view of this question would have been completely different had university staff members been included in the data.

4.4.3 Contradictory responsibility

Although shareholder responsibility and educational responsibility were the two mainline responsibilities, also these contained contradictions. A contradiction in educational responsibility was revealed when an informant considered it "crazy" to offer education free of charge to foreign students.

The shareholder, the Ministry of Education was thought to have too narrow a view on how the university should serve its region. The view of regional engagement that the Ministry was seen to promote, included commercialisation activities and continuing education, not the aim of civilising and developing society.[19] Thus the contradiction was very much about the triple helix approach versus community engagement approach, as presented in Chapter 3.3.4.

In their regional contacts the universities were seen to strike a balance between autonomy and dependence. The university was expected to make independent decisions but at the same time recognise that it will not survive without strong regional support. The university would thus carry out its responsibility to the region through interaction.

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[19]   It is also noted in the OECD review across 14 regions and 12 countries that the uptake and development of high technology is prioritised rather than mechanisms to support social development for wider needs (OECD 2007, 12).

4.5   Summary and conclusions

In this chapter the aim was to answer the second research question: What does responsible academic work mean in the region where the university is located? The manifestations and terminology of corporate responsibility (CR) were examined and discussed, as well as its applications in the context of higher education in the light of scholarly and other relevant sources.

It was found, both on the basis of the theory and implementation of corporate responsibility in the setting of higher education, and on the basis of the main data, that the concept of corporate responsibility is relatively unknown. However, in Finnish companies, social responsibility is a matter of values like openness, transparency and trust, and it is often taken for granted (Panapanaan, Linnanen, Karvonen & Phan 2003, 138). The most common view of corporate responsibility is that of sustainability, as presented in the COPERNICUS programme, or in the Agenda 21 applications. Today, sustainability encompasses social development and economic growth in addition to environmental aspects. On the other hand, the main data included a trailblazing approach to corporate responsibility reporting, namely that of the Turku polytechnic which issues reports according to international sustainability reporting guidelines (GRI). The example shows that, when connected to the strategic management of an organisation, to the regional mission, and to the development of databases, and when altered to match the organisation-specific needs, CR can become a tool of development even for an institution of higher education. Moreover, the example of one institution of higher education in the region is reflected in the joint goals of the region, as was seen in the strategies of the region of Turku.

However, if corporate responsibility in higher education is conceptualised as responsible stakeholder relationships, whether the stakeholders be homogeneous groups or individuals, a more fruitful perspective on academic responsibilities is opened up. Freeman's idea of company stakeholder responsibility as a replacement for corporate social responsibility is particularly useful in this context (Freeman & Velamuri 2006). In this view, academic responsibility would be manifested in how the university takes stakeholders into account in its decision making and actions. Phillips, Freeman and Wicks (2003, 495) note that little attention has been paid to stakeholder theory in the context of non-profit and governmental organisations, and recommend that for the theory to come into its own as a theory of strategic management and organisational ethics, it should be applied to different types of organisation.

The three levels of responsibility presented by Sethi were social obligation, social responsibility, and social responsiveness (1975, cited in Carroll 1989/1993, 40 and Wheeler, Colbert & Freeman 2003, 10). In this study, the dimensions of social obligation and responsibility were clearly identified. The universities must fulfil their social obligation by obeying the law. Also, being publicly funded, they must respect their shareholders – the state and society at

large - by meeting the requirements set them in the annual performance negotiations with the Ministry of Education. In addition to the state as a shareholder, the most important stakeholder group is formed by students. Thus shareholder responsibility and educational responsibility were identified as the most important responsibilities of universities, followed by responsibility towards the region.

This result is not surprising. Had any faculty member been asked about who a university is responsible to, the top three would have been: towards the financier, towards students, and towards the region, with the addition of the international scientific community. However, it must be remembered that the data reveal that the key stakeholders also share this view. They value a university that does the right thing, in relation to the state, to its students, and to the region. Does this put a heavier emphasis on the development of teaching methods, student selection procedures and the relevance of degrees?

If compared to the framework for classifying organisational cultures in relation to responsibility and sustainability issues (Figure 10), universities seem largely to adhere to the compliance culture, but have also identified their stakeholders (state, students, region) and become active in relationship management. However, the sustainability culture seems to be hard to find among institutions of higher education so far.

The third dimension of Sethi, social responsiveness, will be studied in Chapter 5 where the stakeholders give their views on university-stakeholder dialogues. If responsiveness is considered as a prerequisite of survival in turbulent times, the universities will certainly need this tool. For example, Kaptein and van Tulder (2003, 208), maintain that stakeholder dialogue helps to increase organisational responsiveness to environmental signals and, the other way around, helps the environment to understand organisational life. Active stakeholder engagement is on the agenda of the kind of organisations that are the best at creating value for stakeholders. These relationships are characterised by multiple channels of communication, explicit dialogues with key stakeholder groups, and with continuity. (Freeman, Harrison & Wicks, Forthcoming, 179.)

If we return to Figure 9, the schematic diagram of CSR and related concepts by Waddock (2004), we find a path along which to proceed for the purposes of this study:

> Stakeholder theory > Corporate social responsiveness > Corporate community relations > Multi-stakeholder collaboration / Stakeholder engagement within organisational public relations.

The root concept here is stakeholder theory or stakeholder thinking. It leads us to CSR2, corporate social responsiveness, and to CCR, corporate community relations. This in turn is closely linked to public relations activities, and to multi-stakeholder collaboration or stakeholder engagement.

An important question discussed in the literature concerning corporate citizenship in particular is that in addition to obligations, organisations also have rights and privileges (van Oosterhout 2005). This twofold nature of

organisations is well described by Braxton, Luckey and Helland (2002, 28), who state that it is "important to foster relationships outside the university but just as important to retain autonomy". Consequently, in the context of universities, it is a demanding task to create a balance between academic freedom and external responsibilities. In the research data, too, it was recognised that universities are expected to make independent decisions but in the meanwhile recognise that they will not survive without strong regional support. The importance of striking a balance in terms of the Clark's triangle of state, autonomy and market requirements was articulated with emphasis.

If we adopt the stakeholder view on corporate responsibility and assume that universities act in a responsible manner towards society when they respond to their stakeholders' needs and make them better off, it is important to ask whether these groups of stakeholders truly represent society (see also de Bakker, Groenewegen & den Hond 2005). Are we going the wrong way in assuming that community involvement and genuine dialogues can be built through careful stakeholder analysis and by determining what stakeholders really count? Do the stakeholders have only an instrumental role, and if so, should their value be reconsidered, as Buchholz and Rosenthal (2005) suggest?

Ramaley (2000, 233) suggests that the traditional terms of research, teaching, and service should be replaced by the more multidimensional terms discovery, learning, and engagement. This change would recognise the variety of settings and abundance of participants involved in these functions. According to Ramaley there is a fundamental difference between service and engagement. Service refers to a one-way process of knowledge or technology transfer while engagement refers to mutual benefits and shared goals and agenda. Ramaley calls "an engaged university" an institution that has accepted its "primary role in enhancing our human capabilities throughout our lives by generating new knowledge, serving as a source of knowledge, and supporting community capacity to explore and work on the complex issues of society today." (Ramaley 2000, 235-236.) Aittola (2006, 151) for her part states that there is a need for discussion about what citizenship means today, and what academic freedom and engaged citizenship means for the faculty. It is interesting that one of the contradictions revealed in the data on corporate responsibility issues was the narrow view of the shareholder, Ministry of Education, on the regional responsibilities of universities. The views on regional engagement that the Ministry has promoted were seen to include activities of a commercial nature and continuing education, not the mission of civilising and developing society. Hence we can notice here the contradiction between the triple helix view and the community engagement view of regional engagement.

Ostrander (2004, 74-75), in her study of civic engagement on campuses, finds four key components of engagement: student learning, curriculum transformation, community-defined priorities, and knowledge production. These vary and change in emphasis as the work develops and as circumstances change. To involve faculty, intellectual challenges are needed, and new structures are necessary to develop and sustain campus-community partner-

ships. Local conditions present both facilitators and barriers that need to be identified, understood, and taken into account. In this study these local conditions were sketched in Chapter 3.

High ethical and moral values and a strong sense of corporate responsibility that is realised through stakeholder engagement form the basis of successful regional involvement, but they alone are not sufficient. It helps if the institution of higher education is seriously dedicated to the development of teaching and there are established rewards for those efforts. In research universities, however, regional engagement is unlikely to gain ground if it cannot be motivated through connections to research. Regional engagement requires not only peer support on the faculty level but also support from the university administration. Administrative support can include the setting up of bridge-building offices for community involvement or interdisciplinary centres, and the development of review and reward policies.

5   DIALOGUE AS A MEANS OF REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

The previous chapters outlined the environment in which and pressures under which higher education institutions operate today, the challenges involved in taking up the regional role, questions of identity and image, and different manifestations of responsibility. This chapter explores the characteristics and forms of relationships, social interaction, and dialogue. It describes stakeholder-specific dialogues between universities and their key stakeholders. It answers the third research question: Why, how and where do the stakeholder-university dialogues take place and how do the different parties evaluate their success? Moreover, the chapter discusses the role of organised public relations at universities in the light of the data.

Modern stakeholder theorists are increasingly focusing on stakeholder dialogues, and consider critics particularly important in that dialogue, as they help to identify unmet needs (Freeman, Harrison & Wicks, Forthcoming). They stress transparency, willingness, and two-way interaction as the central elements of successful dialogues. Some of the approaches to stakeholder interaction recognised are ignoring stakeholders, the public relations approach, implicit negotiations, and engagement, dialogue and negotiation (Freeman, Harrison & Wicks, Forthcoming, 174). It is worth noting that stakeholders can be ignored because inadequate resources are allocated to the creation and maintenance of the relationship. Here, the public relations approach refers to the one-way process of "telling our story" with the focus on achieving a good image. This view is analogous to the persuasive strategy presented later in this chapter (Figure 13). However, to call this strategy a "public relations strategy" reveals a narrow view of what public relations is about. Interestingly, Freeman et al. point out that public relations needs to be integrated into the strategic thinking of the organisation, which, in turn, contributes to successful interaction with stakeholders. Implicit negations refer to attempts to take stakeholder views into account in, for example, the strategy process through different indirect sources, and attempts to map stakeholder needs instead of asking

stakeholders for them directly. Consequently, engagement, dialogue, and negotiation stand for a stakeholder approach that empowers stakeholders. The authors have realised that the organisations which are the best at creating value for stakeholders are also engaged with them through multiple communication channels and explicit and continuous dialogue (Freeman et al., Forthcoming, 179).

Moreover, Freeman et al. emphasise the importance of informality. Dialogue becomes efficient and effective when trust is established. They maintain that informal processes are conducive to creative solutions end experimentation. Informality and trust are best created in longstanding relationships (Freeman et al., Forthcoming, 181).

5.1   Relationships and social interaction

Marketing scholars and practitioners have been very interested in relationships, networks and interaction during the past decade (Gummesson 1998, Möller, Rajala & Svahn 2006). Gummesson (1998, 43-49) outlines the general relational characteristics that determine the 30 relationship types he presents in his book *From 4P to 30R*. The characteristics recognised are the following: cooperation; meaning, dependence and commitment; trust, risk and uncertainty; power; duration; frequency, regularity and density of contacts; closeness and distance; formality, informality and openness; routinisation; contents; and personal and social properties.

The main categories of the 30 relationships are market relationships (classical and specific), mega relationships and nano relationships. Market relationships refer to the basis of marketing efforts, relationships between the enterprise, its customers, and its competitors. Nano relationships are intra-organisational relationships which reflect external relationships. Mega relationships are interesting for the purposes of this study as they refer to general opinion, political power, personal and social relationships, knowledge-based coalitions, and relationships to the media. (Gummesson 1998, 49-54.)

5.1.1 Prerequisites of social interaction

Social interaction is a focal phenomenon and research object in the social and behavioural sciences, particularly in social psychology. Researchers have recognised some central elements that are prerequisites of social interaction. Social cooperation is a fundamental human need both at work and in one's spare time. The assumption is that cooperation leads to positive effects and emotional rewards and to attraction between people. The central elements of interaction between human beings include e.g. language, consciousness, affection and attraction, morals, values, and social skills.

Language affects how we perceive social life and relationships. Social constructionists even claim that human beings are not determined by any internal or external causes but by invisible linguistic structures and processes in social interaction. Also some communication scholars argue that "selves and relationships are constituted in communication" (Baxter 2004, 109). Language use is different among different social groups or between the sexes, and also the same individual varies the code used according to the situation and to the group s/he is with. Values form the basis of morals and affect interaction in many ways. Schwartz's (e.g. Schwartz 2005) seminal research on 36 cultures revealed ten universal values: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security. Social skills mean the ability to perform in different interaction situations so that positive consequences follow. Role-taking and empathy meaning ability to embrace and understand others' points of view are among these. (Burr 2004, Helkama, Myllyniemi & Liebkind 1998, Pennington 2005).

5.1.2 Stages of social interaction

Relationship development models can be examined in comparison to group formation processes. Different phases characterise group formation. One description includes the phases forming (or inclusion or pseudocommunity), storming (or control or chaos), norming (or emptying), performing (or openness or community), and adjourning (Ellinor & Gerard 1998, Pennington 2005). At the forming stage group members learn to know one another and decide on the basic rules. At the storming stage there are conflicts and arguments. At the norming stage positive group identity grows and rules are formed and agreed on. At the performing stage the group is able to cooperate to reach its goals. The adjourning stage arrives when the project is completed or team members leave. All groups do not necessarily live through these five stages. Some may collapse in conflicts, some may develop excessively close relations to cooperate efficiently, and some may suffer from poor leadership.

Relationship development models provide an interesting comparison to the phases in group formation. Thomlinson (2000, 190) gives the following stages of relationship development: initiating, experimenting, intensifying, integrating, bonding, differentiating, circumscribing, stagnation, avoiding, and terminating. However, these are the stages of dyadic relationship formation and not necessarily applicable to organisational or group relationships. Moreover, many theorists consider directional models of this kind far too linear to capture dynamic human relationships and would rather describe relational changes between different plateaus. A common theme is that relationships are changeable if not always developmental, and that oscillations between and within different stages – or plateaus – take place both in intimate and work relationship contexts. (Baxter & Montgomery 1996, 52, Thomlinson 2000, 191).

Couch (1986) describes interpersonal social interaction through five basic hierarchies: reciprocal attentiveness, social responsiveness, congruent functional identities, shared focus, and social objective. According to Couch

(1986, 119), only the social objective level means true interaction without control and with trust. People cannot really collaborate until they have established the five hierarchies of sociation. This is yet another progressive model of relationship formation. Baxter and Montgomery (1996, 52) go so far as to point out that "the progress construct is so deeply embedded in modern Western thought about change that postmodernist critics refer to it as one of the 'metanarratives' of intellectual discourse since the Enlightment". However, this model will be developed further in the following, in the hope that its linear character will take other forms over time, and remembering that Thomlinson (2000, 200), too, suggests that, ultimately, models of progressive stages of relationship development can prove useful when categorising organisation-public relationships.

Kaarina Mönkkönen (2001, 434-443) interpreted and refined Couch's five levels of interaction in her doctoral thesis, and renamed them. *Presence in situation* means that people are aware of one another but do not seek to contact or react to one another. This ignoring the other may be intentional. If there is any communication, it is clearly one-way. On the level of *social influence* both parties acquire information about the other but the other is seen as an object. Communication is asymmetrical and the element of power is obvious. The level of *game* refers to competition. The parties may have a common goal but they do not collaborate to achieve it; on the contrary, each party may only be interested in winning the game for themselves. *Cooperation* is the level of shared focus, division of tasks, and contracts about how common goals should be achieved. Even this level of interaction may include control to ensure the achievement of goals; here, too, commitment may be vague and individual aims may be stronger than those of the group. Teams and project groups often represent this level. What divides the fifth level of interaction, *collaboration*, from cooperation, is trust, which makes control unnecessary. This level refers to cooperative action with a future-centered, shared focus. This level also means the acceptance of unexpected elements outside the agenda.

Because of the high degree of openness, responsiveness and closeness required on the fifth level, it is debatable whether this level is possible on the professional scene, or whether it may appear only in the private sphere. The focus of Mönkkönen's research is in fact on interpersonal interaction between social worker and client. There are, however, examples of truthful and genuine dialogue on this level, even between groups in conflict, as world politics has shown. It is also worth discussing whether the element of power and need of control infuses all human interaction or not. Hammond, Anderson & Cissna (2003, 150), for example, maintain that "dialogue and power are inextricably interwoven in human relationships".

5.1.3 Organisation-public relationship

Although lists may not do justice to complex human relationships, some dimensions of good relationships can be derived from both interpersonal and inter-organisational research. Drawing on an earlier article by the author on

relational characteristics (Kantanen 2007a), some features common to good relationships can be outlined. Moreover, it can be assumed, that lack of these characteristics contribute to relational dissatisfaction and put a functioning relationship at risk.

According to the literature, well functioning relationships can be characterised by

- mutual satisfaction (Grunig, Grunig & Ehling 1992, Huang 1997)
- power distribution/control mutuality (Baxter & Montgomery 1996, Holland 2005, Huang 1997)
- reciprocity (Grunig, Grunig & Ehling 1992, Oliver 1990)
- legitimacy (Grunig, Grunig & Ehling 1992, Oliver 1990)
- investment (Ledingham & Bruning 1997, Wood 2000)
- trust (Grunig, Grunig & Ehling 1992, Huang 1997, Ledingham & Bruning 1997, Wood 2000)
- openness (Baxter & Montgomery 1996, Grunig, Grunig & Ehling 1992, Ledingham & Bruning 1997)
- commitment/involvement (Holland 2005, Huang 1997, Ledingham & Bruning 1997, Wood 2000).

Power is an essential element of all human relationships, and mutuality of control is an antecedent of a stable relationship (Grunig & Huang 2000). In contrast, Mönkkönen's (2001) model suggests that, at least on the most advanced level of interaction, control is unnecessary because of trust. According to Grunig and Huang (2000, 44-46) the factors of control mutuality, trust, relational satisfaction and relational commitment can be used to conceptualise and measure the quality of organisation-public relationships. Control mutuality refers to how power is distributed and agreed on in a relationship. In the public relations literature trust is considered a self-evident feature both in interpersonal and inter-organisational relationships. It has also been claimed that trust contributes to legitimacy and, therefore, enables an organisation to exist. Relational satisfaction can be considered as the most important outcome of effective relationship maintenance. Relational commitment means the parties' willingness to maintain a valued relationship in the long run.

Grunig and Huang (2000, 29) studied relationships on the basis of Broom, Casey and Ritchey's (1997) model of relationship concepts, antecedents, and consequences. Relationship concepts define the nature of relationships. Relationship antecedents give reasons why organisations enter relationships, such as social and cultural norms, needs for resources, or legal or voluntary necessities. Relationship consequences can be such outcomes as goal achievement, dependency or loss of autonomy, or routine and institutionalised behaviour. Grunig and Huang propose a single theory combining the strategic management of public relations, models of public relations, and relationship outcomes. The first stage is to identify the strategic stakeholders, the second to

incorporate the models of public relations so as to be able to develop and maintain relationships with these publics, and the third stage is to evaluate the relationship outcomes and the quality of relationships, and how they contribute to organisational effectiveness. (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier 2002, 549.)

Marketing researchers have been interested in customer relationships in particular. In Finland the Center for Relationship Marketing and Service Management (CERS) at the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration has developed the field under the leadership of Professor Christian Grönroos. An interesting phenomenon studied is that of bonds (or ties or links) that are considered as the building stones of relationships. The ten bonds recognised and derived from different fields of research are technical bonds, time bonds, knowledge bonds, social bonds, legal bonds, economic bonds, geographical bonds, cultural bonds, ideological bonds, and psychological bonds. The sum of the total package of bonds in a relationship is equal to the total value of the relationship (Wendelin 2004, 44). In this view, e.g., trust and commitment would be considered as social bonds. Public relations researchers Ledingham and Bruning (1998, 58) include structural and social bonds in their list of 17 relationship dimensions, but otherwise closer studies of relational bonds seem hard to find in the public relations literature. The other relationship dimensions identified by them on the basis of marketing and social psychology literature review are investment, commitment, trust, comfort with relational dialectics, cooperation, mutual goals, interdependence/power imbalance, performance satisfaction, comparison level of the alternatives, adaptation, non-retrievable investment, shared technology, summate constructs, intimacy and passion.

5.1.4 University-region relationship

There are certain common themes that characterise successful campus-community partnerships, as the many years of the American Campus Compact movement have shown. Holland (2005) gives these: 1) joint exploration and understanding of goals and interests, 2) understanding of the capacity and expectations of the other, 3) good planning, 4) commitment both to the partnership itself as well as partnership tasks, 5) shared control of directions, and 6) ongoing assessment of relationships.

At the beginning of the partnership it is extremely important to explore goals and interests, express them explicitly and determine how separate goals can be reached through shared action. Realistic expectations are created when the partners understand the capacity and resources each can contribute. Careful planning is needed to find opportunities for success and to define and measure it. Such relationships do not exist just to fulfil specific tasks but for ongoing knowledge exchange, learning together, and capacity-building. As noted before, since the element of power can be argued to be central in all relationships, so too in partnerships the power and control should be mutual and all parties should have a voice in planning, problem-solving, and management. And finally, as Holland puts it, "assessment that involves all

partners is the glue that creates trust, generates new lines of work, funding, and keeps shared goals as well as expectations visible to all." (Holland 2005, 15) These elements contribute to reciprocity between partners and, as a long-term goal, to the learning region, where learning is a common denominator of all the individuals and organisations in the region (e.g. Lemola 2004, 123).

Virtanen (2002, 64-68) evaluates the prerequisites of university-region relationship on the basis of international and domestic studies and recognises, firstly, the importance of a strategy that respects the academic role of the university and thus the choice of key partners. Moreover, contacts with key stakeholders must be institutionalised, that is, the university is not just hobnobbing with them occasionally, but relationships are entered into and maintained patiently and systematically. Lemola (2004, 130) also states that in Finland mechanisms for regional cooperation and innovation have so far been based on relatively loose networks of engaged individuals but that more stable structures are needed. Virtanen (2002) points out that interaction should involve different levels of organisations, not just the managerial or operational. Moreover, regional cooperation must be managed, marketed, encouraged and enhanced internally to convince academics of the importance of the third task. Finally, Virtanen (2002, 66) emphasises the importance of assessments through which both the quality and quantity of regional impact and interaction can be increased.

5.2 Characteristics and forms of dialogue

5.2.1 What is dialogue?

Dialogue has often been considered the most valuable form of interaction. The word dialogue originates from the Greek *dia* (through, across) and *logos* (word, meaning). It is thus strongly connected to the use of words and implies a flow of words and interpretations. The most often cited theorists of dialogue are probably Martin Buber, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jürgen Habermas and Mikhail Bakhtin (e.g., Anderson, Baxter & Cissna 2004, 3). The dominant perspectives of dialogue in the 20th century have been the liberal humanist perspective, critical hermeneutic orientation, and postmodern position. The first stresses empathetic listening and common grounds, the second interaction, civic engagement and deliberation (like Gadamer and Habermas), and the third indeterminacy and "otherness" (like Bakhtin) (Deetz & Simpson 2004, 141-142).

The Russian scholar of literature, culture, language, and philosophy Mikhail Bakhtin (e.g., 1929/1991) in particular has inspired several researchers during the past decade. Dialogue and dialogism have become popular both in different fields of research (e.g., Baxter & Montgomery 1996, Wertsch 1990) and in business management (e.g., Isaacs 1999). To Bakhtin the nature of social life was an unfinalisable, open, and multivocal dialogue, not a closed, univocal

monologue. Bakhtin's core concepts are centripetal (meaning forces of unity, homogeneity, centrality) and centrifugal (meaning forces of difference, dispersion, decentering). These forces can be generalised to all forms of social life and they render dialogue an indeterminate process. Communication means "tracings of unified-yet-competing values, orientations, perspectives, functions, or ideas" (Baxter 2004, 114, Baxter & Montgomery 1996, 24-25). To Bakhtin all language is dialogic at some level, but in its fullest sense the human voice can be spoken only in the presence of the other. This means that dialogue is more than just two people speaking. Dialogue is about thinking together. It is about communicating without the need of choosing a side. Dialogue can, in its purest form, involve mutual exploration and astonishment. Isaacs (1999, 19) defines dialogue as "a conversation in which people think together in relationship".

