Sofia Lundmark

Designing for Online Youth Counselling

Empowerment through Design and Participation
More and more people are using the internet to access various societal functions. In recent years, municipalities and private enterprises have increasingly begun to explore and develop internet-based services to support public health in general and to disseminate health information in particular. This compilation thesis consists of four articles that explore and provide different perspectives on the design and implementation of new online youth counselling services for public organisations and social services, working with counselling and health information for young people. Ethnographic methods, and materials from two empirical settings, have been used to investigate how aspects of design and participation can serve to empower both potential young users and counsellors as stakeholders in the design projects. An important secondary focus is how mechanisms of empowerment play out in the design of online counselling services targeting young people. The notion of empowerment is addressed in terms of empowerment through design, focusing on normative expectations regarding young people as users of online youth counselling, as well as how to work with norms and norm-critical perspectives in the design and development of user interfaces. Another aspect of empowerment concerns participation, here seeking an increased understanding of the processes, practices and shifting roles involved in engaging professionals and young users as participants in a design project. In order to address these interrelated areas of inquiry, an eclectic theoretical and methodological approach has been used to study design in practice. An ethnomethodological approach unpacks how the participants relate to and reflect upon the design projects under study, highlighting aspects of empowerment and user agency. In addition, a sociocultural perspective on communities of practice and participation is used to increase the understanding of what it means to be a participant in participatory design projects. The findings show how embedded social norms and values have implications for users’ identities as presented in the digital design of online youth counselling services. The findings also reveal ways in which user empowerment is facilitated but also restricted by the design of youth counselling e-services, including not only the designed multimodal features of such services, but also the norms that guide usage. The studies also address the outcomes of technological change and the implementation of sociotechnical systems and services for the professionals involved in design projects. Here the studies provide knowledge about the forms of practical reasoning the counsellors engage in when anticipating work-related issues associated with the new technology and how they might deal with potential challenges. Finally, the findings show how participation in a design project may enable the development of new forms of communities of practice in which the participants and their roles and participation status change as the organisation changes.

Keywords: Empowerment, Participation, Design practice, Participatory design projects, Norm-critical design, Norms in design, Ethnography, Ethnomethodology, Online youth counselling

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ISSN 0347-1314
urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-305367 (http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-305367)
To Martin, Sigurd, Mr & the Lundmark family
List of Papers

This thesis is based on the following papers, which are referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.


IV Lundmark, S. (submitted manuscript). Design project failures: Outcomes and gains of participation in design.

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Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction ................................................................. 15
  Online youth counselling .................................................. 17
  Empowerment through design ............................................ 18
  Empowerment through participation .................................... 18
  Aims and research questions ............................................... 19
  Empirical settings and data ................................................ 21
  An outline of the thesis ....................................................... 22

Chapter 2: Related research .......................................................... 24
  Healthcare and health guidance online ................................... 24
  E-services for youth counselling online ............................... 27
  The practices of the design of services for societal functions .... 30
  Approaches to design, design processes and design thinking .... 31
  Service design and transformative change ........................... 34
  Participatory design approaches in design practice ................ 36
  Contributions to the interrelated research contexts ............... 38

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework .................................................... 40
  Studying design in practice – an ethnomethodological approach ... 41
    Professional reasoning in design practice .......................... 44
  Empowerment and participation in design ........................... 46
    Outcomes of participation and participant roles .................. 49
    Professional practice and communities of practice ............... 50
  Critical perspectives in design ............................................. 53
    Norm-critical efforts in design ....................................... 56
  Empowerment and emancipation ........................................ 58
  Reflections on the theoretical stances ................................. 61

Chapter 4: Empirical setting – Design and development of online youth counselling .................................................. 63
  Youth counselling as a public service .................................... 64
  The development of online youth counselling initiatives .......... 66
  Two empirical settings ....................................................... 68
  Setting 1: UMO.se - The national youth clinic online ............. 68
  Setting 2: Stockholm municipality youth counselling – e-services for young people ........................................... 73
Chapter 5: Methodological approach ................................................................. 77
  Design processes as settings for data collection ........................................... 78
  Meetings as institutional practice ................................................................. 82
    The participatory design meetings in Setting 1 ......................................... 82
    The participatory design meetings in Setting 2 ......................................... 83
  The role of the participant observer .............................................................. 85
  Empirical material ......................................................................................... 86
    Audio and video recordings of meetings ...................................................... 87
    Project material, documentation, design sketches and websites ................. 88
  Analytical procedures – selection and data analysis ..................................... 89
    Representation and transcripts ................................................................... 93
    Website analysis .......................................................................................... 94
  Ethical considerations .................................................................................... 95

Chapter 6: Summary of studies ....................................................................... 98
  Study I – [Reflections on norm-critical design efforts in online youth counselling.] .......................................................... 99
  Study II – [Click-guides and panic buttons: Designed possibilities for youth agency and user empowerment in online youth counselling services] .................................................................................. 100
  Study III – [Analogies in interaction: Practical reasoning and participatory design] .................................................................................. 101
  Study IV – [Design project failures: Outcomes and gains of participation in design] .................................................................................. 102

Chapter 7: Concluding discussion .................................................................. 104
  Empowerment through the design of online youth counselling services ......... 104
    Designing empowering mechanisms ......................................................... 105
    Norm-critical design ................................................................................... 107
  Empowerment through participation in design projects .................................. 109
    Analogical and hypothetical reasoning about future changes ..................... 109
    Transformative participation ....................................................................... 111
  Reflections on the contributions .................................................................. 113

Svensk sammanfattning .................................................................................... 115
  Ungdomsmottagningar online ...................................................................... 115
  Empiriska data ............................................................................................... 116
  Syfte och forskningsfrågor ......................................................................... 118
  Teoretiska och metodologiska utgångspunkter ............................................ 120
  Avhandlingens studier .................................................................................. 122
    Studie I – [Reflections on norm-critical design efforts in online youth counselling] .......................................................... 122
Studie II – [Click-guides and panic buttons: Designed possibilities for youth agency and user empowerment in online youth counselling services] ................................................................. 123
Studie III – [Analogies in interaction: Practical reasoning and participatory design] .............................................................................................................................. 124
Studie IV – [Design project failures: Outcomes and gains of participation in design] ........................................................................................................... 125
Avslutande diskussion .......................................................................................... 126

References ............................................................................................................. 128
Finally, this thesis-book-thingy is finished! For this, I have a lot of people to blame. Without you, I would still be shuffling around a big heap of words and thoughts. So, on to all the thank-yous. The following text is probably the most important part of this book. It feels great to be able to share my love and gratitude to all the people that has made this project possible. I have so many people to thank; those who were there in my life when I needed them, providing help and support, as well as much needed distractions. To try and select a few, just seems impossible, but here we go…

Initially, I would like to thank a number of people with whom I have actively collaborated over the years. Firstly, my eternal gratitude to my supervisor, Ann-Carita Evaldsson, for your continued guidance, support, and encouragement regarding the project at large, fine-tuning the nitty gritty details in the text, and everything else. Thank you for being a great advisor, knowing when to provide direction, and when to let me find my own way. Also, deep thanks to my co-supervisor, Gustav Lymer. In particular, thanks for the collaboration around one of the articles and for your thorough readings of my texts. Thanks also to Pål Aarsand, who was my co-supervisor at the beginning of my PhD studies. A special thank you to Maria Normark and Ulf Larsson, who I collaborated with during the research project that sparked my interest in studying this domain. Maria, I also would like to thank you for being a great co-author of the first study included in my thesis.

Several people have contributed greatly by reading and commenting on my PhD work during the project time. Thank you, Cecilia Löfberg, Katarina Gustafson, Johanna Svahn, Susan Danby, Jakob Tholander, Tanja Joelsson, Leif Östman, and Karin Aronsson who have provided important insights in the various formal seminars and PhD control points. Thank you also to my readers in other research seminars, courses, and discussions: Lucy Suchman, Pia Christensen, Cecilia Åsberg, Brit Ross Winthereik, Renita Sörensdotter, Eva Hjörne, Helen Melander, Cecilia Löfberg, Elin Önnevall and Ulrika Bennerstedt. Thanks to all of you who have been reading and commenting during the final parts of my PhD project. You have all greatly improved the quality of this work! Here, I would especially like to thank Martin Jonsson, Janne Kontio, Minna Räsänen, Fatima Jonsson, Mats Nilsson, and Sophie Landwehr Sydow. Thanks also to John McCarthy, Karin Aronsson, Maria Normark, Sebastian and Siri Lundmark for providing important and insightful input on my final paper. Many thanks to Liz Sourbut for great proofread-
ing in the final stages. Great thanks to Janne Kontio for helping out with the Swedish summary, and to Fatima Jonsson, Martin Jonsson, and Sara Lundmark for helping me with proofreading the Swedish parts of the thesis. A huge thank you Camilla Qvick for designing the cover of this thesis!

I would also like to thank all participants in my studies, the counsellors and the head of the social services, the production company involved in the Stockholm municipality project, and the young people participating in the focus group discussions. Thank you to the participants at UMO.se, the production company Ambient Media, and the student intern involved in the specific design project.

It has also been incredibly valuable to have a group of fellow doctoral students to share experiences and problems with, all providing great support. The warmest thank you, Jonas Risberg, Joacim Andersson, and Anna Lindqvist who I started this journey with many years ago. Thanks to my friends and colleagues Johanna Svaln, Adriana Velasquez, Sofia Grunditz, Anette Hamerslag, Petra Petersen, Tina Walldén Hillström, Gabriella Gejard, Olga Kuvaldina, Emma Abrahamsson, Hassan Sharif, Stina Hallén, and to all other doctoral colleagues I have had the honor to get to know during the course of my PhD project.

Here, I would like to highlight the very best helpers in the whole world, my favorite mentors and allies, Janne Kontio and Anna Lindqvist. Without you two, I would never, ever have been able to do this and it would have been so much more boring. Anna, I am so glad that we bonded more deeply in Uppsala. You are the most caring friend. I am so grateful for everything that we have shared during these years, you are the best armor-bearer, and I am so lucky to know that I have a friend like you by my side in whatever hurdles and bombings we encounter. Janne, you are the best friend one could ever wish for, not only in the academic setting, but in life in general. I will always cherish the memories of our writing retreat at the Bergman Estate in Fårö, where you patiently learnt to love Norwegian death punk music and to listen to the stories of my life. Both of you, my partners in this mess! It is a miracle that you have stood by me during these years, not the least, in the final parts of this project. You are the most awesome persons and I am forever grateful for your support and eternal friendship!

Also, thank you to all other dear colleagues and friends in the CLIP research group and other related groups in Uppsala for providing an inspiring intellectual research environment. My deepest thanks to all of my friends and colleagues at the Media Technology department at Södertörn University for providing a home base and an alternative practice in teaching, which I could turn to whenever the thesis work became too overwhelming. Thanks to all of you! You know who you are, and you know how important you are to me. Thanks also to my friends and colleagues at Openlab.

Then there are a few persons that have supported me more as mentors and advisors. Firstly, I am so grateful for all the support and career advice I have been given from my mentor, Minna Räsänen. A special thanks also to Len-
nart Wikander and Johan Bornebusch, for believing in me and supporting me at the beginning of my PhD studies, and to Ingela Josefsson for supporting me as a practitioner in academia. Finally, thank you to John McCarthy and Lucy Suchman, for being such good role models and sources of inspiration for my academic career, showing me how one can be a humble and kind person and still be a successful academic scholar.

A special thanks to The Bergman Estate on Fårö Foundation for allowing Janne and me to spend some time in the late movie director, Ingmar Bergman’s inspirational environment during the final writing of my thesis.

Thanks to Pokémon Go that was released just at the right time, forcing me out on walks that relieved some of the worst thesis writing anxieties.

Without a doubt, the most important person in all of this, Martin, my partner in crime and the love of my life. Without you, this would have been impossible. You support me at all times, encouraging me like no one else, and I totally love to share this and all other projects with you. You give me the most important insights, always providing new perspectives. If all the other mentions are important and awesome, you are the awesomesauce, and you are the one making me see unicorns all over. There is no one I would ever enjoy discussing these kinds of things with more. You are also the most awesome person in the whole world of academics. I owe you forever, and love you so, so much!

Sigurd, you are the most influential and perception-widening person in the world, constantly reminding me about what is important and what is not. You will not be able to read this just yet, but I adore you and you inspire me so much by just being the one you are <3. This goes also for Mr, my all-time partner. It is so much better to write a thesis with a cat laying on the computer, I promise you!

Finally, a love bomb to all of my friends and family. I am so grateful for your support and hejarop! My family, the Lundmark’s, you are the best support one could wish for. Mamma Guje, Pappa Oskar, Siri, Sebastian, Sara, Mormor Gertrud, Roffe, Stefan, Sindre, Martina, Gunvor, Sven, Nora, Pi, Viper, Matisse, Zabu, Nino, Nori, and all of you at Rökällehagen. Thank you for everything! All the chaos, arguing, and unlimited love and support constitutes the fertile soil from which my life and this work have grown. Also, thank you to my family-in-law, Alba, Alfons, Gun, Per, Jonn, Linda, Elis, and Chico. I would also like to thank my beloved friends who have been sadly forsaken due to this work. Here I would especially like to mention a few of you - my most essential extended family that I know that I torture more than others: Jenny, Fredrik, Martin, Kathleen, Moa, Fatima, Johan, and the Ljungkvist family. Sorry for my absence, I promise that I will be more present now!

*Sofia Lundmark*

Örnsberg, October 2016
Chapter 1: Introduction

More and more people are using the internet to access societal functions and communicate with municipalities and county councils (see Findahl & Davidsson, 2015). One societal function for which the shift to a digital arena is particularly apparent, is the healthcare sector, where internet-based services offer information and advice on self-care. In recent years, municipalities and private enterprises have increasingly begun to explore and develop internet-based services, or e-health, to support public health in general and the dissemination of health information in particular (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011; Granholm, 2016; Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003; Lundmark & Normark, 2014). There are several factors motivating these new initiatives. The internet is considered to be a cost-effective way to provide healthcare for minor health issues. E-health services are also considered to support patient emancipation, which is a stated objective of the healthcare system in Sweden (cf. Johannesson & Holmlid, 2013; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). In this thesis, I will mainly address issues that relate to the emancipatory aspects of the implementation of online services for healthcare and health guidance.

The data that I have used is drawn from the domain of designing health services for young people and, more specifically, for online youth counselling. In Sweden, youth counselling refers to a service provided at youth clinics or youth guidance centres that aims to support, help and guide young people aged 12–25 years who are in need of guidance regarding issues such as the body, sex, or contraceptives, or need someone to talk to (FSUM, 2002; 2016). The thesis consists of empirical studies focusing on the design and implementation of new online services for public organisations and social services working with counselling and health information for young people.

As will be highlighted, the design of online youth counselling services brings to the fore a delicate, value-laden and norm-sensitive domain. For example, the design of online services targeting young people as users in the area of youth counselling, means that a range of challenges need to be addressed both in the design of the products and artefacts, and in the process of designing. Significantly, this specific domain also involves power relations with respect to the young people who are the targets audience of the proposed new services. These power relations concern aspects of young peoples’ role in society at large, as well as social norms that come into play during encounters with healthcare services and the online artefacts through which these services are manifested. Power relations also affect the agency
of the stakeholders involved in the design process, and the ways in which they are able to affect the outcome of the new services. These issues are especially significant when representatives of young people as well as counsellors are invited to participate and become central participants in the design process.

The data used in this thesis was gathered in two separate settings concerned with the design and development of health-related online services for youth counselling. In both settings, the participatory design projects involved young people and counsellors as participants and stakeholders. An overall aim is to explore how the young people and the participating counsellors may become empowered, both as participants in the design process and in the design of the final services. This is done, not by studying the work of designers, but by exploring the perspectives of prospective users who in various ways are affected by the design. These are, on the one hand, the young people seeking advice and counselling and, on the other hand, the counsellors working with young people, whose work practices are affected by the new online services. The properties of the designed artefacts and products are also examined because designed products are potentially vehicles for empowerment. As a consequence, this work also raises issues about how emancipatory and norm-critical efforts are manifested in the properties of the final design. In particular, notions of empowerment, in terms of issues concerning, for example, participation, representation, power and control have been central in this thesis. The overall aim is to unpack the ways in which the young people and the participating counsellors may be empowered in the particular design processes. For this purpose, the term empowerment will be defined in a broad and open-ended way as the giving or delegation of power, authority and/or enablement (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010). This emphasises the enabling of people to make their own decisions, and to participate in societal processes (Alpay et al., 2004; Emmison, Butler & Danby, 2011; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). Empowerment can be understood as implying a normative positive understanding. In this thesis, however, it will be treated as a complex and challenging term, and not only as associated with positive results of participation by users and stakeholders (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010). Rather, empowerment will be used as a resource to investigate certain aspects of power and emancipation in design, where it is approached with an awareness of its social and discursive aspects in the specific situations and practices.

The empirical studies will be formulated around two parallel areas of inquiry involving the interplay between empowerment and participation as situated in practice. Firstly, I explore what is referred to as empowerment through design and how the interests and perspectives of the targeted young people are taken into account through, for example, norm-critical design efforts, and how these are reflected in specific functions and properties in the design of the final services. Secondly, I explore empowerment through participation; that is, how representatives of the youth target group, as well as
the counsellors involved, act as participants in the design projects, with respect to how their experiences and knowledge are integrated into the design process. In addition, I consider what it means to be a participant in a design project and how the counsellors’ participation (including their roles and positions) may change as new forms of practice develop.

Studying the design process by examining these two interrelated issues highlights both normative expectations regarding young people as users of online youth counselling and how to work with norms and norm-critical efforts in the design and development of user interfaces. Other issues concern how the professional practice of the stakeholders involved in the projects revolves around learning and knowledge production in the design activity. In this sense, this thesis contributes to different interrelated research areas, such as research on participation and participatory design, the design of health services online, and ideas of empowerment within design. The contributions made will be outlined below and developed in depth in the four empirical studies (Studies I, II, III and IV).

Online youth counselling

This thesis extends previous research on internet-based healthcare (e-health) by focusing on a specific type of service; namely, online services for youth counselling. In Sweden there are several projects aimed at young people in need of healthcare, health guidance and support of different kinds (Löfberg & Aspán, 2011, 2013; Sjukvårdsrådgivningen, 2007c). Youth counselling is a type of service that is commonly provided by various non-profit institutions such as municipalities, county councils or other actors in the healthcare sector. The main everyday work tasks for youth clinics are to give young people advice about sex and relationships, prescribe contraception, perform gynaecological examinations, and offer counselling meetings. In this context, the online service for youth counselling is intended to function as an alternative means of communication with clients, in addition to the existing telephone and face-to-face contacts (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011; Harris et al., 2012).

The effects of the shift towards digital and online services for youth counselling align with the effects of the digitalisation of health services in general. This shift changes the way in which people encounter healthcare in profound ways, from communication with a real person, either face-to-face at the healthcare centre or through telephone services, towards more generic self-diagnosing and information gathering (see Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003).

Previous research in the area has demonstrated various challenges concerning the development and implementation of online health services, and how these processes impact upon organisations, as well as how the infor-
mation provided for clients and target groups is perceived. Several studies focus on how services are delivered and used (Danby & Emmison, 2014; Harris et al., 2012; Löfberg & Aspán, 2011; Stommel & te Molder, 2015). Alongside concerns related to usability and user experiences of the actual services, this also raises issues connected to power and emancipation, as well as potential medical consequences (Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). What has been lacking in research into online youth counselling are studies exploring the design processes of these services and studies that take technology into account and examine social aspects in relation to technology. This thesis adds to the understanding of existing design practices, which mainly aim to improve the online health guidance and counselling provided for young people, by instead exploring in detail specific challenges that are dealt with in designing for the online youth counselling domain.

Empowerment through design
In the context of the design and development of online youth counselling with young people as a specific target group, issues concerning power, empowerment and emancipation become of special importance. Designing a service that can reach a diverse group of users with various experiences, identities, and backgrounds poses certain challenges for the development and design processes. Even though the e-services provided for young people may be interpreted and used by them in various ways, the interface design is often developed with the intention of facilitating a specific understanding of the content provided through the service (Lundmark & Normark, 2014; Löfberg & Aspán, 2011; 2013). Here, it is particularly important to unpack normative expectations concerning gender, sexuality, diversity, functionality, and age (cf. Butler, 2004; Kumashiro, 2002) in order to understand the various interpretations of the services and how their design incorporates specific values. In this thesis, particular care has been taken to understand the normative expectations embedded in the design in order to highlight the ways in which practitioners, and especially those working in the practice of youth counselling, often deal with subjects that can be interpreted as sensitive and private with respect to, for example, personal health issues for young people.

Empowerment through participation
The projects examined in this thesis can be characterised as participatory design projects (Halskov & Hansen, 2015; McCarthy & Wright, 2015), in that various stakeholders such as counsellors and young people from the core organisations were invited to participate and shape the outcomes of the pro-
ject. Participatory design (or PD) normally refers to a specific development approach often referred to as the Scandinavian approach to systems design, originating in the Scandinavian workplace democracy movement of the 1980s (Björgvinsson, Ehn & Hillgren, 2012; Büscher et al., 2002; Ehn & Kyng, 1987; Ehn, 1992; Muller & Druin, 2012; Robertson & Simonsen, 2012; Sanoff, 2007). A core idea behind PD projects is that those affected by a design should have a say in the design process and that the ambition should be to ensure that already existing skills are available as possible resources in the design process (Björgvinsson, Ehn & Hillgren, 2012). In line with several of these studies, which reflect on user involvement and participants’ perspective, this thesis is concerned with the values of participatory design processes and their implications for project participants. The empirical studies contribute to the existing research on participation in design processes (Halskov & Hansen, 2015; McCarthy & Wright, 2015; Saad-Sulonen et al., 2015; Vines et al., 2015) by focusing on both the participants’ involvement in preparing the organisation for change, and the outcomes of user participation in design projects. When referring to participants and users in this study, I am thinking mainly of the young potential users of the services and the counsellors involved in the projects as professional practitioners. The project management actors and other stakeholders involved in the projects are also occasionally included in the term stakeholders.

Participatory design is an extensively researched domain, mainly focusing on how the participatory design approach empowers the participants who are invited to contribute to the project. This thesis extends this research by providing detailed accounts of what it means to be a participant in a participatory design project. For instance, how does the role and position of a participant in a design project interact with the participant’s original professional role in the organisation, and how do such roles develop during the course of a project? Exploring the participants’ and/or members’ perspectives also made it possible to examine the ways in which a design process within an organisation can lead to organisational change and transformative processes in terms of the formation of new roles and new communities of practice. Other related questions concern the outcomes of a design project when it comes to an end.

Aims and research questions

The overall aim of this thesis is to investigate how aspects of design and participation can serve to empower young people as potential users of services, as well as counsellors as professional stakeholders, and how these mechanisms of empowerment play out in the design of online counselling services targeting young people.
More specifically, the mechanisms of empowerment that I focus upon concern, firstly, **empowerment through design.** This involves normative expectations about young people as users of online youth counselling and how to work with norms and norm-critical perspectives in the design and development of user interfaces. The other aspect of empowerment concerns **participation,** and here I am aiming for an analysis of the processes, practices, and shifting roles involved in engaging professionals and young people as participants in a design project.

In order to address these issues, I developed a set of more specific research questions:

**How are young people empowered through the design of online health services?**
- How are normative expectations embedded within elements of design and user interfaces? What forms of normative expectations are made visible and addressed through norm-critical efforts?
- How are empowering strategies manifested in the design of online services for youth counselling? What actions are made possible for young users?

**How can participation in design projects serve to empower young people and healthcare professionals?**
- How do counsellors as participants in a design process prepare themselves and their organisation for future changes related to the implementation of technical systems and services in their professional practice?
- How can participatory design projects be understood in terms of transformative processes, learning and organisational change? How does this affect the positions and roles of the participants?

These questions are addressed in four separate studies that each focus on a specific research question. Study I addresses the social norms and values embedded in the design of online youth counselling and the implications of norms for users’ identities as presented in digital designs. In this study, the norm-critical efforts made by the participants in their roles as designers and developers are studied in order to critically examine the relevance of these efforts for the specific target group of young people who will potentially use the services. Study II deals with the ways in which user empowerment is both facilitated and restricted by the design of youth counselling e-services. This includes not only the designed multimodal features of such services but also the norms that guide their usage. The ways in which the e-services are designed to provide opportunities for young users to be actively involved in them and to seek information within them are also examined in this study.
Study III addresses the contingencies of technological change and the implementation of sociotechnical services for the professionals involved in these design projects. This study provides knowledge about the forms of practical reasoning in which the counsellors are engaged when anticipating work-related issues associated with the new technology and how they might deal with potential challenges. Study IV focuses on participation in a design project as a form of community of practice, in which the participants and their roles and participation status change as the organisation changes. This study investigates the secondary outcomes of participation in design projects, and how the participating counsellors make sense of their experiences and develop new skills and knowledge that lead to their roles and work practices changing over time.

**Empirical settings and data**

This thesis is based on material that draws from two empirical settings in the form of design projects with the common aim of developing health-related online services targeting young people. The two settings are: the national youth clinics website, called UMO.se (Setting 1), and an e-service design project for online youth counselling in a municipality in Sweden (Setting 2).

The first setting is based on a design project at UMO.se, which is the Swedish national youth clinic website for young people aged 13 to 25 (UMO.se, 2014). It is an information-based website that provides counselling on a wide range of issues regarded as important for young people’s health, such as: the body, love, friendship, sexuality, sex, family, drinking, smoking, drugs, self-esteem, and depression. The site is designed to empower young users to find answers to their own questions or concerns as well as to post questions for either UMO.se or youth clinic workers to answer online (UMO.se, 2014). The website has been developed in co-operation with young people, youth clinics, school health services, non-governmental organisations and professionals who work with young people. In the context of the UMO.se project, I conducted an ethnographic single-case study of a design project with the aim of redesigning an animation about love that had been published on UMO.se. I also studied the overall website and the specific functions and multimodal features available on it. By using data from the UMO.se setting, I was able to gain knowledge about some of the challenges of designing for the specific domain of online youth counselling, targeting young people as a main group. Designing for this context involves normative expectations concerning young people’s agency and empowerment, but also local normative understandings about how to navigate and interact as a user within a specific system. I have addressed each of these aspects in separate studies (Studies I and II).
The second setting is based within a design and development project to design an e-service for youth counselling in Stockholm municipality targeting young people aged 12 to 25. The aim of this project was to design a space for online youth counselling as an e-service. During the design project, specific actors, including designers, a production company, the municipality, counsellors working in youth clinics, and young people, were involved in the production process. The project continued for three years and the web and e-service was launched at the end of 2013. Within this context, I conducted a long-term ethnographic study following the whole design process throughout the three years from the initiation of the project to the launching of the e-service. Following a design process for such a long period of time created opportunities for me to address questions related to organisational change. Within this setting, I also studied the overall website and e-service. Drawing on data from a longitudinal study of the design project made it possible to gain a broad understanding of the practices and processes of participation in an organisation involved in a participatory design project. Data from this longitudinal study also enabled me to gain knowledge about the specific challenges in designing for the domain of online youth counselling.

The separate studies draw upon empirical data from the two separate settings, in order to provide a broad understanding of the design practice and development of e-services for online youth counselling. During a period that extended over three years, I used ethnographic methods such as participant observations and audio and video recordings as well as collecting other types of materials, such as digital and physical resources. The data consists primarily of audio and video recordings of meetings held during the design projects. In addition, the data consist of artefacts and outcomes of the design processes, such as various forms of documentation, visuals, sketches, and illustrations, as well as the websites and services developed during the projects. This kind of eclectic empirical material has made it possible to focus on both aspects of empowerment within the design process, and the artefacts and final products and services.

An outline of the thesis

This is a compilation thesis consisting of an extended introduction and four separate studies presented in four articles. The introductory part should be seen as a way of framing the readings of the studies, and it is organised into seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the aims of the thesis and briefly presents the framework and setting for the empirical studies. The next chapter constitutes an overview of previous research in the areas of healthcare and health guidance that are of relevance to the present thesis. The third chapter introduces the empirical setting and the domain of youth counselling in general and online youth counselling in particular. The fourth chapter
offers an introduction to the theoretical frameworks of importance for the studies. Chapter Five then sets out the methods and methodological basis of this thesis. An outline of my research procedures, i.e. how data was gathered and how the data is represented in the text, is also presented in this chapter, along with a discussion of how the data was selected and analysed. Specific ethical considerations related to the data collections are also discussed in the fifth chapter. In Chapter Six, the four empirical studies are outlined and their main findings are presented. This summary of the studies is followed in Chapter Seven by a discussion of the research findings, which concludes the introductory part of the thesis. The second, core part of the thesis consists of four empirical studies in the form of scientific articles.
Chapter 2: Related research

This chapter situates the thesis in contemporary research, ranging from related research on different aspects of ICT in healthcare, to research that focuses more generally on design and development processes; for example, in terms of service design and participatory design. These areas will be introduced to provide an overview of the research fields of relevance to this thesis and how the thesis in turn contributes to the interrelated research contexts. In the first part of this chapter, I will specifically target research of relevance to the domain of online youth counselling, as grounded in the broader area of healthcare and health guidance online. In the second part, I discuss research on design, design processes and practices, and particularly research concerned with participatory design projects and the design of public services. Concepts and definitions relating to design practice of more specific relevance to any of the four empirical studies will also be discussed separately. Finally, I consider the interrelated research areas in relation to each other, and the chapter concludes with some clarifications on how the thesis contributes to the research context at hand.

