Summary

Projects are complex work contexts. This dissertation explores the practices of projects by examining how project members through situated interactions create meaning in their complex work context and how they handle different types of uncertainties and ambiguities in practice.

The empirical material was collected within Maersk Line IT, who is the industrial partner of this PhD study. The dissertation applies an ethnomethodological framework and is centred on three analyses that illustrate how project actors handle different types of uncertainties and ambiguities. Through micro-analysis of meeting interaction, in particular, the analytical chapters show how project teams create order in their daily, complex work context, how project members handle different types of unexpected problems in their work and the uncertainties created by these problems, as well as how project actors handle relational ambiguity in complex project contexts.

By studying the situated practices in projects, this study contributes with a deeper understanding of how project practices as such are performed in practice. Across the analyses, membership knowledge and competencies are shown to be central for being able to produce these management mechanisms and thus essential for managing and making sense of the complex work setting. Theoretically, the dissertation contributes to project research, especially to the project-as-practice field, by showing the situated, interactional practices that the project actors perform, how meaning and order are created through these practices, and how the practices are performed as 'ordinary' in the overall project practice.