Baxter and Montgomery (1996, 4) draw their "relational dialectics" from Bakhtin's dialogic perspective. They stress the "both/and" -ness of relating, meaning that in successful close relationships the parties are able to give voice to and accept opposing tendencies and contradictions, such as autonomy vs. connection, certainty vs. novelty, rights vs. obligations, or self-disclosure vs. privacy. They maintain that all dialectical theorists are committed to these assumptions that characterise dialectics at the metatheoretical level: contradiction, change, praxis, and totality (Baxter & Mongomery 1996, 17). Process and contradiction are generally considered the two central principles underlying dialectical theory. Process refers to the dynamic character of relationships and contradiction expresses the tension between competing needs and desires. (Wood 2000, 44.)

Many dialogical approaches focus on interpersonal relationships (e.g., Baxter & Montgomery 1996, Cissna & Anderson 2004, Wood 2000). Some even question the possibility of inter-organisational dialogue, because dialogue is basically interpersonal interaction. Deetz and Simpson (2004) bring the dialogic theory of communication to the organisational context. They maintain that the liberal humanistic perspective has been widely applied in organisations and that this has lead to an overemphasis on shared meaning and finding common ground (e.g., Ellinor & Gerard 1998). Therefore, the central notions of dialogue, contradiction and difference, have been neglected, as well as the chances to mutually construct understanding (Deetz & Simpson 2004, 150).

When we talk about larger groups and dialogue, we may need structures (temporal, organisational and physical circumstances), common orientation, and even rules about participation, commitment, reciprocity, and honesty (Mönkkönen 2002, 45). However, Mönkkönen (2002, 47) emphasises that it is possible to maintain old set-ups in new rhetorical settings. Network and team meetings may serve as structures for dialogue but they may also remain very formal without a real dialogic orientation. However, the goal of dialogue should be to mobilise different views to meet in a meaningful relation (Bakhtin 1929/1991, 273).

The Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire (1970) introduced the concept of dialogue into education in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Democratic education

should adopt a dialogic model where students, teachers, and community members are participants in an educational process where knowledge is collectively created. Everyone involved has something valuable to contribute. (See also Nordenstreng & Lehtonen 1998, 262.) Personal freedom and development can be achieved only through mutuality, community and inclusiveness. For Freire, dialogue required love, humility and faith, and it was a prerequisite of communication, and communication was a prerequisite of true education. Thus dialogue was a means to empower the oppressed (Stewart, Zediker & Black 2004, 34).

5.2.2 Characteristics of dialogue

Baxter and Montgomery (1996, 195) caution against lists of favourable acts and attitudes when we talk about human relationships. They suggest that characteristics like clarity, empathy, accuracy, openness, control and confirmation may appear on such lists but that these lists do not acknowledge the complex communicative forces involved in human interaction. Instead, they suggest some principles of interactive competence that define the essence of a dialogic view of communication. According to them competent interaction requires recognition of contradiction, multivocality, fluid dialogue and creativity.

Dialogue does not occur without listening. Isaacs (1999, 83) says that the capacity to listen is the heart of dialogue. Ellinor and Gerard (1998, 100-110) define three levels of listening that one should apply simultaneously: listen to others, listen to yourself, and listen for collective themes. They maintain that the most difficult of these tasks is to identify collective themes, to make a synthesis of, seemingly, disconnected perspectives since people tend to stick to their personal views. Further, collective learning benefits from inquiry (questioning) and reflection (careful thinking) (Ellinor & Gerard 1998). Other often-mentioned qualities of dialogue are respect, suspension, and voicing (e.g., Isaacs 1999).

Frequently used metaphors in the context of dialogue and dialogism are those of jazz music or dance, referring to the nature of virtuosic improvisation and mutual understanding. Among others, Hammond, Anderson and Cissna (2003, 130-136) characterise dialogue with the help of symbols and metaphors, and compare, for example, the emergent unanticipated consequences of dialogue with jamming. The other characteristics of dialogue given by them are immediacy of presence (participants turn toward one another to create mutual access), strange otherness (recognition of the fundamental difference of the other), collaborative orientation (learning through relational support), vulnerability (openness to new influences and change), mutual implication (intense dialogue based on mutually interdependent roles), temporal flow (temporally and spatially holistic dialogic systems), and genuineness and authenticity (voicing: speaking with an authentic voice and listening).

Kent and Taylor (2002, 24-30) discuss dialogue as an orientation which involves five features: mutuality, propinquity, empathy, risk, and commitment. Mutuality means collaborative orientation and the spirit of mutual equality.

Propinquity involves the elements of immediacy of presence, temporal flow and engagement. Empathy refers to supportiveness, communal orientation and confirmation of the value of others. Risk means vulnerability, unanticipated consequences and strange otherness. Commitment refers to genuineness and commitment to conversation and to interpretation. Kent and Taylor (2002), as well as Hammond, Anderson and Cissna (2003) base the characteristics of dialogue on an extensive survey of the literature. The elements of dialogue identified are very much the same in both articles, yet grouped differently. Kent and Taylor (2002, 30) put more emphasis on the thought that dialogue is rather an outcome of ongoing communication and relationships than a process or a series of steps. The benefits of it can be increased public support and satisfaction, a better image and increased accountability.

5.2.3 Problems of dialogue

In the enthusiasm for the benefits of dialogue it is sometimes forgotten that the implementation of dialogue is not without problems and risks. These may lie, for example, in the organisational culture, in the management of the dialogic process, in dialogic techniques, in inadequate resources, or in the expectations, values or communication skills of the participants. The more participants there are, as in multi-stakeholder dialogues, the greater the risks.

Collaborative relationships cannot be built on a "full-steam-ahead, just do it!" approach (Ellinor & Gerard 1998, 231). Dialogue facilitators and participants may expect quick and measurable changes and experience frustration when changes in organisational culture are slow (Payne & Calton 2002). One argument that is often heard concerns the effect on productivity. There may be fears regarding uncertainty, contradiction and difference both among leaders and participants, especially in less flexible organisations. The new voices that arise may sound threatening. Since the liberal humanist perspective that emphasises the importance of finding common ground is widely accepted in organisations, tolerance of difference, dilemmas and tensions is low (Deetz & Simpson 2004, 153).

Crane and Livesey (2003, 49-51) name cacophony, fragmentation and paralysis as risks of dialogue. Multi-stakeholder dialogues involve communicating with numerous groups with sometimes conflicting interests. The authors maintain that there is a high potential for cacophony and a risk that dialogue will turn to confusion. They also point out that the notion of socially constructed identity is becoming dominant. Organisations do not necessarily 'have' an identity but construct different identities through communication. This fragmentation sets a true challenge for dialogue. And not only for dialogue but also for all organisational presentations because there is no coherent identity to present. Crane and Livesey mean that because organisations usually value consistency, efficiency and control, genuine dialogue may paralyse or split stakeholder relations because of its inconsistent, inefficient and uncontrollable nature.

The risk elements mentioned above are recognisable in the university context. Universities work with stakeholders who, in turn, operate in their own networks, and face thus the challenge of building dialogue in complex and confusing environments. The identity of a university comes to be constructed on multiple levels of the university organisation when departments and units communicate with their partners. Identity can be a collection of fragments like a puzzle, which prompts the question of how much can and should be done on the university level to form a coherent picture from the different pieces. And, finally, in universities just like in any other modern organisation, decisions are made and resources allocated according to performance. In this environment commitment to time-consuming, exploratory dialogic processes may be hard to create.

5.2.4 van Ruler's typology and communication strategies

One of the prevailing paradigms of public relations research is James Grunig's model of communication that recognises the following four public relations strategies: publicity, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical (e.g., Grunig et al. 2002). Betteke van Ruler (2004) has developed the model further into a communication grid (Figure 12). She derives the four basic communication strategies from communication theory and public relations practices, along with typologies of professional roles (Chapter 5.5.1). The distinctive dimensions are the degree of involvement of "the other" in the communication process, and the view of meaning. With regard to the involvement of the other she divides communication into 1) emission, 2) a controlled one-way process, and 3) a two-way process. With regard to meaning she identified denotative and connotative positions: denotative meanings are overt and shared, while connotative meanings arise through personal feelings and associations. van Ruler's grid does not include communication as emission because such processes are undirected and sender-oriented and the effects of communication do not have any role. Professional orientation of that kind cannot be considered appropriate today (van Ruler 2004, 127, 138). This does not mean, however, that such thoughts of communication do not exist in modern organisations.

The four squares of van Ruler's matrix constitute the basic public relations competencies or strategies. The matrix is a situational diagram and the different strategies can be used in different situations. The *information strategy* is the traditional strategy of public relations – providing information to somebody about something. The *persuasion strategy* is the field of advertising and propaganda. The *consensus-building strategy* builds bridges between the organisation and its publics. The *dialogue strategy* means consultation with stakeholders with regard to policy development.

Controlled one-way

Information   **Persuasion**

Denotation ————————————————————————— Connotation

Consensus-building   **Dialogue**

Two-way
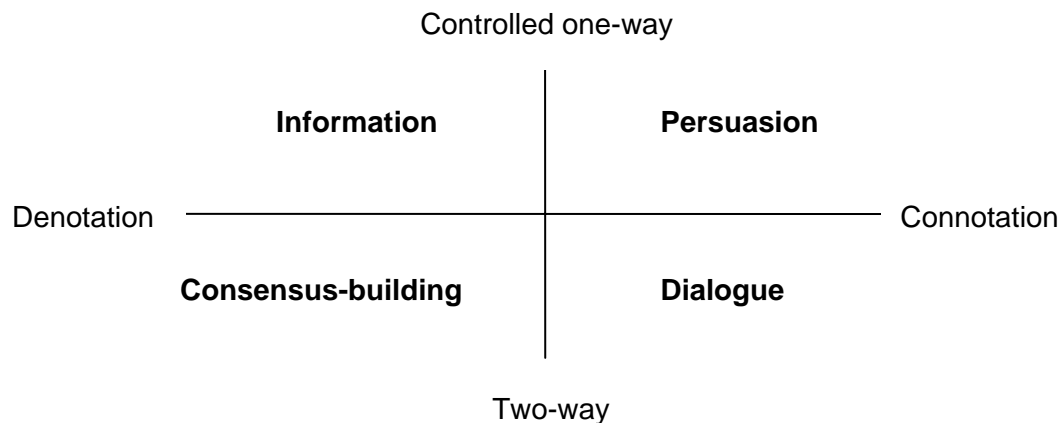
FIGURE 12   The communication grid (van Ruler 2004, 139).

According to van Ruler dialogue and consensus creation are widely discussed and applied in the contexts of the learning organisation and knowledge management. Therefore, these strategies should provide fruitful approaches to the development of organisational communication in higher education institutions.

Hammond, Anderson and Cissna (2003) identify two types of dialogue that imply the power involved in each: convergence and emergence. Convergent dialogue is designed to solve a particular problem or create a desired consensus, while emergent dialogue generates the unexpected. Convergent dialogue is often technique-driven and "serves to maintain and defend a paradigm, a body of literature, a set of values, profitability, hierarchy, and other factors". The power of the authorities is not challenged, neither are the social networks or institutions disrupted. "In emergent dialogue, ideas conflict, clash, and combine until something new appears". (Hammond et al 2003, 146.) Emergent dialogue challenges the parties involved through participation and empowerment. Knowledge produced in the mutual dialogic process is considered as a basis of decision making rather than institutional structures. Therefore, the original idea of dialogue, as described for example by Bakhtin, is realised in emergent dialogue in its purest form.

5.2.5 Communication strategies and social interaction

If we combine the forms of social interaction and the ideas of convergent and emergent dialogue with the communication competencies presented above, we may re-form the communication grid as follows. The starting point comprises the motives for and goals of interaction. These may include third task requirements and financial needs as well as community development and reputation management.
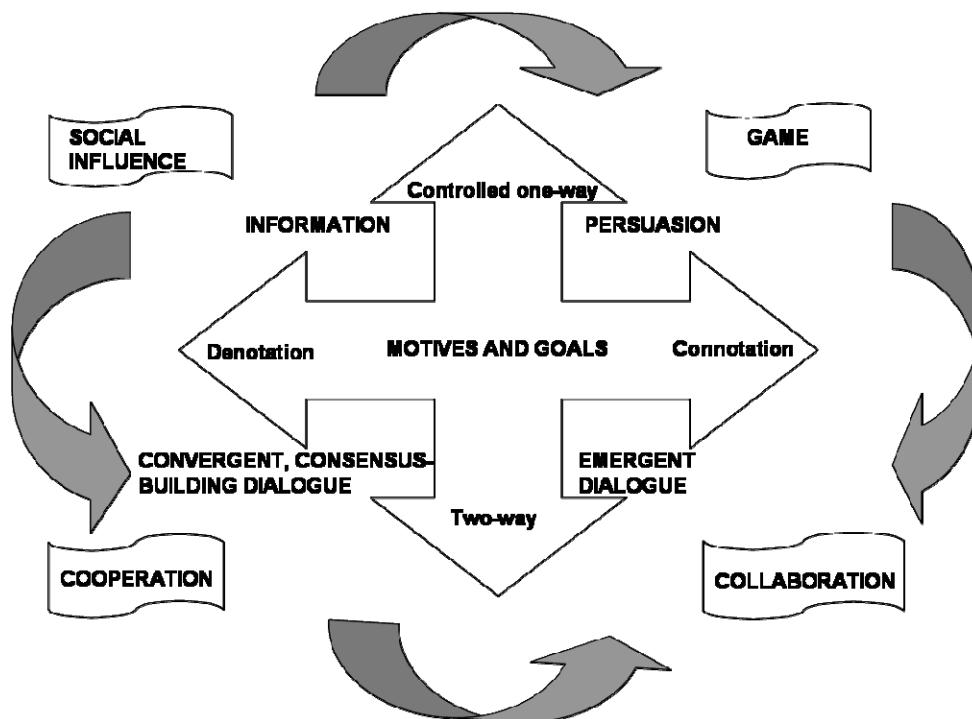
FIGURE 13   Social interaction and communication strategies in stakeholder interaction.

The forms of social interaction are contexts or labels that provide the framework of communication and define the nature of communication. The first form of social interaction (see Chapter 5.1.2), *presence in situation*, is not included in the model because simple awareness of the other in the same space cannot be considered as communication in organisational contexts.

If the model is now compared to what was written about the characteristics of dialogue in Chapter 5.2.2, we notice that only the square with the *collaboration* label, called emergent dialogue, is equivalent to the original notion of dialogue. This square recognises for example contradiction, multivocality, trust, surprise, creativity, and the vulnerability of the parties involved. This square covers the ideas of thinking together and mutual astonishment. Here we have the possibility for an emotional process of co-creation. In fact, van Ruler's interpretation of dialogic strategy represents a more structured and facilitated notion of dialogue than the original notion of creating and thinking together (van Ruler 2004, 140).

The other square named dialogue stands for the rational, convergent, consensus-building form of it within the context of *cooperation*. It means agreements on participants, aims, processes, timelines and sometimes even outcomes. As Hammond et al. (2003, 147) put it, some organisations may prefer these predictable structures to the risks that the emergent type of dialogue involves.

It is worth mentioning that the persuasion strategy does not mean propaganda alone but also presenting the organisation to its stakeholders in a favourable way. van Ruler (2004, 140) describes it as "a targeted tuning of the knowledge, attitude, and behaviours of specified others". The social orientation

of a *game* is applicable here. This is the world of politics and competitors. It can be questioned whether the form of social interaction called *social influence* is suitable for the information strategy. However, in Mönkkönen's (2001) model, on this level the parties acquire information about the other, but the other is seen as an object, communication is asymmetrical and the element of power is evident. Therefore, the label of social influence can be considered appropriate.

Both Grunig and van Ruler (2004, 138) point out that models are situational and that no single model can be considered the best for all public relations practices. The orientation is decisive, as is the world view, and the attitude towards relationship building. This study argues that all forms of social interaction and communication strategies are needed in relationship building, maintenance and enhancement, but priority should be given to the development of the two forms of dialogue if we aim at fruitful, collaborative regional engagement.

5.2.6 Multi-stakeholder dialogues

Stakeholder dialogues have been eagerly promoted in all fields of society during recent years, as well through research findings and business practices, as with the help of international organisations, like AccountAbility. In 2005 AccountAbility published the exposure draft of the international standard for stakeholder engagement, AA1000SES. The standard is expected to provide "a robust basis for designing, implementing, assessing, communicating and assuring the quality of stakeholder engagement"[20].

The traditional model of stakeholder relationships is shown in Figure 14.
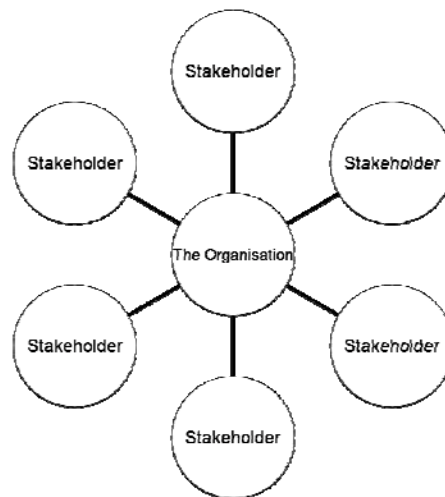
FIGURE 14   The traditional stakeholder model.

However, recent research (e.g., Crane & Livesey 2003) has focused increasingly on the idea that all organisation's stakeholders operate in their own networks,

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20   Retrieved March 1, 2006, from <http://www.accountability.org.uk>

which makes the model very complex. Moreover, each stakeholder group consists of individuals, who, in turn, have their personal networks. These stakeholder webs have been the focus of several studies of stakeholder relations (e.g., Welcomer, Cochran & Gerde 2003). Consequently, this approach has made stakeholder interdependence to an important topic of organisational research. According to Crane and Livesey (2003, 43) "stakeholder relationships must therefore be understood as a complex interplay of shifting, ambiguous and contested relationships between and within diverse organisations." They point out that communication has a central role in these networks, since it is through communication that the networks are constituted, managed and maintained.
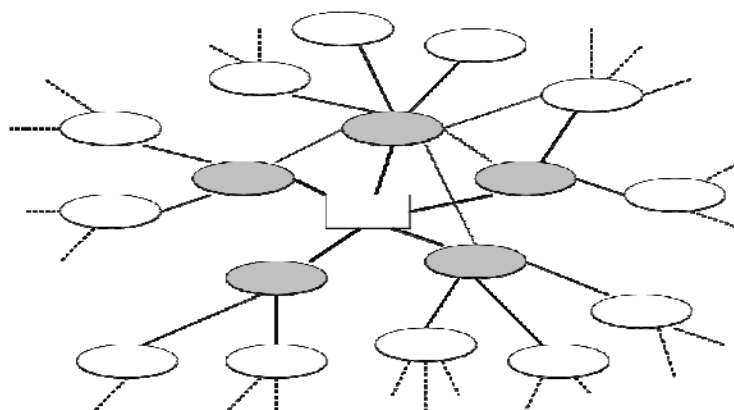
FIGURE 15   The network model of stakeholders.

Multi-stakeholder dialogues have arisen from the need to handle the kinds of complex problems that cannot be solved by an organisation alone and that affect several stakeholder groups. The organisation is seen as a part of a larger network of stakeholders and citizens. The network can be defined "as an interactive field of organisational discourse occupied by all stakeholders who share a complex, interdependent, ongoing problem domain and who want/need to talk about it" (Payne & Calton 2002, 122). Today many organisations that operate in multinational environments have also created stakeholder conferences or web-based dialogue fora to address such questions as human rights, social responsibility, or climate change. In addition to global problems, multi-stakeholder dialogues seem to be useful when means are sought to apply scientific and technological advancements to human and social well-being (Payne & Calton 2002). Collective learning is very much emphasised in these processes. Often these dialogues are initiated by a new awareness of socially responsible behaviour, which is seen to be achieved through responsible stakeholder relations.

Some issues that multi-stakeholder dialogues could explore in the academic context and on the community level are those of the economic and cultural welfare of the region, formation of the university's long-term strategy, curriculum renewal, and questions of globalisation and diversity. For example, when discrimination and offensive behaviour against immigrants turned into

violent attacks in Joensuu in the mid 1990s, the University of Joensuu took an active role in rebuilding tense relationships. Universities could indeed also proactively host dialogues with demanding stakeholders before they turn into dangerous stakeholders.

Experiences from the U.S. provide examples of successful stakeholder dialogues between universities and their communities. In 2002 the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) published a report, Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College, with strong emphasis on education of lasting value.[21] The report was based on two years' work by a national panel that analysed American higher education. The report was followed by a nation-wide series of Campus-Community Dialogues which were hosted by campuses and brought together academic leaders with local civic and government leaders, business leaders, secondary educators, and current and recent students. The aim was to find guidelines for higher education in the twenty-first century and develop an ongoing public dialogue between universities and their stakeholders. The President of AAC&U, Carol Schneider (2002) reported that dialogue participants "underline the importance of integrity, ethical discernment, civic responsibility, and engagement in public life as outcomes of college learning." However, the general public does not necessarily expect active citizenship to be an outcome of higher education, not even in the U.S. where 75 % of high school graduates enrol in college. Schneider holds, though, that the academy could work in much closer partnership with its stakeholders to build public support and understanding of socially responsible education.

5.3 Research results: Characteristics of university-stakeholder dialogue with specific stakeholder groups

In the previous chapter, the key stakeholders that universities were seen to be responsible to were the state, the students, and the region. As this study focuses on regional stakeholders, universities' dialogues with the state, or with the Ministry of Education, were not discussed in the interviews in detail (cf. Treuthardt 2004, Rekilä 2006). However, as the university-ministry relationship is an important determinant of all university functions, it was discussed in Chapter 3, where the context of stakeholder dialogues was mapped.

Hence, in the present research the focus is on dialogues with students, and with the region. The regional stakeholders chosen for interview represented the definitive stakeholders as given in the model by Michell, Agle and Wood (1997, 874, Figure 7). The media was included as one of definitive stakeholders because transparency and public accountability are increasingly required by public organisations.

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[21]   Retrieved January 2, 2006, from < http://www.greaterexpectations.org/>

Below, the results of the analysis are explained, more specifically those concerning the stakeholder groups of students, external board members, advisory boards, business, media, and polytechnics. The data obtained were the richest on dialogues with these groups. This was in part, of course, because the informants represented these groups, but also because the university representatives were eager to present their views on interaction with these specific groups. In this study, the region is thus perceived through these particular stakeholder groups.

The data involve 39 codes related to dialogue which refer to 597 quotations (Table 10). In the following sections, "students" includes "alumni", and "polytechnics" includes "local universities". The dialogues with the "region" in general and with "local decision makers" were discussed earlier in the connection of regional characteristics.

TABLE 10 Dialogue-attached quotations classified according to main stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder group	
Advisory board	96
Alumni	13
Board members	27
Business	49
Decision makers	10
Local universities	19
Media	52
Polytechnics	195
Region	71
Students	65
Total	**597**

5.3.1 Students

The universities have fluent dialogues with their students, at least when seen from the perspective of the Student Union. These dialogues have established forms including regular face-to-face meetings. However, a lot of the communication occurs in written form; for example, the Student Union makes statements about different documents, like strategies, when asked. This aspect of cooperation was emphasised in the interviews when the heads of Student Union were interviewed, and official contacts between the two organisations discussed. Of course, the most frequent and also the most important university-student contacts take place in classroom settings every day, and also in the student interaction with student services' personnel.