Healthcare and health guidance online

In this section, I position the specific setting of online youth counselling within the broader context and situated practice of online healthcare, health guidance and social work. Public welfare institutions have been subject to a number of changes and implementations of new infrastructure and assessment procedures during recent decades (Forsell & Ivarsson Westerberg, 2014; Hall & Slembruck, 2007; Mäkitalo, 2012). Within the area of healthcare and health guidance, there has been extensive development of information and communication technologies (ICT), and these have had a widespread influence on the organisation of healthcare, professional practices and patients’ experiences of illness and its management (Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003). The deployment of new technologies also has consequences for welfare, public health and social services (Daneback & Sorbring, 2016; Granholm, 2016). The development and implementation of digital technologies and standardisation processes in healthcare and social-work organisations have been justified by the fact that professionals need to be “more accountable for their practice, institutional resources should be used
more efficiently and accurately, and service providers should allow the users to participate in the intervention processes” (Mäkitalo, 2012, p. 72). However, the idea of new public management, client-centred models, and ambitions to re-establish confidence in the welfare system could be seen as among the most prominent justifications for the development of new services (cf. Hall & Slembrouck, 2007; Forsell & Ivarsson Westerberg, 2014; Mäkitalo, 2012).

Another common argument is that online services can support patient emancipation (Johannesson & Holmlid, 2013; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). Yet another reason for providing healthcare online is that people are already searching for information about health-related issues on their own on the internet. Providing official medical information can be a useful counterbalance to potentially misleading and erroneous information provided by non-experts.

A substantial number of studies have been conducted in the domain of healthcare and health guidance online (see Balka, Bjorn & Wagner, 2006; Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003; Stiller 2010). The dominant body of research in this field has adopted a quantitative and statistical approach (Andreassen et al., 2007; Fung et al., 2006; Thompson et al., 2008). Researchers have also examined issues of accessibility and the use of e-services with reference to specific social groups, such as senior citizens (Stiller 2010), showing how adoption, use and the impact of ICT to gain access to digital health records can be used as a tool to improve information literacy and informed decision making. Another theme is the development of guidelines for designing healthcare e-services (von Niman et al., 2007) – for instance, classification systems according to human factors (such as trust, user interaction, and service aspects). Projects in the area of human–computer interaction (HCI) have also encouraged people to become engaged in reflecting upon their behaviour and emotional reactions regarding health-related issues (see Sanches, 2015; Ståhl, 2014). Studies have also shown how technologies may act as support for reflection on one’s own health and how interaction and interface design can support this reflection (Höök et al., 2015). These studies often draw on an empowering agenda, which is also of relevance in studies on the use and design of online services for healthcare and health guidance.

The shift from communicating with a real person, either face to face at the healthcare centre or through telephone services, towards more generic self-diagnosis and information acquisition raises a number of questions. Apart from the variation in user experiences, there are a number of issues related to, for example, power, emancipation and empowerment as well as medical consequences that arise due to this kind of self-diagnosis. In many cases, ICT has become a tool for empowering patients and clients of all ages, particularly in the fields of health communication and health guidance (see Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). Introducing ICT in the area of health communication has led to a transformation in the relationship between professionals and patients. One overall aim can be seen as educating individuals to active-
ly monitor and influence their own situations for the sake of better outcomes, lower costs and higher levels of satisfaction among patients or clients (Alpay et al., 2004; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). According to Johannsen and Kensing (2005), the step out of healthcare centres into the online context suggests that patients, users, or citizens become more critical and expect less accurate medical advice. I will expand further on the issues addressed here concerning ICT as a tool for empowering specific user groups and issues related to power, emancipation, and empowerment when implementing this kind of services in the individual empirical studies.

Several studies have been conducted over the past few decades on the use and design of e-services in the health sector; e-services on a broader scale have existed for about 15 to 20 years. Since then, research related to these services has also focused on healthcare and health guidance. The ways in which systems, tools and/or artefacts come to feature in communities of socially organised practice and reasoning in professional work-related settings in the medical and health arena have been studied from diverse perspectives. Several of these studies focus on ICT and aspects concerning dehumanisation and emotional labour, professional practice and identity, and the social and institutional shaping of technology (Health, Luff & Svensson, 2003).

Healthcare organisations have been transformed by, for example, the digitalisation of medical records and institutional data along with access to healthcare and the very consultation itself through various online services (Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003). There is also a growing number of workplace studies concerned with tools and technologies in healthcare settings, such as information-seeking processes for breast-cancer patients and digital records and equipment used in medical practice (see, for example, Balka, Bjorn & Wagner, 2006; Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003). These studies are primarily concerned with the ways in which ethnography may inform thinking about the design and deployment of new technologies (Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003). Research on children and young people’s ways of making use of health information online is not as common as research concerning adults and their relation to information technologies.

Research on the type of online counselling projects that are the focus of this thesis has emerged only in the last ten to 15 years. In many cases, such research questions the possibility of providing medical and healthcare services online without losing trustworthiness or authority (Wilson, 2003). Online counselling as a type of therapeutic interaction with professionals and clients includes a variety of communication channels (see Harris et al., 2012), which have all been studied from various perspectives useful for research on online counselling. A common focus of research exploring design processes and healthcare information is on the ways in which the implementation of new technologies, such as electronic patient records (Velupillai, 2012), unfolds and what the implications of these technological innovations might be. Another prevalent research area is concerned with the possibilities,
problems, and dilemmas connected to the practice of social work and the relationships between clients and professionals (Daneback & Sorbring, 2016). This research area also includes studies that chart clients’ and counsellors’ attitudes to distance counselling as an online service for youth counselling (Centore & Millaci, 2008; Granberg, 2010).

The implementation of video-mediated meetings for distance youth counselling has been explored by initiatives for counselling practice and social work (e.g. Granberg, 2010). When examining a service for youth counselling online, Granberg (2010) found that a video-mediated service seemed to offer well-functioning cooperation between client and counsellor, but that affective efforts were negatively influenced. The participants, both on the counselling and the client side, experienced counselling meetings performed through video-calls as very positive for their treatment and support. The use of this technology tended to bridge the gap between professionals and clients. The clients also described positive effects of being able to conduct the counselling meeting in a safe environment, such as their own home (Granberg, 2010).

Studies evaluating the technology used for meetings have also shown how the use of various types of equipment enable a range of mediated communication services for people in their work and/or enable them to be together at a distance (e.g. Räsänen, 2007; Räsänen et al., 2010). This is something that the young people as clients also describe in my study of youth counselling initiatives of mediated meetings (Study II). Centore & Millaci (2008) found that mental health professionals’ ratings of video-mediated counselling were equal to, or even better than, those of face-to-face counselling (although very few used video in their regular practice). In sum, attitudinal studies have revealed both benefits and drawbacks connected to the use of video-mediated counselling, while observational studies have provided evidence of how the conversational and interactional challenges of e-counselling play out in practice. In this thesis, one of the separate studies is particularly concerned with the outcomes and effects of implementing video-mediated services for online counselling interaction (Study III). In this particular study (Study III), we demonstrate how the participants prepare themselves for specific problems and circumstances relating to the introduction of video-mediated youth counselling as they engage in professional reasoning, and how this affects their work practices.

E-services for youth counselling online

Digital media form an integral part of young people’s sociality and constitute a pervasive feature of how they seek information and entertain themselves in their everyday lives (e.g. Boonaert and Vettenburg, 2011; boyd, 2014; Jenkins, Ito & boyd, 2015; Lindqvist Bergander, 2015). This development is
also important for services directed towards young users. The upsurge in the digital media landscape has in turn led to a rethinking by societal institutions of how young people access information and navigate through digital media as clients, patients, or users (see Alpay et al., 2004). Introducing a framework called ‘blended social work’, Granholm (2016) examines the intersection between social work and ICT, and the consequences, opportunities, and risks of implementing ICT as a part of future social-work practice. Further, Granholm (2016) examines the role of ICT in current social-work practice and shows that young people use it as a source of social support and empowerment, and as an arena for participation. However, research on healthcare and health guidance online directed towards children and young people has mainly focused on evaluations of these initiatives, although some studies have considered the general use and content of specific services (see Löfberg & Aspán, 2011; 2013). By examining both the design of online youth counselling services, and how young people involved as participants discuss potential future uses of the services within the design projects, this thesis adds to previous research.

The availability of online resources targeting youth counselling and guidance has increased during the last few years (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2009; Harris et al., 2012; Stommel & te Molder, 2015). This has led to an increased research interest in these kinds of services, and several related studies about support and guidance for young people on the internet (Danby & Emmison, 2014; Daneback & Sorbring, 2016; Harris et al., 2012; King et al., 2006; Löfberg & Aspán, 2013; Weatherall et al., 2016). More specifically, research concerned with the actual online counselling sessions has provided important input to this thesis (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2009; Danby & Emmison, 2014; Harris et al., 2012; Stommel & te Molder, 2015), as will be discussed in more detail later. Previous studies of online counselling services targeting young people have shown that young users prefer online support to more traditional support (Daneback & Sorbring, 2016), and that they prefer support from informal contacts rather than professionals (King et al., 2006). Building on observational data, a number of studies have examined actual use of online youth counselling services (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2009; Harris et al., 2002; Lamerichs & Stommel, 2016; Stommel & van der Houwen, 2013; Stommel & te Molder, 2015).

In previous research, Danby, Butler and Emmison (2009) and Harris et al. (2012) examined written online counselling, such as chat and e-mail, in comparison to telephone and face-to-face counselling. Danby, Butler and Emmison (2009) demonstrate, for instance, that instant messaging poses a number of challenges to the professional interactional practice of ‘active listening’ (cf. Hutchby, 2005, p. 307) when conducted online. Harris et al. (2012) studied instances where counsellors in interaction with clients proposed shifts in medium from written online counselling such as e-mail to verbal counselling over the telephone. These shifts tend to be built on multi-
layered strategies pursued by the counsellors, as they negotiated the task of requesting and persuading a client to change the trajectory of the counselling interaction from text to talk, without simultaneously jeopardising their professional relationship. Drawing on conversation analysis, they focus on issues such as counsellors’ responses to clients’ problems in opening sequences (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2009), counsellors’ requests for clients to contact them in various ways (Harris et al., 2012), interactional strategies in determining authenticity (Emmison & Danby, 2007), and the inferential and sequential resources involved in pranking within counselling services (Weatherall et al., 2016). Other studies examine clients’ complaints about online counselling and counsellors’ responses to these complaints (Stommel & Van Der Houwen, 2014), and closings in counselling over the phone and online (Stommel & te Molder, 2015). This thesis adds to these previous studies; for example, in Study III, we show that the counsellors have similar concerns relating to the shift of medium, with respect to such things as means of contact, ‘dirty calls’, and who has the power to end the sessions.

Other studies of youth counselling helplines have also shown that young people in problematic situations turn to teachers and counsellors for support when they can be anonymous (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011). Also, a Swedish context has been studied from the same perspective showing that young users try to find ways of dealing with the issues that they present to the supporting agencies (Osvaldsson, 2011). Bambling et al. (2008) found that the main benefit of the online environment experienced by counsellors was emotional safety, resulting from the reduced emotional proximity between client and counsellor. This, along with the absence of non-verbal cues, also reportedly had the effect, however, of causing communication problems and difficulties in accurately assessing clients’ concerns (Bambling et al., 2008). Furthermore, studies show that young people found the internet appealing for support and guidance regarding health issues because it is an accessible and anonymous method for seeking help (Daneback & Sorbring, 2016; Granholm, 2016; Löfberg & Aspán, 2011; 2013). In a survey study of young people and sexuality, the young people highlighted that accessible clinics were an important prerequisite for the prevention work performed by youth counselling initiatives (Forsberg, 2011).

This overview of relevant research has identified studies on aspects of novel internet-based services in the healthcare sector, and more specifically services concerning counselling and guidance in social services. This thesis adds to the growing number of studies concerning this type of e-services for healthcare, health guidance and social work, by more specifically studying the design of online counselling services aimed at young people. The majority of the related studies mentioned here focus on the properties and usage of these services; this thesis, however, illuminates how these new services come into existence through design processes that take place within the con-
text of existing counselling organisations with established professional practices and practitioners.

By explicitly focusing on the design processes of new e-services for youth counselling within an organisational context with project participants, this thesis will provide insights into: a) aspects and mechanisms of empowerment in the design of the new services, grounded in the perspectives of young people and counsellors (Studies I and II), and b) how these transformative design processes are experienced in terms of empowerment and participation from the perspective of the participating counsellors (Studies III and IV).

The practices of the design of services for societal functions

So far, I have discussed how relevant research focuses on the healthcare and youth counselling sectors, as well as how these sectors are affected by new technology and online services. In this and the following sections, I will expand upon another set of relevant research, focusing on the professional practices of design, and the methods and approaches employed in designing new services within this particular domain. As already mentioned, the design of systems and services for the public sector and societal functions has been of interest in several research fields (Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2013; Hall & Slembrouck, 2007; Johannesson & Holmlid, 2015; Stickdorn & Scheneider, 2010). This interest is also influenced by new public management and client-centred models, especially in the implementation of infrastructure for public welfare systems (cf. Hall & Slembrouck, 2007; Mäkitalo, 2012). The aim of these strategies, at least on a national level, is to show how the public sector can be a pioneer in service innovation based on design methods. But also, they seek to explore how to spread the experience of these efforts to business and civil society organisations, and to enhance the ability to develop new and better services based on user needs and requirements (Johannesson & Holmlid, 2015).

It is not unusual to engage various actors and stakeholders in the design process (McCarthy & Wright, 2015; Stickdorn & Scheneider, 2010), and this has become increasingly common in many societal contexts, such as community/urban planning (Toker, 2007) or democratic and political processes (Johannesson & Holmlid, 2013; Mondada, 2015). Perhaps it is most prominent in the domains of IT-related development projects (Halskov & Hansen, 2015; Muller & Druin, 2012). User or stakeholder participation in design and development projects is often justified in terms of offering the opportunity for diverse actors to become involved in changes to their own environment, or as a means of informing design, based on an understanding of the user’s
perspective. In line with this and the overall aim of bringing value to the public sector by contributing to the development of more user-friendly services and human-centred technology (Design Council, 2013), the involvement of actors and organisations in the design process is highlighted as an important aspect of creating new solutions for society. In this thesis, I investigate in more detail how the design projects in the studied settings actively work with user participation. In this context, the intended users and stakeholders (such as counsellors and young people as representatives of the client group) are engaged in the design and development of both the service itself, and of new organisational routines, policies, and practices (see Studies III and IV).

User participation has also been central in previous research on the design process of public services (Sangiorgi, 2011; Thackara, 2006) and public institutions (Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2013), such as e-services in municipalities and the public sector (Cottam & Leadbeater, 2004; Shapiro, 2005), and online health services (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011; Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003). The tradition of human-centred design and development can be traced back to the 1980s and participatory design (Halskov & Hansen, 2015) and co-design approaches (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). It has been further developed in more recent approaches focusing more on organisational change, such as design thinking (Brown, 2009; Brown & Wyatt, 2010), service design (Johannesson & Holmlid, 2013), and transformation design (Sangiorgi, 2011). In what follows, I will discuss these design approaches in relation to previous research on those areas, but first I will provide accounts of more general definitions and approaches to design, design processes and practices of importance to the aims and research questions of this thesis.

Approaches to design, design processes and design thinking

This thesis is concerned with the design and implementation of online services for public organisations that provide health information for young people. Therefore, an important starting point is to try to understand how design and design processes are approached in projects that aim to create new online youth counselling services, and to generate knowledge on these specific design practices. The terms design and design practice are central to this thesis and are used repeatedly in the text. Given that these are well-defined concepts for which there are several definitions, this section aims to outline a general overview of how these concepts are approached in related research areas, as well as giving an account of how they are to be understood in the context of this thesis. Thus, specific approaches to design practice will
be outlined in the following, with regard to both previous research and how they are used and adopted in the research reported in this thesis.

The notion of design should here be understood as both a transformative practice, and the final form of products and artefacts. It is important to understand that design practice is said to be in the middle of a paradigm shift when looking at the design practices examined in this thesis. From being associated mainly with products and the shaping of products, design is increasingly being understood as one of the central processes in change, innovation, and organisational development (Buchanan, 2001; Johannesson & Holmlid, 2013; Krippendorf, 2006). Design in its most generic sense, however, goes far back in human history. The urge to design, in the sense of considering a situation, imagining a better situation and acting to create that improved situation, can be said to have already found expression in early forms of toolmaking, which was an important aspect of human development. The word design means many things today, and there is an on-going discussion about how to define it, as it seems to be a complex and contested term. For example, design is used for describing products, services, systems, communication, strategies, environments, and as a force for change (Sangiorgi, 2011). A common factor that connects the various meanings, however, is service, and the idea that designers are engaged in a service profession in which the results of their work meet human needs (Friedman & Stolterman, 2015). As Friedman and Stolterman put it, “Today, we design large, complex processes, systems, and services, and we design organizations and structures to produce them. Design has changed considerably since our remote ancestors made the first stone tool” (2015, p. X).

An important starting point for this thesis has been to approach design as a resource for change and transformative work, as well as the design of products and artefacts. Consequently, the well-cited definition of design by Herbert Simon, that it means to “[devise] courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones” (Simon, 1982, p. 129) is still relevant. This definition covers nearly all instances of the design concept but also raises some questions. For example, to go from one state to a preferred one indicates that there might be a specific preferred state that it is possible to create. With the design approach of creating something better than that which currently exists, comes the responsibility for imagining this potential preferred state. Firstly, this vision is based on particular understandings of a specific state; secondly, it is applicable to reflecting on whose vision is taken into account; and, thirdly, in asking in what respect the new designed state is better than the existing one (see Mörtberg, 2003; Suchman, 2002).

Considering these questions, the complexity of Simon’s (1982; 1996) seemingly simple definition becomes apparent. Although the changing of existing situations into preferred ones may be the aim of many ‘designerly’ actions and the main definition of the design concept (Cross, 2006), one could argue that this definition must include more than that. For example, it
has been argued that there are ‘no designs from nowhere’ (Haraway, 1991; Suchman, 2002, p. 95), and that context, relations, and situations are essential parts of design that need to be taken into account (Fällman, 2008; Suchman, 2007). This implies that design should be seen as a relational concept, dependent on the surroundings and the society within which it is present and performed.

Much previous research has emphasised an approach to design and technological artefacts, as it is developed and constructed in social and cultural contexts (Baym, 2010; Suchman, 2007). From a social constructivist perspective, the focus on how social forces influence the invention of new technologies (Bijker & Law, 1992), and their development and construction in social and cultural contexts, is the main focus when discussing design, technology, and artefacts. However, when bringing context, society, and cultural structures into the understanding of design (Suchman, 2002), it becomes essential to gain knowledge about the specific artefact being designed, as well as the specific design process (cf. Satchell, 2008). Drawing on this perspective, context is indispensable for design (Baym, 2010; McDonnell, 2015; Suchman, 2002; 2007). Consequently, when design is understood as inseparable from context, society, and situation, it becomes difficult to view it as only a process, designed artefact or work practice. Rather, it needs to be treated as an entanglement between the various actors, and between the social and the technological, in line with the actor-network approach (see Latour, 2005). Building on this approach to design, the use, that is, what happens in action with other actors, also becomes inseparable from design. In line with this, the design processes and practices, as well as the designed websites and services, are considered as situated practices (cf. Suchman, 2002; 2007).

Accordingly, the focus for the empirical studies is on the design processes as well as the designed products and services developed in the projects. In order to be able to investigate the aims of the thesis, the approach adopted here is also based on an understanding that reproduction, reflection and cultural assumptions impact upon the ways in which design and design processes are viewed (see Churchill, 2010). When approaching the norms and cultural assumptions involved in design, it becomes obvious that these issues are often challenging to grasp and to reflect upon, because norms are often made invisible and not questioned in the design process (cf. Pauwels, 2012; Rommes, 2006; Sengers et al., 2005).

Building on the perspective that design is at its heart a conversational practice, as it consists of reflective conversations with materials of various design situations (Schön, 1983; Stolterman, 2007), the approach taken here is that design processes can be viewed as a communicative process, both between the designer and the artefact, and in relation to societal cultural assumptions, social norms, users, and other actors and stakeholders involved in design and design projects. The communicative aspects of design process-
es also rely on the perspective on talk and other means of communication as central to design practices (cf. Heinemann, Landgrebe & Matthews, 2012; Luck, 2012a; Oak, 2012). Since design is often about shaping the societies in which we live (Suchman, 2007), I argue in this thesis that it is important to build on heterogeneous perspectives and knowledge in the study of design and design processes.

Service design and transformative change

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the design concept has increasingly been characterised by a focus on the implementation of services in societal functions and environments (Johannesson & Holmlid, 2013). The design projects studied in this thesis are also related to the common goal of facilitating the involvement of people in societal contexts and in the design of public services. In light of this focus, this thesis also relates to the field called service design. Just as with the definition of the overall design concept, there are no fixed definitions of the service design approach, but generally it can be understood as the design of organisational practices in the form of services (Holmlid, 2009; Stickdorn & Scheneider, 2010). Service design can also be said to include the activity of planning and organising people, infrastructure, communication, and the material components of a service in order to improve its quality and the interaction between the service provider and its users (Stickdorn & Scheneider, 2010). Previous research on this kind of implementation through design has shown that service design projects are often transformative in their character, and increasingly work across organisations and communities to enhance the transformative process. Related to this research is the concept of design thinking, which has been used to specifically target social innovation and uses design methods originating from design practices (cf. Cross, 2011; Krippendorff, 2006; Schön, 1983) such as industrial design to address complex societal issues. These can span a wide range of possible issues, such as policy-making, local community planning or the inclusion of marginalised groups (Brown, 2009; Brown & Wyatt, 2010). A cornerstone of design thinking is the use of multidisciplinary teams in which stakeholders and experts who work within a specific problem area are represented (Brown, 2009; Johansson-Sköldberg et al., 2013). The term design thinking is contested and much debated, although the notion is not restricted to thinking. McDonnell (2015), for example, instead uses the concept of design reasoning, which involves talking, arguing, negotiating, and showing as well as thinking. In a design context, this kind of practical design reasoning has previously been examined in the context of the reasoning of users of technological systems as a resource for informing design (see Crabtree et al., 1997; Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; McDonnell, 2015), reasoning in design instruction (Murphy, Ivarsson & Lymer, 2012), and rea-
soning in the doing of design (Murphy, 2005; Sharrock & Button, 2014). Drawing on these perspectives, I use the concept of design reasoning as a theoretical approach, especially in Study III. I do so in line with the notion of design thinking, and how processes and problem solving can be used to address societal problems that go beyond the traditional preoccupations of professional designers (Brown & Wyatt, 2010; Carlgren, 2013). The empirical studies also address the transformative character of design for organisations and institutions as well as for the users (here counsellors and young people) involved in the design process (see Study IV).

The transformative aspects of design in a societal context and within institutions have also been highlighted in previous research on service design and the design of public services (Burns et al., 2006; Sangiorgi, 2011). Research on the design of public services has emphasised the concept of co-production as a key strategy for more effective and personalised services (Horne & Shirley, 2009). Transformation, in the sense outlined by this research, means radical change in specific environments and focuses on the transformative character of practices and principles developed within organisations (Sangiorgi, 2011).

Transformation design or transformative design is often defined as human-centred, interdisciplinary processes that seek to create desirable and sustainable changes in the behaviour and form of individuals, systems and organisations. The term transformation design was originally coined in order to capture ways of applying user-centred, service, and design approaches to the redesign of public services (Burns et al., 2006). Consequently, transformation design is seen as a means of bringing about change, and its outcomes are often non-traditional design outputs as projects have resulted in the creation of new roles, new organisations, new systems, and new policies. These designers are just as likely to shape a job description, as they are a new product (Sangiorgi, 2011). From the perspective of organisational learning (Argote, 2011; Gherardi, 2005), or expansive learning (Engeström, 2001), transformation design with a focus on services can provide paradigmatic changes (so-called service transformation), through which the more traditional design approaches achieve changed service interactions and service processes (i.e. service interactions design), that in turn affect norms and cultures (i.e. service design intervention). When discussing technology-driven projects and e-health projects in related areas of relevance, the focus has mainly been on the effects and benefits for clients and users. The transformative character of such design approaches for the organisation and existing work practices has often been secondary. However, in line with the transformation and changes brought to the fore by the transformation design perspective (Sangiorgi, 2011), the empirical studies in this thesis focus on organisational outcomes, both for the participants involved in the design projects and their existing professional practices at the youth clinics (Studies III and IV).
Participatory design approaches in design practice

Participatory design and participatory approaches are cited as key components within transformation design practices (Sangiorgi, 2011). Participatory design as a field of research has been explored in a range of design fields, such as: architectural design (Luck, 2003; 2012b), community design (Sanoff, 2007; Toker, 2012), public institution design (Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2013; Shaprio, 2005), system and service design (Holmlid, 2009; Johannesson & Holmlid, 2013), and IT design (Büscher et al., 2002; Wadley et al., 2013). The context for the studies in this thesis aligns well with common understandings of what constitutes a participatory design project (Bødker, Kensing & Simonson, 2004; Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2013), where various stakeholders and users are involved in the process. In this thesis, I have thus chosen to use the term participatory design (henceforth referred to as PD) to describe the participatory dimensions of the studied design projects. This is due to the full engagement of the participants over a long period of time, and because different aspects of participation have been a core concern of theirs.

Participatory design started from the belief that those affected by a design should have a say in the design process, and it had the ambition of retaining existing skills as possible resources in the design process (Ehn & Kyng, 1987; Ehn, 1992). In PD approaches, design is seen as a social process featuring the direct involvement of the people affected in the co-design of technology (Robertson & Simonsen, 2012). Sanoff (2007) describes PD as:

Participatory design is an attitude about a force for change in the creation and management of environments for people. Its strength lies in being a movement that cuts across traditional professional boundaries and cultures. Its roots lie in the ideals of a participatory democracy where collective decision-making is highly decentralised throughout all sectors of society, so that all individuals learn participatory skills and can effectively participate in various ways in the making of all decisions that affect them. (Sanoff, 2007, p. 213)

Accordingly, the roots of PD lie in the ideals of participatory democracy, where decision-making is collective and decentralised, which leads to individuals learning participatory skills and thus being able to participate effectively in various ways in the decisions that affect them (Sanoff, 2007). People involved in PD projects take an active part in raising issues/problems, and in the decision-making process as part of the design and/or design project, resulting in blurred boundaries between various actors, including designers, developers, and users (Andersen, et al., 2015; Luck, 2003). So, if design is seen as part of the decision-making process, it is also about the exercise of power. In this sense, PD projects could be seen as a form of empowerment of users through the sharing of power between the participants, who include the users. However, as in any context of participation and interaction, there are always issues related to power and power relations, where
asymmetrical relations between participants with different degrees of power and the striving for equality interfere (see McCarthy & Wright, 2015; see also Chapter 3, for an extended discussion).

Participatory design in the domain of human–computer interaction (HCI) has also been concerned with issues of workplace democracy and participatory involvement in changing working conditions linked to technology. Some of the previous work on PD projects has therefore focused on change. Büscher et al. (2002), for example, studied various experiences of boundary crossings in PD contexts and demonstrated that key tasks in different settings consist of enlisting the efforts, imagination, trust, and commitment of the users as well as a sharing of risks and responsibilities. In PD, there are practical dimensions related to the sharing of responsibilities, the developing of trust, and the sustaining of commitment that must be accomplished in a situated manner within a constantly changing context (Büscher et al., 2002). These practical dimensions and changing contexts are of importance for the outcomes of the projects.

The positive influence of users’ and other stakeholders’ involvement in design and design processes through the contribution of insights and knowledge is unquestionably acknowledged in previous research (Andersen, et al., 2015; Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Luck, 2003), even though there are examples in which the importance of these insights is not considered in the design process (cf. Rommes, 2006; Shapiro, 2005). In her work, Luck (2003) has demonstrated that, through the social process of discussion by users, design projects can reveal explicit and tacit knowledge that would otherwise be unavailable but is of value to the designers. Social processes of participatory design and design dialogue have made the transfer of user knowledge to designers and design projects possible and have made such knowledge accessible for designers to employ for the users’ benefit (Luck, 2003). In another study, Luck & McDonnell (2006) demonstrate at a micro-level that the designers’ and users’ reflections, discussions, and behaviour may influence the information provided and may make contributions and have implications for the design. Through a detailed analysis of information exchange and the conversational mechanisms adopted by participants during meetings with architects and building users, these researchers discuss design conversations as a medium for the exchange of knowledge that externalise the creative design process which occurs as the conversation takes place. They also discuss how the social mechanisms of interaction displayed through conversations mediate both the creative activity and the information and knowledge exchanged (Luck & McDonnell, 2006).