Topical themes of university-student dialogues were new structures and combinations of university units, students who do not really study, and new degree programmes. Students' welfare was also a serious concern in all regions.

> We have the real basic national standard that one quarter of students are suffering from depression and anxiety. [P4:74]

Students' concerns are often very practical, like getting to know their new home town and home university, lack of parking places, the high cost of public transportation, bus routes, and sports facilities.

The importance of cooperation was motivated by the notions that the university benefits from happy students, and the university does not necessarily have an overall view on students' everyday life and employment, and that students' interests and the interests of the university do not always match.

When disagreements arise, these are often expressed in written statements. However, this happens quite seldom and is done in a constructive atmosphere.

> Oh yes, we can stand the conflicts and put up with them and we do have this constructive discussion culture here. [P4:176]

> In such burning issues we write an official statement. They [university administration] can consider in peace whether to go along a different line or on the same line as us. In my opinion it's so relaxed here that there is no need to disagree so much. [P18:280]

There was some difference in the extent to which universities listened to students' voice, when expressed in written statements. The experience that the university listens to students and includes their voice in its own statements, produced satisfaction, while the feeling that efforts put into writing were wasted, produced frustration.

> I feel particularly that when the university formulates it own statements on matters then of course there are many of our issues included and it has never felt as if they are just thrown out. [P4:182]

> But at times it's frustrating if you produce statements, do a lot of work for it, and then they are never seen anywhere. [P11:186]

Moreover, students spend some 5-7 years at the university and Student Union activists may be involved in the Union for, possibly, two or three years. In this context the decision making processes of the university seem quite slow.

> The workings of such a big organisation are indeed slow, we, too, have really fine education policy objectives in our action plan, they can't really be done in a year but it is the result of a long process.
> [P4:94]

Personal contacts and knowing one another were considered to be prerequisites of fruitful cooperation. The rectors have a decisive role in cooperation, as they set an example. A student-friendly university management that genuinely listens to the students is what students expect and appreciate.

> The fact that the student body can debate more or less tricky issues with the university management, well that is always a good thing. [P11:226]

Student leaders are also ready to make students heard if this does not happen automatically.

> For my part I have thought that we must get our voice heard and ensure that we are listened to. That it's not all just yeah ok, let's do this then nothing happens. [P11:226]

On the other hand, the Student Unions also struggle with various problems related to their members. The feedback from students is sometimes very critical, the members are hard to please, but also many students are passive and reluctantly participate in organisational work. The Student Union also has a mediator role between the university and students. For example, if a student is dissatisfied with the methods of instruction and cannot find any other way of expressing feedback, the Union can provide a neutral but credible channel to further these opinions.

The wish lists of students included, among other things, teaching of high quality, better organised student counselling and tutoring, environmental plans, active and visible recruitment services, and written guidance to students on the university administration. On the national level all students in Finland campaigned for increased study grants, which were also a common concern of all the student representatives in this study[22].

Alumni relations, contacts with former students, were discussed only in Turku, where the alumni programme had advanced successfully during recent years, and currently has some 5 500 members. The programme covers an exhaustive range of alumni activities like Alumni Days, family outings and mentoring. There are no membership fees so far in the alumni association. The fruitfulness of the programme was seen in the great number of participants, who represent several different sectors of society, as well as different echelons in working life. The goals of alumni activities are also given in the strategy of the University of Turku: activating the connections to working life, disseminating research information, developing collaboration in research and mediating new stimuli. In practice, teaching also benefits from alumni relations, as the university gains information from the needs of working life, and employers for their part learn what kinds of specialists the university offers. At Turku the alumni programme has been a prerequisite and a signpost to more systematic stakeholder cooperation.

5.3.2 External board members

The University of Turku did not have an external board member at the time of the interviews, Kuopio had one and Lapland two. From 2007 on Turku has also included stakeholder representatives on its board, as also required by legislation. A desirable combination was to have one external from the public sector and the other from the business community. From the university perspective the public sector was seen to have a better understanding of the academic world.

> Public sector understands better the way this university system operates, and with

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[22] This aim was achieved in April 2007 when an increase in study grants was written into the policy programme of the new government of Finland.

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> those company representatives it's very much that they listen and learn this system. [P16:50]

The strategic role of the university board and the absence of controversial questions like personnel recruitment were seen to be a prerequisite for the presence of external members. On the other hand, it was presumed that externals might become frustrated about university matters. It was admitted that ten years earlier there would have been no possibility of appointing external members to the university board; however, times are different now.

Students, who belong to the university and cannot thus be considered as externals on the university board, seemed to have the most advanced mechanisms for interaction through their board representatives, as the board members and the Student Union leaders always held regular meetings before the board meeting to discuss topical issues and to take a stand. When this link had failed, the situation had been regrettable. The responsibility of board members was considered important and therefore this position was entrusted to active and experienced students with the ability to speak and argue their case.

Also, board externals had developed team work to prepare topical issues beforehand together with advisory board members and other specialists on specific issues. A fluent flow of information between the advisory board members and board members was considered important to be able to impact on the operative decision making of the university.

External board members had indeed experienced some frustration because many issues are so "ready" when brought to the board that the board has no role except formal acceptance. On the other hand, some questions such as the impending structural changes had been hotly debated. A need to vote was considered as a sign of inability to discuss and agree.

Some quotations reveal the difficulties externals have in understanding the academic world and, equally, the inability of the academy to fully take advantage of the external knowledge available. The two worlds do not seem to match, or they are still at the learning stage of board work.

> I have sometimes pictured that if a company were run like this it would be bankrupt in no time! [P13:94]

> One person is far too little in the governing body to present the angle on this type of administrative bureaucracy that we have. [P9:51]

> This common view that has been sometimes expressed that the representatives of the private sector would introduce a very powerful development contribution to the universities via administration, well it's a total illusion because it is such a different world for operating in. [P16:50]

> There they go on and wailing about this productivity programme, it's that awful when they're getting the payment by results system and there's the boss working out if they do proper research, it's awful for the university this whole system that's being used elsewhere. [P21:82]

On the other hand, there were opinions that showed deep appreciation of the

views, experience and advice of externals, and of their role as bridge builders with the surrounding society.

5.3.3 Advisory boards

All the universities studied here have advisory boards chaired either by a respected regional figure (Lapland and Kuopio), or by the university rector (Turku). At Lapland the importance of an advisory board was realised already at the founding stage of the university in the 1970s and included in the university charter. At that time it was also written into the charter that the members of the university community cannot belong to the advisory board but it is a wholly external body. On the contrary, at the time of the study, at Kuopio also deans of faculties and other central university leaders sit on the advisory board. At Turku the advisory board has 16 members, at Lapland 17 members, and at Kuopio 81 members[23]. Different sectors of society are represented, including culture and the media, and both the home town of the university and the surrounding regions. The advisory boards meet twice a year, which is rather infrequent; however, members also meet one another regularly on other occasions.

All three advisory boards were characterised as fora of discussion rather than fora of influence. The advisory board was described as an information channel or contact network and, from the point of view of the university, as "PR work" without immediate benefits.

The main benefits of the advisory board are that the university has a trustworthy network with which to exchange and test ideas and to consult on difficult questions. All the universities had indeed included advisory boards in their strategy processes at an early stage to obtain stakeholder views and visions. On the other hand, in one advisory board member's experience the impact of the advisory board on strategy had remained rather marginal.

> The strategy work has only just been done in the universities, but perhaps the share of the advisory board in it has been that the advisory board has been informed, it didn't get much at all in the joint short occasion to exert influence. And yet all those instances represented by this advisory board would be needed when we peer into the future and think of promoting the well-being of all this area, which actually is the third task. [P12:38]

Advisory boards are not very interactive and dialogic fora. On the one hand, they seem to serve their purpose as a meeting place and provide some interaction between the university and its stakeholders. In Kuopio, for example, the aim of the meetings is to provide the advisory board with up-dated information both about the university, and about national higher education policy. This is also what advisory board members wish to hear. However, the interaction is under no circumstances described as creative or exciting or

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[23] The University of Kuopio and the University of Joensuu founded a joint advisory board for the University of Eastern Finland in the autumn of 2007. The board consists of 18 members and of the management team of the University of Eastern Finland.

unpredictable, quite the contrary.

> It does not really discuss at all, it is a great seminar chamber, lots of people, they go there, drink coffee, are provided with information and go home. [P9:99]

> There the Rector has his own overview, the head of administration speaks on certain topical matters. The speeches delivered.. they are quite predictable, to put it bluntly. And that's where it's at, the role is not such that it would ever produce any great outcomes, regrettably. [P10:90]

> Well yes, there's an opportunity for questions… but the discussion is not generally very lively. A few questions have been raised. [P14:74]

> There's not a great deal of time there for a good dialogue and discussion and it tends to be that we are only informed but our opinions do not emerge. [P19:62]

> The preparation of the agenda is largely in the hands of the university and perhaps we have not been active enough in it, I don't know it we'd have anything to put on the agenda, something productive, but they generally come ready and we go and we talk and we go through the meeting. [P19:66]

At Lapland the advisory board was, however, in the process of changing from being the information channel of the university towards a more interactive forum where also input from the region is forwarded to the academy. The chair of the advisory board was given credit for this development. The role of an active and engaged external chair was also considered decisive in Kuopio, and therefore it was quite surprising that the university rector chairs the advisory board in Turku. However, it must be noted that the data did not include any other advisory board members at Turku, except the rector, and thus the conclusions presented here were drawn mainly on the basis of the data from Lapland and Kuopio.

Many advisory board members had difficulties in naming initiatives that they had tried to advance through the advisory board. It is possible that the role of the advisory board has not been to produce concrete initiatives. In this matter Lapland seems to be an exception. The advisory board had stressed the importance of internationalisation and teaching in English. Concrete initiatives mentioned were media education and the advancement of reindeer farming. The university was also seen to be responsive to the initiatives of advisory board members.

In Kuopio, in particular, there was some dissatisfaction in the air concerning the work of the advisory board and the need for development was expressed. The problems experienced were that the board was too big to be effective[24]; the environment is changing rapidly and competition is becoming harder, and consequently there is a need to develop working methods and find capable people with both the time and commitment to deal with questions concerning the university to be able also to work in smaller thematic groups.

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[24]   Cf. the Ringelmann effect: when groups grow bigger, people tend to work less effectively. As numbers increase, the social power or impact of individuals diminishes and people become less responsible for achieving shared goals. (Pennington 2005, 59.)

There was a need to develop the work of the advisory board towards creating a more sinewy and strategic forum with a clear future orientation.

> In all organisations and also at the university, there easily arises an in-group atmosphere, that is we need new perspectives, many-sided perspectives that these different interest groups can provide. Maybe future forum is a bit of a big name, but nevertheless some debate of our own on the future. [P12:42]

However, even as such the advisory board was considered a valuable structure. One of the informants noted that the formal get-togethers of stakeholders, like the advisory board, strengthen the contacts between different stakeholder groups established elsewhere, and help to maintain the dense network that is typical of a small city. Moreover, a university representative mentioned that the messages of the region are already received through so many channels that little is added by having an advisory board.

5.3.4 Business

The quantity and quality of business contacts depends naturally on how well the scientific fields of the university match the fields of business in the region. Both in Turku and in Kuopio the pharmaceutical industry is one of the university's natural partners because of the faculties of medicine and pharmacy and the focus on bioscience.

In Lapland the university and business life have had some difficulty in finding common interests in addition to the seasonal employment of students in the tourism industry. On the other hand, the business environment with its low number of firms, fragmented SMEs with very small firms and only few corporations does not offer much in the way of resources from the point of view of the university either (cf. Chapter 3.5.2). However, some innovations show that new creative combinations are possible, such as the cooperation with the Lappset Group praised by one informant.

> Well I think this is a splendid achievement, this intelligent playground concept, that there we have our industrial designers, there have been our educationists, our social scientists and there some ten doctoral dissertations have come out of it and then they get a product concept which is totally new and globally very interesting. [P16:46]

The data revealed three major interfaces between the universities and business: education in the engineering sciences and business administration, and science parks or technology centres. The University of Kuopio had, among others, consulted the Technology Center Teknia when formulating its new strategy and was particularly appreciative of Teknia's views on regional interaction. It is interesting that the widely acknowledged mediating role of continuing education centres did not come up in the interviews, or it came up only implicitly.

At the time of the interviews, the multinational Honeywell Corporation was building new premises in Kuopio Technology Centre, next to the university. The decision to relocate to Kuopio was a remarkable achievement

and recognition of the fruitful cooperation enjoyed between the firm, the university and the polytechnic. One of the ways HEIs can contribute to regional business is by attracting investment to the region on account of their local skill base (IMHE Info April 2007, 2).

Because the future of business education was a topical theme in 2006 both in Rovaniemi and in Kuopio, it was naturally also discussed in the interviews.

> It's a grim issue if … the Ministry of Education is so blind that it goes and starts to phase out this thing. It's really a bad deal because they are just the interfaces from which the idea could emerge, and the quality, and these business managers and the rest they would get an interface to this university. [P10:190]

> Let's say that the University of Lapland is just coming to an area where there is beginning to be shared possibilities with business life. [P20:68]

> For business life there would certainly be more of those expectations that it's a pity if the commercial teaching is taken away because there are those rare branches where there would be training directly for service in working life. [P21:202]

Science parks and technology centres proved to be the central meeting places of university and business interests, particularly in Turku and in Kuopio.

> It [the science park] is a good organisation in my opinion, especially between this world of enterprise and research, absolutely splendid. [P5:94]

> Above all the fact that new enterprises have come into being around this university. There are at least 200 of them at present. [P13:78]

Business people appreciate the universities' impact in terms of the internationalisation of the region, the number of employees they bring to the region, new innovations, shared projects and the education of competent personnel.

There had also been disappointments. In the Turku region the need for electrical engineering specialists had been overestimated during the days of information technology boom. Business life had also invested heavily in the organisation of TUCS, Turku Centre for Computer Science; however since then the student interest in this education had been on the decline. The contents of official rhetoric sometimes prove a sham in real life. In Turku some conflict was experienced between the emphasis on entrepreneurship in, for example, the common regional strategy of HEIs, as compared to practice in the field.

In all regions there was ongoing dialogue between the university and the business community, and expectations were discussed and hopes also put forward, whether the issue was the university premises or professorships. The business community had actively put forward their ideas regarding educational needs to the universities, such as a need for higher education in offshore engineering in Lapland, and a need for a joint professorship in metal industry an shipbuilding and a professorship in communication in Turku.

The attitudes towards business cooperation were on the whole positive in the universities. Today, the academy seldom publicly disapproves research projects, commissioned by the private sector, as was the case less than a decade

ago. Also, firms are better aware of the possibilities of utilising top specialists from the universities, even if smaller firms may find the university organisation somewhat distant and not easy to approach.

> This own funding of the university, external funding, it certainly plays a big role, I don't know if it feels like selling your soul or what but in everyday life it has got into a rut, a practical rut, this thought world. [P5:110]

> The legislation is not very flexible with regard to close co-operation since we are part of public administration so our money should be kept apart from that and our rules of play separate from what entrepreneurial activity is. [P3:54]

> The reason why it was felt to be so important, well on the horizon there was the re-introduction of biotechnology and enterprise jobs and new innovations maybe… But if we don't know how to play the game between the university and those companies it may be that impossible frictions arise. Then on the other hand since we are a government accountancy office we are obliged to stick up for the university. [P9:143]

> Well as I see it there ought to be a system that if somebody develops some issue be it on whose time whatever that this developer gets it. If it comes to be only and solely for the employer, the university, then the question is does somebody love research so much that they are willing to do it regardless. [P5:122]

Questions of funding play a central role here. On the one hand, the need for funding drives the academy towards cooperation with business, while on the other hand strict regulations and questions of intellectual property rights fetter the development of academic entrepreneurialism.

5.3.5 Media

In all three regions the universities and the local media enjoyed close cooperation. The editors-in-chief and rectors met at different occasions at least once a week. At Turku the local TV channel broadcasts a programme, Studio Aurora, financed by the university, where academic experts appear weekly. The programmes are also sold to the national channels. At Turku the university rector has also been the chair of the board of the local publishing corporation for more than a decade.

Media relations has traditionally been one of the focus areas of academic public relations work, and thus journalists are a well looked-after stakeholder group and interaction is considered satisfactory, easy, flexible, up-to-date and two-way. Among the different forms of interaction are systematic use of academic writers, theme pages and articles produced in close operation with university experts, recruitment of journalists with a university background, reports on academic events like degree conferment ceremonies and inaugurations, news on doctoral dissertations and other research, joint seminars, and employment of media and design students in newspaper work. The Turku paper *Turun Sanomat* is the only paper in this study that has a special science journalist. This is, of course, is a question of resources.

The editors-in-chief spoke of the importance of the university, even indicating that the universities were given priority on the journalistic agenda.

> We do defend the universities in a fairly watertight way. [P6:78]

> I have tried to move it along that the university would be among the publication's priority matters that are monitored and mentioned in the news, on the pages of the publication and in the columns. [P14:26]

> The basic orientation of the journalist should be that s/he is not too much of an insider in the matter so that s/he can be critical of it. But in my opinion it's an entirely different matter this university… It would be the last trick of all that I should begin to eat the university and shoot the university in the leg. If it is the ray of hope in the region and really viable. [P22:170]

This does not mean, however, that criticism would not be levelled at the university when it was needed.

> It cannot mean that although the importance of the university is acknowledged that there is no reason to do critical reports as in the setups related to these recent court cases… it's done according to the rules of play which are part of journalistic ethics. The publication is not the marketing department of the organisation, not even its continuation. [P14:62]

University-media relations had been tested when the universities had become involved in legal processes. On the other hand, universities were given credit for their open communication in these cases, as in the case, involving scientific fraud and unethical behaviour, of Professor Urpo Rinne at Turku.

Also other stakeholders were of the opinion that the university and the local media had a special relationship which was seen to contribute to regional commitment to "our own university".

> I am convinced that the university feels that it has the support of the media in the region. The expectations of people in the subregion have been met, there is plenty of news about the university, it figures in the principal media of the subregion, and of course critical issues are also noted, but in any case the feeling in the university is that information dissemination is active and appropriate. And of course that is important, and has been sustained for its part by the fact that the university is felt to be the region's own. [P12:74]

All editors-in-chief were experienced media professionals and thus had a long perspective from which evaluate changes. Researchers were seen to have advanced as communicators, although there are still some educational gaps.

> A person who has delved into that science may frequently find it difficult to make science comprehensible to the layman and writes for the press in rather the same way as for a scientific journal, and of course for our purposes that's no good at all. [P14:54]

> In the university this total funding depends every year on external funding. In today's world you are required to tell those outside what you are doing. [P13:162]

Even more importantly, attitudes had changed, as described below.

> Generally you can nowadays get hold of a professor. Nor is it here only a question of mobile phones or not, but of attitudes. The professors have time for the media. [P6:202]

However, as some researchers are more aware of the importance of media publicity or are better at and more interested in expressing themselves to laymen, they also receive more attention. At the same time some exciting and important research results may remain hidden in university chambers.

Communication departments at each university were given credit for their abundant flow of information. Also having a personal relationship with the communication manager and his/her outward personality was valued.

> The university's information dissemination is ample and keeps us nicely up to date. They have even learnt to put doctorial dissertations into comprehensible Finnish. [P22:162]

The media relations seemed to be fluent and trusting on the local level. National media publicity, however, is a problem, which was also found expression in this study, in spite of the fact that the focus was on local media relations.

> What is not in *Helsingin Sanomat* is not in the country at all so in this respect we, like many other universities operating in the regions are in such a backwater… you don't feel quite like deliberately creating scandals or things to get into *Helsingin Sanomat*. [P16:66]

5.3.6 Polytechnics

It was a surprise to the present researcher how profusely university-polytechnic relations were discussed during the interviews. The data contain more information on this relationship than any other. There were at least three reasons why the topic was so hot in 2006. First, questions of higher education policy, like the re-structuring of higher education institutions that is being planned in Finland, were up for debate. Second, the right of polytechnics to grant higher degrees and whether these degrees can be called Master's degrees in English had just become an issue.[25] Moreover, in 2006 Finnish polytechnics changed their English names to universities of applied sciences which caused irritation at universities. The interviews seemed to offer an opportunity for university representatives to let off steam, to express disagreements and disappointments that are normally hidden behind the official rhetoric of fluent cooperation and shared goals. The representatives of polytechnics were very careful in their talk; they did not see any major contradictions but tactfully described their challenging position in Finnish education. They stressed the value and importance of healthy competition.

Current cooperation

There were several fruitful and natural areas of cooperation between the

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[25] One of the informants criticises this right on the grounds that it is not reasonable to educate *doctors* both at universities and polytechnics [P5:38]. This cannot be an accident as this was mentioned twice during the interview. If the current system of higher education is unclear to such an informed and involved regional actor, it must be even harder for outsiders to perceive.

universities and polytechnics, such as the new source of pride and symbol of cooperation in Turku, the ICT building, which was under construction at the time of the interviews, and houses all the information technology-related research and teaching activities of two universities and one polytechnic. The University of Turku, in particular, boasted of its long history of cooperation with local HEIs, which now include the polytechnics, but Kuopio and Rovaniemi also considered themselves as good examples of well functioning cooperation between HEIs. The student unions of the universities and polytechnics easily found common interests in the social questions of student life, such as lobbying for increases in study grants, the right to free higher education, or students' counselling services. In all regions the informants stressed that the basic prerequisites for cooperation are in order; people know one another and are willing to collaborate. Universities provide the personnel of polytechnics with a natural channel for acquiring postgraduate degrees. Moreover, the geographical distances are relatively short.

> Of course we both have our views on certain issues, but that should in no way be allowed to impede cooperation, it is issues which are fought over and certainly not people. [P11:170]

Trust

Criticism of the polytechnics concerned, in particular, academic drift, their habit of adopting university-like working practices, or names, like the replacement of "polytechnic" with "university of applied sciences".

> Then there is also the problem that in polytechnics academic drift is constantly apparent and they want activities which are more university-like. [P1:82]

> When it [the polytechnic] has gone increasingly for a foothold in the university's domain, well I don't think much of it. [P5:38]

Some lack of trust was expressed on both sides. There may be fluent cooperation in different fields and no open conflict, but trust and commitment continue to be lacking.

> We daren't trust one another. We're afraid of something. All the time there's this tense suspicion, especially when something concrete needs to be done. [P9:155]

> It took many years before we were finally able to conclude this agreement. And it wasn't going to work until it was put forward and we started having discussions on it between institutions of higher education that in the strategic planning we agreed that this would be done and nothing has happened. [P7:118]

The reasons given for these problems were the fear that polytechnics may become merged in universities because universities are the more powerful party in cooperative projects, the reluctance of university personnel to cooperate with polytechnics, rigid faculty boundaries in universities, fear that cooperation with polytechnics would lower the level of higher education, different governing mechanisms and organisations in different HEIs, and a

feeling of unfairness, or even envy, as the polytechnics were believed to be better funded than universities.

> We got no representative at all for questions of health care from the medical faculty, there doesn't seem to be anybody there who's interested in engaging in co-operation with the polytechnic. [P10:122]

However, positive changes were also reported in the attitudes of university people who were seen to express more appreciation of the work done by polytechnics. More positive attitudes were seen to have promoted the cooperation.

In turn, representatives of polytechnics were well aware of their defensive position. The awarding of higher degrees was heatedly discussed, as was whether the degrees can be called Master's degrees in English. The new English names of the institutions had also aroused mixed feelings. The informants said that the polytechnics do not want to provoke the universities and will not use their new names in Finnish contexts or when they may cause confusion. It was felt that the pressures had been worse on the national than on the local level. However, in Kuopio the degree issue was a very local one as the polytechnic had been admitted the right to award a higher degree in business administration while the university was in danger of losing its business degree.

> It can clearly be sensed that the polytechnics have got those higher degrees and of course that causes further tension in this shared activity because in a way then you can even call into question whether both of us need to offer degrees of the same level in the same field. [P15:42]

> Shall a higher degree from a polytechnic then be accepted as a higher degree [in applying for a post], there is sure to be some tough arm wrestling over this. [P10:130]

It is interesting that sometimes another stakeholder felt a need to mediate between university and polytechnic, as in the example below.

> I try to dispel those fears, especially at the university, in which it was that this would lower the scientific level if co-operation is intensified. So I said that oh yes we have such fields of science that this university will never become something on the lines of Britain and Sweden, just a training university. [P13:102]

Equality

According to the legislation universities and polytechnics are equal institutions of higher education with different responsibilities. However, this is still unclear to many.

> People don't know enough about how the polytechnics really are on the level of higher education, they are alongside the universities, as a part of the higher education institution as is stated in the legislation and that it is possible at the polytechnic to take higher education degrees. It will surely take its own time before it is in some way equal in the eyes of the great majority. [P7:86]

Even if these two institutions are equal in the eyes of the law, they are not considered equal in practice. For example, an editor-in-chief said that his paper sometimes needs to remind readers of the different status of universities and polytechnics.

Questions of equality are questions of values. The strength of universities is naturally in the production of new knowledge. Polytechnics consider their knowledge of working life and their possibilities to actively develop it valuable. The informants recognised that universities continue to be more powerful, for example, when funding is being negotiated, but that the situation is changing and polytechnics are gaining in esteem and status.

> In an equal discussion everybody knows that the university is in a strong position there. That's absolutely clear. [P8:202]

> The old setup that we are a university and you are a polytechnic or the other way round, well it has evened out, so that as I see it they have every chance of going forward as equals at the negotiating table, each of them understands the function of their respective institutions, and do not to go into such areas that might cause friction. [P10:130]

Future challenges

The future challenges facing universities and polytechnics are closely connected to trends in the development of Finnish higher education in general. Of the regions studied, Kuopio had advanced furthest in its attempts to build a consortium for the university and for the polytechnic. In the spring of 2007 the consortium received funding from the Ministry of Education for the consortium implementation phase. The consortium was also seen to be linked to the requirements of the third task and to promote regional engagement. A common aim was greater efficiency and also a greater regional impact with declining resources. The most concrete outcome of the plan is to have a common campus for both HEIs[26]. Moreover, for support services, like libraries or international services, it had been easy to find unanimity and common ground. The hope expressed in the strategy of the University of Kuopio is that the consortium will become an internationally recognised body with a profound impact on the society and culture of the region. The consortium members will engage in close scientific cooperation and join forces to produce an efficient administration and services.

> The vision that we have was that the University of Kuopio and the Savonia University of Applied Sciences could form this consortium that would bring added value to this area and make the region more attractive than before and would make these educational units of ours stronger together… I'm after a living organisation in which each one knows what they're doing and what role they have and we can have cooperation but let's not go and blur each other's tasks in this society. [P8:186, 198]

> It would be a fantastic thing for the Kuopio area if we were all in the same area and

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26   In June 2007 the governing body of the polytechnic decided to build its new premises on the university campus. The decision was preceded by a lively discussion in which fears of losing distinct polytechnic identity were also expressed.

> what a fine opportunity to build shared library facilities and shared learning centres, really do something together. [P9:155]

> This whole education sector should be able to gather together to take advantage starting from the pending higher education consortium, I think it's important that it should be seen there that we need to get more out of these resources which are not getting any bigger. [P12:90]

Turku for its part was not interested in new structures of this kind with polytechnics. However, in all three regions efforts had been made to advance cooperation between universities and polytechnics in support services in particular, including international services.

An important topic to be discussed in all three regions was the eventual overlapping of education. In Turku these efforts had been taken so far that when the polytechnic had applied for the right to award higher degrees, the disciplines in question had been chosen to complement the already existing degree structure in the region and to avoid overlapping. The aim was also to benefit the region through sensible division of labour. As mentioned before, in Kuopio the HEIs failed to discuss this question concerning the field of business administration education.

> In that sense it's good that the sectors of our operations differ quite a lot. The university is more oriented towards the social sciences while we are very strongly oriented towards technology, social and health care, so our interests to not overlap. [P23:50]

> We partly operate in different areas, different tasks complementing one another appropriately. In certain educational fields, for example business could be called one such, and partly now in this technology, there are certain overlaps, in my experience they have not yet caused any harm to our operations. [P15:42]

> In connection with strategy various cooperation groups have been set up in which the representatives of the higher education institutions consider this co-operation, what should be done together so that overlap can be avoided. The main idea is that we should consider strengthening our own strengths and that would create preconditions for a division of labour. [P7:62]

The regional programme of Southwest Finland states that the three universities in the region are responsible for the scientific education and research in the region, while the polytechnics are responsible for professionally oriented higher education. The strategy also stresses that all HEIs need resources for applied research.

The informants were not quite sure about the future of the dual model, the development of universities and polytechnics along separate paths. The informants realised that the two institutions of higher education had started to resemble one another in many ways. Universities have become more regionally engaged while polytechnics have advanced in R&D. In the field of competence requirements polytechnics also expect their leading teachers to have postgraduate qualifications. Some informants predicted mergers between universities and polytechnics, some assumed that particular changes would come, and some hoped the current model would prevail.

It may be that the polytechnics in some time frames will be joined with the universities. [P19:150]

There is an increasing tendency for us to have these college-type lower degrees produced under the polytechnic name as it is, and the universities concentrate above all on training masters and doctors. [P16:110]

The universities and polytechnics have different functions. In my opinion we should on no account go so that we have only one higher education institution, because I think that in the long term it would do no good for anyone. [P11:178]

5.4 Research results: Problems, success factors and innovations

5.4.1 Problems and contradictions

Problems related to region and environment

Interestingly, the *Helsinki-centeredness* of Finland was a hot topic in all the interviews, including in Southwest Finland, which has more abundant resources than Northern Savo and Lapland. A common phrase was *there is nothing but Helsinki in Finland* and this summarised the situation when the region admitted that Helsinki received something but they lost, or they did not gain because Helsinki opposed. The media in particular were seen to be very capital-centred.

If you follow the electronic media, for example, like the Finnish Broadcasting Company and their activities, dammit all we've got is the metropolitan area. [P16:66]

Both the university and stakeholder representatives recognised some *shortsightedness in the regional policy making*. The region expects quick moves and needs arise *ad hoc* and may not be in line with university strategy. These situations cause frustration in both parties.

Suddenly there emerge some new big issues and then they say that the university should go for them full out and then the university must tell that a ship under the control of the Ministry of Education cannot come about so fast and make quick decisions, in those connections there is always this feeling that the region thinks that we are stiff, too bureaucratic, too slow to turn around. They imagine that we can start up any degree programme at all just any old time. [P9:107]

The environment has these oversized expectations. The environment thinks that the university when it landed here over twenty years ago should be visible everywhere and that the university should produce services and create jobs and send inventors all over the place. And in a young university this doesn't happen so fast, of course. [P22:42]

One of the major concerns in all three regions was *employment in the region*, how to keep the educated young people in the region. The problem was at its most intractable in Rovaniemi where it was hard to find even summer jobs. The regional programme of Lapland recognises that 15 to 29-year-old form the

biggest age group migrating southwards.

> When they come here to study, then there's a hell of a hurry to get away. We should try to stop that. That's where the University could do something. [P20:124]

> If I hear those students correctly, they are very happy here, both Finnish and foreign. They are very keen to stay on here to go to work. And when many of them are at the point of starting a family then this appears as a safe place to bring up children, where everything is close at hand. [P22:254]

University-related problems

Academic freedom, the third angle of Clark's triangle proved problematic in cooperation. The university people defended, naturally, their right to decide on their scientific disciplines and their priorities on other than pure market-driven grounds. On the other hand, some stakeholders felt that economic principles from the outside world would help universities to prioritise.

> If it were up to the business community there wouldn't be much teaching of Fenno-Ugric language research and the like… This is just a good example, it's a small subject but really important… however, the universities are the only institutions in society with this ideal of research and free thinking and freedom, although the third task and tough expectations of these taxpayers and the business world challenge the notion. [P1:46]

> I use this word needs acquisition, but someone should think a bit about what the money's used for. If there are no more students, and no more postgraduates, what's the point of hanging on to these posts like, you might think that the money could go for something where there'll be students coming. [P5:118]

Stakeholder representatives expect discussion on *priorities and the division of labour*, as here between Lapland and Oulu.

> Myself I am of the opinion that not everything needs to be offered at every university but that one could concentrate on certain fields, we have a strong legal faculty, very good faculties of social sciences and education. So that perhaps something could be abandoned. [P18:166, 178]

Moreover, *academic individualism* was seen to weaken possibilities for cooperation, also inside university organisations.

> Well doing this co-operation, it's pretty difficult in the university organisation, when everybody is more or less an individualist and wants that his own department should be the one to take care of everything. [P16:62]

The informants evaluated the capabilities of the university to open up and interact very carefully. Very few informants revealed any negative characteristics, like *defensiveness*, or *willingness to avoid risks* that might follow from publicity or close interaction with stakeholders. The following is one example.

> As soon as the outside world comes along the university somehow retreats behind a protective wall. People don't want to go forward but to retreat. They want to take cover from the unpredictability it would bring along. [P9:127]

Incoherent messages from the university were cited as a problem for stakeholders, decision-makers in particular. In Kuopio one of the old wounds is the loss of dentistry education in the 1990s, which, however, the university was compensated for with investments in biosciences. This situation was unclear to the stakeholders because the messages from the university were incoherent and contradictory. Within the university there were different views on how to proceed.

Organisational structures and reorganisations often remained difficult for stakeholders to perceive and caused uncertainty about whom to contact.

> Continuing education centre, there isn't one. There's some fancy organisation now. And I don't know who's running it and where it's running to. I don't know a thing about the whole organisation. [P20:148]

> They've got all these new titles so that I don't exactly know them all, so that every time some lady comes in and says she represents a new unit, I say ahah, you've got one of those, have you? [P21:70]

Other problems

There were also other problems and conflicts, as presented earlier in the stakeholder-specific chapters. Reasons given for frustration and disappointment were *deficits in listening and two-way interaction* (students, advisory boards), *lack of mutual understanding* (university/business, university/region), *stiff and formal structures and legislation* (board members, business), and feelings of *inequality and defensiveness* and questions of *labour division* (polytechnics). And, as always, *people are busy* and it is hard to find time for interaction and work perseveringly even when the topic is considered important.

> Sometimes one is troubled that everyone is in a bit of a hurry. Then it never gets completed, that one should be able one way and another always to take care of those projects to the end and concentrate on them. [P12:86]

The opposite side of a problem is often a success factor and therefore, for example, the success factor of commitment, and the lack of it, are discussed separately in connection with success factors.

5.4.2 Success factors

Altogether, 69 characteristics were identified as success factors in the university-region dialogues. The top three were trust, commitment and personal relationships.

Trust

The university representatives viewed the university as a trusted partner in the region, and stakeholders expressed their watertight trust in and appreciation of the university. The degree of unanimity was so broad that it confirms indeed

the importance of trust in stakeholder relations. Naturally, for different partners trust includes different aspects. Business people consider it important that trade secrets are not leaked; many evaluate trust through their personal contacts, with the rector in particular, while some stress openness and true listening in general.

> The key word is now firstly openness, because on that basis such trust comes into being and it is important that the various co-operating parties feel that the co-operation is open and trusting in the sense that the contribution is genuinely desired and not that an opportunity has been granted to have a say for the sake of form. [P12:86]

Here again, positive changes have taken place.

> In my opinion there was quite a bit of distrust after the middle of the 90s, ignorance and the like, this region did not recognise or know what the university is, there has been a great deal happening in the last ten years. [P9:107]

Commitment

Commitment and trust are closely connected. The problems presented in questions of trust are very much questions of commitment, and vice versa.

Interestingly, the students' representatives levelled quite sharp criticism at the region, or more specifically, at the city, particularly in Turku and in Kuopio. This is surprising given that the importance of keeping educated young people in the region was unanimously expressed by all informants. Did the region not take into account the fact that students need to feel welcome already as students? In contrast, in Lapland the feeling was that the city indeed takes the students' point of view very seriously.

> An agreement was made whereby it would be sent for comment to the student body, but now in the last couple of years there has not been a single statement and a great number of issues which concern students, one of the most recent was, for example, the discussion on higher education traineeships… it didn't occur to anyone that one might ask the student unions to give their opinion. [P4:122]

> The city's welfare report or some similar account, it made no mention of students as a group of people at all… No group of people should be belittled, voters they all are. [P11:102, 122]

The question of the commitment of the region to the university had been particularly a hot one in Lapland where the region had just lived through the threat of losing their independent university to the University of Oulu (see Chapter 3.5.1).

The commitment of researchers to the region was discussed vividly. In general, the change of attitudes had been noteworthy.

> Was it at the turn of the '90s when it began to be talked about and it seemed as if should some regional task be taken on board so that it felt then that it threatens scientific research work… Attitudes have changed enormously, but so has the world. [P8:134]

However, several informants still felt that researchers lacked commitment to the region.

> The most difficult is our own organisation, that is the personnel. Not even so much the students, I should think, that getting our own personnel committed to this [regional co-operation], it's hard work, really hard work. [P2:170]

> This gang of ours could be said to fall into three castes, those who have absolutely no interest and then those with some interest and then there are those making a pretty fair contribution to this third task. [P8:130]

> You can't say that it would have gone through this regional effectiveness angle the entire body of researchers, you can't say that because they are such individualistic types that many of them have their own things. [P16:82]

> If the university does not commit itself sufficiently or the faculties don't, if there is lack of trust towards the party placing the order, which is the surrounding society, official or business life, well you can only let them down once and that's it. [P19:142]

Moreover, travelling professors were considered as a sign of weak commitment, in Lapland in particular. Local stakeholders would like professors to work for the local environment, not for the (southern) area where they prefer to keep their home and family.

> My message is that if such an important post is given, in my opinion one should then live there. [P19:50]

> Suitcase professors, in a way they do the work they're supposed to do here in this social environment, they do it in Tampere and Helsinki or Turku, where they happen to be. [P22:42]

Money contributes to commitment. If there is the right amount of funding available for research, researchers are willing to change their focus and address regional topics. This was stated in Turku and Kuopio in particular, both of which are universities with a strong research profile.

Personal relationships

In all regions dense networks of personal relationships are a critical prerequisite for interaction.

> Such functioning co-operation is always co-operation between people and exerting influence is between people and then you have to get such people with whom you can set about building these channels for influence, there is no more remarkable remedy for that. [P12:86]

There were examples of relationships that date back to youthful days, and of the feeling that having roots in the same tribe and dialect of Finland make communication easy. Personal relationships are strengthened and maintained by certain structures and habits. These are particularly important when key people change often, as in the Student Union.

> At the beginning of the year we present ourselves and create the contact there and we

have these regular habits that we go to lunch with the Rector. [P4:202]

These first meetings are important as often it "strikes" at once whether the prerequisites for cooperation exist or not. On the other hand, when people know one another sufficiently well, the importance of these structures and habits diminishes. When trusting and fluent contacts are established, it is easy to call on a familiar specialist whenever you need advice.

The personal relationships maintained at the managerial level are decisive in showing the way and in creating a positive atmosphere. These relationships cannot be created without good social and collaborative skills. Consequently, changes in managerial positions are a risk to established dialogues, as was experienced in Lapland, where the rector of the university was soon to change.

> Networks and good co-operation connections, especially the connections of management which create a positive spirit that this is an activity worthy of support and should be done. [P3:206]

> I myself have been able to engage in co-operation with three rectors and each one was different, but still perceived this pattern of co-operation to be important. All you need is to have one in this chain who thinks differently and we wouldn't be at this point. [P15:178]

> It is a prerequisite for good leadership that you have to be able to do real genuine good co-operation with those parties who can take the matter further. When the basics are in place, then the means will be found along the way, so that's not what it founders on. [P12:86]

> When everyone has their own ideas and views on the way to success… how to create an atmosphere and the joy of seeking together, finding it together then everybody would feel that, ah well I was the one who thought of this. [P16:90]

Moreover, less good relationships between the university management and a stakeholder group can determine strongly the quality of the interaction between organisations, as seemed to be the case between the universities of Northern Finland.

> The relations between the universities of Oulu and Lapland have been the relations between the rectors and that's why they have been slight, I say, that not the best possible, but I understand that well, that the younger university has had to be really firm in order to be able to lay a foundation for itself. Then it's a whole lot easier to engage in co-operation when you can talk equally as it were. But if you are constantly in the inferior position, then nothing will come of such co-operation. [P22:206]

Other contributors

In addition to trust, commitment and personal relationships a number of other elements were also characterised as success factors. Connections and bonds to the environment are critical throughout the organisation, and not only on the managerial level.

> The university's success factors are the way in which it is able to create contacts. It has a great deal of cooperation, but what quality of connections it manages to forge to other universities and to the entire scientific community in which it operates. [P22:186]

The prerequisites for these connections are, according to this study, *high quality and relevance of expertise provided by the university, material resources and skills, mutual benefit, willingness to cooperate, common developmental orientation, shared goals and visions, unanimity, realism, flexibility, regularity, continuity and persistence,* and *openness.*

> The initial setup should be such that there is some sort of common goal or objective, motivating benefit or will. [P17:226]

However, both the university and stakeholder representatives emphasised that the basic responsibilities of research and teaching must be prioritised. This may be of comfort to those in the university who feel they are not fulfilling the requirements of the third task as well as they should. Research and teaching of high quality also came first in the stakeholders' priorities.

> However the university should not sell itself to such interest group co-operation. [P1:94]

> It is understood that we need one another and the success of both is in some way contingent upon doing co-operation and operating in the interests of a shared objective as far as it is possible without impinging on one's own basic function, that is, of course the basic task of the university is to engage in scientific teaching and research. [P14:114]

Physical surroundings like campuses had their role as they make interaction easier. Short distances make interaction simple and efficient.

> Nowhere in Finland is there such a natural campus area…. say that you can go a kilometre in any direction well the buildings of all three universities, all the activities, the University Hospital and even Turku Science Park… they are all located in this area, in practice in the centre of the city. [P1:42]

It is worth noting that it is not only serious issues and projects that connect organisations and people, but also *shared emotions* that can be experienced, for example, in sports events. An example of this is the annual rowing contest arranged in Rovaniemi by the university, the polytechnic, and the leading newspaper that has sponsored the trophy.

5.4.3 Innovations and solutions

There is a plethora of structures and solutions through which universities interact with their region. In all three regions those on the managerial level meet one another frequently in different bodies and committees, both in the home region and in Helsinki. Universities have established common research centres, satellite units and educational programmes with their stakeholders, not to mention the vital activities, impact and mediating role of continuing education centres, which have not been a topic dealt with in this study at all.

However, one innovative structure that deserves special mention is the

Provincial University of Lapland[27], which was introduced in 2003. This is because the concept was widely discussed in all the Lapland interviews, and because it has also been a model for similar organisational forms in other parts of Finland. Moreover, it is an example of how institutions of higher education have purposefully sought after a customer-friendly solution in their attempts to answer regional needs. According to the Regional Programme of Lapland, the aims of the Provincial University of Lapland are to ensure the provision of exhaustive higher education services in the region, to advance the connectivity of education and research to the development needs of the region and districts, and, consequently, to contribute to the regional impact of R&D.

The concept resides in the notion that from the point of view of the region it does not make sense for both the polytechnics and the university to establish and market separately open university-type services to the region. Therefore, the Summer University, the University and the two polytechnics (Rovaniemi and Kemi-Tornio) joined forces.

> It makes no sense to continue with the same old summer university mentality that let's go and offer you these courses are there any takers, but it should start with the needs and then match these with what is offered. [P16:110]

A common name was accepted for the organisation, a trustworthy leader with good cooperative skills was found and today the concept enjoys great appreciation among university stakeholders all over Lapland.

> Maybe the most important achievement of the University of Lapland has been this provincial university, that they have decentralised their teaching to different parts of Lapland so that Master's degrees can be taken alongside work, as telework anywhere here. I think that's great that the university has in that way outreached into its environment. [P21:42]

> Well it's grand to hear that somewhere in the municipality of Savukoski the University of Lapland has this course and that course set up, when you think of those municipalities, they're the very last, that's as far as you can get from anywhere and then all of a sudden they've got university services. [P22:154]

In addition to their customer-oriented approach educational services are provided irrespective of place through modern teaching techniques. Each six subregion of Lapland has a cooperative organ with the Provincial University which is a forum of dialogue and functions two-way: they both provide HEIs with information about educational needs and, at the same time, market the educational services available.

> This backlog of needs for education out in the remote areas does indeed exist and here is this supply of education, in the Rovaniemi area and in Kemi and Tornio but this provincial university method has made it possible to offer smaller subregions something. [P17:146]

> An expert group has been set up with our representatives. And it's like a vacuum cleaner that sucks up the subregional development needs. And in principle there is such a thing in every subregion. [P23:102]

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27   In Finnish: *maakuntakorkeakoulu*.

The concept has brought the large region of Lapland and the university closer to one another in many ways and helped them to understand one another. In practice it has helped to answer real educational needs and the cooperation between the HEIs makes it possible to find the right education provider for the need in question.

> It is better understood what a university can offer and in what situation and on what basis those things offered by the university can be built up. Sometimes some small municipality may have a dream of a master's degree programme in a certain entrepreneurial field being started and through that there would emerge jobs related to some fashionable field and other benefits. And perhaps it has not been considered what the population and education situation is in that municipality, whether it is at all realistic to find, for example 25 students for some Master's programme in some branch of ICT. [P17:210]

According to the informants and the common regional strategy of HEIs in Lapland, the Provincial University has furthered the educational equality and regional impact of local HEIs. The next step is to include regional research in the concept.

5.5 Role of public relations professionals

What is the role of public relations professionals in higher education institutions in regional engagement and stakeholder dialogue? The development of the public relations profession is not the focus of this study, but because it is closely connected to the development of public relations work in universities, some background must be presented.

All Finnish universities have public relations offices, yet very different in size, focus and authorisation. In Great Britain for example, if any university administrator has a lead role in assisting the university management in the questions of the third task and regional contacts, it is often the public relations manager (Goddard 1997). On the contrary, in the Finnish context, one of the questions the evaluation team of the Eastern Finland universities specifically set the target universities was on relationship management and leadership. None of the universities (Joensuu, Kuopio and Lappeenranta) mentioned a role for public relations officers in it (Goddard et al. 2003).

However, relationship building, maintenance and evaluation are today increasingly considered to be primary tasks of public relations. These are also ways in which public relations can contribute to organisational effectiveness. The relationship management approach can be a challenge for public relations practitioners who may be unprepared to monitor stakeholder attitudes and expectations and to provide executives with assistance in relationships building (Daugherty 2001, 401). When this study was initiated, the role of public relations professionals seemed to be relatively weak in the contexts of relationship building and third task of Finnish universities. The responsibilities of planning, implementing and coordinating regional activities were included

in the roles of university management, or heads of development, or innovation services, not to mention the centres of continuing education, who are experts in the field. In fact, there seemed to be a lack of coordination in these areas.

5.5.1 Research into professional roles

Valuable research has been conducted in the field of the development of professional roles. van Ruler (2004, 124) shows that in the Netherlands public relations professionals did indeed consider the power of public relations to lie in two-way symmetrical interaction, but they demonstrated one-way practices in their every-day actions. In her article van Ruler provides a comprehensive picture of the different roles of public relations professionals. She constructs on the basis of literature and empirical evidence seven typologies of professional roles: town crier, steward, traffic manager, conductor, creator, facilitator, and seat-of-the-pants. However, the aim is not to develop a normative theory of what should be done, what is good and what is not, but to elucidate the relationships between variables and to develop an empirical theory (van Ruler 2004, 138). The jargon and characteristics attached to the different roles are presented in Table 11.