Holmlid (2009) investigated the connections between PD and service design, and shows how PD and other forms of cooperative design can inform service design, and the other way around. In order to do so, three themes are presented: user involvement, cooperation, and emancipation. Service design is closely connected to PD in its definition, being described as a field em-
phasising sustainable and holistic perspectives and practical ways of working. The outcome of service design, for example, is in itself a process, in which values are co-created between the users and the organisations (Holmlid, 2009). Just like service design, IT design in general tends to move from involving the design of IT artefacts and devices towards the practice of designing work and use practices.

Several of the studies mentioned so far focus on how design processes and practices contribute to organisations and societal functions. However, building on prior research investigating the design of public services, this thesis explores the relationship between the services that are developed during the projects and how the organisations change when implementing these new systems and services. By focusing on the participants (i.e. stakeholders and users) as co-producers in design, this study contributes to knowledge about how the participating actors actively partake in the development of online services. At the same time, the participants, here referring to counsellors working with youth counselling, will also be seen as managing organisational change as an outcome of the design projects (Study IV). Previous research in these areas has focused to a large extent on evaluations of economic and work efficiency as consequences for the organisations involved in design projects. However, studies exploring the outcomes for the people participating in the projects are less frequent. In line with several of the studies referred to so far, the aim of this thesis is to contribute to the field of research into participatory design and co-production in service design by focusing on the transformative aspects of participation and empowerment in design.

Contributions to the interrelated research contexts

The interrelated research areas of e-health services and online youth counselling, on the one hand, and research focusing on the participatory design of public services, on the other, constitute the main research context for this thesis. My aim is to contribute to both these research areas, providing new knowledge about how to design new services for online youth counselling and similar domains, as well as knowledge relating to participatory design processes and how to design for value-laden and norm-sensitive domains. Thus, this thesis adds to the growing number of studies on the design and development of e-services for healthcare and health guidance, by focusing on both services targeting young people, and design processes in which counsellors and young people are involved in the co-production of designing the online services. When discussing technology-driven projects and e-health projects, the argumentation in previous research tends to focus more on the effects and benefits for the clients and users of the e-health services, and less on the outcomes for the care-giving organisation and its existing work prac-
tices. As every new e-health service that is launched is the result of a design process that influences and affects existing work practices, I argue that the design processes and practices need to be as much in focus as the resulting services. Furthermore, this thesis adds to knowledge and research regarding the mechanisms of empowerment that come into play in participatory design projects involving young people’s opportunities to become involved in the use of online services targeting them. The mechanisms in focus here are concerned with both their participant role in design projects, and norm-critical efforts related to the designed artefacts.

Also, situating this work at the intersection of two separate research areas opens up space for cross fertilisation between these areas. By focusing, for example, on the design process in the study of e-services for young people, it becomes possible to analyse the new services in an organisational context and investigate how the new services relate to existing practices. And likewise, studying the design of online youth counselling to learn about design practices and processes opens up opportunities to discuss aspects such as transformative participation, and how the counsellors will affect and may change their future roles within the organisation at hand through their participation in the design project.
Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will describe and discuss the theoretical frameworks and analytical stances I have used. The theoretical standpoints taken are related to the aim of the thesis: to investigate how aspects of design and participation can serve to empower young people and counsellors, and how these mechanisms of empowerment play out in the design of online youth counselling. The mechanisms in focus concern participation in design projects, as well as the various normative expectations and norm-critical efforts directed towards the designed artefacts.

The stated problem domain in this thesis directs attention to the diverse research areas focusing on notions of empowerment and participation in design, critical design perspectives, and studies of design practices. Parts of the associated research relate to the professional practice of participant stakeholders becoming involved in the projects, drawing on theories on participation, learning, and knowledge production in professional practices. Another area comprises issues related to young people as users of online youth counselling and the normative expectations lying behind the design of user interfaces, which tie in to theories on norm-critique and norm-critical perspectives in design. In order to address these interrelated areas of inquiry, it was deemed necessary to use an eclectic theoretical and methodological approach, combining various perspectives. These are concerned with, firstly, the study of design in practice, where an explicit ethnomethodological stance helped to unpack such issues as how the participants actively orient towards specific issues and concerns in the design project. In order to further deepen my understanding of what it means to take a participant perspective on participatory design projects, I also draw on sociocultural perspectives on communities of practice and participation, and participatory aspects of design. Finally, the analyses focusing on how empowerment can be manifested through design are based on theories foregrounding critical perspectives on norms in design, including empowerment and user agency. Empowerment is defined here as a broad and open-ended term that in its most concrete sense is concerned with the giving or delegation of power, authority, and/or enablement (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010). These three theoretical frameworks and research areas will be addressed separately in this chapter. The final part of the chapter consists of a brief overview and some reflections on general theoretical and practical notions of empowerment and
emancipation, and how these notions relate to the online youth counselling domain, as well as to the three theoretical frameworks at hand.

Studying design in practice – an ethnomethodological approach

This thesis is concerned with understanding the social aspects of design, whereby various stakeholders (i.e. young people and counsellors) are involved as participants in the design process. The process of understanding social aspects of design and design as it is practised in various settings is discussed by, among others, Luck (2012a; 2012b), Oak (2012), and Matthews and Heinemann (2012). In line with these studies, the focus here is on studying the “doing of designing in practice” and not “analyses of work practices for design, which informs the design of products, services and systems” (Luck, 2012a, p. 522, emphasis in the original). The analytical focus is directed towards presenting accounts of the participants’ actions, interactions, and practices in the work of doing design (Luck, 2012a) in accordance with an ethnomethodological (EM) approach (Garfinkel, 1967; Hester & Francis, 2008).

Design as it is practised is well researched (cf. Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Luck, 2012a; Matthews & Heinemann, 2012), and studies of ‘doing design’ based on an EM approach contribute to a focus on a “practice-based theory of knowledge and action” (Goodwin, 1994, p. 606). In its most concrete sense, EM is also described as a method for building the social into design (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Luck, 2012a). The study of design in practice is complicated, however, by views on what design is and what actions constitute designing and practices of doing design (Luck, 2012b). Similar views on design have been brought up by Luck (2012b), the first concerning design as something that is done exclusively by designers, and the second of which views design as a distinct kind of thinking related to creative thought and problem solving. Understanding design like this has highlighted the debate on user participation in design processes and events and “whether they [the users] design or ‘merely’ talk about the design of something, and whether they do so by ‘thinking’ in designerly ways” (Luck, 2012b, p. 558; cf. also Cross, 2006). However, studies of design activities that focus on talk-in-interaction have recognised that talk not only serves as a means of communicating about and around design, but is itself a central means of designing (Luck, 2012a); that is, in many collaborative design settings, design is realised in and through talk (see Heinemann, Landgrebe & Matthews, 2012; Matthews & Heinemann, 2012; Oak, 2012). The study of participatory design projects has been defined by a strong commitment to understanding practice (Robertson & Simonsen, 2012; Si-
monsen & Robertson, 2013), and PD practices in particular are often based on talk-centred activities in which designers engage potential users in focused discussions on design-related issues (Luck, 2012b). In this thesis, talk-centred activities are the focus of the data material consisting of recordings of participants in the project discussing design-related issues during the project meetings (see also Chapter 5). Talk-centred activities are also important as a theoretical foundation for understanding the work practices and processes in the youth counselling organisation involved in the participatory design projects examined in this thesis.

A number of studies have introduced the field of EM in studying design and work processes (see Button & Sharrock, 1996; Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Luff, Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000; Sharrock & Button, 2014). These studies draw on the work of Garfinkel, who introduced EM in the 1950s as a way of studying the organisation of social life and the routine actions taking place in everyday life situations. According to Garfinkel (1974), EM is concerned with members’ knowledge of ordinary affairs in organisations, institutions, or other settings for social life. Social life is central to EM and is seen as a locally produced order of business. People using shared methods and actions to produce and reproduce order in a specific setting or situation also achieve and contribute to the orderly organisation of social life (Garfinkel, 1967; Heritage, 1984; 1987).

Traditionally, EM is formulated as the analysis of “everyday activities as members’ methods for making those same activities visibly rational and reportable for all practical purposes, i.e. ‘accountable’, as organizations of commonplace everyday activities” (Garfinkel, 1967, p. vii). These activities coincide with the creation of everyday life or everyday situations; for example, in work practices for members involved in the activity (Garfinkel, 1967; Suchman, 2007). One common aim of EM is to describe and explain people’s everyday lives, but also to draw attention to the notion that everyday life is something on-going that includes members’ actions (Garfinkel, 1967). The effort to study the methods that members use to produce and reproduce the features of everyday life in specific situations (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012), are central to the EM approaches used in the empirical studies in this thesis.

By studying people’s or members’ actions in concrete everyday contexts, the aim has been to explain how social order is achieved. How social activity is accomplished and constituted is a question that preoccupies EM research (see Atkinson & Heritage 1984; Lynch, Livingstone & Garfinkel, 1983). A similar question is important for design. EM is concerned with “detailed and observable practices, which make up the incarnate production of ordinary social facts” (Lynch, Livingstone & Garfinkel, 1983, p. 206), which means that the study of work practices accordingly contains rich descriptions of those practices (Button & Dourish, 1996). The analytical approach taken here draws on EM perspectives on organisations and work practices (Gar-
Suchman’s early work (1987) is based on an EM approach to how people, work, and technology are interrelated. In her studies, she takes the work practices of users into account along with their use of technology and designed interfaces. According to Suchman (1987), EM studies common cultures as a vital part of actions/activities. In her frequently cited and influential study *Plans and situated actions*, she develops an understanding of EM for a study of the relation between humans and computers by focusing on situated actions. Suchman (2007) argues that people’s actions are accomplished in current situations, and are affected by the constraints and opportunities presented to the actors here and now in the specific situation. She sees plans as representations of situated actions that occur when everyday ‘transparent’ activities break down or are questioned. A similar perspective on situated actions has informed the analytical stances I have taken with my focus on the situated design practices and processes that I have studied in the design projects at hand. It is also important in Suchman’s (2007) work that objectivity and normality are viewed as being achieved or constructed through language use and built up through interactions between people. In this thesis, language is understood as *indexical* and *reflective* of the situation and/or context. The relationship between social practices and accounts of those practices is treated as inevitably reflexive, both for participants and observers, according to an EM approach (cf. Button & Sharrock, 1998; Garfinkel, 1967; Suchman, 2000; Sharrock & Button, 2014).

Ethnomethodology has provided important insights into the role of collaboration, communication, and technology in studies of human–computer interaction (HCI) (Suchman, 1994; Dourish & Button, 1999; Dourish, 2001; 2004). More recent studies have an explicit focus on practices and design processes (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Luck, 2012a; 2012b; Matthews & Heinemann, 2012; Suchman, 2007). In line with this work, the focus in this thesis is on how design is practised and realised in action, which in turn provides opportunities to investigate participants’ perspectives on the processes and practices studied. Previous EM research has been conducted in a range of work situations involving technology and the design of interactive systems (Button & Sharrock, 1996; Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Suchman, 1987; Sharrock & Button, 2014). These studies have demonstrated how technologies are embedded within diverse work practices, as well as how the study of these practices provides input to the design of new systems (see Button & Dourish, 1996; Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010). Strongly informed by EM studies of work in design and technology-enhanced environments and systems (as outlined by, for example, Button & Sharrock, 1996; 1998; Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie
2012; Suchman, 2000; 2007), my focus here is on the design processes and practices taking place within the studied design projects.

In studies of design practice and processes, EM has proven useful to inform the practice of designing systems such as e-services. What are described as ‘hybrid studies of work’ can, according to Garfinkel (2002, pp. 100–103), be seen as studies that directly address practitioners and inform specific areas such as public services, institutions, organisations, and design projects and processes. According to Crabtree, Roncefield and Tolmie (2012), the intention of so-called workplace studies in EM is to inform ongoing professional development and to take an active part in the development of the practices under study. This ambition can end up having implications for design (Dourish, 2001; 2004), but can also create an opportunity to inform the practices and institutions studied (Crabtree, Roncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Luff, Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000). Of particular significance here is how the organisation of work and work practices are related to the design projects (Button & Sharrock, 1996), and the organisation of participatory design work in the projects being studied. The notion of workplace studies in EM has also been central to this thesis in its ambition to inform the design practice of developing e-services for healthcare and health guidance online and also to inform the work practice of meeting young people in online settings for youth counselling.

The use of EM in relation to theories and frameworks of critical design approaches has been used in the analyses to enable an examination of the norm-critical design efforts made by the participants in these design projects, as well as the normative expectations that are revealed in the design of online youth counselling services addressed by the participants in terms of empowerment (see Studies I and II). Drawing on EM as an analytical approach, the separate studies also focus on participation and the practices and design activities of which the participants involved in the design process of online youth counselling are a part, exploring how they can serve to empower the participants (see Studies III and IV).

Professional reasoning in design practice

The counsellors and young people involved as participants in the municipality design project (Setting 2) that I studied are initially engaged in a particular form of activity: contributing to a participatory design process as representatives of professionals and potential users. The concept of participatory design refers to the direct involvement of people from the target user group in the co-design process (Robertson & Simonsen 2012). As previously mentioned, the notion of ‘design’ applied here refers not only to the form and function of the artefact/service under development, but also to the work practices into which the new technology that is being developed will be fitted (cf. Björgvinsson, Ehn & Hillgren, 2012). Because work practices will
inevitably change as a consequence of the implementation of new technologies and services, they will have to be actively designed alongside the technology itself. An important aspect of participation in the design projects is thus to prepare for change and to be able to anticipate and develop shared understandings of organisational change. In the separate studies (Studies III and IV), one overall aim was to examine how the participating counsellors prepared themselves for the future implementation of new sociotechnical systems in their organisation. For this purpose, the ways in which the counsellors talked about, and became engaged in professional reasoning about, the potential challenges they might meet in their work practices were examined. Consequently, some of the analyses focus on conversations that took place during meetings as part of the participatory design practices (see especially Studies III and IV).

The focus on participatory design processes, practical actions, and professional reasoning (cf. Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012) is accomplished through gaining access to participants’ stated apprehension regarding new technology, and the hypothetical reasoning practices that engender possible solutions. This kind of reasoning in design is well researched through the practice of thinking out loud, talking, arguing, negotiating, and showing the ability to explain and justify speculations about future consequences and courses of action (McDonnell, 2015). Design reasoning (cf. Murphy, 2005; Murphy, Ivarsson & Lymer, 2012; Sharrock & Button, 2014) is approached here as a form of situated action in participatory design in which various stakeholders are involved in design talk during meetings. While I am primarily concerned with analysing talk-in-interaction, the participants in the studies are not engaged simply in conversation but also in a consequential activity in which practical reasoning (Garfinkel, 1967) is brought to bear on various issues connected to the introduction of a new technology. An EM focus on practical reasoning implies examining the methods by which issues relevant to participants are constituted and managed, as well as how problems and solutions are defined, constructed, challenged, defended and developed (cf. Buttny, 2004). The ways in which locally ratified and defensible articulations of competent professional practice are worked up through talk are addressed in the third study of this thesis (Study III). By focusing on a situation in which the technology under discussion is yet to be implemented, we show how it becomes possible to gain access to the ways in which members prospectively and hypothetically, rather than retrospectively (cf. Mäkitalo & Reit, 2014), identify relevant issues, and anticipate future scenarios of technology use (see Study III).
Empowerment and participation in design

This thesis contributes to research on participation in the design of information technology, typically referred to as participatory design (PD) or co-design. In this section, I return to the notion of PD (see also Chapter 2), as it is of importance in understanding the projects under study, now with a focus on participation and empowerment through design. In this context, the notion of PD is used to describe the involvement of the counsellors in the project of designing the online counselling service. As discussed in previous chapters, PD has mainly been used to refer to the direct involvement of the target users in the co-design of tools, products, environments, businesses, and social institutions (Robertson & Simonsen, 2012; Simonsen & Robertson, 2013). Reflections in previous research on user involvement and participants’ perspectives (McCarthy & Wright, 2015) have been very influential for understanding participation and empowerment in the participatory design projects studied here. The notion of empowerment will be further discussed in the final part of this chapter.

In this thesis, PD refers to a broad understanding of participation in the design and development of IT systems and e-services. I treat it as more than a set of methods and techniques, but see it rather as an approach driven by emancipatory and democratic values, where “the tools and techniques representative of participatory design embody higher layers of concerns and values that can guide, inspire, and focus design” (Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2013, p. 406). For the participants, as part of the design process, PD enables opportunities to anticipate future changes and alternative trajectories (cf. van der Velden & Mörtberg, 2014). Drawing on this understanding of PD, I use participation as a theoretical tool in the empirical studies for understanding aspects of empowerment in the processes and practices, along with the roles of the participants involved in the design projects.

This thesis also builds on the on-going debate regarding IT-mediated participation in wider contemporary societies and adds to the recent emphasis on exploring participation in IT design (McCarthy & Wright, 2015; Saad-Sulonen et al., 2015; Vines et al., 2015). The recent focus on how participation is approached as a practice is centrally related to this debate (Andersen et al., 2015; Vines et al., 2015). A perception of practice as socio-material and/or sociotechnical is well established in PD, meaning that practice and actions are to be understood as ‘situated action’ and embedded in the context where they are performed (see Suchman, 1987; 1993). Suchman’s (2007) claim that all actions are situated and dependent on material and social circumstances is influential in this thesis, as well as in the studies of PD projects.

Empowerment and user empowerment have been of great interest in previous research on participation in design (cf. Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Halskov & Hansen, 2015). McCarthy and Wright (2015)
discuss aspects of participation in relation to the empowerment of participants. Although not using the term PD, they highlight in their research that the power of participatory projects is the possibility to “explore and harness the capacity of people to create participative experiences” (McCarthy & Wright, 2015, p. 3). By participative experience, they mean that people involved in participatory projects are able to partake in new ways of defining themselves and their relationships. They explore what it actually means for people untrained in design practice to take part in something that enables them to play with new ways of being and to contribute to the making of something of value to others. In line with this, the approach taken here draws on understandings of the participants’ experiences as a members concern and therefore it is important to examine the participants’ practices and methods of doing participation in design (cf. Luck, 2012a).

Previous research on participation in design and development projects has shown that the definitions of participation range from implicit goals of ‘involving users’ to more elaborate ideas of participation as the core aspect of participatory design and explicit understandings of the user as driving the process forward (cf. Andersen et al., 2015; Halskov & Hansen, 2015; Robertson & Simonsen, 2012). Halskov and Hansen (2015) identified three general definitions and approaches in their overview of the core participatory design research between 2002 and 2012. The various approaches involve: (i) an implicit understanding of participation, in which participants are involved, but their role and function is not explicitly stated, (ii) an understanding of participation in terms of being full participants in the design process and providing a users’ point of view, and (iii) a view of participation that focuses on mutual learning and knowledge transfer between the users and the designers involved (Halskov & Hansen, 2015, p. 86). In addition, Halskov and Hansen (2015) argue that participation is often loosely defined and they call for more detailed accounts of what constitutes participation, as well as how participation unfolds throughout entire projects (see Andersen et al., 2015).

The above approaches in contemporary PD and PD projects also include central notions such as having a say (Kensing & Greenbaum, 2013), mutual learning (Halskov & Hansen, 2015; van der Velden & Mörtberg, 2014), and situated action (Suchman, 2007; van der Velden et al., 2016). Having a say or giving a voice (Andersen et al., 2015; Simonsen & Robertson, 2013), refers to giving future users and participants decision-making power in the design practice (Kensing & Greenbaum, 2013). This implies design practices based on the users’ point of view (Halskov & Hansen, 2015), the equalisation of power relations and the employment of democratic practices (Kensing & Greenbaum, 2013; van der Velden et al., 2016). Nevertheless, being given a voice does not automatically mean that the participants really have a say in the design practice due, for example, to power relations or unequal access to knowledge and information of relevance to the decision-
The notion of **mutual learning** implies, as argued above, that the participants involved in a design project mutually learn from each other, and share their practical knowledge, competences, and values (van der Velden & Mörtberg, 2014). According to Halskov and Hansen (2015), one might argue that most PD processes involve mutual learning, and that this definition of participation in PD projects does not recognise the users’ points of view. Robertson and Simonsen (2012) acknowledge that mutual learning in design processes provides “all participants with increased knowledge and understandings: Potential users about what is being designed; designers about people and their practices; and all participants about the design process, its outcomes and how both can influence the ways we live and the choices we can make” (Robertson & Simonsen, 2012, p. 5). The definition of mutual learning itself (Björvgvinsson, Ehn & Hillgren 2012; Halskov & Hansen, 2015), however, does not state whether or not the purpose of PD approaches is the transfer of knowledge between users and designers or if it implies that the users are in the best position to make decisions for themselves and to know what decisions they need to make regarding their own situation.

Finally, **situated action** or **situation-based action**, which is a basic element of PD approaches, implies that design practices and processes should be located within the situations where the activities that are the focus of the design processes are taking place (see Suchman 2007; van der Velden et al., 2016). These views on participation and notions in PD projects have been used in the analyses in this thesis to provide a rich and nuanced perspective on both the relationship between participation and empowerment, and how often divergent forms of participation can serve to empower different stakeholder participants in the design processes of online counselling services.

In order to approach how participation is performed in design and design projects, the processes of participation have also been explored in this thesis. As “participatory design projects also include the potential for integrating multiple voices and the challenge of aligning interested parties in design” (Vines et al., 2015, p. 77), the process of participation differs between PD projects. Even though the concept of participation has been well developed within the research field of PD projects and in several other human-centred design fields (cf. Andersen et al., 2015; Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2013; Halskov & Hansen, 2015; Vines et al., 2015), it is essential to further explore participation in design and in specific projects, in order to gain knowledge about the processes by which various actors become involved in design processes.
Outcomes of participation and participant roles

The notion of participation used in this thesis draws on the view that participation is in itself participative, affective, and discursive, and calls for a methodology that depends on the close relationship between experience and agency (McCarthy & Wright, 2015). Goffman’s (1981) concepts of ‘participation status’ and ‘participation framework’ are means for analysing how people organise their participation by taking on various forms of interactional role and participant status when they become involved in an interactional setting. The focus of concern here is on how participants engaged in a specific activity create a joint focus and how their participation and status are related to the specific activity at hand. A similar understanding of participation permeates the separate studies, which all explore aspects of participation in the situated practice of design and design projects in the domain of online youth counselling.

In these design projects, where co-design or participatory design is a foundation, participation is not regarded as a linear dimension, stretching, for example, from passive to active; rather, it is understood as the emergence of possibilities for the participants involved (cf. Arnstein, 1969; Goffman, 1981; McCarthy & Wright, 2015). This view of participation highlights that it is not to be seen as something inherently good or as a matter of consensus formation between participants (see Goffman, 1981; McCarthy & Wright, 2015). Instead, participation is often dependent on the asymmetrical relations between participants in different positions of power, formed in an institutional context with specific goals to meet, and influenced by social norms and values (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; McCarthy & Wright, 2015). This in turn means that participation needs to be problematised in relation to empowerment and emancipation. In line with this, participation “requires increased attention to social and political experiences with technology, including issues of ownership, authorship, and voice” (McCarthy & Wright, 2015, p. 5). Accordingly, participation is approached as a non-linear, relational, practical, and situated process in participatory design projects, as shown, for example, in my analysis of the ways in which the participants’ roles change when they are involved in PD projects over a longer period of time (see Study IV). This understanding of participation implies that participation and participatory design projects can control as well as liberate the participants, creating contrasting positions, rather than being based on mutual support and understanding (McCarthy & Wright, 2015).

In this thesis, it is crucial to examine the participant perspectives within the design process and the doing of design in the studied projects. As have been noted, the influence of users’ and other stakeholders’ involvement in design and design processes through the contribution of insights and knowledge is acknowledged in previous research (Andersen, et al., 2015; Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Luck, 2003). Research on participa-
tion in design, participatory design, the participant role, and the results and outcomes of PD have mainly provided examples of how to conduct research on PD and PD projects, how these kinds of projects can be understood, and the possible outcomes of participation in design. In addition, researchers have discussed notions of success and failure in relation to design projects. Common reasons for failure are that the project runs over time, goes over budget, results in an inferior product or service, or a combination of the three (Button & Sharrock, 1996). Büscher et al. (2002) also discuss issues concerning how the involvement and engagement of participants affect the premises of how to determine the success of a PD project. The researchers emphasise that the ideology of PD means that PD projects may not be allowed to fail. They highlight four problematic factors that mean failure is almost impossible: (i) designers and developers who must report to funders and protect their reputations to be able to access future projects; (ii) participants who have invested time and resources want to complete the project successfully; (iii) users and other stakeholders who may have divergent agendas about what is interesting and useful; (iv) various stakeholders who may have market and other relations in which one’s gain is the other’s loss.

These points illustrate that the measuring of success cannot be reduced to the instrumental, stated goals of the project, but may be due to an entanglement of different stakeholder perspectives, including the views of the participants from the target organisation, for whom the outcomes of the project might have substantial effects on their work situation. Gaver et al. (2009) refer to the “symptoms of failure” when they describe an interactive system that they designed, implemented, and tested and concluded to be unsuccessful. The authors emphasise the importance of acknowledging failures in order to be able to learn from mistakes. Thus, they conclude that something that is a failure in one respect may be a successful outcome in another; for example, in terms of the experience gained and the learning outcomes resulting from the failure. As demonstrated by Büscher et al. (2002), it is central not only to reflect upon the notion of failure in the context of PD, but also to investigate the ways in which failure in the design process becomes a complex and contested issue, and almost impossible. In sum, this reveals the importance of highlighting aspects of failure in relation to experiences gained from studies such as Gaver et al.’s (2009) on the notion of failure (see Study IV).

Professional practice and communities of practice

The counsellors involved in the design projects are positioned as both professional social workers working at the youth clinics, and as participants involved in a design project. In Study IV, an analytical stance drawing on notions of professional learning and communities of practice is used to explore the participatory dimensions of how the stakeholders take on different
roles as they become empowered to participate in design and design processes.

There is a growing interest in organisational research about the intersection of knowledge, work, and professional practice. One reason for this is the implementation of ICT and the impact of these technologies on traditional ways of working and on the competences of professional workgroups affected by this implementation (Gherardi, 2014). The ways in which the design of the technologies and services support practical knowledge (Orlikowski, 2002), how professional learning and knowledge change in such contexts (Jensen, Lahn & Nerland, 2012), and how collective professional and non-professional knowledge is performed in distance work (Gherardi, 2014; Räsänen, 2007) and in design practices (Luck, 2012a; Schön, 1983) have been examined in previous research and are also central to this thesis. Drawing on research on professional knowing and learning as emergent properties of engaging in social activities (Säljö, 2009), the separate studies are concerned with professional practitioners as social actors involved in everyday practices in the design projects (Studies III and IV).

A professional is here understood as someone with expertise in a specific occupational field of practice (Edwards, 2010; Mäkitalo, 2012). What is important is that expertise is viewed as a relational concept that is activity-specific, organisationally bound, and often contested (Mäktitalo, 2012, p. 59). What counts as being professional varies in different fields of practice, and to develop and sustain oneself as a professional could imply many things. It is therefore hard to pin down or define what professional learning is in a basic sense (Mäkitalo, 2012; Säljö, 2009). For example, the ability to categorise and distinguish features that are important for a specific profession can be regarded as a kind of professional knowledge (Goodwin, 1994; 2007). Previous research has emphasised the relational character of people’s capacities for action (Suchman, 2007), which can also be seen as important for professional practices. Goodwin (1994), for example, has demonstrated that becoming a professional archaeologist is a matter of learning how to systematically see and differentiate certain features in the various domains of scrutiny to which archaeological work is oriented. In Goodwin’s work, archaeological knowledge is treated as relations between specific socially and historically constituted practices and their relation to materials and artefacts. According to Goodwin (1994), it is from these relations that the archaeological knowledge and practice of the profession is developed. This form of knowledge production, or so-called professional vision, is present in any profession or professional practice. It is a matter of highlighting certain specific aspects and making them relevant, while at the same time downplaying or not attending to others (Goodwin, 1994). Learning is here treated as a concern of “the interactive organization of apprenticeship” (Goodwin, 2007, p. 57). Perspectives involving professional learning and knowledge production are also central in research on design as a professional practice (cf.
Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; McDonnell, 2015; Schön, 1983). In the design projects studied here, professional learning became particularly important in Study IV, where the counsellors’ participation over an extended period of time highlighted a range of aspects and outcomes that could be described as situated and expansive learning that are important for understanding how participation in design projects can serve to empower healthcare professionals.

In Study IV, where the focus is on the outcomes of participation in PD projects, the EM approach (Garfinkel, 1967; Hester & Francis, 2008; Luck, 2012a) is further combined with a sociocultural perspective in order to explore how, during the design process, the participants create their own ‘community of practice’ (Wenger, 1998) that aims to achieve specific goals (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in processes of collective learning in a shared domain, in this case a design project in which online youth counselling services are being developed. Communities of practice are described as continually intertwining processes of ‘participation and reification’ (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002), and can thus be related to the participatory approach taken in the design projects. The focus on participation as fundamental to practice draws on the perception of participation as a complex process combining both specific actions, such as doing and talking, and personal aspects of such things as emotions and social relations (Wenger, 1998). In line with this view of practice and participation, this thesis approaches practice as being realised through participation in the design projects studied.