The Delphi research project, consisting of researchers and educators in public relations from 26 countries was conducted in 1999-2000 and identified these four distinct characteristics of professional public relations in Europe: managerial, operational, reflective and educational (van Ruler, Verčič, Bütschi & Flodin 2004, 54). The managerial dimension is about the development of strategies to maintain relationships; in the operational dimension the focus is on communication tools; the reflective dimension implies analysis of social changes and standards; and the educational dimension contributes to the development of communication competences all over the organisation.

On the basis of the literature on public relations definitions, professional roles and key competences, Asunta (2006, 133-135) defined three interactive and interdependent dimensions of European communication work: management of identity, of relationships, and of the public sphere. These dimensions were seen to contribute to the achievement of the strategic goals of the organisation in the long run. All these dimensions can be practised on operational or strategic levels. Having a theoretical knowledge base and ethical service orientation were considered as the framework of professionalism.

TABLE 11   van Ruler's (2004) typologies of the roles of public relations professionals.

Role	View on public relations	Jargon used	Comments
Town crier	Broadcasting his master's voice Communication is action, what PR does; public announcements about things decided elsewhere	factuality, honesty, clarity, correctness, punctuality, reliability, creativity	Earlier the dominant model in the public sector; cannot be taken seriously today as materials are only a means, not an end in themselves
Steward	Pampering Communication is contact, keeping doors open	atmosphere, socializing, representation, etiquette, humanity	Cannot be taken seriously today
Traffic manager	Transfer of information Right information to the right people at the right time, physical information transfer	proper distribution, noise prevention, communication track, feedback on reach, quality control, structures and channels, digging canals, logistics	
Conductor	Harmonious performance Communication as persuasion; interpreting and recreating the opus that has been passed down from those at the top	helming attitudes, creating support, influence, gaining goodwill, image building, creating one voice, enthuse people	
Creator	Creating a bond Communication is about bonding, building bridges between individuals, creating mutually beneficial relation-ships; stakeholder thinking instead of target groups	mutual understanding, relationships, mutual appreciation, cooperation, partnership	
Facilitator	Hosting a dialogue Create environments where meaningful dialogues can flourish; select actors, put them together, chair the dialogue; responsible for the process; public relations is about mediation	dialogue, interaction, revealing meanings, monitoring, facilitating, process management, communicative competence	
Seat-of-the-pants	An art, not a profession Communication is magical mystery, cannot be defined, analysed or categorised	talent is everything, generalists, personal experiences	Cannot be taken seriously today

An interesting and recent comparable study is Salomaa-Valkamo's (2007) thesis about public relations professionals in Finnish technology centres. Technology centres and universities share many common properties, like knowledge intensiveness, high level of expertise, and wide networks. Salomaa-Valkamo identified four main roles of public relations professionals in their networks: connector, boundary spanner, information provider, and specialist. The first role means linking and gathering different groups and teams and the second is about linking one's own groups with others and about creating relationships beyond these networks. The third role refers to informing, and the fourth to, for example, the educational role within one's own organisation. The most common role was the role of information provider, which, however, did not only mean traditional dissemination of information through public channels but also, for example, the transfer of tacit knowledge. (Salomaa-Valkamo 2007, 106.)

5.5.2 Organised public relations at target universities

For a rough analysis of the change in the public relations profession in the universities, data collected in 1989 for a seminar paper in political science by the author were studied. The data were gathered with a questionnaire from Finnish and Swedish university rectors, directors of administration and information officers. The data are not exhaustive as they reflect the very narrow view on communication then held by the author who was just a beginner as an information officer. However, it provides some interesting background to the present study. Because the target universities in the present research were also included, the answers given by the rectors and information officers of Kuopio, Lapland and Turku were analysed. Moreover, the current communication managers of these universities were asked to provide information about their working conditions, responsibilities and roles in the questions of stakeholder relationships and regional engagement.

In 1989 the smallest and youngest universities in Finland, like Lapland, were still at the early stage of their public relations activities, and usually had only one public relations officer who had the main responsibility for internal information, presentation materials and other publications. In this setting the resources of Kuopio can be considered noteworthy as its budget was the size of that of Turku at that time. In all three universities the title of the public relations officer in charge was information secretary.

In 1989 the author did not have an understanding of the eventual strategic linkages of communication, so questions on this issue could not be asked either. However, in all three regions the rectors considered the role of information officers as links between the university and the rest of the society very important. Hence it can be assumed that the rectors, at least, understood at that time already that there is more to the role than the production of communication tools. At the moment at all the target universities, the importance of public relations work is well acknowledged. If in 1989 all information officers were very much Town criers (Table 11), their role has

changed significantly from that. However, in practice the major part of the time is still spent on producing information materials (Table 12).

The third task has indeed changed communication work at Turku and Kuopio, but in Lapland the focus has always been on strong regional relations and thus there has been no need to alter course. All the communication managers emphasised that the university understands well the strategic role of public relations work. At Kuopio an active communication policy is even mentioned in the strategy of the university. However, communicators are not necessarily included in the so called dominant coalitions such as management teams, which was seen to be a deficit, particularly from the point of view of internal communication. At times of upheaval, such as during the structural re-organisations of HEIs, it was considered extremely important to include the public relations manager in the executive team, as was done in Turku.

In the research interviews the role of organised public relations was discussed quite briefly. It was interesting, however, that at Kuopio and Lapland public relations professionals were seen as having only an informing role in stakeholder relations. The responsibilities of public relations departments were seen to include a variety of productions and projects like journals, newsletters, websites, festivities and exhibitions. Also the heads of the communication departments of the universities of Kuopio and Lapland confirmed that their role is mainly to produce material for stakeholder needs. This is not to say that these would not be valuable links between the university and its stakeholders; on the contrary, university journals, for example, are highly appreciated by key stakeholders. But, as van Ruler (2004, 138) says, materials are only a means, not an end.

Actually the only role in stakeholder relations recognised in the research interviews that was given to the public relations departments in all three universities was that of media relations. This was also emphasised by the public relations managers.

> Press relations are maintained in such a way that we constantly feed material from here and then again we have these press conferences when there's something going on. [P16:66]

> Media relations are enormously important, also in the care of this third task. [P8:114]

TABLE 12 Human resources, responsibilities and development needs of the public relations offices of the universities of Kuopio, Lapland and Turku in 1989 and in 2007.

	HR	Responsibilities	The most time-consuming tasks	Development needs
Kuopio				
1989	3	Link between the university and society Article writing	Production of presentation materials Editing	Motivation of researchers
2007	5	Planning, development and coordination of internal and external communication Corporate image, media relations and follow-ups, communication and presentation materials and Radio Kantti	Journal, newsletter and web communication	Lack of journalist Science information, marketing communication and new university federation as challenges
Lapland				
1989	1	Link between the university and society Internal information	Editing Production of presentation materials	More personnel and other resources
2007	5	Science information, marketing communication, internal communication, public relations, web management, visual image	Science information and marketing communication: journals, annual report, brochures, press releases, publications, press conferences, academic festivities, layout work, Internet	Structural and visual renewal of website Development of international communication More resources for basic work: text production in Finnish and English
Turku				
1989	2	Link between the university and society Image building	Editing Reading the incoming material	Science information
2007	9	Planning and implementation of university-level communication and stakeholder relationships Education, consultation and communication services to personnel Instructions to guarantee quality, coherence and visual image of communication and stakeholder relationships	International marketing Structural re-organisation of HEIs and new profiling attached to it	Know-how in the field of stakeholder relationships

At Turku, however, the role of the communication department had changed and now took a more active role in stakeholder relationships with alumni activities as the basis. Also in the recruitment of new personnel, attention had been paid to abilities in relationship building. In stakeholder relations the role of the communication department was seen to be to open doors and to invite the faculty with specialist knowledge to participate. Therefore, the communication department at the University of Turku had the role of Creator or Facilitator. Their colleagues in Kuopio and Lapland seemed to have the role of Traffic Manager or, particularly in the marketing efforts attached to student recruitment, Conductor (Table 11).

5.6 Summary and conclusions

The aim of this chapter was to clarify the characteristics and forms of relationships, social interaction, and dialogue; to analyse stakeholder-specific dialogues between universities and their key stakeholders, and to answer the third research question: Why, how and where do university-stakeholder dialogues take place and how do the different parties evaluate their success? Moreover, the role of public relations professionals was studied.

Because dialogues take place in relationships, the characteristics of relationships were outlined first. The relational characteristics found were then fitted into a model of interaction based on Mönkkönen's (2001) model on the developmental stages of social interaction and on van Ruler's (2004) four communication strategies.

Universities interact with their stakeholders for several reasons. Some of these motives were explained in earlier chapters, such as the impact of higher education policy, re-evaluation of academic responsibilities, historical roots, university profiles and third task requirements. In addition to these an important motivation is funding. If enough funding is made available, researchers are willing to change their research focus towards regional topics. This finding ties in with recent notions that regional engagement will not happen without faculty being provided with adequate research challenges by the region (Furco 2001, Ostrander 2004).

Some interaction takes place regularly and in formal settings, like board meetings. Then there are dialogues hosted by the university, and usually by its management, dialogues arranged by third parties, and dialogues in informal settings such as on airplanes and at cultural and sports events. In this sense all the regions seemed small enough for such informal gatherings which, in turn, were considered valuable for relationship maintenance. In all three regions the managers of the different organisations are involved in dense networks of relationships and, consequently, the stakeholders of universities bring along their own networks.

Whether universities actually conduct dialogues with their stakeholders or not depends on what we mean by dialogue. If dialogue is defined entirely as its purest form, the emergent type (Figure 13, Table 13), there is virtually no dialogue. The interactions described in the data of this study are much more structured and formal, and informative rather than interactive. They seldom mobilise different views to meet in a meaningful relation (Bakhtin 1929/1991, 273). Sometimes they even occur in written form, as when the university asks its partners, like the student union, to give statements on different issues – an important but definitely not emergent form of dialogue. In general there were only a very few weak signs of emergent dialogues between universities and their stakeholders, and the examples given did not concern organisations but long-term relationships between managers, like the university rector and the editor-in-chief who play golf together. However, if dialogue is conceptualised as the convergent type (Figure 13, Table 13), there are indeed lots of dialogues going on.

Tolerance of difference and of tensions should be better in universities than in some other organisations because university employees have grown accustomed to questioning suppositions and situations. However, here, too, the need to avoid tensions and contradictions was obvious. Externals could participate in the work of the university board as no contentious questions are handled there. Student unions were content if their dialogues with the university management are held in a genial atmosphere. Universities were not willing to engage in dialogues with stakeholders other than strategically important partners with friendly attitudes towards the university. On the other hand, university-polytechnic relationships were considered problematic because of tacit contradictions. However, relationship theorists know that conflict, the tension between competing needs and desires, is constantly present in all relationships (e.g. Wood 2000, 44). Why, then, are we so afraid of problems and contradictions? The dominant liberal humanistic perspective really seems to have led to an overemphasis on shared meaning and common ground (Deetz & Simpson 2004, 150).

There are also interactions that are by no means dialogic but informative. Advisory boards were, at least at the time of interviews, channels of information from the university to its stakeholders, not dialogic fora, despite some attempts to develop them into more two-way channels. It can be concluded that on the institutional level, with, for example, advisory boards and the media, relationships are maintained on a structured basis, and that is why communication is informative and persuasive rather than dialogic. It is highly probable that on the faculty and department levels there is a plethora of regional relations, but these relations are neither entered into nor maintained systematically. However, on that level both convergent and emergent dialogues may take place.

The communication strategies applied in stakeholder interaction are mainly the strategy of information and the strategy of convergent, consensus-building dialogue (Figure 13, Table 13). The traditional communication

strategy, with a mainly one-way information flow, was typical of universities'
contacts with all their stakeholders. However, this can be considered as the
basis of all communication work: there must be some tools available and these
tools are still today very much the traditional brochures, newsletters, journals,
and media releases.

TABLE 13 Communication strategies and how universities apply them to different
stakeholder groups.

Communication strategy	Aims and characteristics	Fields of use	Applied to the stakeholder group
Information	to provide information, the other as an object, asymmetrical, element of power evident	material production and delivery, media conferences, media releases	all stakeholders
Persuasion	to tell our story, to present in a favourable way, targeted tuning	advertising, propaganda	prospective and international students, media
Convergent dialogue	to build bridges, to solve a problem, to create a desired consensus, to maintain and defend, technique-driven, agreements, aims, processes, timelines, predictable structures	most meetings and teams	board members, business, students, polytechnics, Ministry of Education
Emergent dialogue	to generate the unexpected, to produce knowledge together, ideas conflict and clash, new ideas appear, participation, empowerment, contradiction, multivocality, trust, surprise, creativity, vulnerability, mutual astonishment, co-creation	intimate personal relationships, stakeholder consultations, brainstorming	close, personal, long-term relationships

A challenging question faced throughout this chapter is whether the element of
power infuses all human interaction or not (Couch 1986, Hammond, Anderson
& Cissna 2003, Helkama, Myllyniemi & Liebkind 1998, Mönkkönen 2001).
Schwartz (2005) considers power as one of the universal values. Some
researchers on interpersonal communication do not necessarily include the
control element in their descriptions of the critical elements of relationships
(e.g., Toth 2000), but several other researchers in the field do. Thus it can be
assumed that the element of power is always there when we discuss

stakeholder relationships, even in relation to collaborative dialogues. Deetz and Simpson (2004, 150) maintain that "power is never distributed equally", and that "what is 'common' among stakeholders almost always favours the already privileged position". The question of power was very interesting in the relationships between the universities and their neighbouring polytechnics, in particular when the latter were constructing a completely new form of HE in Finland. Also, the power of the bigger unit was discussed in Lapland in connection with the University of Oulu.

The fundamental question concerns what dialogues are needed for. If productive time management requires efficient working methods, why should time be wasted in time-consuming and even risky dialogue sessions where results are unforeseen? The answer may be in the importance of being heard, in the inclusiveness of the other in dialogue. The kind of stakeholder engagement where the organisation is politely interested in, but not really committed to, the views and suggestions of the other, remains superficial with no effects on organisational development other than, possibly, general goodwill. As one of the informants aptly concluded: "it is important that the contribution is genuinely desired and not that an opportunity has been granted to have a say for the sake of form."

Dialogues do not just happen. Dialogues must be planned, facilitated and managed. Here an important role exists for communication specialists, if they are able and willing to take it, or if they are empowered to. The study showed that public relations is a function appreciated both by the universities and by their stakeholders, but the contents of the work of public relations officers still very much concentrates on the basic tasks of information production. Here the University of Turku was an exception, with its more strategic focus on the development of stakeholder relations.

Grunig (1993) discusses symbolic and behavioural relationships. Symbolic relationships are connected to communication, and behavioural relationships are connected to organisational behaviour. According to Ledingham and Bruning (2001, 529) effective organisation-public relationships need both organisational behaviour and communication. Several research projects have proven that when the organisation engages in action and communication that fosters a sense of openness, trust, commitment, involvement and investment, it builds the behavioural and symbolic relationships with its key stakeholders that are critical to effective organisations (cf. Grunig, Grunig & Dozier 2002, Huang 1997).

6 DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION

This chapter summarises and discusses the findings of the present study. It utilises the theatre metaphor to illuminate the characteristics of the scene, the actors, and the characteristics of dialogue. It also elaborates a model of regional stakeholder relations for the context of higher education and describes dialogue through the metaphor of theatre. Moreover, the chapter evaluates the trustworthiness of the study from the points of view of confirmability, dependability, credibility, transferability and application, and also the theory generation process. It sums up the research results and evaluates the contribution of the study to different fields of research. The chapter then gives suggestions for further research and, finally, discusses the implications of the study.

6.1 University-stakeholder dialogue

The study is entitled: Stakeholder dialogue and regional engagement. The overall research task was to answer the question: How do Finnish universities fulfil their third task and responsibility towards their region through stakeholder interaction? The sub-questions were:
1. What are the themes and contexts that determine university-stakeholder relationships?
2. What does responsible academic work mean in the region where the university is located?
3. Why, where and how do stakeholder-university dialogues take place and how do the different parties evaluate their success? What is the role of public relations professionals with regard to these dialogues?

The main thread running through the study is that there is a need to take stakeholder impact into account in the decision making and action of the university. The university is seen to discharge its responsibility towards the region by engaging its regional stakeholders in its processes. Corporate responsibility is thus manifested in the university context through impacts on stakeholders. When regional stakeholders are engaged in the life of the academy through dialogic interaction, the connections to the region are strengthened and the academy in turn can take regional needs into account in its decisions and actions (Freeman & Velamuri 2006, Virtanen 2002). Through this responsiveness the university can fulfil its social obligations and responsibilities towards the region where it is located and which has contributed to its foundation and development.

6.1.1 The scene of regional dialogue

In this study several determinants were identified that influence the university-stakeholder relationship and set the scene for interaction. These determinants were presented in Figure 3. *Identity* was seen to consist of leadership, values, traditions (history), and environment. *Profile* is the component of organisational identity that the organisation makes visible through, for example, mission statements. *Preconditions* include the resources and capacity for cooperation and attitudes towards it. These region- and university-specific determinants will be discussed in the following section.

National higher education policy, or the shareholder impact of the government, was also seen strongly to determine the regional engagement and regional relationships of HEIs. In this study the most frequently discussed issues in Finnish higher education policy were the productivity plan of the Ministry of Education, and the role of polytechnics. This higher education policy also determines the contents of the third task of universities, which in Finland is the triple helix model rather than the wider community engagement view (Gunasekara 2004, Leydesdorff & Etkowitz 1998). In the Clark's triangle the universities balance between state steering, market-based steering, and the academic tradition. Striking a balance between the three roles was also the topic of the dissertation by Rekilä (2006), who noticed that the HEIs attempt to be simultaneously bureaucracies, firms and academic communities. This attempt was reflected in the everyday life of the academy to such an extent that at Turku, for example, the faculty had experienced a need to defend the university's old mission statement, which emphasises academic freedom.

Internationalisation or *globalisation* turned out to be an increasing determinant of the regional relations of HEIs. The European Higher Education Area is under construction and the degree harmonisation process has especially affected the relationships between the universities and polytechnics. Moreover, the communication and marketing efforts of institutions of higher education have been faced with new challenges in the global arena.

The *interactional view on regional engagement* (Kinnunen 2001) implies a focus less on such aspects of regional impact like enterprises generated through

technology transfer or other measures of regional development, but rather in the identification of stakeholders, and structures created to advance these relationships.

The *re-evaluation of the responsibilities of higher education* refers to changing modes of science and to the newly-found significance of the regional role. Such a regional role implies the increasing importance of stakeholders and their expectations of higher education institutions. In this study the stakeholders considered universities, first of all, as responsible to the state and their students and, secondly, to the region. Universities are expected to fulfil the contracts negotiated with the Ministry of Education and to ensure the high quality of teaching. The regional expectations include two main streams of participation: to be responsive to concrete needs, and to take a visionary role. Topical educational needs in this study, for example, included dentists and Masters of business administration for eastern Finland. The visionary role, also called innovator responsibility in this study, implies that the university is needed to predict and interpret trends and directions, to say where the region is going, and also to question the prevailing norms and notions.

> There should be some atmosphere of discussion and ideation in the university world…The university should be something more than a backboard. It should be a visionary, be able to sniff the way the wind is blowing so that there would be things to be said, Look out. Now we are off on this thing. [P21:154]

The visionary role was also emphasised in Yläranta's (2006, 147, 155) doctoral thesis about stakeholder management in knowledge-intensive governmental organisations. Knowledge workers are expected to know, what is "around the corner" and thus produce societal impact, that is, to demonstrate social responsiveness and responsibility. Numminen (1987, 391) also stressed the healthy self-respect and adventurous moves of academics as a key to meeting the rapid changes and challenges of society.

6.1.2 The actors in regional dialogue

The actors in dialogue in this study consisted of the universities of Kuopio, Lapland and Turku, and the regions where they are located. The university- and region-specific determinants of dialogue were seen to be *identity*, *profile*, and the available *preconditions*. The universities and regions differed greatly in regard to their identity, profile and preconditions.

At Lapland the leadership of the university and the physical environment profiled the university strongly. The long-term rectorship and the efficiently built campus were central, distinctive, and continuous elements of the university's identity. Kuopio and Turku resemble one another in many ways in their strong research intensiveness and distinctive profile in the biosciences. The small size of the universities of Lapland and Kuopio was an advantage which produces flexibility and a dynamic character. The profiles of Lapland and Kuopio were considered clearly identifiable. More importantly, the profiles were relevant from the point of view of the region after the readjustments that

had been necessary, particularly in Lapland, after the early days of the universities. The University of Turku was included in the data to study whether stakeholder dialogue and regional engagement differ in the setting of a large multi-faculty university located in a more prosperous south of Finland. The profile of the university was recognised to be that of a scientific research university, but also that of a critical and involved Humboldtian university.

The historical roots of the universities gave them different profiles. The University of Kuopio was founded to produce medical experts for Eastern Finland and the University of Lapland to produce state officials. Both arose from the need to produce regional equality. The origin of the University of Turku is in the nation-wide donations of ordinary Finns which gives it nation-wide significance. Yet the university's long history was not a burden in its stakeholder contacts; on the contrary, the university was evaluated to have succeeded in its efforts to open up more towards the surrounding society. In all three universities their historic commitment to the region can be seen to contribute to the establishment of regional initiatives (Ostrander 2004, 82).

The regions where the universities operate differ a lot from one another in regard to identities, profiles and preconditions. Turku and southwest Finland with their cultural and spiritual heritage, many institutions of higher education, and economic diversity offer a plethora of possibilities to interact and cooperate. Northern Savo and Lapland both suffer from the lack of big companies, population decline and weak fringe areas, the problems being more acute in Lapland. In struggling with these questions the regions had expectations of the university, that it would to give the area "new buzz", or in Lapland, keep it alive. The special challenge of Lapland is the large geographical area in which the university is expected to operate.

The preconditions attached to the organisational culture were the compliance culture (cf. social obligation by Sethi 1975), relationship management culture (cf. social responsibility), and sustainable organisation culture (cf. social responsiveness) (Wheeler, Colbert & Freeman 2003, 11). Universities were found to follow mainly the compliance culture, and to some extent, relationship management culture. On the basis of the literature review the preconditions for dialogue that were identified were long-term visions and their connectedness to institutional goals, active and involved partnerships, resources, meaning staff and funding, and wide support throughout the university from the top management to the departments. On the basis of the data the main preconditions identified were the high quality and relevance of expertise provided by the university, material resources and skills, mutual benefit, willingness to cooperate, shared goals and visions, realism, flexibility; regularity, continuity and persistence, and openness.

The study gives voice to the region through the representatives of the key stakeholders, and to the university through the rectors and officials in charge of regional relations. These relationships were thus studied on the managerial level. An alternative angle would have been the faculty or department level with a more "hands-on" orientation towards regional engagement.

6.1.3 Characteristics of regional dialogue

Several motives were identified both in the literature and in the data for dialogue, such as mutual benefit and exchange (e.g. university-students), resource dependency (e.g. university-business), and increased organisational effectiveness (e.g. university-external board members). Recent findings have emphasised the importance of connecting research to regional topics. If this is not done the scientific community does not have enough motivation for regional engagement (Cox 2000, Ostrander 2004). This aspect was not clarified in the present study because the faculty level was not involved. However, the motivating force of regional research funding was explicitly argued.

The relational characteristics that determine dialogues include, according to the literature, trust, power or control mutuality, reciprocity, legitimacy, investment, credibility, openness, and commitment or involvement (Chapter 5.1.3). In this study the most important characteristics were trust, commitment, and personal relationships. The most significant dialogic problems were experienced in the fields of listening, two-way interaction, mutual understanding, organisational structures, equality, and time management. Problems expressed in the field of commitment concerned primarily the commitment of researchers to the region. These success factors and problems are illustrated in Figure 16.
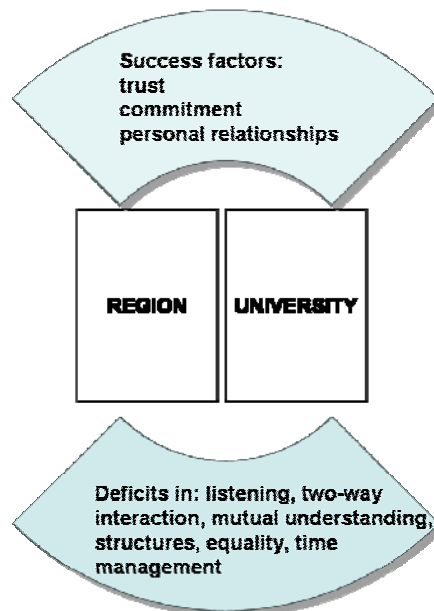
FIGURE 16 Success factors and deficits in university-region dialogues according to this study.

6.2 Modelling regional stakeholder dialogue

In this study a model of university-stakeholder dialogue was sketched on the basis of the communication strategies by van Ruler (2004) and the levels of social interaction by Mönkkönen (2001). The different forms of communication were illustrated in Figure 13, where the arrows imply that the level of collaboration with emergent dialogues is a level to be pursued. The real-life situations in turn show that emergent-like dialogues are still a long way off. They require more time, resources and commitment than organisations are willing to invest in them. However, van Ruler (2004) does not aim at ideal types in her original article. Figure 17 describes the social interaction and communication strategies between universities and their stakeholders, as found in this study.
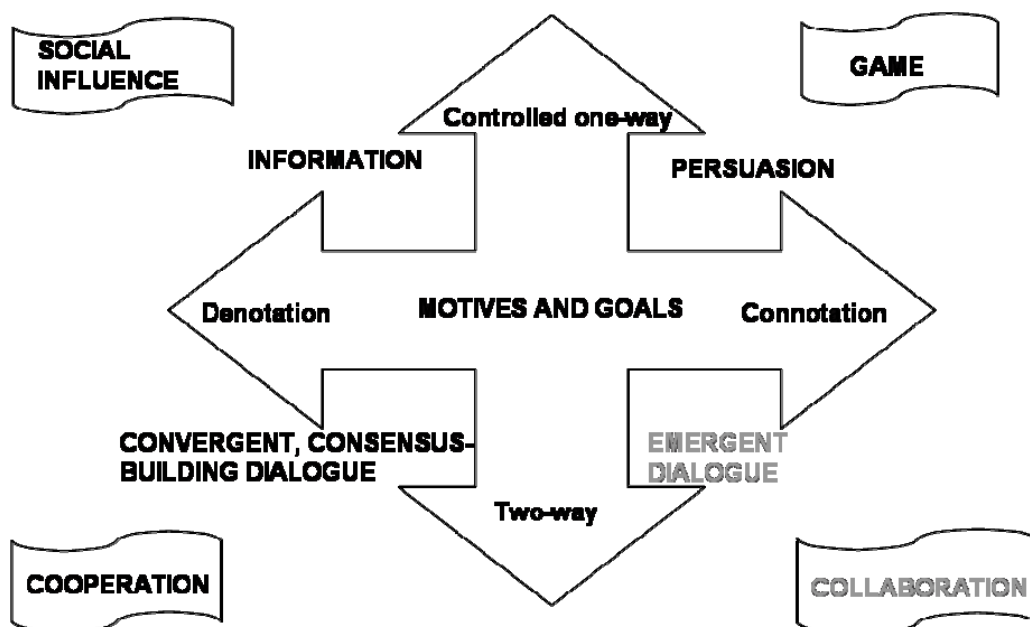
FIGURE 17   Social interaction and communication strategies in regional university-stakeholder dialogue according to this study.

University-stakeholder communication was found to be an oscillation between different plateaus and to concentrate mainly on the strategies of information, persuasion and convergent dialogues, while emergent dialogues were rare. Relations do not develop linearly but rather as a fluctuating shift between different plateaus.

FIGURE 18   Oscillations between different stages of social interaction and communication strategies in university-stakeholder interaction.

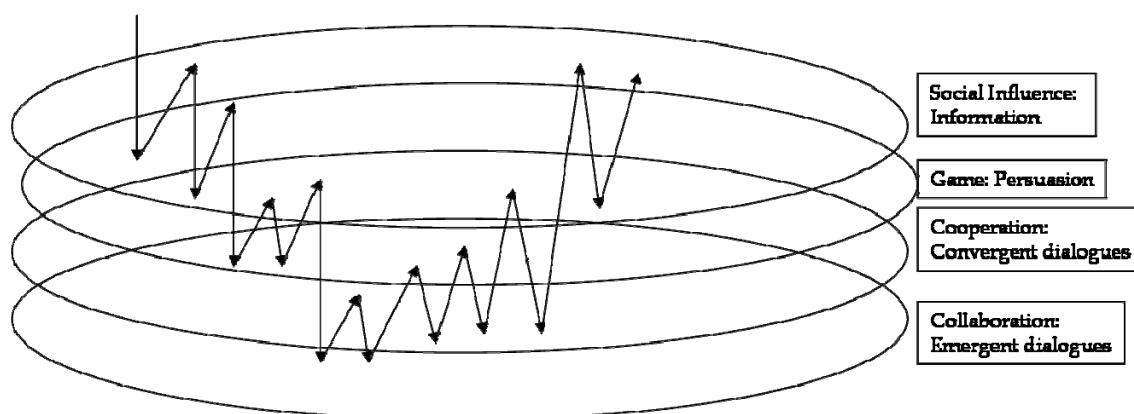Baxter and Mongomery (1996) suggest that competent interaction requires recognition of contradiction, multivocality, fluid dialogue and creativity. In this sense there is no virtuosic improvisation in these scenes of university-stakeholder dialogue (Hammond, Anderson & Cissna 2003). Utilising the theatre metaphor, the different stakeholder dialogues could be characterised as stand-up improvisation (collaboration, emergence), classic drama (cooperation, convergence), Idols contest (game, persuasion), and monologues (social influence, information). Thus universities do not improvise in their stakeholder relationships but prefer classic drama in classic set-ups. The need of persuasion and game is particularly visible in student recruitment, where new modes are being adopted to attract Finnish and overseas students. The competition for new students is becoming harder, including nationally, as younger age groups are shrinking in numbers. Institutions of higher education are evaluated every year by numbers of applicants and thus these numbers are constant concerns of rectors and public relations professionals. Monologues with one-way information only are a basis of communication, needed at the initiating stage of the relationship and to keep the contact alive.

The role of the university manager, i.e. rector, is definitely the role of the director. The role of public relations personnel varies. They can be assistants to the director or, perhaps, choreographers but more often are among the stage personnel. Whether they are stage designers or prompters depends on the size and capabilities of the public relations department, and of the understanding of the strategic role of communication in the university in question.

All forms of performance can be enjoyable and contribute to relational satisfaction. However, there is a fundamental difference between being an actor in a play with the right to participate and create something new, or a member of an audience. One of the main findings of the study is that in their interaction with the academy many stakeholders are still given only the role of an audience to a monologue, where they receive information and follow a script that has been written elsewhere. Some stakeholders were contented with this setting but some also expressed their desire for deeper and more interactive engagement.

Advisory board members in particular were ready to take on a different role. Moreover, sources of frustration identified in this study were the feeling of not being heard, and the feeling of being in a fake participatory role without genuine possibilities to exert an influence.

6.3 Evaluation of the study

6.3.1 Evaluation of trustworthiness

Confirmability

Confirmability (parallel of objectivity in quantitative studies) means that the conclusions drawn arise from the data, not from the researcher (Miles & Huberman 1994, 278). In this study general methods and procedures have been described in detail to give a complete picture of the procedure. Tables illustrate how the data was collected, processed and condensed for conclusion drawing. In the report, conclusions are linked to exhibits of the data to verify the process. The data are retained and available for reanalysis. Moreover, throughout the process the author has been aware of her personal assumptions, values and biases. For example, she knew one of the target universities, Kuopio, better than the two others.

Dependability

Dependability (parallel of reliability) refers to the quality control of the research, to consistent, stable and cautious work (Miles & Huberman 1994, 278). In this study the research questions were given explicitly in the introduction of the study and the study was designed congruently with them. Also the researcher's status and relation to the target universities was explained. The paradigms and constructs that the study is based on were introduced in Chapters 1-2. The interviewing, transcribing and analysing processes were explained in detail in Chapter 2. The data were collected from the full range of respondents, suggested by the research questions. However, the respondents represented the managerial level of organisations, so called elite informants, and thus the research results reflect their views on stakeholder dialogue and regional engagement, views may be different from those that would be expressed on the faculty level or by equivalent operational units. Miles and Huberman (1994, 264) warn of the "overreliance on accessible and elite informants" and advise considering whether they are representative. In this study their conceptions were, however, considered valuable, as they make the decisions and point the way for the whole organisation. A possible defect is that representatives of the cities of Kuopio, Rovaniemi and Turku, were not interviewed.

The use of ATLAS.ti software enabled systematic data management, coding and display. The types of triangulation used in this study were data triangulation and theory and interdisciplinary triangulation. Investigator triangulation was also sought, but without success. The seminar and conference presentations and journal articles based on the study enabled peer and colleague reviews.

Credibility

Credibility (parallel of internal validity) means the ability of the study to convince its readers that the conclusions are grounded in the data. It is about the truth value of the study, whether the findings make sense to the research objects, and to the readers of the study. (Miles & Huberman 1994, 278.) In the present study the descriptions and conclusions are attached to the authentic voice of the informants through quotations. This, hopefully, anchors the theoretical underpinnings to the data. In this study triangulation meant utilising different data sources and different theories. These proved helpful and complementary, it enabled a more holistic picture to be obtained of university-stakeholder dialogue from the point of view of regional engagement. A credibility check often used and recommended is to let the original informants evaluate the conclusions. A participant check was considered in this study, too, but it was not found realistic from the point of view of the informants' schedules, and the schedule of the thesis.

Transferability

Transferability (parallel of external validity) means the possibility to transfer conclusions to other contexts, and their generalisability (Miles & Huberman 1994, 279). The data and research setting were described in detail to enable comparisons to other samples. In this study, comparisons have been made, for example, to samples that include information officers of Finnish technology centres (Salomaa-Valkamo 2007), stakeholders of Finnish public organisations (Luoma-aho 2005), and stakeholders of a knowledge intensive governmental organisation (Yläranta 2006).

Generalisations based on a qualitative study must be made cautiously. Qualitative approaches recognise the role of the researcher, and thus human abilities, world-views and experiences can influence the results. The conclusions presented here can be generalised to other regional universities and their stakeholders as many Finnish, as well as European, universities are at the learning stage of a more intensive stakeholder engagement, and the determinants of interaction specified in this study, like the national higher education policy and globalisation, concern them all. However, the author would be wary of generalising the results to specialised HEIs, such as universities of technology, which differ widely from the regional universities, or to HEIs operating in the capital area.

Application

Miles and Huberman (1994, 280) suggest that as a part of research evaluation, it must also be discussed what the study does for its participants and readers, and what are the benefits and harms that it may cause.

Ethical concerns were discussed already at the beginning of the study, including the possible harm the revelation of the tacit conflict in university-polytechnic relationships may cause to regional attempts to build consortia and other new cooperative structures. The applications of the study include, at least, suggestions for new structures and ways of working for advisory boards, a new role of public relations professionals in stakeholder relationships and regional engagement, and an emphasis on the advancement of personal relationships between universities and their stakeholders.

6.3.2 Evaluation of the theory generation process

In this study the phenomena of stakeholder dialogue and regional engagement were approached through the multidisciplinary lenses of the regional impact of higher education, corporate social responsibility, and relational dialectics. Through these, in addition to the findings from the data, it was aimed to gain a holistic view of the phenomena (Figure 19).
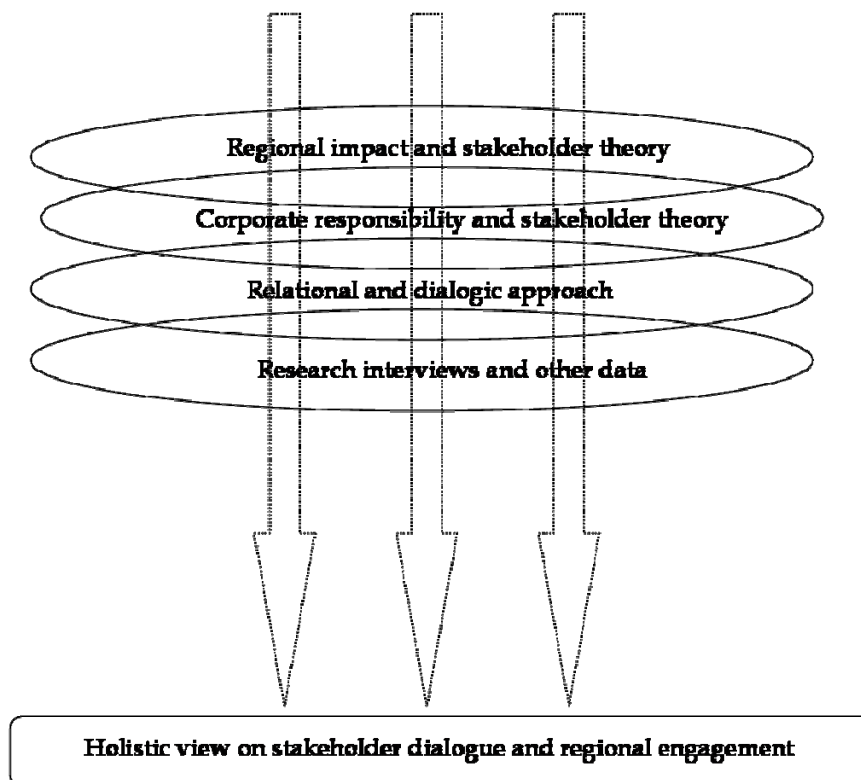

FIGURE 19   The approaches utilised in this study to gain a holistic view on stakeholder dialogue and regional engagement.

The study design followed the so called double funnel[28] model (Eskola 2001, 138-140, Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 241-242), where separate minor theories are utilised instead of a single minor theory and the phenomena are interpreted through these theories. This approach proved to be very fruitful, but also challenging. The threat was fragmentation and lack of coherence at the reporting stage, and the task of pulling all the threads together was a laborious one. The motivation was gaining a holistic and multi-faceted picture of stakeholder relations and regional engagement.

In this study, theory was not constructed entirely on the basis of the data, as it is in grounded theory studies (Strauss & Corbin 1998), but abductively. Theoretical considerations derived from the literature guided the data collection and analysis. The aim was to allow for reflexivity and interaction between the researcher, concepts, data collection, and analysis (Altheide 1987, 68). This choice can be considered successful. A pure grounded theory approach would have been too demanding for a novice researcher. Moreover, quantitative approaches were not considered suitable for a study of personal relationships and the meanings attached to them.

Stakeholder thinking was the guiding idea at all phases of the study, and regional engagement was evaluated through the involvement of stakeholders in the life of the academy. This is one perspective on regional engagement; others are, for example, those of technology transfer processes, or the educational impact on regional welfare. The theoretical path followed in the study can be described as follows:

> Stakeholder theory > Corporate social responsiveness > Corporate community relations > Multi-stakeholder collaboration / Stakeholder engagement within organisational public relations. (Waddock 2004, 12)

The study did not produce new theory. However, it tested, combined and refined the existing theories and thus contributed to the development of the field of research of organisational communication.

6.3.3 Evaluation of the research results

The three-fold research task included dialogue contexts, the responsibilities of the academy in relation to the region, and the motives, structures and contents of dialogues and evaluations of their success. In this study regional engagement was evaluated through the involvement of stakeholders in the life of the academy. This view represents the interactional approach to regional relationships (Kinnunen 2001), while the dominant approach in Finland emphasises direct, measurable impacts on regional development, like patents and business incubators. The interactional approach provided an alternative way of understanding regional impact and was suitable for the purposes of a study in the field of organisational communication and public relations.

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28   In Finnish: *tuplasuppilo.*

The study identified the following themes and contexts that determine university-stakeholder relationships: national higher education policy, re-evaluation of the responsibilities of higher education, the universities' "third task", and globalisation. The university- and region-specific determinants of university-stakeholder dialogues were seen to be identity, profile, and the preconditions of universities and the respective regions.

Responsible academic work in the region was seen by stakeholders to mean that the university fulfils its responsibilities towards the state, the students, and the region. Universities must fulfil the contracts negotiated with the Ministry of Education, and provide teaching of high quality. This result is comforting to the universities. Basically, stakeholders prioritise the same tasks as faculty, i.e. high quality teaching and research. Shattock (2003, 175) found that universities that excel in teaching and research often attract the best students, obtain more research funding and extend the boundaries of the university in social activities. Luoma-aho (2005, 307) suggests that public organisations have a solid basis for legitimacy in the faith of their stakeholders, whom she calls "faith-holders". She states that "public organisations are legitimate when they do what they are created to do". This is exactly what was found in this study, too: universities are considered legitimate when they excel in their basic functions of research and teaching, although their responsibilities are continuing to expand.

The responsibilities towards the region comprised two components: to respond to concrete needs, and to take a visionary role. In stakeholder dialogues the main factors contributing to successful dialogues were trust, commitment, and personal relationships. Deficits identified in university-stakeholder interaction concerned, in particular, listening, two-way interaction, mutual understanding, structures, equality, and time management. Deficits in commitment concerned, above all, the commitment of researchers to the region.

In general, stakeholder interactions took place in traditional settings and emergent, creative dialogues were rare. If dialogue is conceptualised in its purest form, i.e., as emergent dialogue, such dialogue does not exist between universities and their stakeholders. As also assumed beforehand, emergent dialogue is confined almost entirely to interpersonal relationships; however, convergent dialogues between universities and their regions are common. It is also likely that there would have been more emergent-like dialogues if the respondents in this study had also included faculty members and their local partners. Moreover, it is possible that the research setting was not capable of revealing the variety of different dialogues that exist, at least not to the extent that, for example, observation, or analysis based on real, recorded interactions, might have revealed.

The research results also included evaluation of the role of public relations professionals in stakeholder dialogue and regional engagement. The study implies that the role of public relations professionals of universities may be increasing in stakeholder relationships, although it is relatively vague at the moment. In her recent study of the communication work done by Finnish

technology centres and science parks, Salomaa-Valkamo (2007) found that networking was the main mission of communication professionals in these organisations. Technology centres are reminiscent of the universities in many ways in their knowledge-intensiveness and specialist orientation. However, in questions of relationship management and networking, the communication professionals at the universities seem to facilitate and support, and do not, by any means, guide or host the processes.

The present study contributes to the development of the discipline of organisational communication and public relations in many ways. From the point of view of research it provides new information about the application of van Ruler's communication grid in the context of dialogue. It emphasises that the notion of dialogue and the ideal of two-way communication are not old-fashioned, as sometimes argued, but valuable targets to be aimed at, even if seldom realised. From the point of view of corporate responsibility the study questions the applicability of the concept to public organisations. However, stakeholder theory can provide a bridge through which CR thinking becomes relevant, also in the case of public organisations. Corporate responsibility in the public organisation setting can best be conceptualised through stakeholder relationships. Stakeholder theory is also a business concept and seldom applied to public organisations. The study provides information about, and examples of, how stakeholder thinking can be utilised in public HEIs. The emphasis should be on stakeholder empowerment and stakeholder relationships rather than on stakeholder management. Finally, the study proves that, although organisational communication is today a strong discipline on its own, it can still benefit from multidisciplinary approaches. This study would have benefited from more input from higher education studies, or public or business administration, or social psychology.

A limitation of the study is the relatively narrow view of stakeholders adopted by universities and also in this study. Stakeholders are seen by the universities to consist entirely of strategic partners and friends, not of opponents or critics, although the opinions of these would be particularly valuable for organisational development. Another limitation is the narrow view of the region as it is perceived by the present regional stakeholders, who consist mainly of the elite of the region. Consequently, this study cannot say anything about the universities' relationships to their immediate neighbourhoods, such as the laymen living next door, or skateboard kids on campus.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

In this study, the university-stakeholder relationship was approached through the perspectives of regional impact, corporate responsibility, and dialogue. This was motivated by the need to gain a holistic view of stakeholder relations. Any of these three main perspectives could provide a solid framework for further

research and offer a possibility to deepen the knowledge gained so far. Moreover, all three could provide a fruitful research setting for a group consisting of regional economists, higher education and organisation researchers, and communication scholars.

The main data of this study provide managerial perspectives on stakeholder relations. The viewpoints may be very different on the grassroots' level, in departments and in the respective operational units of stakeholders. It would be of interest to study these viewpoints because this is the stage where strategic guidelines are tested in practice. It can be presumed that in these relationships the main components of successful interaction, namely trust, commitment and personal rapport, are even more important than on the managerial level. It would be important to study how regional engagement is realised in practice, what drive it and what hinder it. This information would be useful in the development of practices within the field of stakeholder relationships and contribute to better engagement in regional needs.

The study of the roles of public relations professionals remained only a minor topic in this study. This could be studied much more extensively, possibly comparatively, such as with a study of the public relations professionals in technology centres, or other knowledge-intensive organisations. The duties of public relations professionals are also taking in marketing, branding in particular, in the competitive and global markets of higher education. In this study, the HEIs of Turku were already on their way to developing their international marketing strategies.

The on-going changes in the field of higher education will provide a number of exciting research topics. Given that the Finnish universities will undergo an upheaval during the near future, with fundamental changes in the basis of their funding and organisational forms, researchers must also fulfil their visionary role and become involved in these processes. For example the University of Eastern Finland, which will comprise the universities of Kuopio and Joensuu by 2010, is an enormous challenge also from the point of view of communication. The merging process offers a plethora of research topics, both in internal and external communications as the geographical distance of the organisations concerned is 140 kilometres and the process affects 3 000 staff members, 15 000 students, and an innumerable amount of stakeholders. The merging process involves questions of organisational and regional identity and image. There are bonds, linkages and relationships that may cease, and new ones that will be created, both between people and between networks. Now that the merger is in its infancy, it offers an exciting opportunity for researchers to investigate and to report, both for the benefit of the organisations now concerned, and for those that will be created in the future.

6.5 Implications and concluding remarks

The implications of this work are, hopefully, that universities learn to listen to their stakeholders in a more sensitive and appreciative way. This can happen, for example, through the reorganisation of advisory boards, through new roles given to specialists of regional engagement or public relations professionals, or through working methods that emphasise the creation and maintenance of personal relationships. A relevant implication is that regional commitment does not arise in faculties without funding initiatives and without clear measures and rewards.

From the point of view of the structural reorganisation of HEIs in Finland, the present study suggests that, in addition to students and staff, numerous stakeholders must also be taken into account in these processes. The University of Turku and Turku School of Economics are joining forces, a move which particularly affects firms in Turku which have close relationships with the business school. In Kuopio the local university has been a considerable source of pride, for example, to the city of Kuopio, and the new merger with the University of Joensuu, the University of Eastern Finland, challenges this relationship.

For the development of public relations practice in universities the study implies that there may be a need to readjust the role of communication offices in the near future. The direction seems to be towards more extensive external relations and towards international arenas. In general, the importance of relationship management is increasing, and the responsibilities are extending from media and alumni relations towards other external stakeholder groups. This development has already happened in the UK, for example. Thus in professional roles, the dimensions of relationship management and education may increase and the dimension of public sphere either decrease or remain unchanged (cf. Asunta 2006, van Ruler, Verčič, Bütschi & Flodin 2004).

This study showed that different universities are needed in Finland, at least from the point of view of regional stakeholders. The profiles of the three target universities are quite different, but they all enjoy great esteem in the region, event to the extent that the survival of the whole region is seen to be dependent on HEIs, as in Lapland.

The study concludes with the following remarks.