The notion of the ‘apprentice’, as used by Lave and Wenger (cf. 1991, pp. 35–57), is also important for the analysis of the data (Study IV). Apprenticeship as defined by Lave and Wenger means that not only do the participants or apprentices have to master new knowledge and skills but they are also expected to become members of communities of practice and to form new versions of these (see Wenger, 1998). In this thesis, particular attention has been paid to how new professional roles emerged in the design project and in the project group during the project’s lifespan. The similarities with the apprentice who, through participation and practical work, becomes a legitimate participant and professional expert in the specific field (Lave & Wenger, 1991) are demonstrated in the design project’s various phases, as the expertise and roles of the participating counsellors transformed over the duration of the project. The notion of apprenticeship resonates with Wenger, McDermott and Snyder’s (2002) work on learning as social participation, where individuals are active participants in the practices of social communities, and where the construction of collective identities is accomplished through participation in particular communities. In this context, a community of practice is a group of individuals participating in an activity, who create a shared identity through their engagement with and contributions to the practices of their communities (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002).
One premise of this approach is that learning through apprenticeship is perceived as a non-linear process involving a complex set of social relationships, practices, and processes. Apprenticeship is not to be seen here as a linear process during which the participating counsellors become professional experts just by being involved in the established practice. Rather, it draws on expansive learning perspectives (Engeström, 2001) and the capacity of participants to undertake a gradual apprenticeship in the activities as they respond to them in enriched ways (Engeström, 2001; Leadbetter, 2006). Expansive learning involves the creation of new knowledge and practices (Engeström, 2001), which in this case are related to the transformative dimensions of learning (cf. Mezirow, 2010), design, and transformative services (cf. Sangiorgi, 2011). Here, the transformative dimension and expansive learning through apprenticeship are triggered by the implementation of new services or technological systems that challenge and affect the participants in the organisation so that they gradually appropriate and develop their participant roles in ways that also change the project (see Study IV). In order to address how the participation unfolds during the project, “organisational contingencies of development are practically contended” in relation to the details that unfold in the “course of the development” (Button & Sharrock, 1996, p. 373). For this purpose, the design project is treated as a changing frame of reference for the participants involved, who move from being stakeholders empowered to participate in the project to being participants who relate to the project as a whole and manage it as a totality (cf. Button & Sharrock, 1996; Sharrock & Button, 2014), as demonstrated in Study IV.

Critical perspectives in design

The online youth counselling domain has some specific and interesting properties if looked upon as a design domain. It concerns a specific user group of young people struggling with the issues of identity work that arise during youth. This domain also encompasses sensitive issues around topics such as sex, mental illness, drugs, and abuse. These issues align with certain emerging topics within HCI research, where critical perspectives are used to address, for example: social norms, values, and gender issues in relation to design. Thus, the theoretical stance taken in this thesis (especially in Study I) is influenced by the recent focus on feminism and critical perspectives within the field of HCI (Bardzell, 2010; Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015; 2016) and critical approaches from other design fields, such as architecture and industrial design (Bonnevier, 2007; Ehnberger, Räsänen & Ilstedt, 2012). Taking a reflexive interest in enabling people by offering “expositions and analyses of social injustices, including their mechanisms of reproduction, and seek[ing] to disrupt those mechanisms, and to introduce the possibility of bringing into being more just systems” (Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015 p. 116),
critical theory has been recognised as providing important input for HCI and design research. This recent focus has proven that it has much to offer, both within HCI research (Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015; 2016), and for research on design and design as it is practised (cf. Dunne & Raby, 2001; Fagerström, 2010; Ilstedt Hjelm et al., 2007).

The studies above contribute to an emerging critical tradition in the field of HCI (Bardzell & Bardzell, 2010; Bowker & Star, 2000), where a critical perspective on technology as a co-constructing agent is applied (Berg & Lie, 1995; Moser, 2006; Tholander, Normark & Rossitto, 2012). The emerging field of critical perspectives in design builds to a large extent on feminist research, bringing to the fore how gender identities and relations are embedded in and influence both the use and the design of digital artefacts, and also how things could be done differently (Berg & Lie, 1995; Bardzell, 2010). Feminism in general, and feminist science and technology studies more specifically, has a lot to bring to the field of design research and HCI, not least in terms of the study of emancipation and empowerment (Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015). The critical perspectives gained from these fields can provide input for both designers and practitioners within the design field. The potential for feminist contributions to HCI and design research has been proven to be of great importance (Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015; Erickson et al., 2016). Feminist approaches could be integrated into all stages of the design process and “bring clarity to the way that subjectivity and experiences with using technology are gendered – and what designers could and should do about that” (Bardzell, 2010, p. 1304).

In many design disciplines, a critical frame of reference is present in the interplay between the creative practice and the critical perspectives. However, the design of interactive systems and interface design have historically lacked this critical frame of reference (Löwgren, 2007). Recently though, HCI research has become more concerned with critical theory, and critical approaches have been recognised as important for research in this field (see Blythe et al., 2008; Bardzell & Bardzell, 2013; 2015). The focus on critical perspectives and practices in HCI has led to several initiatives to include critical perspectives in design. Some of these critical approaches and initiatives are: value-sensitive design (Friedman, 1996; Friedman, Kahn & Borning, 2006; LeDantec, Poole & Wyche, 2009; Nathan et al., 2008), interaction criticism framework (Bardzell & Bardzell, 2013), reflective design (Blythe et al., 2008; Dourish et al., 2004; Sengers et al., 2005), and research on critical and/or humanistic HCI (e.g. Bardzell & Bardzell, 2013; 2015).

Critical perspectives in design have traditionally been used with the aim of understanding, explaining, evaluating, and critiquing cultural phenomena (Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015; Blythe et al., 2008; Bonnevier, 2007). Critical design is often defined as design processes that aim to identify blind spots and open up new design spaces to create products that reflect new assumptions, values, and norms (Dunne & Raby, 2001; Sengers et al., 2005). Ac-
According to Maze and Redström (2009), critical design can be understood as a certain practice or approach that deliberately mixes up traditional measures of value in and through practices. The notion of criticality is formulated as being performed ‘within’ the actual design work, as a method to make designers reflect on their own practices (cf. Jonsson & Lundmark, 2014; Mazé & Redström, 2009). By drawing attention to values other than productivity and efficiency in the design practice, the ambition in critical and reflective design is to introduce a clearer approach to design and thus to identify unconscious assumptions and blind spots and open up new design spaces (Sengers et al., 2005).

One perspective relevant to this thesis draws on research by Bowker and Star (2000), who demonstrate the role of categories and standards in shaping the modern world, and in turn highlighting the embedding of values in design. They describe how classification schemes are organised and embedded into objects, which then give shape to the categories that people make. By analysing the embedding of classification into objects, Bowker and Star (2000) show how the normative classification system became invisible, or taken for granted, and that these objects thus actively contribute to the upholding of the classification system. Their study is particularly enlightening for how norms may become embedded in artefacts. Thus, engaging in critical reflection on the values embedded in design practices is viewed as a core principle of technology design by advocates of a critical and reflective design perspective, which in turn also affects the creation of products and artefacts. The use of reflective design and critical reflections, opening up and identifying normative assumptions and expectations, also helps to highlight deviations from the norms that are present in specific designs or design projects, and in turn makes visible the norms that are present in design (cf. Sengers et al., 2005; Rommes, 2006).

A theoretical tool that supports this analysis is Haraway’s (1991; 1997) notion of interference. Moser (2006) uses her approach to create a bridge between ethnomethodological approaches and Science and Technology Studies, showing how differences are made, interacted with, and come to matter in people’s lives, and how science, medicine, and technologies are involved and play a part in such processes. She uses Haraway’s term interference to create a metaphor for critical notions of academic work, arguing that realities are not given, but rather created in material practices and locations. Socio-technical practices are to be seen as reflexive, critical, and enacted versions of reality that interfere with one another. Moser (2006) claims that this perspective can show how realities and interpretations emerge and are the effects of relations that go beyond the traditional interest of semiotic approaches. This way of exploring materials, practices, technology, and artefacts also goes beyond studies of traditional texts and discourses. The focus is rather on how objects, interpretations, and social orders are made, emerge, and are sustained in relation to their materialities, and how these come to
matter (Moser, 2006). In this thesis, the concept of interference has been used as an approach in relation to norm-critical perspectives and issues of design and design processes (see especially Study I). The interference concept suggests that artefacts contribute to generating, enacting, stabilising, destabilising, and materialising identity differences (Moser, 2006). In line with these understandings, the concept of interference has been used as a way to visualise how norms, values, and identity structures, such as empowerment, are enacted in the design process and through the design of online youth counselling services (see Study I).

In Studies I and II, critical perspectives relating to agency, identity, materiality, and empowerment are discussed both in relation to how the design projects have been developed and in regard to the websites and e-services being developed as part of the design projects.

Norm-critical efforts in design

The concept of norm-critical perspectives often refers to the questioning of norms, but also to the challenges, transformations, and creations of new norms and standards. By questioning taken-for-granted norms, norm-critical perspectives often shed light on how different groups may benefit from reproducing norms (Kumashiro, 2002; Martinsson & Reimers, 2008; 2010).

The idea of social norms is a sociological concept describing intersubjectively shared and in many respects implied rules and expectations about behaviour in social communities or in society at large (Butler, 2004; Goffman, 1959; Foucault, 2002; Kumashiro, 2002), and are often referred to as the ‘normal’, taken-for-granted perceptions of a phenomenon. Social norms are also contextually defined and formulated (Goffman, 1959). Social norms imply understandings of how actions are supposed to be performed, as well as how one is supposed to behave towards and in relation to others (cf. Jonsson & Lundmark, 2014).

From an EM perspective, norms are not seen as predetermined and as governing actions, but as resources that participants can invoke in the accomplishment and organisation of situated actions and activities (Heritage, 1987; Suchman, 1987; 2007). Norms might also be ways of understanding how actors organise activities and the social structures of achieved actions (Garfinkel, 1967; Suchman, 1987; 2007).

Drawing on an understanding of norms and norm-critical perspectives, the stance taken here is that design is not neutral; every design is founded on the norms and values of a society. Artefacts communicate specific values and norms, which demand special attention when designing for diverse user groups. Design is not free from the existing norms of a society; rather, designs tend to reproduce norms and to be deeply connected to them (see Fagerström, 2010; Rommes, 2006). Taking a norm-critical perspective implies not only that one recognises the subordinated or oppressed, and makes visible the privileged ones who benefit from their positions, but also that one
examines one’s own position (see Bromseth & Darj, 2010). The positions and relations to power differ and are changeable within various contexts. However, by asking ‘who benefits from this social order?’ it is possible to discover how norms are reflected in specific activities, actions, and situations (see Dolk, 2013; Jonsson & Lundmark, 2014; Martinsson & Reimers, 2008).

Taking a norm-critical perspective means exploring and visualising the norms that affect our actions, values, and beliefs. This tradition is well established within research areas such as education (Dolk, 2013; Martinsson & Reimers, 2008; 2010) and gender and queer pedagogy (Bromseth & Darj, 2010). However, it has not been explored to the same extent in areas concerned with design, even though some efforts have been made in previous research (Bardzell, 2010; Friedman, Kahn & Borning, 2006).

As already mentioned, design is not free from the norms of society (cf. Fagerström, 2010; Rommes, 2006). Therefore, studies of design could be both a field and a tool with great potential for changing, and/or reflecting upon social norms. One feminist strategy is to visualise normative conventions, both by revealing them as constructions of discourses situated within social and political contexts and by exploring alternative approaches to normative conventions (Bardzell, 2010).

To highlight deviations from norms or exceptions to the usual is one way to shed light on how norms are present in a situation; for example, when making a design decision or during the discussion of design-related issues. A focus on norm-critical perspectives makes issues related to social norms in such areas as gender, sexuality, design, and age more visible. This strategy can also be used to open up space for possible change, along with ways to question and challenge the taken-for-granted norms. In this thesis, I adopt the notion of norm-critique at a more general level to highlight and question the social norms that are embedded in design and that impose normative expectations on the users and target groups (especially in Studies I and II).

Norms in design and norm-critical efforts can also be drawn upon as resources for highlighting and understanding the user needs that could be helpful in design processes. In this thesis, analytical approaches drawn from critical design perspectives on norms in design are used to show how norm-critical efforts are made relevant in the design of websites and e-services, as well as in design processes in which various actors are involved (see Studies I and II).

How the users make structures such as gender, class, disability, and ethnicity relevant in interaction, situations, conditions, and/or in relation to material practices is also related to the concept of critical design and other critical perspectives (Moser, 2006). This process requires that the users must manage their actions and behaviours according to structural and cultural norms (Stokoe, 2006). Highlighting norms and structures is also important from a production and design perspective, where reflections on how users do
gender or reproduce other social identities in interaction are important when setting out to question these structures.

An approach to designed artefacts and services based on an awareness of the co-construction and composition of the cultural norms present in the specific target environment, as well as in relation the designed products, has previously been highlighted (Bardzell, 2010; Churchill, 2010; see also Lundmark et al., 2011; Lundmark & Normark, 2014). As Churchill puts it:

It is my opinion that designers should think about gender at a level of sophistication beyond colour and shape. We should be reflective and conscious of the assumptions of use and user that are being built into our products. We should know how we are reifying and/or reinforcing behavioural norms or challenging them. (Churchill, 2010, p. 56)

Although these issues have been discussed in recent research, critical perspectives and the questioning of social norms are still neglected in the broader field of design, and not least in the design of digital artefacts and/or environments (cf. Bonnevier, 2007; Churchill, 2010; Ehrnberger, Räsänen & Ilstedt, 2012). The design of products, artefacts and/or services is often based on both conscious and unconscious design decisions. By the use of a norm-critical perspective, the unconscious design decisions and the norms that are being reproduced could be visualized and revealed in the design process (see Berg & Lie, 1995; Bardzell, 2010; Bonnevier, 2007). The questioning of social norms in relation to already-existing digital and multimodal online services (cf. Pauwels, 2012) could also be useful in gaining an understanding of the interplay between technology, design, and users’ actions and interactions related to the designed services and artefacts. Norm-critical perspectives and efforts in design will be discussed further in the conclusion and in particular in Study I.

The focus on design elements and features as inherently containing normative assumptions and expectations about young people as users has been a central concern in this thesis. I have adopted a norm-critical perspective on design as outlined in this chapter as an analytical approach for analysing the different aspects of the designed services, with respect to how normative expectations are embedded in their design (Study I), as well as the opportunities that the designed services open up for potential users (Study II) in terms of empowerment.

Empowerment and emancipation

Empowerment, as already argued, is a complex and contested term. Critical, feminist, and post-structural researchers have warned that there is a need for caution when considering claims that designed services and the implementa-
tion of ICT automatically enhance inclusion and empowerment (see Lennie, 2001). This critique has also been prominent in research concerned with participation and empowerment, where the definitions of empowerment, as well as the relationship between participation and empowerment, have been problematised (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Nielsen, 2012). Although empowerment is a concept with varying connotations, most definitions tend to emphasise more-or-less normative aspects such as the importance of enabling people to make their own decisions and to actively participate in societal processes in a more direct and engaged manner (Alpay et al., 2004; Emmison, Butler & Danby, 2011; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). When empowerment is used in the area of social services, it is usually based on the idea that young people should have the ability to define their own problems and develop actions and strategies to solve those problems (Emmison, Butler & Danby, 2011; Granholm, 2016). In the area of youth counselling, empowerment is perceived as a process through which young people gain the ability to take control over their own situation (Alpay et al., 2004). Empowerment is also perceived as a social process that consists of components such as power, control, capacity, and self-reliance (cf. Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010), as well as accessibility, expressivity, and active engagement (Grimme, Bardzell & Bardzell, 2014). Moreover, notions of empowerment are always situated in a social context and culture and are dependent on specific situations. This thesis takes the view that empowerment is relational and situated within specific contexts and, as such, is contingent on specific circumstances, rather than being an absolute term with specific meanings (see Savigny, 2013; Young, 1999).

Previous research on empowerment in the area of ICT and health services has highlighted the changing conditions for patients and clients using online services (Alpay et al., 2004; D’Alessandro & Dosa, 2001; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). In many cases, ICT has been a tool for empowering patients and clients of all ages, not least in the areas of health communication and health guidance (see Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). The overall aim has been to transform the relationship between professionals and patients, in order to promote autonomous self-regulation, educating people to be able to actively monitor and influence their own situation, with the benefits of better outcomes, lower costs, and higher levels of satisfaction for patients or clients (cf. Alpay et al., 2004; D’Alessandro & Dosa, 2001; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005).

In the area of youth counselling, the use of ICT, e-services and other internet resources has mainly been seen as a tool for enabling young people to gain access to help with issues related to psychological health, but also to strengthen them to handle their own situations (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2009; Emmison, Butler & Danby, 2011; Osvaldsson, 2011). Counselling practices and youth clinics are often based on ideological notions of empowerment and self-reliance, emphasising the client’s ability to understand and
influence their own status or situation (UMO.se, 2014). The empowerment of young people is often accomplished through the promotion of the client’s own capacities and ability to solve problems rather than the counsellor suggesting solutions (Emmison, Butler & Danby, 2011). Consequently, the notion of empowerment concerning young people often refers to the growth of autonomy and increased participation, critical engagement, and the ability to act in accordance with reasoning practices (Savigny, 2013; Young, 1999).

Empowerment has also been the focus of user-centred design and participatory design, both for cultivating these practices and in order to develop artefacts and design features (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Ladner, 2008; 2015). A central issue here is the design of tools and artefacts that may empower users and make it possible for them to access products on their own terms (Grimme, Bardzell & Bardzell, 2014; Ladner, 2015). Interface design and digital technology have thus in many cases been optimised with the aid of input concerning what users can and want to do rather than forcing them to adapt to a solid and established interface (see Ladner, 2015). Most commonly, users with diverse forms of disabilities have been involved in design processes to further develop functions relating to accessibility (Ladner, 2008; 2015).

Empowerment has also been addressed in the area of participatory design as an important aspect of participation with a focus on the user. In their overview of empowerment in participatory design research, Ertner, Kragelund and Malmborg (2010) show that the concept of empowerment is used in diverse ways and for different purposes. They identified five categories of enunciation of empowerment in order to gain a broader understanding of how the concept is used. The first category defined empowerment as a concrete improvement in life conditions for a specific user group, focusing on the articulation of goals to enable users to change their life situations to pursue a better future with higher quality of life. The second category enunciates empowerment as the enablement of participants to become involved in direct democracy and thereby influence political and social matters. The third category highlights the user’s position and how empowerment can be viewed as strengthening participants by enhancing their level of participation and opportunities to influence PD processes. The fourth category focuses on researcher practice, where empowerment is treated as a resource for the reinforcement of researchers’ ability to actually access the practice of PD. The fifth and last category enunciates the empowerment of users through design as “dependent on the practitioners’ ability to expose the design practice to a reflexive analysis of how discursive conditions for knowledge production shape the process and the achieved results” (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010, p. 193). Ertner, Kragelund and Malmborg (2010) also emphasise that empowerment through design is a complex and challenging activity that is not always associated with positive results for users and other stakeholders. Rather, empowerment is to be treated with an awareness of its social and
discursive aspects in the specific design situation, and that empowerment in
design processes is based on social interaction and thus implies the risk of
maintaining and reproducing pre-existing power relations (Ertner, Kragelund

In line with these critical reflections on empowerment, this thesis adds to
studies on empowerment within participatory design research by focusing on
two specific user groups: i) young people as potential users, and ii) counsel-
lors as participating practitioners, and how these two groups become em-
powered through the design of web services within an online youth counsell-
ing domain. In addition, the empirical studies will contribute to an under-
standing of what it means to be a participant in a PD project and how partic-
ipation in transformative design processes can serve as a means to empower
the professional practitioners within a changing organisation. The thesis also
contributes to an understanding of empowerment as situated in practice,
where various stakeholders are involved as participants in a design project
that forms the basis for both the processes and the designed services. By
examining the interrelations between the notions of participation and em-
powerment, I will also problematise the relationship in terms of power di-
dimensions (cf. Nielsen, 2012). Empowerment is perceived here as being situ-
ated in practice and thus it is not used as an absolute term. In line with the
notion of participation, the notion of empowerment is treated as a non-linear,
practical, and situated process in participatory design projects. The aspects
and mechanisms of empowerment under investigation are approached here
as situated in the everyday actions through which the participants organise
their participation in the design projects and in respect to the specific de-
signed features and services analysed in the separate studies.

Reflections on the theoretical stances

In this chapter, it has been argued that studying both the products and pro-
cesses in the design of online youth counselling requires an eclectic theoreti-
cal approach combining interrelated areas, here ranging from the study of
design in practice, to empowerment in participatory design, to critical per-
spectives on norms in design.

These theoretical approaches contribute to specific aspects of the analyses
in the separate studies. The theories elaborate on the different perspectives of
studying design processes and add to an understanding of the participatory
aspects of design projects. Studying design in practice by using EM as a
theoretical approach makes it possible to investigate how the participants in
these design projects are engaged in specific forms of professional reasoning
when preparing their organisations for change, as well as how the partici-
pants orient towards specific issues and concerns during the course of the
project. In addition, a focus on participation and what it means for the partic-
ipating counsellors and young people to be involved in the design projects at hand, also requires a theoretical understanding of the professional communities of practice that are invoked and constituted in the projects as well as a participant perspective focusing on what their participation comes to mean for the stakeholders who are involved in the design processes. Finally, the critical design perspectives presented in this chapter contribute to understandings of how norms, user empowerment, and agency are manifested in design and designed products and services.

An overarching theme that spans and connects the interrelated theoretical approaches is the notion of empowerment. This notion is important for the study of the websites and services, as well as the study of participation in design and design processes. The aim of gaining knowledge about the mechanisms of empowerment that come into play in participatory design projects for online youth counselling services is to direct our attention towards theories concerned with understandings of participation and participants’ roles in design projects as well as how norm-critical efforts are directed towards designed artefacts and user agency.
Chapter 4: Empirical setting – Design and development of online youth counselling

This chapter outlines the settings for the empirical studies along with the social and institutional practice under investigation. Before presenting these settings in more detail, I will first provide a contextualisation of youth counselling more generally and how online services have been developed as part of a public service for young people. To situate the studies, I first present an overview of youth counselling as a form of public service, followed by presentations of some development projects on online youth counselling initiatives. Using this as a context, I then introduce the two empirical settings where the research was conducted. These settings are both part of the development of health-related online services for young people in a youth counselling context. The two chosen settings represent, firstly, an initiative taking place at a national level and, secondly, a more local project within a municipality. Setting 1 consists of a design project developing a specific animation for the national website for youth counselling in Sweden, UMO.se. Setting 2 is a design project within a municipality, where a youth counselling website and e-service is being developed.

The two settings have in common the fact that they are both situated within the practice of designing online youth counselling services. In both settings, online youth counselling service refers to a youth clinic practice that is set up online to provide support and help for young people with diverse backgrounds in need of guidance. The aim of this online youth counselling is to provide guidance concerning, for example, physical bodily issues, sexuality, and the use of contraceptives as well as being available if someone needs to talk. The chosen settings provide interesting research sites due to their diverse target groups and the fact that they are concerned with value-laden and norm-sensitive areas, where people’s needs, access to services, and participation become of special importance and a challenge in terms of both the development of the designed services and the use of participatory design approaches.
Youth counselling as a public service

In order to be able to understand how the initiatives under study have been developed, it is important to introduce the broader context and the institutional practice of youth counselling as a public service in Sweden. Thus, in what follows, the development of youth counselling in online settings in Sweden will be described, providing a background and introduction to the empirical settings. I will start by describing the objectives and work done by youth clinics and youth counselling centres as a public service, and then move on to describe the development of online services in this area.

A youth clinic or youth counselling centre is a healthcare clinic for young people. Such services exist in similar forms in many countries. In Sweden there are around 150 youth counselling centres scattered across most county councils and municipalities in the country (SOU, 2006/77; FSUM, 2002). Most regions in Sweden have youth clinics. The overall objective for these centres or clinics as a public service is to promote physical and mental well-being, focusing mainly on sexual and reproductive health and the rights of young people (FSUM, 2016). Young people in Sweden can get advice on contraception, pregnancy testing, birth control pills, condoms, and testing for sexually transmitted diseases, as well as counselling and advice on various psychological problems or matters concerning identity. At the youth clinics, young people can meet with a range of professionals including midwives, therapists, and social workers.

Youth clinics are often regarded as important resources for the wellbeing of young people (SOU, 2006/77) through their supporting actions and counselling regarding young people’s health and lifestyles. In Sweden, hundreds of thousands of young people visit youth clinics every year. Youth clinics and centres are open to all young people between the ages of 12 and 25 years (FSUM, 2016). The target groups for youth clinics today are all young people and teenagers in the country, regardless of religion, cultural background, disabilities, or sexual orientation, and all the work done at these clinics is to be built on the needs of the young people who visit them (Wiksten-Almström, 2006).

Most youth clinics have a philosophical basis that is built on a holistic view of the practice of youth counselling, based on a social, youth, and sexuality perspective that takes a non-moralising and norm-critical stance (FSUM, 2002; 2016). Furthermore, this also involves an approach of meeting young people from diverse cultures in an open way that is grounded in a standpoint of gender equality (FSUM, 2002).

The meeting with staff at a youth clinic is often the first contact taken on a young person’s own initiative to obtain help and support on various issues. Some of the young visitors who contact youth clinics need answers or confirmation for specific questions, while others need regular contact for a longer period with the professionals at the clinics (FSUM, 2002). This makes
every meeting at the youth clinics individualised and organised for each specific situation. The institutional work of youth clinics consists of individual conversations, investigation, treatment, group activities, and outreach activities. The activities often include all of these areas, but vary according to local needs and levels of competence at each clinic (FSUM, 2002). All activities at the clinics should also, according to the youth clinic’s organisation, be based on an egalitarian and gender-equality perspective that will contribute to increasing gender equality among young people (FSUM, 2016). All employees at the youth clinics are therefore expected to demonstrate an awareness of the social inequalities that affect public health, and to promote mutual respect and dialogue between the sexes and also between young people from diverse social environments and backgrounds (Wiksten-Almströmer, 2006).

In Sweden, youth clinics are often organised and administered by the government, municipalities and county councils (FSUM, 2002). Only a few are run as private institutions, while almost half are governed by both municipalities and county councils. Often the midwives at the counselling centres are employed by the county councils, while the counsellors are employed by the municipalities (Sjukvårdsrådgivningen, 2007a; b).

A recurring work practice at the youth clinics, which has become especially important in my research, is the youth counselling meetings that are organised by the counsellors working there. It has been of particular significance for me to understand the everyday work situation of the counsellors at youth clinics, how their regular institutional set-up is organised, and how their regular professional practice is affected by their involvement in the design project (Setting 2). Normally, meetings make up a recurring and essential part of the working day for counsellors at youth clinics, constituting a significant part of their institutional work activities and routines in a particular workplace. The recurring practice of youth counselling meetings is informed by taken-for-granted norms and structures for the counsellors conducting the meetings as well as for the young people attending them as clients. Youth counselling meetings are in that sense institutionalised and formal in their character in that they are planned, organised, structured, and/or regulated practices and part of an institutional agenda (Hall, Sлембрук & Sarangi, 2006). Youth counselling meetings are carried out in youth clinics in order to provide young people with guidance and confidential counselling from counsellors and other medically educated personnel. At least implicitly, such meetings emphasise that there are issues to be discussed, information to be shared, and decisions to be made. As in much social work practice, in these kinds of meetings talk is the main vehicle for getting information from a client in order to be able to provide help and support where it is needed (Juhila, Mäkitalo & Noordegraaf, 2013).

The challenges in providing access and support to young people for the youth counselling institutions include the growing demands on increasing
implementation of infrastructure and assessment procedures that almost all public organisations, institutions, and services face under new public management (cf. Hall & Slembrouck, 2007; Hall, Slembrouck & Sarangi, 2006; Mäkitalo, 2012), as well as the fact that young people use other ways of finding information, such as digital media and online resources (Boonaeart & Vettenburg, 2011; boyd, 2014; Jenkins, Ito & boyd, 2015), which affects the traditional forms of meeting at youth clinics and how the clinics can address young people’s need for support and guidance. The upsurge in the digital media landscape has in turn led to a rethinking by societal institutions of how young people access information and navigate through digital media as clients, patients or users (see Alpay et al., 2004; Daneback & Sorbring, 2016; Granholm, 2016). All of these changes and demands highlight the issues that public services and institutions face when ICT and digital media challenge their fundamental roles and practices (Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2013). Consequently, this has also affected how the institutional practice of youth counselling has changed due to the need to find new ways of being accessible to a wide range of users as a public service and also new ways of approaching potential young users of the services provided.

The development of online youth counselling initiatives

As described above, there is a growing interest in society at large to explore and develop ideas about how ICT can be used to support public health in general and the dissemination of health information in particular (Johannesson & Holmlid, 2013; Vinnova, 2013). Conditions have changed radically for many participants in healthcare. However, growing demands to use the internet in the healthcare chain (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011; Granholm, 2016; Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003) have also affected the development of online youth counselling and how it is executed by various actors in the area of healthcare and health guidance. Online counselling in this context should be understood as any type of counselling interaction with professionals and clients that can be performed through any resource that uses the internet as a connection. This definition includes a variety of communication channels, such as instant messaging, chat, e-mail, and video-mediated communication, and all of these involve their own potential benefits and challenges (see Harris et al., 2012; Stommel & te Molder, 2015).

Currently, in Sweden, there are several services, e-services, and venues for supporting individual healthcare and health guidance on the internet. For example, actors such as county councils supply their users with services such as 1177 (a healthcare information service), Vårdguiden (a regional healthcare guide in Stockholm), and Mina vårdkontakter (Eng.: My healthcare contacts). New technologies provide resources for reorganising services in both the private and public sectors of healthcare and health guid-
ance (Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003), forming an essential part of new public management and resource-efficient models (cf. Forsell & Ivarsson Westerberg, 2014). There are actors in the private and non-profit spheres as well as public organisations and institutions that offer support and guidance regarding health and lifestyle issues via various digital platforms. Such actors offer several kinds of e-services, such as websites including information, self-assessment tests, e-mail support, forums, instant messaging discussions, online questionnaires, self-help programmes, and video- or audio-mediated support of various kinds (Abbott, Klein & Ciechomski, 2008; Granberg, 2010). The interest in society at large to explore these kinds of services for support has led to the development of various venues for different target groups.

One example of actions aimed at disseminating health information and guidance for young people as a target group has been the creation of non-commercial venues. Most of these venues or services are websites with the aim of informing, encouraging, or assisting young people to reflect in various ways; for example, by providing quality-assured information about personal health or sexuality, giving young people an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss their own life situations, or providing support through various chat functions (Löfberg & Aspán, 2011; 2013). In Sweden, there are several services supporting young people’s identity, health, and lifestyle work. The medical information service (Swe.: Sjukvårdsrådgivningen) in Sweden created an overview in 2007 (Sjukvårdsrådgivningen, 2007b; c) of services for the online support of young people. In this overview, they concluded that young people tend to seek information about sex and relationships through online services and that there were several websites available for young people that included these issues. Some examples of this kind of website and online services are: sakraresex.se (Eng.: safer sex), preventivmedel.nu (Eng.: contraceptives), RFSU.se (Swe.: Riksförbundet för Sexuell Uppläsnings; Eng.: the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education), BRIS.se (Swe.: Barnens rätt i samhället; Eng.: Children’s Rights in Society), raddabarnen.se, BUP.se, (Swe.: Barn- och ungdomspsykiatrin; Eng.: Child and Youth Psychiatry), tjejerounen.se (Eng.: Women’s Empowerment Centre), tjejerzonen.se (Eng.: Service for Women’s Empowerment), and killfrågor.se (Eng.: Boys’ Forum Online). All these services are of great importance for young people seeking support and guidance in online settings.

So far, a lot of initiatives of this kind have been implemented in the context of guidance and support for youth counselling (Daneback & Sorbring, 2016; Löfberg & Aspán, 2011; 2013). One such initiative for the development and design of online youth counselling has been the work of implementing video-mediated meetings for youth counselling. In this chapter, these initiatives will be discussed and elaborated, as they have emerged as especially important in the design projects at hand in one of the empirical settings (see Studies II and III).
Two empirical settings

The two empirical settings for this study, UMO.se and the local project of online youth counselling clinics in Stockholm municipality, will now be presented in more detail. The development of both these initiatives to provide online services for youth counselling was begun in response to a governmental investigation in 2006 regarding young people’s mental disorders and illness (SOU 2006/77). The investigation clearly stated that the development of internet resources for young people regarding issues related to psychological health was an important concern that needed to be addressed. The report stressed that resources should be invested to provide support for this target group. Internet-based support and contact with professionals was highlighted as a cost-effective solution and in the investigation it emerged that expectations about the presumed effects in relation to the costs are strikingly high. This can also be related to the focus on new public management and client-centred models (cf. Forsell & Ivarsson Westerberg, 2014), as well as the implementation of new infrastructure and online health services (Heath, Luff & Svensson, 2003; Stiller 2010), which it was argued were necessary to rebuild confidence in the public welfare system (Hall & Slembruck, 2007; Mäkitalo, 2012).

The advice given in the report was that the government, municipalities, and county councils in Sweden should develop websites and e-services inspired by the British YouthInMind (SOU, 2006/77), a website that uses web-based services to support the psychological wellbeing of people in several countries (YouthInMind, 2016). At a national level, the Swedish website promoted in the investigation, according to the advice delivered to the government, should consist of resources related to mental health, information about mental health, opportunities for self-assessment, internet-based cognitive psychotherapy programmes, and references to various resources promoted by other actors in these areas (SOU, 2006/77). This directive was one step on the way to the development of an online national youth counselling clinic in Sweden, and also to the development of municipality-based initiatives and projects affected by this development.

Setting 1: UMO.se - The national youth clinic online

UMO.se is the national website of youth clinics in Sweden for young people aged 13 to 25 (UMO.se, 2014). It is an information-based website that provides counselling on a wide range of issues regarded as important for young people’s health, such as: the body, love, friendship, sexuality, sex, family, drinking, smoking, drugs, healthcare, self-esteem, depression, and seeking help (Löfberg & Aspán, 2011; see also Image 1). The site is designed to empower young users to find their own answers to questions or concerns as
well as to post questions for either UMO.se or youth clinic workers to answer online (UMO.se, 2014). The website was developed in close cooperation with young people, youth clinics, school health services, non-governmental organisations, and professionals who work with young people.

Based on the fact that hundreds of thousands of young people (aged 13–25 years) in Sweden visit youth clinics every year, and as a result of the governmental investigation, the Swedish government commissioned the online youth clinic. This national web-based youth clinic was designed to make it easier for young people in the age range of 13–25 to find relevant, up-to-date, and guaranteed high-quality information about sex, health, and relationships. The national website of UMO.se was launched on 18 November 2008 as a result of these efforts.

The government of Sweden financed UMO.se as one part of a larger equality project that took place during the same time that UMO.se was being developed. UMO.se is now governed by Inera AB, and partly owned by the county councils. It aims to make healthcare and health guidance accessible, effective, and safe for all citizens (Löfberg & Aspán, 2011). UMO.se, as the only national youth counselling site in Sweden, is accordingly dedicated to increasing and enhancing empowerment and equality in young people’s everyday lives. During the first two and a half years of UMO.se, the site received approximately 4.5 million visitors, out of whom about three million were unique visitors. In 2014, it had 6.5 million visitors. On the site, you can ask
questions anonymously about sensitive matters and receive answers from youth-clinic professionals.

Every year, UMO.se answers around 8000 questions posted by users (Löfberg & Aspán, 2011). In January 2012, it received 311 000 visitors and around 10 000–14 000 visits to the site each day (Birgersson Norling, 2012). This is an increase of 80% since 2011. In March 2016, there were approximately 730 000 visitors, which is a further increase (UMO.se, 2016). One expressed ambition of UMO.se is to provide information and to create opportunities for young people to reflect upon and influence their own lives. In its work and agenda, UMO.se has the ambition of always taking an inclusive perspective and it aims to appeal to every user in the target group. UMO.se adheres to this ambition during the work process and in the development of the site’s content.

Another aspect of this work is the equality perspective towards which UMO.se strives. By working with this goal of equality, UMO.se has developed its own way of working with a norm-critical agenda and making efforts through which it constantly questions and problematises societal norms (see also Study I). The concept of norms, according to UMO.se, refers to the awareness of exclusionary structures such as gender, gender-transgressive identity and expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief systems, functional impairment, sexuality, and age (Guidelines for equal rights on UMO.se, UMO.se, 2014). Accordingly, such norms, as defined by UMO.se, are questioned, discussed, and debated through the whole process of working with the website and throughout its entire content. Regarding content, UMO.se uses quality-assurance processes that involve various examinations; fact reviewing by external experts, the medical director, and an editorial board consisting of people representing youth clinics and experts on human rights and discrimination.

Another requirement of the assignment from the government was that the website should be permeated by and developed from a clear equality perspective. UMO.se chose to widen this perspective to include all seven grounds for discrimination formulated in the Discrimination Act1 as described in Swedish law, and to work with a norm-critical perspective in its development of the website (Löfberg & Aspán, 2013). What UMO.se means by a norm-critical perspective and agenda is that it uses an anti-oppressive perspective that illuminates and questions taken-for-granted norms and norms that affect individuals’ access to power at different levels. UMO.se

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1 The purpose of the Discrimination Act is to combat discrimination and in other ways promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.
also defines its norm-critical work in its guidelines for equal rights on the website as follows:

Norm-critical work is to illuminate and question norms, and discuss and problematize what the advantages are of belonging to them. It starts by critically revising one’s own position and attitudes. For example, why do I think the way I do in certain questions, or if I ever have had to defend my belief system – or worry about other people’s negative reactions to it. Or whether one can access public space, with public transport and into public buildings, and if one has access to public information through language and the way it is presented. (UMO.se, 2014²)

UMO.se has the explicit goal of providing norm-critical material. It has defined five areas that it especially aims to work towards from a norm-critical perspective. These are: content, information structure and interaction design, external communication, co-operation, and the workforce. Through information structure and interaction design, UMO.se aims to prioritise subjects, and how users are expected to search and find their way around the site. External communication refers to whom UMO.se chooses to communicate with, in what way, and where and how the information is visible. Co-operation includes whom UMO.se chooses to work with, who is hired for assignments, whose knowledge and whose perspectives are prioritised. According to the organisation, the employees at UMO.se consist of individuals who have an awareness of issues such as diverse groups’ superior power and others’ lack of it, in order to be able to fulfil the above requirements.

Usability issues are also addressed by the site’s inclusion of various multimodal and visual features such as images, film sequences, animations, and sound. From the structuring of information on the website, it is also evident that UMO.se considers accessibility to be central. The content of the site consists over a hundred texts and illustrations, animations, tests, movies, and games (see Image 1). On UMO.se, all content is based on factual information that is designed to be visible throughout the site and its material. The most popular pages on UMO.se are the ones about sex, and next come those concerning the body in general and the genitals in particular (Löfberg & Aspán, 2011). The texts provided on the site are often short and are presented in everyday language. The information is also available through images, illustrations, movies, and other visuals to include as many users as possible. Text, images, and illustrations have a common design and look to attract users.

² This formulation is presented in the English version of the UMO.se website, 2014-01-30.
The website has a lot of functions through which the user can interact with the content, such as games, questionnaires, slideshows, moving images, and the “Ask UMO” function. The design and layout of the images and illustrations are cartoon-like, distinctive, and colourful. These features and ambitions aim to have an inclusive approach. The material should be easy to access and possible to use in various ways. The website and the material that UMO.se provides have also been developed for use by diverse users and in various ways; for example, by young people, educators, and youth clinics. The opportunity to engage socially, aesthetically, and emotionally with the website (see McCarthy & Wright, 2004) is offered by the visual and multimodal aspects (cf. Kress, 2009; Pauwels, 2012), which in turn are designed to make its content accessible to young users of diverse backgrounds. In an interview study, Löfberg and Aspán (2011; 2013) found that young users of UMO.se appreciated the service as they could seek information on specific issues on their own terms. The ambition of the website is also in line with the idea that information sharing is a key aspect of patient empowerment in ICT healthcare services (D’Alessandro & Dosa, 2001). This relates in turn to a dominant discourse in which the informational dimension of internet use is set out as a norm (cf. Boonaert & Vettenburg, 2011, p. 57). In addition, the multimodal aspects can be used to illustrate and discuss normative understandings and norms in relation to design. How the areas and themes of importance are visualised, composed, and presented on the website have been important in the analysis of norms in design. Furthermore, through the modalities presented on the website, norms are both implicitly and explicitly embedded, as I will show in my studies of UMO.se (see Studies I and II).

The setting of UMO.se can be described as a norm-sensitive context. The areas and issues that the website covers, which comprise sex, health, and relationships, may potentially invoke normative understandings of how one should act and/or think about these subjects. As a consequence, when the areas and themes addressed on the website are presented, certain norms and normative understandings are embedded within the multimodal information and the use of various design features (cf. Pauwels, 2012). For example, the content and design of the website is expressed by assembled textual, visual, and multimodal information represented through the use of text, images, interactive elements, navigation, structure, programming code, and layout. In the separate studies, textual, visual, and other forms of multimodal information, as well as interactional elements such as navigation and structure, are analysed as design features (see Studies I and II).

Specific design features and functions of the website UMO.se have turned out to be of particular relevance to examine (see Studies I and II). One such function is the ‘panic button’ (Sw.: panik-knappen). The panic button was created to provide an opportunity for the user to leave the page quickly if necessary. When the button is clicked, the website closes down and google.com opens up in the web browser’s window. This function was
designed to be ever-present on the right-hand side of each webpage on the site (see Study II). According to studies conducted by UMO.se, this function is greatly appreciated by young users (UMO.se, 2014). UMO.se has won several prizes in design and publishing contests and received additional praise for its design of the panic button (UMO.se, 2014; see also Study II). The panic button has contributed to changing how websites related to young people’s health issues are designed, in that many websites now include such a function. For example, the topic of whether or not to include a panic button inspired by UMO.se came up on several occasions in the design project for the municipality, a setting that is also covered in this thesis.

Setting 2: Stockholm municipality youth counselling – e-services for young people

Inspired by the national website for online youth counselling, other projects for developing online youth counselling services have been launched by several municipalities and other institutions targeting health guidance and support for young people. One such initiative is the second empirical setting, a participatory design project for developing an e-service for youth counselling in the municipality of Stockholm that targets young people aged 12 to 25 years. This initiative is based on the intention of developing web services that integrate the local physical youth clinics with online services for the same target group. A prominent feature of this design project is the way in which various actors and stakeholders were actively involved in the design and production process, including designers, a production company, the municipality, counsellors working in youth clinics, and young people in focus groups.

The project started with the idea of making youth counselling more available to young people in the municipality. One aim was to reach groups of young people who were not the most frequent visitors to the youth counselling centres or clinics. In Stockholm municipality there were about ten youth counselling clinics located throughout the municipality in 2011 (RFSU, 2011).
In November 2010, the district office (Swe.: Stadsdelskontoret) in Stockholm received an application from the youth counselling centres in the city applying for permission to start developing a youth counselling e-service in Stockholm municipality. The project was described as a concrete solution to create an accessible e-service for youth counselling. The proposed service was seen as a complement to the national website, UMO.se, and the overall aim was to make youth counselling more available and accessible to young people who were not frequent visitors to youth clinics within the municipality. The idea of the project was to assemble the youth clinics and their sites together, and to gather the information provided onto one specific website, and presenting it within a coherent interface. It also included setting up a website with a diverse set of communication channels, such as a virtual guide room, a virtual visit to a youth clinic, counselling via chat and video-mediated meetings, language support, and online booking services. The overarching goal of the project was to accommodate young people in their own online spaces and arenas. In the application, a project organisation was suggested that included decision-makers, an investment officer, and a project leader, along with participants representing counsellors at the youth clinics. The application highlighted the importance of the participating counsellors getting introductory training in the web interface and its new services and recommended that at least one of the counsellors should receive more in-depth education and training in the system to enable them to be responsible for it and act as an expert user in relation to the other users at the youth clinics.
The development and design of the web service began at the end of 2010 and when the project started, a production company was employed to initiate the development of the e-service. The project studied was organised under a set of procedures for the specific project organisation. Counsellors from the youth clinics in the municipality were involved as stakeholders under the auspices of the participatory dimension of the project. The involvement of these counsellors was based on their expertise with the potential end-users (mainly the young people visiting youth clinics) and on an estimation of the potential gains to their professional practices in working with the implementation of the new services. The project leader at the production company had the leading role in the project and arranged meetings with the participating counsellors and other stakeholders. These meetings took place approximately once a month. In addition, they arranged large-scale project meetings with most of the counsellors working at the youth clinics in the municipality, which took place once or twice each semester. The project continued for three years and the web-service (see Image 2) was launched in stages during 2013.

The production company was inspired by a human-centred, participatory, and resource-efficient production and design perspective in their work and approach to customers. The company primarily highlighted the aspects of user participation in their work, even though other aspects of design processes were also regarded as important. The approach used by the company brings to the fore respect for human actors in the processes, the systematic development of tools (i.e. systems and designed artefacts), and methods (i.e. both design methods and methods for structuring work and organisations) to support improvements in organisations. The design processes and approach used were not based on quick solutions; the aim was rather to improve activities and organisations through consistent work towards improvement and development.

However, the production company that developed the youth counselling site for the municipality was working with the ambition of involving participants and stakeholders in the project. By the use of creative and innovative methods and by developing organisations, the company aimed to improve their own development processes during design projects, as well as their clients’ organisations and agendas. The design and development work was generally performed by teams of business consultants, engineers, and designers. During the project of developing the e-service for youth counselling, the team generally consisted of one project leader, one interaction designer, one designer of illustrations and forms, developers, and other people involved in the production. During this process, the clients and counsellors involved in the project usually met with the project leader, and sometimes also an interaction designer.

Some of the important aspects of design that were highlighted by the production company in their work practices included their view of the people
involved in the project, as well as their views on decision-making, work processes, problems, and challenges. For example, the company’s work processes were based on the view that the people involved in the project are a central part of the work and development. Their aim, from the beginning of the process, was to do the right things and make the right decisions, welcoming problems during the process and visualising problems and challenges during the course of the project. They also had the ambition to make the people who were affected by the design or development part of the work processes by taking the experiences of specific actors into account during the whole design process. The ambition was also to show users how to work efficiently to create fixed and clear processes, and to be able to constantly improve these work processes. Implementation of this kind of work during the design project of developing the e-service for online youth counselling in the municipality was demonstrated, for example, by the fact that counsellors, midwives, heads of the youth clinics in the municipality, and the young people who visit the youth clinics were all included as part of the design process and involved in almost all phases of development.

These inclusive design and production approaches used by the production company are closely connected to discussions on human-centred design approaches (cf. Brown, 2009; Design Council, 2013; Stolterman, 2007), which imply that the requirements for technology and design should be developed around the work situations of users. This perspective has been particularly prominent in participatory design (PD) projects (Simonsen & Robertson, 2013), as was extensively discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. The project in this setting is not explicitly stated to be a PD project, but it is clearly based on participatory design values (Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2013). PD has here become important for understanding and situating the settings in a broader research context. The relations between the projects and their participatory dimension will be discussed more thoroughly in the four empirical studies (see Studies I, II, III and IV).
Chapter 5: Methodological approach

In this chapter, I will describe the methodological approach used in the thesis. Firstly, I will present how the empirical material was gathered in the two research settings, and then I will discuss the analytical procedures, including the selection and representation of the recorded materials and e-services. Lastly, I will highlight ethical issues of importance for the collection and representation of the data in the separate studies.

The empirical data is drawn from two ethnographic studies, one within the national setting of UMO.se (Setting 1) and one from the local municipality-based design project (Setting 2). In Setting 1, I followed the progress of a specific design project and analysed the website of UMO.se and the meanings of specific functions and features on this website. In Setting 2, the design project was followed over a period of three years, from the beginning of 2010 to the launching of the website and e-service at the end of 2013. The approach used draws on participant observations, combined with data collection, primarily of audio- and video-recorded interactions in meetings held during the design projects. In addition to these recordings, the data consists of: interviews; various artefacts arising from the design process, such as different forms of documentation, design diaries, design sketches, and illustrations; and the websites and services developed during the projects.

The methodological and analytical approach taken in this thesis builds on an ethnomethodological approach, as used in studies of workplaces and design practices (Button & Sharrock, 1996; Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Garfinkel, 1967; Suchman, 2007), and health services for young people (see, for example, Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011; Danby & Emmison, 2014; Harris et al., 2012). In addition, I draw upon critical design perspectives (Bardzell, 2010; Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015; Bowker & Star, 2000), along with studies on norms and the norm-critical efforts that are made in design practices (see Bonnevier, 2007; Ehrnberger, Räsänen & Ilstedt, 2012; Fagerström, 2010). Finally, this thesis also draws upon methodological approaches connected to participation and participatory perspectives in design practice (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Halskov & Hansen, 2015; McCarthy & Wright, 2015; Robertson & Simonsen, 2012), as discussed in previous chapters. The separate studies (i.e. Studies I, II, III, and IV) differ in terms of the methodological and analytical approaches adopted, depending on whether the focus is on the participatory design activities or on the products developed during the design of health services for young people.
For the analysis of participatory dimensions in design and design processes, important analytical concepts have been: empowerment, participation, professional reasoning, and communities of practice. In the analysis of the health services designed for young people, the methodological approach and analytical stances applied draw mainly on website analysis and critical design perspectives (Bardzell, 2010; Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015; Bowker & Star, 2000; Suchman, 2007) in order to highlight norms in design, user empowerment, and agency.

In this chapter, I will further develop the methodological framework and the diverse analytical stances used in the separate studies. But before that, I present an overview of the empirical data and the settings for data collection.

**Design processes as settings for data collection**

The empirical foundation of this thesis is data gathered while following the processes of designing online services as part of long-term ethnographic studies in two settings for youth counselling. By following specific design projects and the situated actions (Haraway, 1997; Suchman, 1987; 2007) occurring in these projects, such as the design processes and practices, it has been possible to explore the research questions as outlined. An ethnomethodological approach integrated with ethnographic methods (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012) has been important for investigating activities recurrently performed during the everyday institutional work practices of the design projects at hand (cf. Button & Sharrock, 1996; Heath & Luff, 2000; Luff, Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000; Suchman, 2007). This approach has been important both for studying the wider settings of the design projects and for taking an insider’s (or member’s) point of view.

The ethnographic data includes participant observations, video and audio recordings, interviews, field notes, and project materials such as design diaries, design sketches, and documentation. Ethnography offers a valuable set of analytical tools for studying talk-centred activities and societal practices (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Evaldsson, 2005; Randall, Harper & Rouncefield, 2007), such as the participatory design activities in the design project studied. In this study, the combination of participant observations and audio and video recordings is used to gain an understanding of the overall design processes studied and the meetings in which the participants are involved as specific design activities during the projects. The combination of ethnographic fieldwork and video recordings highlights the advantages and possibilities to identify and access activities, including talk and other forms of action, performed by the people involved in the design projects (cf. Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010). Drawing on ethnomethodology, I combine fieldwork and participant observation in all the empirical studies (Studies I, II, III and IV) in order to make sense of the participants’ activities during design
projects (cf. Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Randall, Harper & Rouncefield, 2007). In both empirical settings, I participated as both a researcher and an observer in the projects, being partly immersed in the design processes. Acting as a participant during the meetings held as part of the design projects gave me a deep ethnographic understanding of the context. Following the design processes over time has been central for the data collection and for the overall research performed in these settings. The main data collection took place at the meetings that were held during the design projects, which constituted a natural and recurring part of the design practice. The specific forms of meeting activities will be described more thoroughly in the next section of this chapter.

The first empirical setting (Setting 1) consists of a short-term case study lasting three months of the design and re-design of an interactive animation by UMO.se. Studies and analyses of the overall design of the website, UMO.se, and specific functions and multimodal features available on the website also draw on data from this setting. In this design project, the designers’ and editors’ work processes were followed by participation in meetings and by the collection of design material. A short interview with representatives from one production company involved in the design process was also conducted during the project. The design project and the data documented in that particular setting were part of a larger research project, Brukskvaliteter i webbtjänster för egenvård – en analys av UMO.se (English title: Use qualities of web services for self-care – an analysis of UMO.se). The research project was based on a co-operative project between Södertörn University, UMO.se, and the production company Ambient Media. The project leader was senior lecturer Maria Normark from Södertörn University, who is also the co-author of the first empirical study (Study I). The design project studied in this setting lasted for approximately half a year, and we followed the design process for three months during the spring of 2010. The design process under study consisted of a project with the aim of designing a specific animation to become a part of the website of UMO.se, called the Love animation. We had the opportunity to follow a student who was working as an intern in the editorial office at UMO.se and the design processes with which she was involved during her internship. Her task was to redesign and reformulate the interactive animation on the website about what happens in the body when falling in love (Study I). The data from this project consists mainly of recordings and field notes from editorial and project meetings, along with illustrations, design sketches, design notes made by the designer, expert evaluations from actors involved in the editorial group, and an interview with representatives from one production company involved in the process. As an outcome of this co-operative project, access to the local municipality-based project (Setting 2) was also initiated.

The second empirical setting (Setting 2) consists of a design project for online youth counselling in the municipality of Stockholm. This project was
followed for three years, as part of a study capturing the design process, from its beginning to the launching of the e-service. The process began in the autumn of 2010 and ended in the autumn of 2013. I acted as a participant observer, recording and documenting recurrent activities and material documents. During a shorter period, between the autumn of 2012 and the spring of 2013, I was on parental leave and only took part in the project via e-mail communication with the participants. The main setting for the data collection was the participatory part of the design practices and the main focus is on various forms of meetings, including: project and work-group meetings with representatives from the youth clinics in the municipality; the project leaders working in close collaboration with the production company; meetings with all the representatives of youth counselling in the municipality; and focus-group meetings with young people as potential users of the website. The detailed context for these meetings will be described more thoroughly below. In addition, design sketches, design manuals, field notes, email conversations, and project documentation were part of the corpus of empirical data from this setting.

The background knowledge gained by conducting participant observations has been of crucial importance for the reported research. Gaining an initial understanding of the settings was significant when the data collection was initiated. What has been described as “vulgar knowledge” (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012, p. 38; Randall & Sharrock, 2011, p. 3) is in this case central to the understanding of the empirical material and the empirical settings at hand. The concept of vulgar knowledge, or vulgar competence, basically refers to gaining, at the very least, a fundamental understanding of the setting for the study (Randall, Harper & Rouncefield, 2007). In ethnomethodological research, this means that the researcher has to get to know and understand what is required to be competent to perform specific actions in a specific practice (Randall, Harper & Rouncefield, 2007; Randall & Sharrock, 2011). For example, in their influential book Doing design ethnography, Crabtree, Rouncefield and Tolmie (2012) highlight that the researcher needs to develop an appreciation of the ordinary competences possessed by the individuals studied and how they employ this to get their activities done, and make them accountable and recognisable. The development of vulgar competence is, as they note, “a requirement for you to get to know the work of a setting such that you can see what ‘anyone around here’ can see in the ways that they see it” (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012, p. 38).

In my case, this knowledge includes a complex process. Firstly, there was a need to become ‘vulgarly competent’ (Lindwall & Lymer, 2005) in the setting of youth counselling and the work and processes of the professionals working at youth clinics. Secondly, I had to gain profound knowledge about the design processes in both settings, including the work processes of the design projects (cf. Button & Sharrock, 1996).
healthcare initiatives were usually executed, the various actors (such as municipalities, healthcare institutions, and county councils) involved in the design processes, and their everyday work in the setting under investigation. Thirdly, knowledge about the young people who seek support and guidance through the services and institutions studied was of great importance so that I could understand the overall setting of the design projects. These insights speak to the need for knowledge that reaches far beyond the meetings that took place during the design projects studied. This kind of ethnographic knowledge was also a prerequisite for understanding the practices of the researched sites and the setting of the design projects for online youth counselling that has been the focus for investigation. Knowledge about the setting has mainly been developed through immersion in the design projects as a participant in the process of design. In the UMO.se project, the participant observations were performed over a shorter period of time (i.e. around three months) than those in the design project for developing an e-service for the Stockholm municipality’s youth clinics (i.e. around three years). The studies conducted are based on an ethnomethodological approach, where the situations, settings, and phenomena analysed have grown out of observations of the practices and processes taking place in the design projects in both settings.

The documented design processes can be seen as collective endeavours with a more or less specified goal resulting in a more or less tangible product. It is common in studies of design processes to find that not all stages are accessible to examination as, for example, individual work and processes (see, for example, Button & Sharrock, 1996; Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012). In the projects at hand, the parts of the design process that have been accessible to research have mainly been meetings and project documentation of different kinds, such as design sketches, prototypes, and the images, texts, and multimodal design features on the websites and e-services. The advantage of studying meetings in participatory design contexts is that they provide access to the participants’ perspectives on the projects, including the talk-in-interaction being performed during the design meetings. Due to the fact that participatory design is often based on talk-centred activities as a central part of the design practice (cf. Luck, 2012a; Luck, 2012b; Matthews & Heinemann, 2012; Oak, 2012), the meeting-talk in the design projects studied here enabled access to central events in the design process (see Studies III and IV). Documenting meetings as part of the design process also makes it possible to study several aspects of the process because of the representation of the important stages, processes, and actions.
Meetings as institutional practice

Meetings and meeting talk as a form of institutional practice are central to the constitution of the design project and its participatory dimension. Meetings and meeting talk have therefore also been important in the analyses of the empirical data material. In her influential work on meetings and collaborative work, Boden (1994) establishes how organisations are *talked into being* through meeting talk and that this practice can visualise structures and an organisation’s agendas and goals. Since Boden presented her work, several studies have been conducted that highlight the importance of studying meetings for understanding organisations and institutional practices (for an overview, see Svennevig, 2012). The discussions and excerpts presented in my analyses are all parts of the organisational and institutional practice of both the design process of online youth counselling and the organisation of meetings during the design projects.