Stakeholder dialogues take place in settings that heavily determine the course of those dialogues while the settings are often planned and defined elsewhere, not by both participants in the dialogue.

Strong organisational identities contribute to clear profiles and make interaction easier. On the contrary, diffuse identities cause problems, as in the case of the fluctuating boundaries of universities and polytechnics. However, these

situations of uncertainty can offer an opportunity to create something new through collaboration, to replace the old. New organisational identities can be constructed through stakeholder negotiations.

Dialogues need forms and structures, facilitation and even management (Lemola 2004, Virtanen 2002). Here there is a role for public relations professionals (Kent & Taylor 2002, 30).

Personal and informal relationships are an important foundation for successful dialogues as they increase trust. Thus such settings and work forms that aim at improving acquaintance between individuals are recommended. This is particularly important at the forming, or initiating stage of a relationship. As McVea and Freeman (2005) state, stakeholders have names and faces and families.

The more tacit or obvious bias and conflicts a relationship contains, the more important it is to aim at continuous dialogue. A contradictory relationship is not necessarily a threat but may even bring about "mutual astonishment", creativity and learning (Hammond, Anderson & Cissna 2003). It may, however, require more time and engagement.

Stakeholders need to be empowered. If the university has a genuine interest in stakeholder contribution, stakeholders deserve more than the right to speak for form's sake. The Clarkson (1999, 4) principles include acknowledgment, monitoring and listening.

Naïve as it sounds, dialogue can be learned. For example listening and other communication skills, time management, or interactive working forms can be studied (Kent & Taylor 2002, 31). Here again, a challenge arises for communication educators.

YHTEENVETO

Yliopistojen sidosryhmävuoropuhelu ja alueellinen sitoutuminen

1 Johdanto

Tutkimuksen pontimena on alati voimistuva tarve ottaa sidosryhmät[1] huomioon yliopiston päätöksenteossa ja toiminnassa. Tähän liittyy myös viime vuosien keskustelu yliopistojen ns. kolmannesta tehtävästä, palvelusta, joka on noussut opetuksen ja tutkimuksen rinnalle tai olennaiseksi osaksi niitä (Laki yliopistolain muuttamisesta 715/2004, Virtanen 2002, Vähämäki 2005). Lähtöoletus on, että kun sidosryhmät osallistetaan yliopiston työhön dialogisen vuorovaikutuksen kautta, yliopiston suhteet toiminta-alueeseensa vahvistuvat ja alueen tarpeet voidaan paremmin ottaa huomioon yliopiston päätöksenteossa ja toiminnassa. Kuuntelemalla herkällä korvalla toimintaympäristöään yliopisto voi täyttää yhteiskunnalliset velvoitteensa ja kantaa vastuunsa aluettaan kohtaan, onhan alue vaikuttanut ratkaisevasti yliopiston perustamiseen ja kehittymiseen. Tätä vuoropuhelua kutsutaan tutkimuksessa dialogiksi, joskin tutkimustulosten perusteella voi kyseenalaistaa sen, onko tosiaan kyse "dialogista", jos dialogi ymmärretään avoimeksi ja ennakkoluulottomaksi kohtaamiseksi ja uusien, yhteisten todellisuuksien luomiseksi.

Tässä tutkimuksessa yliopistojen alueellista sitoutumista tarkastellaan vuorovaikutteisuuden kautta. Muita suomalaisessa alueellista vaikuttavuutta käsittelevässä kirjallisuudessa esitettyjä lähestymistapoja ovat mm. aluekehitys, koulutuksen vaikuttavuus ja tiede- ja teknologiapolitiikka (Kankaala, Kaukonen, Kutinlahti, Lemola, Nieminen & Välimaa 2004, Kinnunen 2001, Virtanen 2002). OECD:n (2007, 22) tuore tutkimus korkeakoulujen ja alueiden suhteista 12 maassa tunnistaa erityisesti nämä alueeseen sitoutumisen dimensiot: tiedon luominen, tiedonsiirto sekä kulttuurin ja yhteisön kehittäminen.

Tavoitteena oli tutkia, miten suomalaiset yliopistot toteuttavat ns. kolmatta tehtäväänsä sidosryhmävuoropuhelun kautta. Tutkimustehtävä oli kolmiosainen:

1. Mitkä teemat ja kontekstit määrittelevät yliopistojen ja niiden sidosryhmien suhdetta (dialogin käsikirjoitus)?
2. Mitä vastuullinen yliopistotyö tarkoittaa yliopiston toiminta-alueen näkökulmasta (dialogin motiivit)?
3. Miksi, miten ja missä sidosryhmädialogeja käydään ja miten eri osapuolet arvioivat niiden onnistumista (dialogin näyttämö, osallistujat, kulku ja onnistuminen)? Mikä on viestinnän ammattilaisten rooli näissä dialogeissa?

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[1] Tässä käytetään käsitettä *sidosryhmä*, koska se on suomeksi ymmärrettävämpi kuin *stakeholderit*. Sidosryhmien on katsottu viittaavan lähinnä organisaation itsensä valitsemiin, melko tiiviissä yhteistyössä oleviin kumppaneihin, kun taas *stakeholder* on käsitteenä laajempi ja voi viitata myös yllättäviin ja vihamielisiin ryhmiin, vrt. ruotsin *intressentgrupper*, englannin *interest group*.

Tutkimuksen rakenne on selvitetty taulukossa 14.

TAULUKKO 14   Tutkimuksen rakenne, eri lukujen tavoitteet ja avainkirjallisuus.

1 Johdanto			
2 Tutkimusasetelma			
Tutkimuskysymykset	**Tavoitteet**	**Tieteenala/näkökulma**	**Avainlähteet**
Luku 3			
Sidosryhmäsuhdetta määrittävät teemat ja kontekstit?	kartoittaa alueeseen sitoutumisen ja si- dosryhmädialogien konteksti	viestinnän ja korkea- koulutuksen tutkimus, alueellinen vaikutta- vuus ja stakeholder- teoria	Albert & Whetten 1985, Balmer & Wilson 1998, Gioia, Schultz & Corley 2000, Mitchell, Agle & Wood 1997
Luku 4			
Mitä vastuullinen yli- opistotyö tarkoittaa tällä alueella?	kartoittaa yhteiskun- tavastuu-käsitteen sisältö ja sen rele- vanttius yliopistoyh- teyksissä	viestinnän ja liikkeen- johdon tutkimus, yh- teiskuntavastuu ja stakeholder-teoria	Carroll 1989/1993, Freeman & Velamuri 2006, Garriga & Melé 2004, Waddock 2004
Luku 5			
Miksi, missä ja miten dialogeja käydään ja miten niissä onnistu- taan?	kartoittaa sidosryh- mäsuhteitten piirteet ja kokemukset dialo- geista	viestinnän tutkimus, erityisesti suhteitten ja dialogin tutkimus	Baxter & Montgomery 1996, Grunig & Huang 2000, Hammond, Anderson & Cissna 2003, Ledingham & Bruning 2000, Mönkkönen 2002 , van Ruler 2004
6 Diskussio ja arviointi			

Tutkimus eteni ja raportti on kirjoitettu Eskolan (2001, 138-139) esittämän tup- lasuppilomallin mukaan. Siinä tutkijalla ei ole yhtä suurta teoriaa vaan useita pieniä. Tutkimuksessa edetään ilmiöpohjaisesti ja teoriat toimivat tulkintake- hyksinä. Tavoitteena on saada eri ainekset keskustelemaan keskenään ja välttää teorian ja empirian välinen kuilu. Tutkimuksen lähestymistapa on esitetty ku- viossa 20.

Tutkimusaineisto (ks. myös taulukko 3) kerättiin Kuopion, Lapin ja Turun yliopistoista ja niiden toiminta-alueelta. Tutkimuksen pääaineisto koostuu nel- jästä osasta:

- – Kuopion, Lapin ja Turun yliopiston strategiat
- – Kuopion, Lapin ja Turun yliopiston ja niiden paikallisten kumppani- korkeakoulujen yhteiset aluestrategiat
- – Pohjois-Savon, Lapin ja Varsinais-Suomen liiton maakuntaohjelmat

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- teemahaastattelut, jotka tehtiin Kuopion, Lapin ja Turun yliopistojen sekä niiden sidosryhmien edustajien kanssa keväällä 2006 (23 kpl).

Tutkimushaastatteluja varten kartoitettiin yliopistojen avainsidosryhmiä tuomalla Luoma-ahon (2005) modifioimaan Mitchellin, Aglen ja Woodin (1997) malliin yliopiston tärkeimmät sidosryhmät. Tämän perusteella haastateltaviksi valittiin näiden sidosryhmien edustajat: opiskelijat (ylioppilaskunnat), hallituksen ulkopuoliset jäsenet, neuvottelukunnat, liike-elämä, media ja ammattikorkeakoulut. Yliopistojen sijaintikaupunkien kaupunginjohtajat olisivat myös itseoikeutetusti kuuluneet haastateltaviin mutta kaupunginjohtajien tavoittaminen haastattelua varten osoittautui mahdottomaksi. Yliopistojen edustajina haastateltiin rehtorit sekä 1-2 yliopiston aluetyöstä vastaavaa virkamiestä kustakin yliopistosta.

Lisäksi tehtiin vuonna 2004 yliopistojen kolmannen tehtävän sisältöjen kartoittamiseksi pilottitutkimus suomalaisten ja amerikkalaisten yliopistohenkilökunnan ammattijärjestölehtien artikkelien pohjalta (*Acatiimi* ja *Academe*). Yliopistojen viestintäammattilaisten profession ja työnkuvan kehittymisen kuvauksen taustana käytettiin vuonna 1989 kerättyä valtio-opin seminaarimateriaalia ja nykytilan kartoitukseen Kuopion, Lapin ja Turun yliopistojen viestintäpäälliköille tehtyä suppeaa kyselyä.
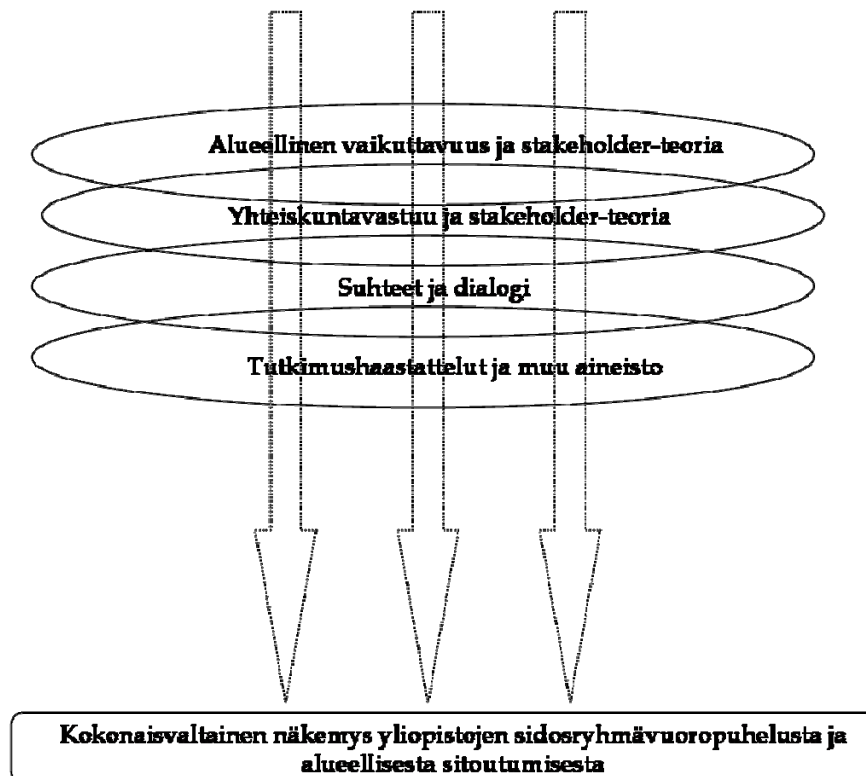
KUVIO 20 Tutkimuksessa käytetyt lähestymistavat, tavoitteena kokonaisvaltainen näkemys yliopistojen sidosryhmävuoropuhelusta ja alueellisesta sitoutumisesta.

Aineiston analyysissa pääpaino on haastatteluaineistolla. Laadullinen lähestymistapa ja etnografinen sisällönanalyysi (Altheide 1987) valittiin, koska laadullisen menetelmän oletettiin tuottavan rikkaamman materiaalin. Oli myös luultavaa, että tutkimuksen kiireinen kohderyhmä olisi ollut vaikeasti tavoitettavissa muilla keinoin. Aineiston käsittelytyökaluna käytettiin ATLAS.ti-ohjelmistoa.

2 Dialogin näyttämö

Tutkimuksessa määriteltiin yliopistojen ja niiden sidosryhmien välisen dialogin näyttämöksi kansallinen korkeakoulupolitiikka, meneillään oleva korkeakoulutuksen vastuiden uudelleenmäärittely, kolmannen tehtävän vaatimus sekä yhä enenevässä määrin globalisaatio.

Erityisen voimakkaasti yliopistojen vuorovaikutussuhteita määrittelee "isännän ääni" eli opetusministeriön johtama kansallinen korkeakoulupolitiikka. Tutkimusaineistossa laajimmin esille nousseet kysymykset olivat opetusministeriön tuottavuusohjelmaan liittyvät uudet rakenteelliset suunnitelmat, sekä ammattikorkeakoulujen asema. Korkeakoulupolitiikka määrittää myös kolmannen tehtävän sisältöjä, jotka Suomessa ovat paljolti Leydesdorffin ja Etkowitzin (1998) triple helix -mallin mukaisia, jolloin yliopistot nähdään ennen muuta alueittensa taloudellisen kehityksen vetureina. Tutkimushaastatteluissa kävi ilmi, että yliopistot ja niiden sidosryhmät pitävät tätä opetusministeriön linjaamaa näkemystä liian yksipuolisena, koska se unohtaa yliopistojen kulttuurisen tehtävän yhteisöjen rakentajana (vrt. OECD 2007). Tässä tilanteessa yliopistojen on tasapainoteltava sidosryhmien odotusten, autonomian ja opetusministeriön vaateiden välillä. Tämä tasapainoilu tunnetaan myös ns. Clarkin kolmiona (Clark 1983), jota mm. Rekilä (2006) on käsitellyt väitöstutkimuksessaan.

Korkeakoulutuksen kansainvälistyminen ja yhteisten eurooppalaisten koulutusmarkkinoiden luominen määrittää sidosryhmäsuhteita voimakkaasti, erityisesti työnjakoa yliopistojen ja ammattikorkeakoulujen välillä.

Korkeakoulutuksen vastuiden määrittelyllä tarkoitetaan alueellisen vaikuttavuuden, yliopistojen ns. kolmannen tehtävän uutta nousua 1990-luvun lopulta alkaen, mikä on johtanut myös paikallisten sidosryhmien uuteen rooliin yliopistojen päätöksenteossa. Sidosryhmien edustajien mielestä yliopisto on toimistaan vastuussa erityisesti valtiolle, opiskelijoille ja toiminta-alueelleen. Yliopiston on huolehdittava siitä, että opetusministeriön kanssa solmitun tulossopimuksen tavoitteet täyttyvät, ja että opiskelijat saavat korkealaatuista opetusta. Suhteessa toiminta-alueeseen tunnistettiin kaksi alueen odotusten päälinjaa: *herkkyys vastata alueen konkreettisiin tarpeisiin* ja *visionäärin rooli*. Esimerkkinä konkreettisista toiminta-alueen odotuksista voi mainita Itä-Suomen hammaslääkäripulan. Visionäärin rooli puolestaan merkitsee sitä, että yliopistojen tulisi asettua näkijän ja innovaattorin paikalle suhteessa toiminta-alueensa kehitykseen.

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3   Dialogin osapuolet

Tässä tutkimuksessa dialogien osapuolia ovat Kuopion, Lapin ja Turun yliopistot sekä niiden toiminta-alueet. Sidosryhmäsuhteisiin vaikuttavat suuresti sekä yliopiston että sen toiminta-alueen identiteetti, profiili ja toimintaedellytykset. Esimerkiksi Lapin yliopistossa johtajuus ja yliopiston fyysinen ympäristö profiloivat yliopistoa vahvasti. Yliopistoa 27 vuotta johtanut rehtori ja tehokkaasti rakennettu kampusalue olivat keskeisiä, erottavia ja pysyviä yliopiston identiteetin rakennuspuita. Toisaalta juuri Lapissa toiminta-alueen edellytykset yliopistoyhteistyöhön olivat heikoimmat. Lappia on koetellut suuri väestökato ja yliopistosta valmistuvien työllistymismahdollisuudet alueelle ovat heikot. Lapin yliopiston erityishaaste on laaja toiminta-alue, jonka palvelemiseksi yliopisto on yhdessä muiden koulutustoimijoitten kanssa kehittänyt innovatiivisen konseptin, maakuntakorkeakoulun, joka sai laajalti kiitosta kaikilta yliopiston sidosryhmien edustajilta.

4   Dialogin piirteitä

Tässä tutkimuksessa tärkeimpiä dialogin menestystekijöitä olivat *luottamus*, *sitoutuminen* ja *henkilökohtaiset suhteet*. Puutteita yliopistojen ja sidosryhmien välisessä vuorovaikutuksessa oli erityisesti kuulluksi tulemisessa, viestinnän kaksisuuntaisuudessa, molemminpuolisessa ymmärtämisessä, rakenteissa, tasa-arvossa ja ajanhallinnassa. Sitoutumisen ongelmat koskivat erityisesti tutkijoitten sitoutumista oman toiminta-alueen kysymyksiin. Tutkimuksessa todettiin, että tutkijoitten sitoutumiseen vaikuttaa ratkaisevasti se, voiko alue tarjota tutkimuksellisia haasteita ja rahoitusta.

5   Viestinnän ammattilaisten rooli

Tutkimuksessa sivuttiin myös viestintäfunktion roolia ja valtuuksia yliopistojen sidosryhmäsuhteiden hoidossa. Tutkimushaastatteluissa oikeastaan ainoat roolit, jotka Kuopion ja Lapin yliopiston viestinnän ammattilaisilla tunnistettiin olevan yliopiston sidosryhmätyössä, olivat mediasuhteiden hoito ja materiaalien tuottaminen sidosryhmien tarpeisiin. Myös viestintäammattilaiset itse näkivät roolinsa näin. Turun yliopistossa viestintäosastolle oli tietoisesti rakennettu entistä aktiivisempaa roolia sidosryhmäsuhteiden hoidossa ja toimintatapojen kehittämisessä oli käytetty pohjana alumnityöstä saatuja kokemuksia.

Van Rulerin (2004) viestinnän ammattilaisten roolityypittelyn mukaan Kuopion ja Lapin yliopistojen viestintäosastoilla on lähinnä liikenteenohjaajan tai kapellimestarin rooli, kun taas Turun yliopistossa toteutetaan suhteiden rakentajan tai mahdollistajan roolia. Liikenteenohjaajan ja kapellimestarin rooleissa tiedonvälitys on useimmiten yksisuuntaista, kohderyhmät ja jakelukanavat määritellään tarkkaan ja viestinnällä tavoitellaan suotuisaa julkisuutta ja sidosryhmien myönteisiä asenteita. Suhteiden rakentaja ja mahdollistaja ovat vuorovaikutteisuutta painottavia viestijöitä, he luovat suhteita, siteitä ja siltoja, rakentavat dialogifoorumeita ja isännöivät dialogeja.

6   Johtopäätökset

Tutkimuksessa rakennettiin sidosryhmädialogin mallia van Rulerin (2004) esittämien viestinnän perusstrategioiden pohjalle liittämällä niihin Mönkkösen (2001) esittämät sosiaalisen vuorovaikutuksen tasot (Figure 13). Tavoiteltavana pidettiin yhteistoiminnallisuuden (collaboration) tasoa, jossa toteutuisi aito dialogi osapuolten välillä. Tutkimusaineiston pohjalta kuitenkin todettiin, että lineaarista ajattelua hedelmällisempi vuorovaikutussuhteen kuvaus löytyy, kun tarkastellaan sidosryhmäsuhteita heilahteluna eri tasojen välillä.

Teatteri-metaforaa hyödyntäen eri viestintäorientaatiot (vrt. Figure 13) kuvattiin nimillä stand-up-improvisaatio (yhteistoiminnan taso, emergentti dialogi), klassinen draama (yhteistyön taso, konvergentti dialogi), Idols-kisa (kilpailu, suostuttelu) ja monologi (sosiaalinen vaikuttaminen, informointi). Yliopistot eivät improvisoi sidosryhmäsuhteissaan vaan preferoivat klassista draamaa perinteisissä puitteissa. Improvisoiva, luova, yllätyksellinen dialogi tuli kysymykseen korkeintaan pitkäaikaisissa ja luottamuksellisissa suhteissa, joita toki voi olla esimerkiksi yliopistojen rehtorien ja paikallisten johtajien välillä. Kilpailevaa ja suostuttelevaa viestintää harjoitetaan erityisesti yliopistojen markkinointitoimissa, kuten opiskelijarekrytoinnissa tai kansainvälisessä viestinnässä. Yksisuuntainen monologi, informaation jakaminen, on viestinnän perustyötä, jota tarvitaan sekä suhteiden perustamisvaiheessa että niiden ylläpitämisessä.

Sidosryhmädialogeja ohjaa itseoikeutetusti rehtori. Viestintäammattilaisten rooli vaihtelee. He voivat olla ohjaajan assistentteja tai koreografeja mutta useimmiten he työskentelevät kulissien takana. Onko heidän roolinsa lavastajan vai kuiskaajan, riippuu viestintäosaston koosta ja taidoista sekä siitä, miten yliopistossa on ymmärretty viestinnän strateginen merkitys.

Kaikki esitystyypit voivat olla nautittavia ja tuottaa tyytyväisyyttä. On kuitenkin suuri ero siinä, osallistuuko dialogiin aktiivisena toimijana ja uutta luovana osapuolena vai yleisönä. Yksi tutkimuksen keskeisistä tuloksista onkin, että sidosryhmille annetaan yliopistoissa yhä monologin yleisön rooli, missä he vastaanottavat tietoa ja seuraavat toisten tekemää käsikirjoitusta. Jotkut yliopistojen kumppaneista olivat tyytyväisiä tähän rooliin mutta useat myös ilmaisivat halunsa syvempään ja vuorovaikutteisempaan dialogiin. Turhautumista ja tyytymättömyyttä aiheutti sidosryhmissä tunne, ettei heitä aidosti kuunnella, ja myös se, että vaikutusmahdollisuudet jäävät näennäisiksi. Sidosryhmien toive kiteytyi näin: "että aidosti halutaan se panos eikä vain muodon vuoksi anneta tilaisuutta jotakin sanoa".

Yhteisöviestinnän tutkimuksen kannalta tämän tutkimuksen kontribuutio on van Rulerin (2004, Figure 12) viestintäkehikon soveltamisessa dialogeihin. Tutkimuksen mukaan dialogin ja kaksisuuntaisen viestinnän ideaalit eivät ole vanhanaikaisia vaan arvokkaita tavoitteita, vaikka ne harvoin toteutuvatkin. Yhteiskuntavastuun osalta tämä työ kyseenalaistaa käsitteen soveltuvuuden julkisiin organisaatioihin ja ehdottaa, että yhteiskuntavastuu toteutuu julkisyhteisössä parhaiten vastuullisen sidosryhmäsuhteiden hoidon kautta. Tärkeää olisi kuitenkin korostaa sidosryhmien valtuuttamista ja suhteiden laatua mieluummin kuin suhteiden johtamista.

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Yliopistojen viestintäfunktion kannalta tutkimus viittaa siihen, että viestinnän ammattilaisten työpanosta on lähitulevaisuudessa suunnattava entistä enemmän laajamittaiseen sidosryhmätyöhön ja myös kansainväliseen viestintään. Viestintävastuut ovat selvästi laajenemassa media- ja alumni-suhteista myös muihin sidosryhmiin. Samoin viestintäammattilaisten kouluttaja- ja konsulttirooli tulee entisestään korostumaan.