The focus on talk-in-interaction is generally conceived as a way of gaining access to the process of information transmission that constitutes the goals, agendas, and decisions (Boden, 1994) upon which the design processes are based. Boden (1994, p. 107) describes several key aspects of analysing meeting talk. For example, by examining specific aspects of the organisation of talk in various work settings, it is possible to discover, through those materials, how an apparently fragmentary process of information gathering is transformed into goals, agendas, and decisions. Meetings, when viewed as local interactional events, thus constitute an important part of a design process based on incremental decision-making (cf. ten Have, 1996).

Meetings are often a central and recurring part of work practices and everyday events for many professionals in various settings and contexts. This also holds true for design projects and design processes, where meetings are a central part of the practice, not least in design projects with a participatory agenda (see Bødker, Grønbæk & Kyng, 1993; Bødker, Kensing & Simonsen 2004; Luck 2012b; Robertson & Simonsen 2012; Simonsen & Robertson, 2013). In the design projects studied in this thesis, it has also been important to study meetings as a form of talk-centred activity in order to understand the design processes, and it is therefore important in the empirical studies. During the projects, I have mainly analysed data from three forms of meetings that took place during the design process. These will be presented in the following sections for each setting.

The participatory design meetings in Setting 1

In Setting 1, data was drawn from three forms of meeting: editorial group meetings, design meetings, and expert council meetings. These were diverse in character; the editorial group meetings consisted of small groups of editors and designers, the design meetings were small-scale meetings with de-
signers and producers, whereas the expert council meetings were large-scale meetings involving representatives from various target groups, professionals, and editors. I participated in a total of three meetings from this setting, one of each type. The editorial group meetings in this project were organised as work meetings for people (around 3–4 participants) who worked at UMO.se and at the production companies involved in the design process. The design meetings were for the designers and producers working on the project. The expert council meetings for this project were held at the UMO.se headquarters in a large meeting room and involved larger groups (around 10–15 participants), including representatives from the various actors and stakeholders involved in the project. In the expert council group, actors from youth clinics in Sweden, LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer) representatives, and representatives from health organisations participated, amongst others. At these meetings, representatives from UMO.se also participated and often presented information about the design process. They then received feedback from the other participants on specific features of the service, such as design, images, texts, and content.

The participatory design meetings in Setting 2

In the municipality project (Setting 2), the data is mainly drawn from three forms of meeting: project-group meetings, large-scale project meetings, and focus-group meetings with young potential users of the e-service being designed.

The first type of meeting in this setting was project-group meetings with the project organisation (mainly consisting of representatives from youth clinics (counsellors and midwives), the project leader from the production company, the designer, and the head of social services for youth clinics in the municipality). These were small-group meetings (5–12 participants) at which most of the participants were counsellors working at youth clinics in the municipality. I participated in 17 project-group meetings and recorded 15 of them. The first two project meetings were not recorded because participation in these meetings was part of the process of gaining access to the research setting. The project-group meetings were often between two and two and a half hours long and held within working hours, often in the morning, beginning at nine and ending before lunchtime at around twelve. The project leader from the production company was always in charge and was responsible for the agenda and the content of the meeting during the first two years of the project. The aim of the meetings was usually to discuss and work with the development of the website and the e-service. As the production company had the goal of engaging different actors and stakeholders in the design project, the overall aim of these meetings for the production company was to engage and involve the users of the forthcoming e-service.
The meetings during the first two years were commonly held at the premises of the production company in traditional meeting rooms, but also sometimes at the municipality’s youth clinics in their meetings spaces. During the final year of the project, the production company was no longer involved and then the meetings were held in facilities at the headquarters of social services in the municipality. The counsellors involved in the project participated in these, and occasionally one representative from the IT department and/or the head of social services also attended. The project-group meetings were often organised around discussions involving the whole group, presentations about the content and status of the project, small-group discussions, and workshops working with content and developmental processes.

The second form of meeting, the large-scale project meetings, were mainly for information with various representatives from the youth clinics in the municipality, social services, the production company, and occasionally invited guests (15–25 participants). These were often structured as two-hour-long meetings with the agenda to inform the participants about specific issues. The information shared in this way concerned issues ranging from the youth clinics’ everyday work and the counsellors’ profession, to information about the development of the e-service. I participated in three large-scale project meetings during the course of the project and recorded them. No excerpts from those meetings have been used in the separate studies, but the meetings have informed the analyses and the ethnographic knowledge in relation to the design project and the aim of this thesis.

The third form of meetings in the municipality project were focus-group meetings arranged by the production company in order to receive input from young people on the design of the e-service. I participated in three of these, and recorded two. The focus-group meetings were often one and a half hours long and held either early in the morning, before school, or late in the afternoon, after school hours. The two recorded focus-group meetings were both held in café environments with two potential users, who were also frequent visitors to youth clinics in the municipality, and the project leader from the production company. The two café environments differed regarding the setting and the visitors in the surroundings. These meetings were recorded after the participants had given their permission and consent. In line with this, the first focus-group meeting was not recorded because I wanted the participating young people to feel familiar with my participation as a researcher, as well as with being recorded. The overall aim of the meetings was to involve young people as potential users of the e-service being developed, but the agenda differed each time. The focus in the recorded meetings was to test content, texts, and design on the young people as potential users of the services and to get their opinions on specific aspects of the design of the e-service. The project leader acted as moderator and the young participants were engaged in the discussions and acted as representatives of young people as a specific user group. The meetings followed the format that the pro-
ject leader presented a subject and then the young representatives became engaged in discussing that subject.

**The role of the participant observer**

Doing participant observations made it possible both to study the different stages of the design process and to gain empirical data that covers the whole process. In this way, it was possible to identify recurring activities within the settings and institutional practices, and to identify a complete picture of the work practices of the participants involved in the design projects. Combining participant observations with audio and video recordings has also made it possible to identify situations and discussions of importance for design and development. In this way, I also gained access to the participants’ talk and actions during project meetings.

As already mentioned, I participated as both a researcher and an observer in the studied settings and projects. This means that I was also immersed in the design processes as a participant in the meetings that I studied. The two-fold role of researcher and participant is complex and has often been debated and discussed as problematic. Previous research (Jordan & Henderson, 1995; Sarangi, 2004) problematises the activity of observation by discussing the notion of the **observer’s paradox** described by Labov (1972). The observer’s paradox draws attention to the fact that the act of observation itself can contaminate the data being gathered. Sarangi (2004) extends the observer’s paradox by proposing the participant’s paradox, which draws attention to the activity of participants observing the observer, and the analyst’s paradox that in turn draws attention to the activity of obtaining members’ insights to inform analytical practice. Sarangi (2004) also discusses the relation between traditional participant observation and the situation where the observer slides into being some kind of participant in the activity. The possibility of disrupting the activity under observation, but also the commitment of being able to participate and observe the setting and activity for the purpose of interpreting it, has also been highlighted in previous research (Jordan & Henderson, 1995; Randall, Harper & Rouncefield, 2007).

In the design projects in this study, I have been more of a participant in the activities, even though I was often a silent observer sitting in the meeting, but not actually participating in the work activity at hand. As a researcher using ethnographic methods, such as participant observation, I as a researcher also became a participant in the field (Duranti, 1997). Building on this notion, I have tried to position myself as a researcher as just one of the participants in the field. During the project group meetings and the large-scale meetings, the observer role was easier to uphold than during the small focus-group meetings where it became more problematic to be an observer due to the small number of participants. In the meetings involving young
people, they were always the most engaged participants in the discussion, together with the project leader, while I as a researcher participated to a lesser extent in the discussion. However, I would argue that the insights gained from the participant observations bridge the potential problematic positions of being both observer and participant in the studied settings.

Empirical material

The empirical data consists of audio and video recordings and field notes of meetings, project material, documentation, design sketches, prototypes, and also the overall design of the websites and e-services developed in the design projects. In this section, the empirical data will be presented in more detail and the processing of the data will be further discussed.

Most of the recordings were compiled from the development of the design project in the municipality of Stockholm (Setting 2). This is also the setting where I conducted the most extensive fieldwork, following the project from beginning to end. The larger corpus of audio and video recordings was compiled from the project group meetings (32 and 29 hours respectively). In addition, the data from this setting consists of video and audio recordings of focus group meetings with young people (three hours of video and four hours of audio) and large-scale project meetings (five hours each of audio and video).

In the first setting, the design project of UMO.se, I participated in project meetings and recorded one interview (two hours) with the designers from the production company. Along with this material, written notes and protocols from the meetings were analysed. In addition, other data material, such as digital and material resources (i.e. websites, e-services, project material, design sketches, prototypes, illustrations, texts, and images) was drawn from both empirical settings. This material will be described in more detail later on in this chapter. The fact that the majority of my empirical data was drawn from the design project in the municipality is reflected in the data used in the empirical studies that represent the foundation of this thesis (Studies II, III and IV). One reason for the study of the UMO.se project being less well-documented is that it was part of an initial research project that sparked my interest in the design of online youth counselling services, which also led me to continued research in the same area. The study of UMO.se (see Studies I and II) provided important insights that made it possible for me to extend my understanding of the design and development of online youth counselling services. A central reason for studying the municipality project is that it provided the opportunity to follow a design project from its initiation to its end. The possibility of studying a design project for a longer period of time provided a unique opportunity to study aspects of participation from the perspective of both the organisation and the participants involved. It also pro-
vided a foundation for following what happened with the design projects even after that they were finished.

Audio and video recordings of meetings

During the fieldwork in both settings, I made audio and video recordings as well as taking field notes to gain situated knowledge of the design processes and the design projects (cf. Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012). During the meetings, written field notes were used to capture the formal organisation of the meetings, the flow of work, including the temporal sequences of the interactional work and meeting-talk, and issues that were highlighted as being important to the participants. The field notes were an indispensable part of the fieldwork, as they helped me to keep track of the discussions and to structure my thoughts during the design project meetings, which provided a basis for developing a coherent account of the setting and the situations under study (cf. Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012, p. 79).

The meetings during the design process were audio and video recorded, to capture the situated nature of the meeting-talk, which in turn enabled a subsequent analysis of the recordings of the data material (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012, pp. 81–82). Video recordings make it possible to analyse naturally occurring events and details of work practices (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff 2010; Lymer, 2010, p. 59). To start with, entire meetings were recorded each time they occurred, and no specific events were chosen for recording during the meetings. Recordings were made of the following types of meetings: project-group meetings, large-scale project meetings and focus-group meetings. When looking at the recorded data, I chose specific events and sequences for more detailed analysis, but the whole meetings also formed the foundation for the analysis, enabling me to gain knowledge of the whole design processes. This is especially the case in Study IV, where the phases through which the project passed during its course are the primary focus.

The video recordings and documentation of meetings were affected by several parameters, such as the choice of camera placement, the type of camera, the environments where the camera was placed, and the angle of the camera lens (cf. Aarsand & Forsberg, 2010; Lindqvist Bergander, 2015, p. 45). These factors affected the material and its analysis, and during my study, I was constantly being made aware of this when making the recordings. The iterative process of learning how best to perform recordings (Goodwin, 1993) in the studied settings, was constantly negotiated due to such factors as access to the locations before the meetings, camera positioning, etc. During the meetings, as often as I could, I recorded both video and audio, with separate tools for recording.

For video recording, a high-resolution DV camera was used and positioned in a way that seemed appropriate for each situation in order to gain
access to the whole event of the meeting. During most of the meetings, the angle of the camera was placed so that all participants were visible. However, sometimes the time available to set up the equipment was too short so the video camera was set up as quickly as possible, in which case the visibility of participants was a secondary consideration. Sometimes, there was no time to set up the recording devices in advance. Even if the camera’s field of view in those cases did not cover the whole setting, the recordings still constituted a view of the members’ perspectives of the meetings and the content of the session. The camera was as often as possible placed at the eye level of participants, in an attempt to capture their perspective on the activities and situations studied (ten Have, 2004; Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff 2010). The camera was fixed during the video recordings and I placed it so that it was not at the centre of anyone’s attention.

There is a balance between being close enough to get adequate sound and images and being at a reasonable distance so that the on-going interaction is not disturbed (see Kontio, 2016; Melander, 2009). For this reason, I also recorded audio on a separate device so as not to disturb the on-going interaction. For the audio recordings, a smartphone was used to capture audio only. This device was placed anywhere near the meeting setting in order to access the speech and conversations of the attendees.

Project material, documentation, design sketches and websites

While participant observations, integrated with audio and video recordings of meetings, constitute the main data for analysis, other digital and material resources have also been used to inform and contextualise the analysis. The participants’ activities and the interactional work involved in doing them are often replete with physical or material resources (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012, pp. 83–85). Such resources of relevance to this study include: the overall websites and services, project material, design sketches, illustrations, and images from both settings. According to Crabtree, Rouncefield and Tolmie (2012), such resources are extremely useful, as they sensitise the researcher to the work that goes on in a setting, set the focus, and direct the researchers towards salient topics. However, and perhaps more importantly, they highlight that material resources include the very ‘objects of work’, as in the things the members are working on, i.e. making, developing, or designing. In this case, these are the websites and e-services for online youth counselling. Consequently, the separate studies also consist of analyses of online material such as the websites produced in the design projects of UMO.se and in the municipality project. The websites have mainly been used as empirical material for analysis in two of the separate studies (Studies I and II). Apart from the websites, the empirical material also consists of various kinds of project material and documentation from both empirical settings. In the UMO.se project (Setting 1), I was given access to this kind of
project material through the intern, the editors, and the people working with the project.

The empirical materials drawn from this project are: design sketches, illustrations, prototypes, project documentation, written expert statements, and design diaries. In the municipality project (Setting 2), I was given access to project material and documentation mainly by the project leader from the production company, the head of social services for the youth clinics in the municipality, and the counsellors participating in the project. In this project, the documentation presented at the project-group meetings, design sketches, applications, project documentation, e-mails, illustrations, prototypes, workshop material, and outlines and standards provided by Stockholm municipality and the production company regarding design was accessible as data material.

The above products and materials were used in the analysis of the overall websites and e-services, as well as in the analyses of selected design features. The project data and digital resources have influenced the analyses of the separate studies, but became more prominent in the analyses in Studies I and II. In both these studies, visual material and digital resources from the design projects were used, as in the analysis of empowerment, norms, and norm-critical efforts in the designed services, and selected examples are presented in the analyses.

Analytical procedures – selection and data analysis

The analytical approaches taken in this thesis draws on ethnomethodological work on organisations and work practices where the practical activities, practical circumstances, and practical reasoning (Garfinkel, 1967) of design projects are in focus. The analytical approach is also based on studying design as it is practised (Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012). These kinds of practices are to be seen as phenomena worthy of study in their own right (Garfinkel, 1967). Of particular importance to the studies have been the situated activities and practices through which knowledge is shared and distributed (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010). The practical character of the design projects is treated as a member’s concern and the participants’ methods have been the focus of the study (cf. Garfinkel, 1967; Hutchby 2007; Suchman 2007; Hester & Francis, 2008; Luck, 2012a). The practical actions and practical reasoning in which members are engaged as a feature of doing their work, for example as participants in the meetings during the design projects, have enabled an understanding of what is of relevance from the perspective of the participants (cf. Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012).

In each of the separate studies presented, talk-centred activities have been the central focus for both the selection of data and the analyses. The participants’ involvement and reflections during the project meetings are mainly
realised in and through talk, even if the participants are also involved in other practices. It has been possible to analyse the social aspects of the design projects and how design and participation are practised in the settings of designing for online youth counselling through a focus on the activities and interactions in the studied meetings. A focus on “the doing of designing in practice”, and how design activities are accomplished in situ (Luck, 2012a, p. 522) have been particularly important for making sense of the participatory dimensions of the projects, where various stakeholders are involved in design. The separate studies are concerned with analysing the participants’ actions, interactions, and practices during the work of doing participation in design (Luck, 2012a) and practical reasoning (Garfinkel, 1967) as the participants become involved with the specific issues addressed in the projects.

The focus of the analysis has been, for example, on normative expectations and the norm-critical efforts that were made in the design and development of new online services (Study I), or on opportunities for youth agency and user empowerment through design features in online youth counselling (Study II). Another focus for analysis has been practical reasoning in design, examining the methods through which the participants constitute and manage problems and how solutions are constructed, challenged, and developed (Study III). Finally, I have explored how the participants reflect upon and experience their professional practice and how their roles as participants in the design project change over time (Study IV).

The analytical procedure for the studies consists of several steps. Through the participant observations, participating in meetings, documenting and viewing the video recordings from the meetings, listening to audio recordings, and reading field notes, I was able to identify specific instances of interest in the data material that stood out as being important for understanding the design practices at hand. By looking at design materials, websites under development, and existing websites for youth clinics and youth counselling, other instances turned out to be of specific relevance in relation to my research interests. Each of the separate studies is based on selected materials and instances that I have chosen for analysis. In particular, I have identified instances where issues related to normative expectations and norm-critical efforts, notions of empowerment, and design-related issues are brought up. From those instances, I have chosen specific episodes or events for further scrutiny in the separate studies. For the analyses, I selected specific sequences and events of practices and processes in design, which in turn relate to specific challenges of designing for the specific online youth counselling domain.

For example, selected sequences are drawn from the interviews with the production company involved in the design of UMO.se and the expert council meetings in order to capture how the participating actors discuss and reflect on the design and content of UMO.se (Study I). In the first study (Study I), instances and situations that problematise or draw attention to social
norms and values in the design of online youth counselling were identified in the data material. Instances were chosen from this material that addressed norm-critical efforts made by the participants in the projects and the relevance of these efforts for the target group of users. Quotes are drawn from the producers’ and designers’ discussions about the design of the Love animation, along with discussions from the expert council meetings. In addition, normative assumptions and efforts have been analysed as being embedded in the design features of UMO.se.

Study II includes selected sequences in which young potential users participating in the focus group meetings discuss video-mediated technologies for conducting counselling meetings through the use of the designed e-service. These sequences address young people’s agency and user empowerment in counselling meetings and the implications of video-mediated technologies for this practice. In order to examine the ways in which young users address issues related to user empowerment (Study II), the analytical approach draws on focus-group data (Lindegaard, 2014). It is argued that an ethnomethodological approach to focus-group data provides an understanding of how group members draw on their previous knowledge as they produce talk on specific topics (Lindegaard, 2014, p. 640; see also Rapley, 2001). The data from the focus-group meetings in the municipality project (Setting 2) provides access to the participants’ discussions on designed features and material of importance for understanding what the services offer in relation to young people as users, their agency, and empowerment. This study also applies a multimodal design and website analysis approach that focuses on how the design features of online services embody implicit cultural meanings (Pauwels, 2012).

Particular sequences of talk-in-interaction from the project group meetings focusing on how the participating counsellors engage in professional reasoning (Study III) and how they discuss the outcomes of their participation in the project (Study IV) have also been selected and used. In both the third and the fourth study (Studies III and IV), the analytical focus is on the ways in which the participating counsellors engage in and contribute to the participatory design process as representatives of potential users of the services that are being developed. The participants reflect on their participation in design and the design project, and the artefact/service under development in relation to the work practices within which the new services and technology will be fitted. Drawing on a perspective that views design as more than just the development of artefacts and services (Halskov & Hansen, 2015; Holmlid, 2009; McCarthy & Wright, 2015), the participants and the professional practices they are involved in are considered to be co-constructed in the design processes of the services.

In Study III, the analyses focus on conversational exchanges in order to examine design practices, including participatory design, through the lens of an ethnomethodological approach to conversation analysis (cf. Heinemann,
Landgrebe & Matthews, 2012; Luck 2012a; Matthews & Heinemann 2012; Oak 2012). The sequences chosen from the recordings were based on a detailed review of the data material gathered during the meetings in the municipality project (Setting 2). The selected data focuses on the counsellors’ discussion of how the video-mediated communication service can be used and developed in the project. The analysis captures the practices of comparison and analogical reasoning, through which issues related to the implications of video-mediated technology in the design project are brought up and negotiated. The collection of extracts for detailed analysis were selected by searching through the data for instances where the counsellors made explicit connections, comparisons, and analogies with existing technologies and work practices, which in turn were associated with the participants’ prior experiences, and other phenomena of relevance to their discussions (Study III).

Study IV is based on a long-term case study of the design project in the municipality (Setting 2). The data consists of an analysis of the various phases faced by the design project during its lifetime combined with selected events in which the outcome of the counsellor’s participation in the design project is analysed and discussed. The sequences presented in Study IV were chosen in order to capture the outcomes of the design project from the participating counsellors’ perspectives. The selected sequences were taken from two specific meetings to exemplify discussions that recurrent throughout the design project as a whole. The EM approach (Garfinkel, 1967; Hester & Francis, 2008; Luck, 2012a) was used here as a resource for exploring how roles and categories shifted in the interactions. This in turn was combined with a sociocultural perspective on how the participants create their own ‘community of practice’ through the formation of their changing roles (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Of particular interest is how new roles emerge in the design project and in the project group during the project’s lifespan. By studying the design project and its participants over a longer period of time, it was possible to show how the participants’ roles changed and were transformed through their participation and practical work. The design project and the outcomes for the participants is explored through the use of ethnographic methods and field notes, as well as through detailed analyses of meeting-talk. In this way, it is shown how, through their long-term participation in the project and in the particular meeting activities, the counsellors transform their professional roles during the course of the project (Study IV).

Project materials, documentation and design sketches were also used in the analysis of all the separate studies to deepen the understanding of the instances, episodes, and events chosen from the audio and video recordings.
Representation and transcripts

During the analysis of the selected data for each study, I have presented the material and chosen sequences to other researchers at research seminars, presentations, and conferences. The benefits of doing part of the analysis collaboratively in data sessions have been highlighted by a number of researchers in the field of interactional studies (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010). My material from these studies has been presented on several occasions in data sessions together with colleagues in the research group CLIP – Studies in Childhood, Learning and Identities as Interactive Practices at Uppsala University. This has generated important and valuable insights into the sequential and multimodal analysis of the material, and the analysis has also been strengthened by the multiple interpretations made collectively in the research group. The material has been presented both as audio and video clips and as transcripts drawn from the selected data.

The process of transcription is also part of analytical practice (Mondada, 2007; Randall, Harper & Rouncefield, 2007) and is a way of making data available to an audience by making it possible to read it in papers, presentations, and articles (cf. Goodwin, 1994). The chosen sequences used in the separate studies were transcribed using a simplified version of conversation analysis, drawing on the transcription conventions developed by Jefferson (2004). In Study III, where the analyses focus on conversational and talk-centred activities, a more detailed transcription of the participants’ talk was used. A simplified version of conversation analysis was used in Study II, where the analyses of the focus-group data are centred more on topical issues in the participants’ talk. In Studies I and IV, extracts from fieldwork data and audio and video recordings are used, and specific statements made by the participants were transcribed as examples and quotes to illustrate specific phenomena of relevance to the analysis.

During the transcription process, I transcribed the episodes that I have used from the Swedish data and then translated them into English, largely on a word-by-word basis with some adjustments for English syntax. In Studies I and IV, only the English translations of quotations and excerpts are included in the text, while in Studies II and III, both the English translations and the Swedish originals are included in the excerpts presented. The translations of the transcripts were made as closely as possible to the on-going talk to convey as much as possible of the original details and the content. In the final study (Study IV), I only use extracts from video recordings and field notes rather than detailed transcriptions of talk. The selected episodes and sequences used in the analysis could not be provided at full length in the article due to constraints of space in the chosen journal. The longitudinal approach used made it impossible to include detailed transcripts of talk in this study. For this purpose, the episodes and examples used are presented as extracts
from field notes, drawing from the participant observation and the video recordings.

**Website analysis**

While the audio and video recordings provide access to the participants’ perspectives on the design projects as realised in practice, the website analysis mainly provides an analyst’s perspective on the designed feature and materials. However, material resources are fundamental to the very ‘objects of work’, as noted by Crabtree, Rouncefield and Tolmie (2012, p. 83), and they are thus also important for the overall work conducted in the design projects. In the empirical studies, a range of design features and material resources were prominent and it was therefore deemed necessary to analyse these in more detail.

The analyses of website data and visual material are mainly informed by the multimodal framework developed by Pauwels (2012). This framework covers both the multimodal nature of websites and their cultural expressions and how these interplay (see also Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015). The analytical framework provides ways of analysing both the immediately manifest visual and multimodal features and constitutive elements of the designed features, and the relations of these designed features with the layers of normative expectations that are communicated through them. The core concern of the analysis is not how to design culturally appropriate or effective websites, but how to decode the cultural information and expressions that reside in both form and content, and the implicit layers of cultural meanings that are embedded within the websites examined (cf. Pauwels, 2012).

More specifically, the analyses used in the studies of the websites consist of five steps, which are: 1) the preservation of first impressions and reactions to the website; 2) an inventory of salient features, topics, and attributes, such as present website features, attributes, main categories, and topics; 3) an in-depth analysis of content and formal choices; 4) an analysis of embedded points of view, goals, and implied purposes; and 5) a contextual analysis of the design of the websites (Pauwels, 2012).

The analysis of the website and visual materials cover both a national website, UMO.se (Setting 1) and a design project for online youth counseling in Stockholm municipality (Setting 2). In performing the website analyses, the focus has been on the ways in which the design and specific design features can enable (or not) the agency of young users. The analyses focus on notions of empowerment as expressed by the assembled textual, visual, and multimodal information of the website, as well as the degree to which the producers of the web services encourage the empowerment of users through their designs. In the study that mainly uses website analysis (Study II), I also focus on and address the more symbolic dimensions of websites in order to unravel the intended and/or unintended meanings, as communicated
through the designed possibilities and actions for young users. There is also a focus on what the services and websites afford in terms of norms and empowerment related to online youth counselling in the analyses of the websites and the visual data material.

**Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations are important in all research practices and are present at all stages of the research process. There are of course specific ethical considerations that have to be taken into account when taking part, for example, in focus-group discussions with young people or in project meetings with actors involved in design processes. In this thesis, the Swedish Research Council’s ethical directions and principles on good research practice regarding research in general, and specifically for documenting and handling data, have been followed (Vetenskapsrådet, 2011). This means that it has been important to follow, discuss, and problematise the ethical principles that are relevant to the workplace contexts that I have researched. However, some ethical principles have been more important than others in relation to my research work, and this will be further developed. The demands on researchers regarding the gathering and handling of data as well as approaches, responsibilities, methods, and reliability drawn from the Swedish Research Council have been taken into consideration, and I have accordingly tried to find a reasonable balance between the various legitimate interests and concerns (Vetenskapsrådet, 2011).

Participant observation and audio and video recordings of meetings and design projects, such as those followed in this thesis, impose specific requirements that I have particularly taken into account. For example, the difficulty of gaining permission and informed consent to record from all participants in project meetings affected the possibility of using video to record a few of the meetings (i.e. large-scale project meetings). All participants were given information about the project, the research agenda, and its aims prior to data collection. To gain access to the research field and setting, permission was obtained from the heads of the institutions involved in the project. In this way, my participation was sanctioned by responsible actors for the production and development of different stages in the research process. Most of the participants in the study also gave their permission to be part of my study, although some stipulated that they did not want to be recorded on video, which I have taken into consideration during some of the meetings in my data collection. Accordingly, I gained informed consent (cf. Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Vetenskapsrådet, 2011) from the participants at the beginning of the study and also renegotiated this consent on several occasions during data collection.
On several occasions during the design process in Stockholm municipality, the participants asked questions about my presence. Due to the transformation of the group involved in the municipality project during its lifespan (see Study IV), questions related to consent needed to be readdressed on several occasions during the period of data collection. The changing personnel in the project group brought up the need to discuss the aim of the research with the participants on several occasions during the project’s lifespan. Keeping up a continuing discussion about the aims of the research has also been central for the continued data collection and for accessing a constantly changing field and setting. On a few specific occasions, some participants asked not to be recorded and therefore some utterances and discussions cannot be used in the project. I have respected these requests in the selection of examples and sequences used in the separate studies.

For the parts of the study that involved young people as potential users of the services, special ethical and methodological demands upon studies involving children and young people have been taken into account (cf. Christensen & James, 2000; Christensen, 2004; Vetenskapsrådet, 2011). Since all the young people participating in my study were over 15 years old, their parents were not contacted to give consent (Vetenskapsrådet, 2011, p. 43). One reason was that the young people participating in the focus-group discussions may also have been addressing personal and private issues concerning their experiences of being in contact with counsellors and youth clinics, and contacting their parents might have exposed their relation to the youth counselling practice. Another specific ethical consideration in relation to my data collection with young people was the challenge of how to make young people participating in focus group meetings feel comfortable with my presence as a researcher recording them.

An additional issue is the fact that parts of the material and documentation during the design project were work-in-progress material and thus I could not use them because of copyright or ownership-related issues, and this also involved specific ethical considerations. However, I did obtain permission to use images and screenshots from the final websites and e-services in both settings (Setting 1 and 2) in the separate studies (Studies I and II). When the images are used in the final publications of the studies, they are referred to according to the website’s guidelines and with reference to the website location. When design sketches and other image materials are used (Study I), special permission was obtained from the designers and originators.

In order to secure the anonymity of the participants in the studies, all names and personal information have been anonymised. Excerpts and citations have been anonymised in all of the four publications to avoid people and statements being attributable to specific individuals involved in the project. However, the projects and settings have not been anonymised, which means that the overall project can be located, in relation to the particular
websites, e-services, and specific design projects. The recordings and empirical data will be used only for research purposes and none of the material will be made available to persons not involved in this study, even after it is finished.
Chapter 6: Summary of studies

This compilation thesis includes four separate empirical studies, which each draw upon selected parts of the data described in the method chapter. In this chapter, I present a summary of the studies included in the thesis. The first study, *Reflections on norm-critical design efforts in online youth counseling*, focuses on norms in design, and is based on research and empirical data from the design of a specific animation for the website of UMO.se. The analytical focus is on the relation between technology and norms in design, elaborating upon issues concerning user identities and the norm-critical efforts that are made relevant in interface design and in this specific design project.

The second study, *Click-guides and panic buttons: Designed possibilities for youth agency and user empowerment in online youth counselling services*, has a clear design perspective. It focuses on how empowerment is manifested and displayed in and through specific multimodal features and functions in the design of websites and e-services for online youth counselling. This study explores the designed possibilities for youth agency and user empowerment as displayed in the design of the websites and as they are raised in focus-group discussions among potential young users of the e-services in the design project under development.

The third study, *Analogies in interaction: Practical reasoning and participatory design*, focuses on how participants in the design project in Stockholm municipality prepare themselves for future changes related to the implementation of new technologies in their professional practice and everyday work. Through a detailed analysis, we show how certain forms of professional reasoning practices are used by the participants in the design project to discuss and plan for future video-mediated youth counselling meetings.

The fourth study, *Design project failures: Outcomes and gains of participation in design*, focuses on the design project for youth counselling online in Stockholm municipality and addresses the participatory design aspects and ambitions of the project. This study explores the outcomes of participation for the counsellors involved as actors in the design project and their shifting experiences of participating in a project with uncertain outcomes. A brief overview of the outline and results of the separate studies is presented in the following sections.
Study I – [Reflections on norm-critical design efforts in online youth counselling]

The first study provides an initial account of how young people can be empowered through the design of online youth counselling services. Central to this study are questions concerning how user identities are made relevant in an interface design where norm-critical aspects have been explored during the design process. This study specifically explores how social norms are embedded in interaction design and how different user roles and identities are made relevant during the design processes of a specific design project. The design project that is the focus of this study is part of the development of the national website UMO.se (Setting 1). The empirical material is drawn from a case study of a design project in which a multimodal animation about what happens in the body when falling in love is developed.

The designers and developers of this specific project have been actively working with a norm-critical approach in their design work, and by following this work it was possible to find concrete examples of design challenges that involved normative and value-sensitive considerations. In addition, examples of how norms and values are manifested, not only in textual or pictorial content, but also in the design as a whole, including aspects of interaction and navigation, are given in this study. The project in focus acts as a starting point for a discussion of how interactive design consisting of technology, interaction, images, sounds, and text together construct meaning, including normative expectations and values that are important for empowerment in design.

By drawing on theories from science and technology studies (Moser, 2006; Suchman, 2007), this study contributes to critical studies in the field of HCI (Bardzell & Bardzell, 2010; Bowker & Star, 2000; Friedman, Kahn & Borning, 2006), in which the view of technology as a co-constructing agent is applied (Berg & Lie, 1995; Moser, 2006; Tholander, Normark & Rossitto, 2012).

In this study we argue that there is a need to unpack the ways in which digital design embeds norms and to critically examine the relationship between norms and design (cf. Bardzell, 2010). Some of the main findings of the study show that how the interface design presents itself largely affects its openness to multiple interpretations. Drawing on the analyses in the study, it is argued that the values embedded in the interface design become invisible, in the sense that it is almost impossible to see how the design structures our actions and interpretations of the online content. It is also argued that interface design creates normative understandings that go beyond the more common analysis in the research field of HCI of usability, aesthetics, or effectiveness. Focusing on the construction of norms in interface design in a set of selected empirical examples opened up space for a critical examination of how interface design provides structural patterns with which people come...
into daily contact through their use of services such as online youth counselling websites.

Study II – [Click-guides and panic buttons: Designed possibilities for youth agency and user empowerment in online youth counselling services]

Drawing on the findings described in the previous study, the second study further deepens our understanding of empowerment through design in relation to normative expectations regarding young people as users of online youth counselling. In this study, we examine how resources for agency are designed into online youth counselling services, as well as how these resources are addressed by young prospective users during the design of these services. The study is thus concerned with the display and manifestation of user empowerment in the design, as well as issues linked to young users’ agency that surface during the design process. The data is drawn from both the design of the national website for youth clinics in Sweden, UMO.se (Setting 1), and the design project developing e-services for local youth clinics in Stockholm municipality (Setting 2).

The analytical position taken is that empowerment in e-services and websites is not a neutral or absolute concept, but is relational and needs to be contextualised within a mediated social environment (cf. Savigny, 2013). User empowerment (Ladner, 2008; 2015) is approached here through a multimodal framework that focuses on how the design features of online services embody implicit cultural meanings (Pauwels, 2012). This approach is combined with an interactional approach that examines how young users of online services talk about and reflect on the possibilities of design features within focus-group meetings (cf. Lindegaard, 2014). The designed possibilities for young people’s agency in online services are treated as a key concern for understanding how user empowerment, including both the multimodal aspects of design features and the norms that guide their usage, is communicated in online youth counselling contexts.

The study demonstrates that design features and functions may both facilitate and restrict young people’s involvement and control over sensitive and private issues when interacting with such services. In addition, the study demonstrates that designed empowerment may allow young users to critically approach and effectively use such services. Although user empowerment within e-services is implemented in many ventures, we argue here that it is equally important to study how the design of a system is underpinned by certain normative expectations that also affect the power relations and the possibilities and control over their actions for young users. For example, the study demonstrates that privacy and trust are central aspects of user empow-
empowerment in online youth counselling systems in which young users are offered the possibility to define their own problems, actions, and strategies. In addition, power and personal control over the information-seeking process and personal space are found to be key issues in how young users accomplish empowerment in the e-services studied here.

Study III – [Analogies in interaction: Practical reasoning and participatory design]

The third study provides an ethnomethodologically informed analysis of how a group of counsellors discuss possible socio-technical dilemmas created by the introduction of web-based video-mediated counselling in the participatory design project of developing a youth counselling e-service in the municipality project (Setting 2). The study examines a set of discussions that take place among the participating counsellors as they participate in the design and development of the video-mediated communication platform. The selected empirical case provides an illuminating setting for examining how professionals anticipate work-relevant issues connected to the new technology, how they reason in terms of risk, and how they devise new practices and policies for dealing with potential challenges. With an overarching interest in participation and empowerment in design, the analysis focuses on the analogical reasoning through which the envisaged system becomes anchored to existing technologies and work practices.

While existing research on mediated interaction in counselling (Danby et al., 2009; Harris et al., 2012) has examined how new technologies influence and alter traditional forms of counsellor-client interaction – thus comparing the observed usage with such traditional forms – the present study approaches comparison as a participant’s concern and as a situated element of professional practical reasoning (cf. Garfinkel, 1967).

Furthermore, through focusing on a situation in which the technology under discussion is yet to be implemented, we gain access to the ways in which members projectively and hypothetically identify relevant issues, and anticipate future scenarios of technology use. Or, in other words, how the reciprocal relation between technology and organisational practice is established as an accomplishment by the participants. The analyses demonstrate how the participants engage in extensive hypothetical and analogical reasoning (cf. Murphy, Ivarsson & Lymer, 2012). The counsellors draw on various experiences from their existing work practices, such as experiences of distance interaction with clients via telephone and chat as well as face-to-face meetings. In the study, three forms of analogical reasoning are identified. These are: formulating design alternatives, challenging problem formulations, and stories. In various ways, these forms of analogical reasoning inform the on-
going design decision-making process, in which the hypothetical technology and its organisational and work-related implications are evaluated. The study shows that analogical reasoning is undertaken in interaction, and places the findings in the context of participatory design and studies of design reasoning.

Study IV – [Design project failures: Outcomes and gains of participation in design]

The fourth and final study is based on an investigation of a participatory design project developing e-services for youth counselling online in the setting of Stockholm municipality (Setting 2). The study investigates the outcomes of participation for the counsellors involved as actors in the project along with their experiences of participating in the project. Through the use of an ethnomethodologically informed analysis, I examine how the counsellors make sense of their experiences of participating, and how they develop new skills and knowledge that lead to their roles and work practices changing over time. As the study is longitudinal and follows the unfolding and development of the project over a period of three years, the analytical work addresses temporal aspects of participation and, in particular: a) what happens when the design efforts come to an end and the developed service is launched, and b) how this affects the roles and responsibilities of the participants who are still working in the project.

The study illuminates how a participatory design project that can be seen as having to a certain extent failed in terms of its explicitly stated goals may still have positive and unexpected outcomes due to the empowerment and learning of the individuals participating in it. In the study, a number of secondary outcomes that are potentially valuable for the organisation and for the participants are identified when they reflect upon their experiences. These outcomes are related to processes of transformation connected to the development of new professional roles and a new community of practice.

The identified outcomes are discussed in terms of: transformation of roles, situated learning, and organisational change. The study demonstrates how the roles of the counsellor participants change during the course of the project. Participation in the design and development processes made it possible for the counsellors to take part in and reflect upon the changes in their own working environment, as well as creating a means for them to question the organisation. Participation in design can thus catalyse a transformative practice for the participants who are included in the process.

The importance of empowerment and ownership is emphasised in a setting in which the participants are eventually expected to manage the project on their own. Just as McCarthy and Wright (2015) problematise role-based
distinctions that attempt to fix who people are in terms of what they do in participatory projects, what this project shows is that the transformative participation process extends beyond their roles in the project, which in turn may have lasting implications for the participants’ changing and future roles in the organisation. A recurrent pattern in the meeting talk is the ways in which the counsellors refer to the knowledge that they have gained during the process of design and their participation in the project. This is also demonstrated in particular selected examples from a project meeting, in which the counsellors manage to discuss both the technical specificities of the designed service and whether the technology functions as it should, and a possible future for the project. The project also had a lasting effect on the organisation, with the formation of new communities of practice based on the counsellor participants' new roles, practices, and common goals within the larger organisational unit (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Another more general discussion concerns the relationship between the stated project goals and the actual outcomes, and how the measures for success in PD projects could be reformulated to encompass the learning outcomes and organisational transformations that inevitably result from such projects.
Chapter 7: Concluding discussion

In this compilation thesis, I have explored the design and implementation of new online services for public organisations and social services that work with counselling and health information for young people. More specifically, I have investigated how aspects of design and participation can serve to empower both young people as potential users and counsellors as representatives and stakeholders in the design of such services. For this purpose, I approached the notion of empowerment from two interrelated perspectives. The first covers **empowerment through design** and how the interests and perspectives of the targeted young people are taken into account in the final design of the services. This perspective highlights the normative expectations embedded in specific functions and properties of the design, as well as the norm-critical efforts made to address these expectations. The second perspective focuses on **empowerment through participation**; that is, how representatives of the youth target group and the counsellors act as participants in the design projects. More specifically, this concerns how the participants’ experiences and knowledge are taken into account in the design process. Even more importantly, I explored what it means to be a participant and take part in a design process, and how such participation may change as part of the development of new forms of practices. In order to address these issues, the research questions posed at the outset of the thesis were raised (see Chapter 1). Through these questions, I have directed my attention to how young people can be empowered through the design of online health services, as well as how participation in design projects can serve to empower both young people and healthcare professionals (i.e. counsellors).

In this concluding chapter, I will summarise the findings and further reflect on the key questions that were posed at the outset of this thesis to provide some distilled and deepened answers to these research questions.

**Empowerment through the design of online youth counselling services**

One overarching question posed at the outset of this thesis was: *How are young people empowered through the design of online health services?* This question was posed in order to explore how the properties of the designed
new services affect the young presumptive users, with respect to certain empowerment mechanisms relating to young people’s representation, agency, and power.

Empowerment has previously been highlighted as a key argument in support of creating online e-services in the healthcare sector and for counselling and social services (cf. Alpay et al., 2004; Emmison, Butler & Danby, 2011; Granholm, 2016; Johannsen & Kensing, 2005). What this thesis has shown is that the introduction of new online services reformulates the existing rules and practices in the counselling situation; for example, in terms of the power relations between counsellor and client. Thus, the introduction of new services has great potential to empower the young people seeking help and guidance. What has also become evident is that certain aspects related to empowerment become especially salient within the context of online youth counselling that addresses young users and issues related to sensitive areas such as sex, mental illness, drugs, or abuse. Consequently, questions around trust, privacy, power, and control became central in the analysis of the designed new services.

It is also evident from the separate studies that small and seemingly insignificant design choices can have great impact on how the services are perceived and used by young people. For example, what became apparent in the studied design projects was that underlying normative expectations regarding young people as users were incorporated into the design of the new online services. This work thus highlights the importance of designers and other practitioners engaging in critical and norm-critical efforts as part of the design process when developing new services. In addition, it underscores the importance of actively incorporating young presumptive users as participants in the design project and taking their input seriously.

In the following, I will further outline some of the contributions this thesis has made to understanding the relationship between the properties of the design and empowering mechanisms concerning trust, privacy, power, and control, and how social norms can become embedded in user interface design.

Designing empowering mechanisms

Two of the more specific questions in this thesis were: How are empowering strategies manifested in the designs of online services for youth counselling? What actions are made possible for young users? These questions were touched upon in all of the empirical studies, but in particular in Studies I and II. For example aspects of agency, power relations, privacy, trust, and control are seen to be central aspects of user empowerment in online youth counselling services and websites, when young users are offered the opportunity to define their own problems, actions, and strategies (see Study II). Together, the studied websites and services cover a national and a local are-
na, both with the aim of creating an inclusive online space for young people. In Studies II and III, the importance of privacy and trust were highlighted as central aspects that it was essential to address in the online counselling situation, from the perspective of both the young people and the counsellors. At the same time, the separate studies also demonstrate that issues related to privacy and trust can be both challenged by and seen as a resource for young users when interacting with the services (see Study II). Trust in this context was related to contextual properties, such as the location and institutional context of the service or system, as well as their own feelings of safety when interacting with the online services.

Study II placed specific emphasis on both documenting and reflecting upon how the new proposed online services empowered the young users by providing means to exit or shut down the online counselling meeting through specific design properties built into the websites. As this designed function for shutting down the page was highlighted as important by the young people in the focus group, it was interpreted as enabling opportunities for young people to demonstrate privacy and mistrust with respect to the professionals and their advice-giving in counselling meetings (cf. Hall, Slembruck & Sarangi, 2006). From a counsellor’s perspective, trust is also crucial in counselling settings where young people are seeking support and wishing to talk about their problems. In Study III, it is shown that the participating counsellors express concerns around how to handle uncomfortable situations involving, for example, ‘dirty calls’ or suicide threats related to the implementation of video-mediated counselling meetings. In these discussions, the counsellors express concerns about issues connected to privacy and trust that the new technology and designed services may bring to their work practices. The studies indicate that feelings of security and safety are not only crucial for the young people using the web-based services (cf. Löfberg & Aspán, 2011), but also for the practitioners providing these services.

In addition to trust, privacy, and control as important aspects of empowerment and agency, power relations related to the information-seeking process and personal space are also revealed as being central to how young users access and navigate information in online youth counselling services. The fact that the young participants in Study II described positive feelings of control and power as they talked about the online counselling meetings can be taken as a way of critically approaching the power relations between counsellors and young clients. The technology offered to the young clients provided an opportunity not only of ending an unpleasant or problematic meeting but also of altering the power relations in terms of who is in control within new forms of video-mediated counselling practices. The agency that the young participants demonstrate in relation to the designed possibilities of the proposed panic button and the shut-down function highlights that even the simple act of clicking a button to exit a potentially unpleasant situation can be empowering for young users. The analyses also show how a step-by-
step navigation in web-based e-services for youth counselling is unintentionally informed by normative and individualistic expectations, implying that young people are expected to take responsibility for their own problems (cf. Colley & Hodkinson, 2001). Thus, e-services can be seen as both facilitating and restricting users’ abilities to alter the system to fit their needs, uses, and behaviours (see Study II). The analyses demonstrate the importance of considering the ways in which young people communicate aspects of trust, privacy, power, and control as central dimensions of empowerment in youth counselling services. Giving young people the means to reflect upon and influence the design of an e-service, such as online youth counselling, allows them to approach the information they find and participate in societal processes in a more direct and engaged way.

Norm-critical design

The other central questions raised in this thesis, related to empowerment, were: How are normative expectations embedded within elements of design and user interfaces? What forms of normative expectations are made visible and addressed through norm-critical efforts? The issue of how norm-critical efforts can be used to address normative expectations and values in design elements and user interfaces is explicitly the focus of Study I, and is also addressed to some extent in Study II. These studies demonstrate the importance of understanding how implicit values embedded in the interface design affect users when they interact with the services in question. The fact that both of the studied settings, UMO.se (Setting 1) and the design project in Stockholm municipality (Setting 2), are concerned with issues that are part of a norm-sensitive context makes them into an interesting site for studying how normative expectations about users are embedded in the designed services. As demonstrated in both Study I and Study II, normative understandings of young people as users do exist and they cause certain problems in the studied design projects. The design of the e-services is informed by various normative expectations concerning, for example, how to navigate the websites and how to interpret the content provided. The design is also underpinned by certain normative expectations that affect power relations and both increase and restrict the possibilities for action for young prospective users of the services.

In both of the studied settings, the websites and e-services in focus contain content that is represented by multimodal elements in combination with various interactive elements. In the separate studies, the assembled textual, visual, and multimodal information, along with interactive elements such as navigation and structure, are analysed as design features (see Studies I and II). Drawing on the analyses in the separate studies, it was found that the values and social norms embedded in the design often seem to be hidden
from the users, who do not reflect upon how certain norms structure their actions, navigation, and interpretations of the online content (see Study I).

Study II discusses how the designed features of the websites and e-services reproduce normative understandings of privacy by foregrounding potentially sensitive and private issues for young people. In the study, notions of privacy for young users themselves become prominent in regard to the designed “panic button” on the UMO.se website, compared to their use of a standard shut-down function. For example, the participants in the focus-group meeting discuss the possibilities for ending a potentially unpleasant video-mediated counselling session by using the standard shut-down symbol in the corner of a regular web browser window. Here, the designed panic button indicates a sensitive subject, while the standard shut-down button instead creates a way for young people to take control over their actions.

As it is central in this thesis to understand how social norms and norm-critical efforts are made relevant in design, the analyses have focused on how norm-critical efforts are made during the design process. Drawing on concepts and theories related to interference (see Moser, 2006), Study I showed how, for example, various user identities interfered with the normative expectations and efforts made through the design of the services. In the study, four areas were highlighted as important in relation to norm-critical efforts and expectations in the design of online youth counselling services: a) Navigation, and the way in which linearity can embed normative structures into interface design. This is exemplified by the linear structure of the Love animation, which is problematised by the designers and developers, as well as by the participants in the editorial group and the expert councils. b) It was found that visual and textual representations, and the use of a single figure or image to represent specific aspects of youth counselling concerns, limited the opportunities for inclusion and variation. The use of a single figure or image restricted the (re)presentation of diverse identities and roles with which the users could identify. c) Issues related to diversity, and how to represent various identities was also connected to how diverse identities could be represented in respectful ways and with careful consideration. Finally, d) normative expectations in design are concerned with the assembling of texts, images, and interactive elements and the ways in which these interplay. For example, how animation and designed interaction features are used in order to empower the users of the websites and services (see Study I).

By examining the construction of norms in interface design, this thesis opens up possibilities for further critical examinations of how interface design provides structurally normative patterns in the online design features with which many of us come into daily contact. The findings also bring to the fore the importance of open-endedness in interface design when it comes to e-services targeting young people as users in the online youth counselling domain.
Empowerment through participation in design projects

The other overarching question posed in the introduction to this work was: *How can participation in design projects serve to empower young people and healthcare professionals?* More specifically, this question dealt with specific aspects of participation, aiming for an increased understanding of the processes, practices, and shifting roles of the counsellors and young people involved as participants in a design project. This thesis thus contributes to the current discussion around participation in participatory design (PD) projects and human-computer interaction (HCI) research (cf. Halskov & Hansen, 2015; Saad-Sulonen et al., 2015; Vines et al., 2015). In particular, two of the studies (Studies III and IV) explore participation in design as it is practised and unfolds over time, an area in which research is lacking.

The relationship between empowerment and participation has long been a focus of research on user-centred design and participatory design, which studies the ways in which end-users may influence the results of a design process (cf. Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Ladner, 2008; 2015). The studies in this thesis contribute to this area of research both in terms of how people perceive their role as participants, and how they actually perform and what they do in these roles in a design project. The findings of the separate studies also expand our knowledge about how counsellors involved as professionals in a design project reflect upon and change their roles as participants, and how they anticipate and prepare for future changes in their work practices.

Analogical and hypothetical reasoning about future changes

One of the more specific questions in this thesis, related to empowerment through participation, is: *How do counsellors as participants in a design process prepare themselves and their organisation for future changes related to the implementation of technical systems and services in their professional practice?* Two of the separate studies (Studies III and IV) shed light on some of the ways in which the participatory dimension of the design project is realised in everyday interactions. An overriding concern for the participants involved as stakeholders in the design process is to develop an understanding of what the future system will, and should, be like; in terms of both the implemented artefact, and the new and changed work practices that come with it. This is also true for the young people participating as potential users of the services being developed in the participatory design projects (see Study II). By studying the design processes and the meetings in which the participating counsellors were involved in these processes made it possible to demonstrate how the participants prepared themselves for future changes. One notable feature of the participants’ professional reasoning around these issues is that they were primarily concerned with the organisation of their
work and the impact of the envisaged technology on their existing work practices. It was also found that envisioning a problem scenario could function for the participants as a way of opening up a more generalised examination of the technology-related consequences for their professional practice.

One particular contribution of this thesis in terms of how the participants prepare for and envision future changes, concerns how they engage in what is here referred to as hypothetical and analogical reasoning around future scenarios. Study III explicitly explores how the implementation of video-mediated technology is addressed through the articulation of problematic scenarios enacted using analogical and hypothetical reasoning about possible future changes. The discussions tended to circle around unresolved issues concerning how to implement the service under development in the organisation, and addressed topics where there was some issue at stake, such as weighing up design alternatives or when potential organisational problems or concerns were raised.

In Study III, three forms of analogical reasoning were shown to be central to the ways in which the participating counsellors draw on their professional knowledge to make sense of their participation in the design project. Firstly, it is demonstrated that they draw on professionally relevant and distinct categories or types of conversations to be able to relate to a future situation. Secondly, a kind of story was told and framed in ways that suggested that one or another option was favourable. Thirdly, analogies were drawn to problematise prior contributions, either to downgrade the relevance of the envisaged problems in an attempt to normalise the technology, or to suggest solutions that were already familiar in their professional practice.

It was found that analogies and hypothetical reasoning about the studied design processes constituted an interactional resource for the participating counsellors with real consequences for the work of participatory design. The fact that PD can work as an instrumental means of preparing practitioners for organisational change (Björgvinsson, Ehn & Hillgren, 2012) resonates with the ways in which analogies provide a means in actual practice of anchoring possible futures to familiar phenomena. The reasoning practices examined in this thesis can thus be seen as ways for the participants to appropriate and incorporate aspects of the technology into an existing organisational environment and professional practice (cf. Suchman, 2002). The participants involved in the design processes are thus preparing themselves for future changes in their work practices by actively trying to incorporate and implement the new technologies and services into their current work practices (see Studies III and IV). The ways in which the professional knowledge and expertise of the participants is brought to bear in these deliberations are detailed and wide-ranging, reaffirming the notion that PD represents a means through which participants’ tacit knowledge comes into play in design processes (Björgvinsson, Ehn & Hillgren, 2012). The analyses in the separate studies (see Studies III and IV) demonstrate some of the ways in which
forms of knowledge that are necessarily tied to particular work practices, particular workplaces, and particular participants can be brought to bear on design-related issues.

Transformative participation

Two more questions related to empowerment through participation were: How can participatory design projects be understood in terms of transformative processes, learning, and organisational change? How does this affect the positions and roles of the participants? These issues were addressed through analyses of the participatory design projects by means of an approach taking the members’ perspective by studying the participating counsellors as stakeholders who are involved in the design projects. As demonstrated in particular in Study IV, the design project in the municipality setting had many unforeseen outcomes for the participating counsellors. From a designer’s and organisational perspective, it could be seen as problematic that the majority of the online services discussed in the design project were never implemented. However, by studying the project longitudinally from the perspective of the participants, the analyses reveal outcomes that can be seen as extremely valuable both for the individual participants and for the wider organisation. A number of secondary outcomes, extending beyond the stated project goals, which are potentially valuable for the organisation involved in the project are documented in detail in Study IV. These outcomes concern aspects of how participating in a design project empowers both young people and counsellors in the process of developing new services and work procedures. These outcomes are also related to transformational processes concerning the development of the new professional roles and new communities of practice that were formed through their participation in the design process. The findings related to these outcomes revolved around three themes: transformation of roles, situated learning, and organisational change.

Transformation of roles refers to how participation in the design and development processes made it possible for the participating counsellors to become involved in the changes to their own working environment and professional practice, which in turn created opportunities both for questioning and reflecting on the organisation (see Studies III and IV). For example, it is shown how participation in design can catalyse a transformative practice for the individuals included in the processes (Study IV). In Study IV it is demonstrated in the analyses that empowerment and ownership were emphasised in the project as the role of the participants gradually transformed during the course of the project. McCarthy and Wright (2015) problematise role-based distinctions that attempt to fix who people are in terms of what they do in participatory projects. The findings of this study suggest that these transformational processes extend beyond the counsellors’ roles in the pro-
ject and may in turn have lasting effects on their roles in the future organisation. It was found that the counsellors moved from being informing participants at the beginning of the project to becoming active agents and gaining ownership in relation to the project’s new outcomes. By the end, they were managing both to run the project and the e-service and to take control over its development, and even to plan and prepare for its future development. The longitudinal approach taken in the study of this design project thus revealed that, during a later phase of the project, the participating counsellors were left alone with the design process and had to find ways of solving the problems and difficulties that they met on their own.

A recurrent pattern in the meeting talk during the design project in the municipality setting (Setting 2) was that the counsellors referred to the knowledge that they had gained during the process of design and through their participation in the project. This is shown in both Study III and Study IV, where the counsellors are involved in discussions in which they bring up their commonly held professional knowledge about their professional practice as well as imagining future changes for the project. The professionals’ learning and advanced knowledge of the design project that were gained through their participation have much in common with notions of trajectories of learning (cf. Melander, 2009) and transformative participation (McCarthy & Wright, 2015). The situated learning achieved by the participating counsellors was part of a mutual learning process (see Halskov & Hansen, 2015) based on shared understandings (Dalsgaard & Eriksson, 2016) between the counsellors and the developers involved in the initial phase of the project. Even though design projects and services can be said to bring new practices and expertise into an organisation, parts of the practices and knowledge are often already integrated into that organisation (Johannesson & Holmlid, 2015). The findings of our empirical studies indicate that the studied design projects have found ways in which skills and capacities already present in the organisations can be integrated into both the projects and the governance of the proposed services, in rather flexible ways.

Aspects of organisational change are also foregrounded in the analyses of the design projects. These projects have had an effect on the organisation, due to the formation of such things as communities of practices (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) based on the participating counsellors’ perspectives, professional practice, and new common goals. It has been demonstrated in the separate studies that new arenas are created for counselling work and participation that are not directly connected to the projects (Study IV). These new organisational units and communities of practice are formed as an outcome of the participatory dimensions of the design projects. It was demonstrated in Study IV that the participatory design aspects and their transformative participation (cf. McCarthy & Wright, 2015) became central for the counsellors involved in the project. This in turn had consequences for the wider organisation, within which the participating counsellors formed a
new organisational unit for developing the project and for future work. The findings also bring to the fore another, and more general, discussion concerning the relationship between stated project goals and actual outcomes. This underlines that the measures for success in participatory design projects need to be reformulated in order to encompass the learning outcomes for the participants and the organisational transformations that will be the inevitable result of such projects.

Reflections on the contributions

Taken as a whole, this thesis contributes to two interrelated areas of inquiry: a) **empowerment through design**, which involves how the interests and perspectives of the targeted young people are taken into account in the final design of the services, and b) **empowerment through participation**, covering how representatives of both the youth target group and counsellors act as participants in the design projects; and how this participation transforms their statuses and roles as well as being implemented and incorporated into an organisational context and existing practices. By studying the design of online youth counselling, this thesis opens up opportunities to discuss aspects such as transformative participation, and how counsellors’ participation in a design project affects their roles in an organisation.