Tutkimuksen päätösteesit ovat seuraavat:

Yliopistojen sidosryhmädialogit toteutuvat sellaisissa konteksteissa, jotka vaikuttavat vahvasti dialogin kulkuun mutta joita dialogin osapuolet eivät voi itse määritellä.

Vahvat yhteisöidentiteetit luovat selkeitä profiileja ja tekevät vuorovaikutuksen helpommaksi. Toisaalta sekavat identiteetit aiheuttavat ongelmia, kuten yliopistojen ja ammattikorkeakoulujen häilyvät rajat. Epävarmuuden olotilat tarjoavat kuitenkin mahdollisuuden luoda jotakin uutta yhteistyössä, kun vanhat asetelmat väistyvät. Uusia yhteisöidentiteettejä voidaan luoda yhdessä sidosryhmien kanssa.

Dialogit tarvitsevat muotoja, rakenteita, varustamista ja myös johtamista (Lemola 2004, Virtanen 2002). Tässä on rooli tarjolla viestinnän ammattilaisille (Kent & Taylor 2002, 30.)

Henkilökohtaiset, epämuodolliset suhteet ovat tärkeä menestyksellisten dialogien edellytys, koska ne kasvattavat luottamusta. Siksi sellaiset asetelmat ja työtavat, jotka tähtäävät ihmisten tutustumiseen, ovat suositeltavia. Tämä on erityisen tärkeää suhteiden aloitusvaiheessa. Sidosryhmillä on kasvot, nimet ja perheet (McVea & Freeman 2005).

Mitä enemmän hiljaisia tai avoimia ennakkoluuloja ja ristiriitoja suhteeseen sisältyy, sitä tärkeämpää on jatkuva vuorovaikutus. Ristiriitainen suhde ei välttämättä ole uhka vaan se voi tarjota dialogin aidoimmillaan eli mahdollisuuden yhdessä ihmettelemiseen, luovuuteen ja oppimiseen (Hammond, Anderson & Cissna 2003). Tällainen dialogi kuitenkin yleensä vaatii enemmän aikaa ja paneutumista.

Sidosryhmille pitää antaa tarpeeksi valtuuksia. Jos yliopisto todella haluaa hyödyntää sidosryhmiensä panoksen, sidosryhmillä pitää olla suurempi rooli kuin vain mahdollisuus sanoa sanottavansa muodon vuoksi. Hyviä periaatteita ovat tunnustuksen antaminen, luotaus ja kuunteleminen (Clarkson 1999, 4).

Dialogissa tarvittavia taitoja voi opiskella ja oppia, kuten kuuntelemista, ajanhallintaa ja vuorovaikutteisia työtapoja (Kent & Taylor 2002, 31). Tässä on myös haaste viestinnän kouluttajille.

7   Jatkotutkimuksen aiheita

Merkittävä jatkotutkimuksen aihe on dialogien toteutuminen tiedekunta- ja laitostasolla. Yliopisto-organisaatioiden avaintyö tehdään laitoksilla ja strategisen johdon tekemät sopimukset koetellaan ruohonjuuritason kontakteissa. Tutkimuksen perusteella voisi olettaa, että siellä menestyksellisen vuorovaikutuksen avaintekijät, luottamus, sitoutuminen ja henkilökohtaiset suhteet, ovat vielä tärkeämpiä kuin johtotasolla. Olisi tärkeää tietää, miten alueellinen vuoropuhelu toteutuu laitostasolla, mitkä ovat siellä sen edistäjät ja esteet. Tämä tieto auttaisi kehittämään sidosryhmäyhteistyön käytäntöjä ja yliopistojen paneutumista toiminta-alueittensa kehittämiseen.

Viestintäammattilaisten roolin kehittyminen jäi tässä tutkimuksessa vain sivujuonteeksi. Aihetta olisi syytä tutkia perusteellisemmin, esimerkiksi vertaillen viestintätyötä yliopistoissa ja muissa tietointensiivisissä asiantuntijaorganisaatioissa.

Kolmas kiinnostava ja ajankohtainen tutkimuskohde ovat uudet liitto-yliopistomallit, joita Suomessa on ryhdytty luomaan osana korkeakoululaitostamme ravistelevaa suurta rakenteellista mullistusta. Esimerkiksi Itä-Suomen liittoyliopisto ei kosketa vain 3000 hengen henkilökuntaa ja 15000 opiskelijaa vaan myös lukuisia muita Kuopion ja Joensuun yliopistojen sidosryhmiä.

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GLOSSARY

The concepts are presented below as they are used in this study.

Corporate Responsibility, CR An overarching concept for an organisation's economic, environmental and social responsibilities.

Dialogue Interaction between individuals or groups, characterised by two-way communication. Central types: convergent (technique-driven, conventional) and emergent (free flow of ideas, mutual astonishment). (Hammond, Anderson & Cissna 2003.)

Engagement/Involvement/Commitment Used synonymously. Emotional devotion to something (Merriam-Webster's 11th Collegiate Dictionary). Involvement is not used here as marketing research identifies it (high or low involvement in consumer behaviour).

Identity A summation of the elements that make the organisation distinct. Driving forces: leadership, values, traditions and environment. (Balmer 2001, 280.)

Image Perceived identity. The immediate set of meanings inferred by a subject in confrontation/response to one or more signals from or about a particular institution. The net result of the interaction of a subject's beliefs, ideas, feelings and impressions about an institution at a single point in time. (Cornelissen & Thorpe 2002, 175.)

Polytechnic A Finnish institution of higher education, introduced in 1996, currently known by the English name university of applied sciences.

Profile Target image (Juholin 2001, 298, Åberg 2000, 114). The part of organisational identity that the organisation deliberately makes visible, for example in mission statements.

Public relations/Organisational communication Used synonymously. The previous is the common denominator of the field both in the academy and in business in the Anglo-American world; the latter and other forms of *communication*, like *corporate communication* or *communication management*, dominate in Europe (van Ruler 2004, 125, van Ruler, Verčič, Bütschi & Flodin 2004, 47). In this study, when the function of public relations is referred to, it is called "organised public relations", or "public relations offices", or "public relations professionals".

Region/Community Used synonymously, as well as regional engagement and community involvement. A particular cultural, historical or economic area which

is a subdivision of a national state, and which has a specific heritage or identity (Davies 1997b, 29).

Stakeholder/Interest group Used synonymously. Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives (Freeman 1984, 46).

Third task The two main tasks of universities are research and teaching. The third task, service, means that knowledge produced in and by the international scientific community is transmitted and applied to social and regional needs (Virtanen 2002, 76). In the fresh OECD review the dimensions of regional engagement are *knowledge creation,* through research and technology transfer, *knowledge transfer* through education and human resources development, and *cultural and community development* (OECD 2007, 11). Synonyms used in the literature: third mission, role, strand, stream.

University A Finnish institution of higher education which can grant doctoral degrees.

Acronyms

AAUP	American Association of University Professors
BICT	Business in the Community
CC	corporate citizenship
CCI	corporate community involvement
CR	corporate responsibility
CSR	corporate social responsibility
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EUPRIO	The Association of European Universities' Public Relations and Information Officers
FINHEEC	Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council
FURT	Finnish Union of University Lecturers
FUUP	Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers
HEI	higher education institution
IMHE	Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education
NUAS	Det nordiska universitetsadministratörssamarbetet
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises

APPENDIX 1

Interviewees, their titles and organisations, and dates of interviews

University of Kuopio and its stakeholders		
Lepola, Tapani	Editor-in-Chief, Savon Sanomat	May 4, 2006, at 15:00
Nerg, Päivi	Director of Administration, University of Kuopio	March 27, 2006, at 19:00
Niiranen, Matti	CEO, Kuopio Chamber of Commerce, Member of the University Board	April 12, 2006, at 9:00
Pentti, Jussi	Planning Officer, University of Kuopio	May 5, 2006, at 12:30
Ryynänen, Mirja	M.A., Chair of the University Advisory Board	April 19, 2006, at 13:30
Tolppi, Veli-Matti	Rector, Savonia University of Applied Sciences	April 18, 2006, at 13:00
Uusitupa, Matti	Rector, University of Kuopio	April 11, 2006, at 13:30
Viinikainen, Heli	Chair of the Student Union	April 11, 2006, at 11:00
University of Lapland and its stakeholders		
Ansala, Liisa	Chair of the Student Union	April 3, 2006, at 12:00
Oikarinen, Esko	President of the Rovaniemi Court of Appeal, Chair of the University Advisory Board	May 12, 2006, at 12:00
Pokka, Hannele	Governor, State Provincial Office of Lapland, Member of the University Board	April 3, 2006, at 9:00
Rautajoki, Timo	CEO, Lapland Chamber of Commerce	April 4, 2006, at 12:30
Riepula, Esko	Rector, University of Lapland	April 5, 2006, at 9:00
Tieranta, Pentti	Rector, Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences	April 4, 2006, at 14:30
Tuomi-Nikula, Heikki	Editor-in-Chief, Lapin Kansa	April 5, 2006, at 15:00
Viiri, Arto	Structural Fund Coordinator, University of Lapland	April 3, 2006, at 14:00
University of Turku and its stakeholders		
Kettunen, Juha	Rector, Turku University of Applied Sciences	April 26, 2006, at 9:00
Lähteenmäki, Jari	CEO, Turku Chamber of Commerce	April 25, 2006, at 9:00
Markkanen, Seppo K.	Director of University Development, University of Turku	April 25, 2006, at 14:00
Massinen, Aimo	Editor-in-Chief, Turun Sanomat	April 26, 2006, at 11:00
Palonheimo, Maija	Director of Communications and Public Affairs, University of Turku	April 27, 2006, at 8:15
Sauvola, Katja	Chair of the Student Union	April 26, 2006, at 12:30
Virtanen, Keijo	Rector, University of Turku	April 27, 2006, at 9:30

APPENDIX 2

Interview requests sent by e-mail, the first and the second contact

Hyvä N. N.

Tiedän, että olette kovin kiireinen mutta toivon silti, että voisin haastatella Teitä 3.4. alkavalla viikolla Teille sopivana aikana. Olen Rovaniemellä koko viikon, joten myös ilta-ajat ovat mahdollisia. Haastattelun kesto olisi korkeintaan 1,5 tuntia.

Teen yhteisöviestinnän väitöstutkimusta Jyväskylän yliopistoon. Tutkin yliopistojen alueellista vaikuttavuutta ja sidosryhmäyhteistyötä. Kerään haastatteluaineiston Rovaniemellä, Kuopiossa ja Turussa. Tutkimustani ohjaavat professori Jaakko Lehtonen ja dosentti Elisa Juholin. Olen työskennellyt 20 vuoden ajan viestinnän ammattilaisena Vaasan ja Kuopion yliopistoissa.

Olen vakuuttunut siitä, että Teillä olisi paljon annettavaa tutkimukselleni. Toivon myönteistä suhtautumista ja olen yhteydessä sihteeriinne ensi viikon alussa haastatteluajan sopimiseksi.

Ystävällisin terveisin Kuopiosta

Helena Kantanen
FM, tohtoriopiskelija
Puh.

Dear N. N.

I know that you are very busy, but I hope that you could find time for a research interview during the week starting April 3. I shall spend the whole week in Rovaniemi, so even evening times are possible. The interview will last 1,5 hours at maximum.

I am working on a doctoral thesis in the field of organisational communication and public relations at the University of Jyväskylä. My focus is on the regional engagement and stakeholder cooperation of universities. I shall collect my data from Rovaniemi, Kuopio and Turku. My supervisors are Professor Jaakko Lehtonen and Docent Elisa Juholin. I have worked for 20 years as public relations professional at the universities of Vaasa and Kuopio.

I am convinced that you can make an important contribution to my study. I look forward to your positive answer and shall contact your secretary at the beginning of next week to set a date for the interview.

With kind regards from Kuopio

Helena Kantanen
MA, Doctoral student
Tel.

Hyvä N. N.

Kiitän suostumuksestanne tutkimushaastatteluun. Ajankohdaksi sovimme keskiviikon 5.4.2006 klo 15.00.

Tutkin yliopistojen "kolmatta tehtävää" eli oman toiminta-alueen palvelemista ja sidosryhmä-vuoropuhelua. Tutkimustani ohjaavat professori Jaakko Lehtonen ja dosentti Elisa Juholin Jyväskylän yliopiston viestinnän laitokselta. Kerään aineistoni Rovaniemellä, Kuopiossa ja Turussa.

Toivon, että voin nauhoittaa haastattelun. Säilytän antamanne tiedot luottamuksellisina ja Teidän osuuttanne ei voi tunnistaa tutkimuksestani. Haastattelujen lisäksi käytän tutkimusaineistona yliopistojen strategioita ja ohjelmapapereita.

Haastattelun teemoja ovat
- yliopiston historialliset ankkurit toiminta-alueeseensa ja niiden näkyminen tänään
- alueellisen yhteistyön motiivit, tavoitteet ja arvot
- yhteistyön organisointi
- yhteistyön sisällöt
- kokemuksenne yhteistyöstä
- kehittämistarpeet ja tulevaisuus.

Tapaamisiin ensi viikolla.
Ystävällisin terveisin

Helena Kantanen
FM, tohtoriopiskelija

Dear N. N.

Thank you very much for your consent to the research interview. The date and time are Wednesday April 5, 2006, at 3 p.m.

My study is about the "third task" of universities, about how they serve their region and interact with stakeholders. My supervisors are Professor Jaakko Lehtonen and Docent Elisa Juholin from the Department of Communication of the University of Jyväskylä. I shall collect my data from Rovaniemi, Kuopio and Turku.

I would like to be able to record the interview. I shall preserve the information confidentially and what you say will not be identifiable in the report. In addition to research interviews the data include strategic documents concerning universities' regional engagement.

The themes of the interview are
- historical regional anchors of the local university and how they are realised today
- motives, goals and values of regional engagement
- organisation of regional engagement (structures)
- content of regional engagement
- experiences of regional engagement
- development needs and future themes of regional engagement.

See you next week.
With kind regards,
Helena Kantanen
MA, Doctoral student

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APPENDIX 3

Extract from a research interview

K: Profilointi, mm. Vielä mä kysyn nyt kun en tiedä että mikä se tämä maakuntakorkea-koulukuvio sitten on tässä?

V: Joo se taas liittyy tähän meidän ja Rovaniemen ja Kemi-Tornion ammattikorkeakoulujen yhteiseen koulutuksen alueellistamiseen ja siin on itse asiassa sitten Lapin kesäyliopisto vielä neljäntenä mukana tässä konsortiossa. Ja siinä on.. myös tällänen.. asiakaslähtönen näkökulma et siin on näitten neljän toimijan koulutus paketoitu samaan pakettiin ja lähtökohtana on se että sitä voidaan tuolla.. seutukunnissa.. paikasta ja jossain määrin ajastakin riippumatta sitten ottaa vastaan.

K: Justiin ja todella järkevää.

V: Jjoo.

K: Joo, epäröit vähän onko järkevää niinkö..

V: ..Tietysti kyllä se on ihan järkevää et siit on hyviä kokemuksia saatu. Tällasta.. patoutunutta koulutustarvetta on tuola alueilla, syrjäalueilla kuitenkin olemassa ja täälä on kuitenkin tää koulutuksen tarjonta periaattessa ollu sitä et se on ollu tarjolla lähinnä tässä Rovaniemen seudulla tässä Rovaniemellä ja sitten tuola Meri-Lapissa, Kemissä ja Torniossa mutta tällä maakuntakorkeakoulun menettelyllä sitä on pystytty sitten tonne pienempiinkin seutukuntiin tarjoamaan. Varmaan tässä tää opetusteknologian kehitys kaiken kaikkiaan mahollistanu että tää homma on ollu mahollista. Tietysti tätä henkilöitten liikkumistakin vielä tapahtuu ja varmaan jatko-opinnot on.. edellyttää sitä että joku sielä käy paikan päällä mutta että kaikkea ei tarvi enää tällä perinteisellä luennointimenetel-mällä, luennoitsija paikan päällä tarjota tonne kaukasimpiinkaan seutukuntiin.

K: Kyllä.. Mitä sitten muita tämmösiä aluepalvelujen lisäks niin muita tämmösiä välittäjä-mekanismeja on yliopiston ja alueen välillä että voitas tunnistaa ne alueen tarpeet?

V: No tohon jos sitä maakuntakorkeakouluasiaa purkaa vielä.. palasiin niin siellä on jotta sitten se seutujen koulutustarve tulis esille niin sinne on sitten perustettu tämmöset seutukuntakohtaset yhteistyöelimet että sielä on sitten mukana korkeakoulujen edustajat tavallaan markkinoimassa meiän tarjontaa mutta myös sitten kuulemassa että mikä se kysyntä on siellä alueella. Et alueelta on sitten kuntien ja jossain määrin sitten yritysten taikka yritysten ja järjestöjen edustajia elikkä se on tämmönen kohtaamis- ja keskustelupaikka.. Jos sitten toimielimiä ajattelee niin.. no yliopiston hallituksessahan on nykyään ulkopuolisia jäseniä, sitten meilläkin on tällänen neuvottelukunta, taitaa olla melkein kaikilla muillakin yliopistoilla joissa on sitten sidosryhmien edustajia mukana.

APPENDIX 4

Coding list

SUPERCODES (CODE FAMILIES)
*Commitment
*CSR
*Dialogue
*Innovations
*Political Context
*Problems and Contradictions
*Public Relations
*Regional Context
*Structures and Solutions
*Success Factors
*University

University	Regional Context	Dialogue	Commitment
U: 3rd strand	R: development need	D: advisory board	C: media to university
U: academic freedom	R: employment in	D: alumni	C: region to students
U: achievement	region	D: alumni goal	C: region to university
U: benefit	R: future theme	D: board	C: researchers to region
U: challenge	R: regional challenge	D: business	C: researchers to
U: challenge 3rd strand	R: regional	D: business expectation	university
U: challenge education	characteristics	D: business listening	C: students to region
U: challenge	R: regional cooperation	D: business problem	C: students to society
internationalisation	R: regional development	D: challenge	C: students to university
U: challenge PR	R: regional equality	D: change	C: university to region
U: challenge	R: regional expectation	D: city	C: university to society
prioritisation	R: regional image	D: decision makers	
U: challenge research	R: regional pride	D: equality	
U: change	R: regional relevance	D: goal	
U: comparisons	R: regional strength	D: listening	
U: evaluations	R: regional weakness	D: listening change	
U: funding		D: local universities	
U: historical roots		D: media	
U: image		D: motive	
U: key actors	**Political Context**	D: polytechnics	
U: labour division	P: educational policy	D: polytechnics change	
U: management	P: mergers	D: polytechnics	
U: measure	P: regional strategies	contradiction	
U: mission statement	P: regional universities	D: polytechnics equality	
U: rector	P: threat	D: polytechnics future	
U: rector Kuopio	P: trend	theme	
U: rector Lapland		D: polytechnics goal	
U: rector Turku		D: polytechnics labour	
U: region	**CSR**	division	
U: stakeholder	CSR: implementation	D: polytechnics listening	
U: strategy	CSR: relevance	D: prerequisite	
U: target profile	CSR: responsibility	D: proactive dialogue	
U: values		D: public	
		D: region	
		D: region example	
Public Relations		D: region expectation	
PR: role		D: students	
PR: tool		D: students business	
		D: students example	
		D: students expectation	
		D: students goal	
		D: students listening	

Success Factors
S: attractiveness
S: autonomy
S: balance
S: campus
S: collaboration
S: collaboration scientific community
S: collaboration skills
S: commitment
S: common task
S: competition avoidance
S: continuity
S: critical mass
S: definition
S: development orientation
S: early conversations
S: employment in region
S: entrepreneurship
S: established habits
S: flexibility
S: good arguments
S: have a say
S: high quality
S: honesty
S: innovativeness
S: intellectual property rights
S: interdependency
S: international role
S: internationalisation
S: joy of exploring
S: labour division
S: legitimacy
S: listening
S: mutual benefit
S: mutual initiative
S: mutuality
S: networks
S: Northern location
S: openness
S: patience
S: persistence
S: personal relationships
S: political relationships
S: positive atmosphere
S: preservance
S: prioritisation
S: public relations
S: quality
S: realism
S: regional knowledge
S: regional need
S: regional research
S: regularity
S: relevance
S: reliability
S: resources
S: right stakeholders
S: shared goals

S: shared interests
S: shared needs
S: skills
S: social responsibility
S: structures
S: tradition
S: trust
S: unanimity
S: values
S: vision
S: wide regional support
S: willingness

Problems and Contradictions
PC: academic freedom
PC: access
PC: animal testing
PC: competence
PC: confused organisation
PC: defensiveness
PC: employment
PC: entrepreneurship
PC: flimsy grounds
PC: fraud
PC: gene technology
PC: Helsinki centredness
PC: incoherent messages
PC: intellectual property rights
PC: prioritisation
PC: public-private
PC: quality
PC: regional disagreement
PC: regional expectations
PC: resistance to change
PC: Sami
PC: slow processes
PC: student welfare
PC: uncoordination
PC: university business

Structures and Solutions
SS: advisory board
SS: alumni
SS: Arctic centre
SS: associations
SS: board memberships
SS: chancellor
SS: contact persons
SS: continuing education
SS: external board members
SS: external faculty board members
SS: Finnbarents
SS: governing bodies
SS: ICT building
SS: institutes and organisations
SS: international networks
SS: invitations
SS: IUTÅ
SS: JOO
SS: maakuntakorkeakoulu
SS: MYR
SS: professorship
SS: rectorial meetings
SS: regional services
SS: regular meetings
SS: research services
SS: Russia centre
SS: satellites
SS: science park
SS: SparkNet
SS: stakeholder relations
SS: teams
SS: Teknia
SS: thematic days
SS: TUCS
SS: Turku Science Park
SS: YRVIKE

Innovations, best practices and achievements
I: elämystuotanto
I: maakuntakorkeakoulu
I: neuvottelukunta

APPENDIX 5

Examples on codes, quotations and interpretation

CSR Code	Quotation	Interpretation
Relevance	Se on nyt vähän semmoinen teoreettinen kysymys miettiä ylipäänsä, että mikä se yhteiskuntavastuu on kun ei sitä nyt yliopistojen osalta ole koskaan edes kysytty. [P23:70]	not relevant
	No sehän ei mitään muuta olekaan… pitäähän meidän olla jotakin varten… se on sisäänrakennettu tämä koko yliopiston mieli on tavallaan siinä yhteiskunnallisessa palvelutehtävässä [P16:42]	very relevant
Responsibility	Kyllähän yliopisto on lähinnä vastuussa sille nuorisolle, jota se kouluttaa, että niistä tulee hyviä ja yhteiskuntakelpoisia ihmisiä, että minusta se tulos mitataan siinä. [P21:58]	educational responsibility, stakeholder: students
	Kun valtio rahottaa, valtion kautta tulee tämä rahotus, niin kyllähän tietysti täytyy sen toiminnan olla vastuullista. [P6:98]	shareholder responsibility
	Lainsäädännössä on määritelty, mitkä on ne koulutusalat mitä me voidaan pyörittää ja mitkä tutkimusalat on olemassa niin niitten kanssa me eletään. [P3:90]	minimum responsibility
	Sitä en kyllä ymmärrä, että meidän täytyy antaa ilmaista opetusta ulkolaisille opiskelijoille, se on mun mielestä aivan älytön tilanne. [P5:82]	questionable responsibility
Implementation	Turkulaiset korkeakoulut tukevat osallisuutta ja kasvua aktiiviseen ja demokraattiseen kansalaisuuteen osallistumalla yhteiskunnalliseen keskusteluun, edistämällä kansalaisvaikuttamista vahvistavaa koulutusta ja tutkimusta sekä kehittämällä kansalaisvaikuttamisen kanavia. [P25:329]	Turku: advanced view on CSR