In addition, I have shown how participatory design approaches can be used as tools and resources to address the often invisible or hidden norms in the design of online services. By ensuring the involvement of various stakeholders early in the design process, it is possible to visualise and take into consideration the forms of normative expectations and values that underlie the stakeholders’ practices, as well as to be sensitive to the norms that are reproduced in the design of the proposed services. I argue that it could be valuable for design practitioners to take these findings into account. By reflecting upon participatory design techniques, and by empowering stakeholders to participate in the design process, important insights into the normative expectations and values within the specific practices may be provided for the design practice to consider.

Finally, I will critically reflect on and develop some aspects of empowerment as used in the analyses in this thesis. In particular, Ertner, Kragelund and Malmborg (2010) highlight empowerment through design as a complex and challenging activity that is not only to be associated with positive results in terms of participation by users and stakeholders. As they put it, empowerment is rather to be treated with an awareness of the social and discursive aspects in a specific design situation. They also emphasise that empowerment in design processes is based on social interaction and that it therefore implies the risk of maintaining and reproducing pre-existing power relations (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010, p. 194). Much previous research has
been concerned with empowerment in design, and empowerment is commonly approached from a specific perspective, either in terms of how some user group is empowered by a particular new technology, or how its members can be given a voice in the design process (cf. Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Ladner, 2008).

In this thesis, I have aimed for a more nuanced understanding of how empowerment plays out through the complex interplay between a set of factors. These factors involve stakeholders: both young people as potential users of the services and professional practitioners and designers, who are all engaged in a process of creating and shaping new services and work practices, which through their design manifestation, either raise obstacles, or create means for inclusion and participation. Through this more holistic perspective, the ambition has been to convey the wider scope of what the design projects mean for the people whose lives, work, and practices are affected by the outcomes.

Given that this work has explicitly focused on how empowerment plays out in the design process, the study has not included accounts from users of the actual services. An interesting continuation of this work could thus be to study the designed services for youth counselling, in actual use, from the perspectives of both young people and counsellors as users of the services in their professional practice and everyday work.

Another strand of research that would add to and further develop the findings of this thesis would be to further explore the notion of failure in participatory design and the possibility of studying design processes and practices not only as successful projects. Thus, by focusing on the design processes and practices, this thesis has provided access to perspectives on empowerment that do not just highlight the good practices and examples, but also cover the complexity and everyday nuances of empowerment in design and through participation.
Svensk sammanfattning

Ungdomsmottagningar online


I den studerade kontexten, ungdosmottagningar online, är dessa digitala tjänster avsedda att fungera som alternativa medel för kommunikation med klienter. Detta som komplement till existerande telefon- och fysiska kontakter (Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011; Harris et al., 2012).

Effekterna av övergången till digitala och onlinetjänster för rådgivning riktad till ungdomar är i linje med effekterna av digitaliseringen inom häls- och sjukvården i allmänhet. Denna förskjutning påverkar hur människor möter hälso- och sjukvård på ett genomgripande sätt; från kommunikation


Att studera design och skapande av digitala tjänster för ungdomsmottagningar, är också att råka fokus mot en värdefylld och normkänslig domän. För att designa nätbaserade tjänster riktade mot ungdomar som användare krävs att ett antal olika utmaningar beaktas, både rörande utformningen av produkter och artefakter likväl som i själva designprocessen. Något som också spelar en viktig roll i den specifika domänen är de olika maktaspekter som kommer upp till ytan i relation till ungdomar som målgrupp. Dessa maktrelationer handlar om unga människors roll i samhället i stort, men det handlar också om makt i relation till de normer som blir relevanta i mötet med hälsovårdstjänster och de digitala artefakter genomsykta i mötet dessa tjänster är manifestade. Maktrelationer handlar här också om den inverkan som intressenter involverade i designprocessen har, samt de sätt på vilka de har möjlighet att påverka utformningen av de nya tjänsterna.

**Empiriska data**

Avhandlingen bygger på data hämtade från två empiriska miljöer, vilka har det gemensamma syftet att genom ett designprojekt utveckla hälsorelaterade onlinetjänster som riktar sig till ungdomar. De två studerade miljöerna är: den nationella ungdomsmottagningens hemsida, kallad UMO.se (miljö 1), och ett e-tjänstdesignprojekt för ungdomsmottagning på nätet i en kommun i Sverige (miljö 2). Båda miljöerna är intressanta att studera, på grund av sina olika målgrupper, deras användning av en deltagande designapproach (eng. participatory design), liksom det faktum att de båda behandlar värdefyllda och normkänsliga områden, där människors behov, tillgång till
tjänsterna och deltagande blir av särskild betydelse och en utmaning för deltagarna att utforma.

Den första studerade miljön bygger på ett designprojekt på UMO.se. UMO.se är den nationella ungdomsmottagningens hemsida i Sverige för ungdomar i åldern 13-25 (UMO.se, 2014). Det är en informationsbaserad webbplats som ger rådgivning kring ett brett spektrum av frågor som anses vara viktiga för unga människors hälsa och identitet; såsom kroppen, kärlek, vänuskap, sex, sexualitet, kön, familj, alkohol, tobak, narkotika, våld, kränkningar, självkänsla om att må dåligt. Webbplatsen är utformat för att tillhandahålla unga användare svar på deras frågor eller funderingar, samt att ge dem möjlighet att lägga upp sina egna frågor till antingen UMO.se eller ungdomsmottagningarnas anställda alternativt andra professionella aktörer att besvara på nätet (UMO.se, 2014). Webbplatsen har utvecklats i samarbete med ungdomar, ungdomsmottagningar, skolhälsovården, icke-statliga organisationer och yrkesverksamma som arbetar med ungdomar. Inom ramen för UMO.se-projektet genomfördes en etnografisk fallstudie av ett designprojekt med syfte att omkonstruera en animation om kärlek som hade publicerats på UMO.se. Även den övergripande webbplatsens specifika funktioner och multimodala aspekter på webbplatsen studerades. Genom att använda data från designprojektet och UMO.se har det varit möjligt att få kunskap om ett antal utmaningar kopplade till design och utveckling av ungdomsmottagningar på nätet. Dessa utmaningar kan handla om att i designprocessen överväga normativa förväntningar på unga människors agens och egenmakt (eng. empowerment), men också om att belysa de implicita normativa överenskommelser som finns gällande hur användare antas navigera och interagera inom ett specifikt system. Båda dessa aspekter har tagits upp i de separata studierna (Studierna I och II).

avseende design och utformning för ungdomsmottagningens tjänster online baserat på data från den longitudinella studien.

Delstudierna i avhandlingen utgår således från empiriska data från de två ovan nämnda miljöerna. Detta för att skapa förståelse för designpraktikerna och utvecklingen av e-tjänster för ungdomsmottagningar online. Under perioden för de studier som avhandlingen baseras på, vilka tillsammans sträcker sig över tre år, använde jag mig av etnografiska metoder såsom deltagande observationer, ljud- och videoinspelningar samt insamlande av andra typer av datamaterial, såsom digitala och fysiska resurser. Datamaterialet består huvudsakligen av ljud- och videoinspelade interaktioner vid möten under designprojekten. Därtill består det empiriska datamaterialet av artefakter och resultat av designprocesserna, såsom olika former av dokumentation, grafik, skisser, illustrationer, samt de webbplatser och tjänster som utvecklades i projekten. Denna typ av eklektiskt empiriskt datamaterial har gjort det möjligt att fokusera på olika aspekter av delaktighet inom designprocesser, på artefakterna samt även på slutprodukterna och de utvecklade tjänsterna.

Syfte och forskningsfrågor

Det övergripande syftet med denna avhandling är att undersöka hur aspekter av design, delaktighet och egenmakt (eng. empowerment) kan bidra till att stärka unga människor och professionella yrkesverksamma praktiker som potentiella användare av tjänsterna. I fokus har också varit hur dessa mekanismer för delaktighet tar sig i uttryck i utformningen av ungdomsmottagningar på nätet.

De mekanismer som påverkar delaktighet och egenmakt som är i fokus i dessa studier är å ena sidan deltagande och egenmakt i och genom design. Dessa handlar i sin tur om normativa förväntningar kring hur unga människor använder nätet för till exempel ungdomsrådgivning samt hur normer och normkritiska perspektiv implementeras inom design och utveckling av användargränssnitt. Den andra aspekten av egenmakt som fokuserar på deltagande, riktar in sig på en analys av de processer, metoder och skiftande roller som yrkesverksamma och ungdomar som deltagare i ett designprojekt har.

För att ta itu med dessa frågor, har en uppsättning av mer specifika frågeställningar utformats:

_Hur påverkas ungdomars befogenhet och egenmakt genom design av hälso-tjänster online?_

- På vilka sätt är normativa förväntningar inbäddade i designelement och användargränssnitt? Vilka former av normativa förväntningar synliggörs och åtgärdas genom normkritiska insatser?
• Hur manifesteras strategier kopplade till egenmakt i utformningen av onlinetjänster för ungdomar? Vilka handlingar möjliggörs för unga användare?

*Hur kan deltagande i designprojekt tjäna till att ge ungdomar samt hälso- och vårdpersonal egenmakt och deltagande?*

• Hur förbereder deltagarna i en designprocess sig själva och sina organisationer för framtida förändringar i samband med implementeringen av tekniska system och tjänster i yrkesutövningen?

• Hur kan deltagande i designprojekt förstås i termerne av transformativa processer, lärande och organisationsförändring? Hur påverkar detta positioner och roller för deltagarna i ett designprojekt?

Dessa frågor behandlas i fyra separata studier som var och en på olika sätt belyser de olika frågeställningarna. Den första studien (Studie I) behandlar sociala normer och värderingar inbäddade i utformningen av ungdomsmottagningar på nätet och de följer som normerna har på användarnas identiteter vilka presenteras i digital design. I denna studie har de normkritiska ansatser som deltagarna i sina roller som designer och utvecklare jobbat med studerats, för att kritisera och analysera dessa identiteter i termer av deras egenmakt och deltagande. Den andra studien (Studie II) behandlar de sätt på vilka användarnas egenmakt stärks, men också begränsas, genom utformningen av ungdomsåtgärdning som e-tjänst, vilket inte endast utgör en del av utformningen av den digitala designen, utan även deras egenmakt och deltagande. Dessutom undersöks även hur ungdomar kan vara aktiva och aktivt involverade i och söka information inom sådana tjänster. Den tredje studien (Studie III) tar sikte på de risker som teknisk förändring och genomförande av sociotekniska tjänster för personal som arbetar i designprojekt för med sig. Denna studie ger kunskap om olika former av praktiska resonemang kuratorerna är engagerade i när arbetsrelevanta frågor som rör den nya tekniken kommer på tal och deras strategier för att hantera och förutse eventuella problem. Den fjärde studien (Studie IV) fokuserar på deltagande i ett designprojekt som en form av praktikgemenskap (eng. community of practice). Deltagarna, deras roller och status är i särskilt fokus då deltagandet förändras när hela organisationen genomgår genomgripande förändringar. Studien undersöker sekundära utfall för deltagande i designprojekt samt hur de deltagande kuratorerna i designprojektet utvecklar nya färdigheter och kunskaper som gör att deras roller och arbetsätt förändras över tid.
Teoretiska och metodologiska utgångspunkter

De teoretiska ställningstaganden som används i denna avhandling är relaterrade till syftet med avhandlingen; att få en fördjupad förståelse av mekanismer för egenmakt och delaktighet vilket spelar in i deltagande designprojekt för hälso- och sjukvårdsstjänster på nätet, där mekanismerna i fokus rör deltagarnas roll i designprojekt, samt de olika normkritiska insatser som riktas mot design av artefakter.

Den teoretiska referensramen riktar uppmärksamheten på specifika forskningsområden. Förutom det ganska breda forskningsområde som är i fokus med avseende på empowerment (på svenska egenmakt och delaktighet) bidrar den här avhandlingen till forskningsområden som intresserar sig för yrkespraktiker i relation till lärande och kunskapsproduktion i designverksamheter. Ett annat område omfattar frågor som rör ungdomar som användare av nätet, ungdomsmottagningar online samt normativa förväntningar och normer inom design och utveckling av användargränssnitt. För att ta itu med dessa närliggande områden ansågs det nödvändigt att använda en eklektisk ansats när det kom till teoretiska och metodologiska val, vilka kombinera olika och liknande perspektiv. I studiet av design i praktiken användes en uttrycklig etnometodologisk ansats som exempelvis hjälppte till att utforska och utveckla hur deltagarna orienterar mot specifika frågor och områden i designprojekten. Denna ansats kombinerades, för att ytterligare fördjupa förståelsen av vad det innebär att vara en deltagare i deltagande designprojekt, med sociokulturella perspektiv på praktikgemenskaper och delaktighet, samt med specifika aspekter med fokus på deltagande i design. Slutligen fokuserar analyserna på hur egenmakt och delaktighet kan manifesteras i och genom design genom att använda kritiska perspektiv på normer i design, som sätter egenmakt och användarnas agens, i förgrunden.

Det metodologiska och analytiska tillvägagångssättet förlitar sig på en etnometodologisk ansats som bygger på studier av arbetsplatser och designmetoder (Button & Sharrock, 1996; Crabtree, Rouncefield & Tolmie, 2012; Garfinkel, 1967; Suchman, 2007) samt användningen av hälso- och sjukvårdsstjänster för unga människor (se exempelvis Danby, Butler & Emmison, 2011; Danby & Emmison, 2014; Harris et al, 2012). Dessutom har centrala designperspektiv (Bardzell, 2010; Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015; Bowker & Star, 2000) nyttjats, tillsammans med studier av normer och normkritiska ansträngningar i design (se exempelvis Bonnevier, 2007; Ehrnberger, Räsänen & Ilstedt, 2012; Fagerström, 2010). Slutligen bygger denna avhandling också på metodologiska ansatser som står i nära relation till delaktighet och deltagande designperspektiv (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Halskov & Hansen, 2015; McCarthy & Wright, 2015; Robertson & Simonson, 2012). De separata studierna som ingår i avhandlingen skiljer sig med avseende på metoder och analytiska tillvägagångssätt, beroende på om fokus ligger på deltagande i projekt eller på de produkter som utvecklas i utformningen av hälso- och sjukvårdsstjänster för ungdomar. För analys av delta-
gande dimensioner i design och designprocesser har analytiska begrepp av betydelse varit egenmakt, delaktighet, professionella resonemang och praktikgemenskaper. I analyserna av designandet av hälsovård för ungdomar har metoder och analytiska ansatser som bygger på webbplatsanalys och kritiska designperspektiv (Bardzell, 2010; Bardzell & Bardzell, 2015; Bowker & Star, 2000; Suchman, 2007) tillämpats. Detta för att kunna belysa normer i design i relation till egenmakt och agentsskap.


121
Avhandlingens studier

Studie I – [Reflections on norm-critical design efforts in online youth counselling]

Den första studien ger en inledande redogörelse för hur unga människor kan nå ökat deltagande genom design av ungdomsmottagningar online. I fokus för denna studie är frågor kring hur användaridentiteter görs relevanta i gränssnittsdesign, där särskilt fokus har legat på normkritiska aspekter vilka undersöks i de studerade designprocesserna. Denna studie utforskar särskilt hur sociala normer är inbäddade i interaktionsdesign och hur olika användarroller och identiteter görs relevanta under designprocesser i ett visst designprojekt. Designprojektet i fokus för denna studie är en del av utvecklingen av den nationella webbplatsen för ungdomsmottagningarna i Sverige, UMO.se (miljö 1). Det empiriska materialet hämtas från en fallstudie av ett designprojekt, samt en multimodal animation som handlar om vad som händer i kroppen vid förälskelse.


Studien hävdar att det finns ett behov av att belysa hur normer bäddas in i digital design och för att kritiskt granska förhållandet mellan normer och design (jfr Bardzell, 2010). Några av de viktigaste resultaten i studien visar hur gränssnittsdesign gestaltas och formges i hög grad påverkar och möjliggör en öppenheten för flera olika tolkningar för användarna. Med utgångspunkt i analyserna visar studien att värden som finns inbäddade i gränssnittsdesign ofta blir osynliga, i den meningen att det är nästan omöjligt att se hur design strukturerar våra handlingar och tolkningar av innehåll på nätet. Studien visar också att gränssnittsdesign skapar normativa överenskommelser vilka går utöver den mer gemensamma analysen inom forskningsområdet kring användbarhet, estetik eller effektivitet. Genom att undersöka hur konstruktionen av normer sker i gränssnittsdesign i en uppsättning utvalda empiriska exempel har det varit möjligt att kritiskt granska det sätt som gränssnittsdesign skapar strukturella mönster som människor kommer i kontakt med dagligen genom användning av tjänster såsom ungdomsmottagningar online.
Studie II – [Click-guides and panic buttons: Designed possibilities for youth agency and user empowerment in online youth counselling services]

Med utgångspunkt i resultaten från den första studien (se ovan), fördjupar den andra studien vidare förståelsen för egenmakt och delaktighet (eng. empowerment) genom design i förhållande till normativa förväntningar som kan finnas om ungdomar som potentiella besökare av ungdomsmottagningar online. I denna studie undersöks hur resurser för agentskap är utformade på nätet i rådgivningstjänster riktade till ungdomar samt hur dessa resurser behandlas av unga potentiella användare vid utformningen och designen av tjänsterna. Studien handlar följaktligen om hur egenmakt (eng. empowerment) manifesteras i design samt hur unga användares agentskap kommer till ytan under den deltagande designprocessen. Data hämtas både från UMO.se (miljö 1) och från designprojektet för de lokala ungdomsmottagningarna i Stockholm kommun (miljö 2).


Studien visar hur design och specifika designade funktioner både kan underlätta och begränsa ungdomars delaktighet och kontroll över känsliga och privata frågor när de interagerar med denna typ av onlinetjänster. Dessutom visar studien hur designad egenmakt kan tillåta unga användare att kritiskt och effektivt använda nåtbaserade tjänster för ungdomsmottagningar. Studien visar även att det är betydelsefullt att studera hur design av ett system bygger på vissa normativa förväntningar som också påverkar maktrelationer och möjligheter för och kontroll av möjliga handlingar för unga användare. Exempelvis visar studien hur integritet och förtroende är centrala aspekter av användares egenmakt i tjänster och system där unga användare erbjuds möjligheten att definiera sina egna problem, åtgärder och strategier. Vidare har makt och personlig kontroll över informationssökning visat sig vara centrala aspekter för hur unga användare blir delaktiga i de e-tjänster för ungdomsmottagningar som har studerats.
**Studie III – [Analogies in interaction: Practical reasoning and participatory design]**

Den tredje studien består av en etnometodologiskt informerad analys kring hur en grupp kuratorer diskuterar möjliga sociotekniska dilemma som skapas genom införandet av webbaserad videomedierad tjänst för ungdomsmottagningar och kuratorsamtal inom ramen för ett av de studerade deltagande designprojekten (miljö 2). Studien undersöker en uppsättning diskussioner mellan de deltagande kuratorerna, där de deltar i design och utveckling av en videomedierad kommunikationsplattform inom ramen för designprojektet. Den empiriska studien ger insyn i hur yrkesverksamma diskuterar och förutser relevanta frågor gällande deras yrkespraktik till följd av den kommande implementeringen av den nya tekniken. Studien fokuserar även på hur kuratorerna resonerar i termerna för delaktighet och hur de utveckla nya metoder och strategier för att kunna hantera potentiella problem. Med ett övergripande intresse för delaktighet i design och utveckling inom projektet fokuserar analysen på de analogiska resonemang genom vilka de planerade systemen förankras i befintlig teknik och befintliga arbetsmetoder.

Medan tidigare forskning kring mer eller mindre interaktion för rådgivning och kuratorium (se Danby et al., 2009; Harris et al., 2012) har undersökt hur ny teknik påverkar och förändrar traditionella former av interaktion mellan kuratorer och klienter, närmar sig den aktuella studien deltagarnas oro och angelägenheter som en del av ett professionellt, praktiskt resonerande (jfr Garfinkel, 1967).

Genom att fokusera på en situation där tekniken som diskuteras ännu inte har implementerats, ger denna studie tillgång till de sätt på vilka deltagarna hypotetiskt identifierar relevanta frågor och förutser framtida scenarier av den kommande teknikanvändningen. Studien påvisar med andra ord hur det ömsesidiga förhållandet mellan teknik och organisatorisk praktik etableras, inte som en relation bestående av inflytande från den ena till den andra, utan som en prestation av deltagarna inom ramen för designprojektet. Analyserna visar hur deltagarna ägnar sig åt omfattande hypotetiskt och analogiskt resonemang (jfr Murphy, Ivarsson & Lymer, 2012). Kuratorerna använder sig av olika erfarenheter från den befintliga praktiken, erfarenheter med utgångspunkt i jämförelser av möten och interaktion med klienter via telefon, chatt eller ansikte mot ansikte. I studien identifieras tre former av analogiska resonemang; att formulera designalternativ, genom att utmana problemformuleringar och genom berättelser. På olika sätt kan dessa former av analogiska resonemang informera, tydliggöra och understödja designbeslut inom det pågående designprojektet, där den hypotetiska tekniken och dess organisatoriska och arbetsrelaterade konsekvenser utvärderas. Studien visar hur analogiskt resonemang sker i samspel och resultaten i studien relateras till tidigare forskning samt teorier kring konstruktioner av resonemang och deltagande i design.
Studie IV – [Design project failures: Outcomes and gains of participation in design]

Den fjärde och sista studien baseras på en studie av ett deltagande designprojekt med syftet att utveckla e-tjänster för ungdomsmottagningar på nätet på lokal nivå i en kommun (miljö 2). Studien undersöker deltagande för de inblandade aktörerna i projektet samt deltagarnas erfarenheter av att delta i projektet. Genom att använda en etnometodologiskt informaterad analys undersöker studien hur kuratorer som deltar i designprojektet förstår sina erfarenheter av att delta i projektet, samt hur de utvecklar nya färdigheter och kunskaper som gör att deras roller och arbetssätt förändras över tid. Eftersom studien är longitudinell och följer projektets utveckling under en period omfattande tre år, tar det analytiska arbetet fasta på temporalaspekt av delaktighet, och i synnerhet a) vad som händer när designprojektet upphör och den designade tjänsten lanseras och b) hur detta påverkar ansvaret hos deltagarna och de roller som deltagarna som fortfarande arbetar i projektet har.

Studien belyser hur ett deltagande designprojekt kan ses som något som, utan att uppfylla dess uttryckligen uttalade mål, ändå kan ha positiva och oväntade resultat på grund av delaktighet och lärande hos deltagarna i projektet. I studien har ett antal sekundära resultat som är potentiellt värdefulla för organisationen och för projektde tagarna identifieras. Dessa resultat är relaterade till de förändringsprocesser som är knutna till utvecklingen av nya yrkesroller och en ny praktigemenskap (eng. community of practice).

De identifierade resultaten i studien diskuteras i termer av: förändrade roller, situerat lärande och organisatoriska förändringar. Studien visar hur deltagarnas roller ändras under projektetiden. Deltagandet i design- och utvecklingsprocesser har möjliggjort för deltagarna att delta i, och reflektera kring, de förändringar som skett i den egna arbetsmiljön i anslutning till projektet. Dessutom har deltagandet bidragit till och möjliggjort medel för deltagarna att ifrågasätta specifika aspekter kopplade till organisationen till följd av deras nyvunna kunskaper inom projektet. Deltagande i design kan således katalysera en föränderlig praktik för deltagarna i processen.

Vikten av delaktighet och ägande betonas i en miljö där deltagarna så småningom förväntas leda projektet på egen hand. Precis som hos McCarthy och Wright (2015) problematiseras rollbaserade distinktioner som avser att förklara vilka människor är, i termer av vad de gör i deltagande projekt. Vad det här projektet visar är att de transformativa deltagande processerna sträcker sig utanför de givna rollerna i projektet, vilket i sin tur kan få konsekvenser för deltagarnas utveckling och framtida roller i organisationen. Ett återkommande mönster i de studerade mötena är de sätt på vilka kuratorer hänvisar till den kunskap som de har fått under processen och genom deras deltagande i designprojektet. Detta visas specifikt i två utvalda exempel från olika projektmöten som presenteras i studien, där kuratorerna lyckas hantera både att diskutera de tekniska egenskaperna hos den avsedda tjänsten och om tekniken fungerar som den ska, samtidigt som de diskuterar en potentiell

Avslutande diskussion

Denna avhandling presenterar fyra empiriska studier som haft för avsikt att undersöka designprocessen och genomförandet av nya onlinetjänster för offentliga organisationer och sociala tjänster som arbetar med rådgivning och information om hälsa riktad till ungdomar. Det övergripande syftet med studierna har varit att ge insikter om hur aspekter av design och delaktighet kan bidra till att stärka unga människor som potentiella användare av tjänsterna och kuratorer som företrädare och intressenter i utformningen av sådana tjänster. För detta ändamål har studien omfattat och närmast sig begreppen egenmakt och delaktighet (eng. empowerment) från två besläktade perspektiv: det ena avseende egenmakt och delaktighet genom design och hur de intressen och perspektiv som är riktade mot ungdomar beaktas vid den slutliga utformningen av tjänsterna. Detta till exempel genom de normativa förväntningarna som finns inbäddade i specifika funktioner och egenskaper i designen samt i de normkritiska ansträngningar som görs för att ta itu med dessa förväntningar. Det andra perspektivet handlar om egenmakt och delaktighet genom just deltagande, vilket berör hur representanter för målgruppen ungdomar samt kuratorer fungerar som deltagare i designprojekt. Närmare bestämt handlar detta om hur deltagarnas erfarenheter och kunskaper värderas i designprocessen, och ännu viktigare vad det innebär att vara en deltagare och delta i designprocessen samt hur deltagandet kan komma att ändras som en del av utvecklingen av dessa nya praktiker. För bemöta dessa frågor formulerades de forskningsfrågor som presenterades i början av avhandlingen och i det här kapitlet. Dessa frågor gäller både hur ungdomar kan ges och få egenmakt och delaktighet genom utformningen av den här formen av online-tjänster samt hur deltagande i designprojekt kan bidra till att stärka både ungdomar och kuratorer som är involverade i processen.

Betraktad som en helhet bidrar denna avhandling till de två sammanhängande forskningsområden; a) egenmakt genom design, innefattande hur intressen och perspektiv riktade till ungdomar beaktas vid den slutliga utformningen av tjänsterna, och b) bemyndigande genom deltagande, vilket innefattar hur representanter för målgruppen ungdomar samt kuratorer, age rar som deltagare i designprojekt, hur deras deltagande förvandlar och för-
ändrar deltagarnas status och roller samt hur det genomförs och införlivas i ett organisatoriskt sammanhang och i gällande praxis. Genom att studera utformningen av ungdomsmottagningar online, öppnar denna avhandling upp för möjligheter att diskutera aspekter som transformativt deltagande samt hur kuratorer deltagande i designprojekt påverkar sina roller i organisationen.

Dessutom har studien visat hur deltagande designmetoder kan användas som verktyg och resurs för att hantera ofta osynliga eller dolda normer inom design av onlinetjänster. Genom att involvera olika aktörer tidigt i designprocesser är det möjligt att synliggöra och att ta hänsyn till olika normativa förväntningar och värderingar som finns inbyggda i intressenternas professionella praktiker samt att vara känsliga för de normer som återfinns i utformningen av de föreslagna tjänsterna. Dessa resultat kan med sannolikhet vara värdefulla för designpraktiker att ta hänsyn till även i andra domäner.

Slutligen är det nödvändigt att kritiskt reflektera över vissa frågor i samband med användningen av begreppet egenmakt (eng. empowerment) i denna avhandling. I synnerhet Ertner, Kragelund och Malmborg (2010) pekar på att egenmakt genom design är en komplex och utmanande aktivitet som inte bara är att förknippa med positiva resultat av användarnas deltagande. Som de uttrycker det, egenmakt bör snarare behandlas med medvetenhet om sociala och diskursiva aspekter i den specifika utformningen. De betonar också att egenmakt i designprocesser bygger på social interaktion och att det därmed innebär risk för upprätthållande och reproducerande av redan existerande maktrelationer (Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010, s. 194). I de flesta tidigare studier av egenmakt i design, förstås egenmakt ur ett visst perspektiv, antingen i form av hur några användargrupper bemyndigas av någon ny teknik eller hur de kan ges en röst i designprocessen (jfr Ertner, Kragelund & Malmborg, 2010; Ladner, 2008).

I denna avhandling har jag istället försökt att skriva fram och skildra en mer nyanserad bild av och förståelse för hur egenmakt konstrueras som en del av ett komplext samspel mellan en rad faktorer. Dessa faktorer utgörs av intressenter; både ungdomar som potentiella användare av tjänsterna liksom professionella utövare och designers, alla engagerade i en process av att skapa och forma nya tjänster och arbetsmetoder och som genom sin design antingen kan skapa hinder eller skapa möjligheter och medel för inklusion och delaktighet. Genom detta mer holistiska perspektiv förmedlas förhoppningsvis en mer genomgripande bild av vad designprojekt innebär för de människor vars liv, arbete och metoder påverkas av resultaten av projektet.
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