JYVÄSKYLÄ STUDIES IN BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
108

Anne Laakkonen

Construction of the Entrepreneurial Identity in the Family Business Context

A Cross-Cultural Study

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

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Esitetään Jyväskylän yliopiston kauppakorkeakoulun suostumuksella
julkisesti tarkastettavaksi yliopiston päärakennuksen salissa C5
tammikuun 10. päivänä 2012 kello 12.

Academic dissertation to be publicly discussed, by permission of
the Jyväskylä University School of Business and Economics,
in University Main building, auditorium C5, on January 10, 2012 at 12 o'clock noon.

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 2012

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Cover page illustration by Sofia A. Singler, Student of Architecture
Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge (2010)

URN:ISBN:978-951-39-4550-3
ISBN 978-951-39-4550-3 (PDF)

ISBN 978-951-39-4549-7 (nid.)
ISSN 1457-1986

Jyväskylä University Printing House, Jyväskylä 2012

ABSTRACT

Laakkonen, Anne
Construction of the Entrepreneurial Identity in the Family Business Context. A Cross-Cultural Study
Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2012, 297 p.
(Jyväskylä Studies in Business and Economics
ISSN 1457-1986; 108)
ISBN 978-951-39-4549-7 (nid.)
ISBN 978-951-39-4550-3 (PDF)
Diss.

This study focuses on entrepreneurial identity constructions in the family business context through a cross-cultural lens. The study is interdisciplinary by nature drawing from and contributing to theories of identity, entrepreneurship, and family business. It aims at contributing to the added understanding of how family business entrepreneurs construe their entrepreneurial identities.

The methodology of this study is based on the interpretive approach utilizing the principles of hermeneutics. The empirical materials for it were gathered through thematic research interviews from two different business cultural groups representing two different generations of family business entrepreneurs; ten family business members in Louisiana, USA and nine in Finland.

The empirical materials were then analyzed interpretively through a cross-cultural lens resulting in interpretations of entrepreneurial identity constructs in the family business context. The interpretations were indicative of identity structures that are temporal, culturally embedded and situated. The value systems of the two groups seem fairly similar in building on honesty, hard work and family as values. The Louisianans appear to construct their entrepreneurial identities on portfolio entrepreneurship, money as value and networking skills expressed through a confident self-portrayal whereas the Finns appear to build theirs on being promoters of corporate entrepreneurship, having a tolerance for envy, and seeing time as a value expressed through a modest self-portrayal. Not all family business entrepreneurs perceive themselves as having an entrepreneurial identification.

The study suggests that identity work can be valuable as a thinking tool for raised self-awareness for family business entrepreneurs as well as family business consultancy.

Keywords: identity, entrepreneurship, family business, culture

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We are many

Of the many men who I am, who we are,
I can't find a single one;
they disappear among my clothes,
they've left for another city.

When everything seems to be set
to show me off as intelligent,
the fool I always keep hidden
takes over all that I say.

At other times, I'm asleep
among distinguished people,
and when I look for my brave self,
a coward unknown to me
rushes to cover my skeleton
with a thousand fine excuses.

When a decent house catches fire,
instead of the fireman I summon,
an arsonist bursts on the scene,
and that's me. What can I do?
What can I do to distinguish myself?
How can I pull myself together?

All the books I read
are full of dazzling heroes,
always sure of themselves.
I die with envy of them;
and in films full of wind and bullets,
I goggle at the cowboys,
I even admire the horses.

But when I call for a hero,
out comes my lazy old self;
so I never know who I am,
nor how many I am or will be.
I'd love to be able to touch a bell
and summon the real me,
because if I really need myself,
I mustn't disappear.

While I am writing, I'm far away;
and when I come back, I've gone.
I would like to know if others
go through the same things that I do,
have as many selves as I have,
and see themselves similarly;
and when I've exhausted this problem,
I'm going to study so hard
that when I explain myself,
I'll be talking geography.

Pablo Neruda (1958, translated by
Alastair Reid)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I feel grateful and blessed as I sit down to write this foreword to my thesis. Writing it has been a challenge beyond comparison but one that has been extremely gratifying and rewarding. For the success of it I owe a great debt of gratitude to many an individual.

I thank all the family business owners, both in Finland and in Louisiana, USA who so graciously took part in this piece of research by rendering accounts of their entrepreneurial identities to me. I can only hope that by participating in this research they gained something themselves as well. I owe a great deal of gratitude to family business owners Linda and Joe Holyfield whose good name put me in contact with the Louisianan entrepreneurs. Linda and Joe epitomize the hospitality that the South is known for.

I would like to thank Professor Juha Kansikas, whose belief in my ability was of the essence during this process. He has always been quick to answer my sometimes most mundane questions and has supported my work in good times and bad. I would also like to thank Professor Matti Koiranen for having given me the opportunity to turn this doctorate into a double doctorate by asking me to participate in co-operation with Hasselt University in Belgium. This experience has really enhanced my understanding of cross-cultural issues both in the field of research and further beyond in the real world. A big thank you goes to Professor Frank Lambrechts of Hasselt University; he acted as my Belgian supervisor and was also always more than willing to offer me his expert opinion on the various issues regarding my work as well as Belgian culture. Another thank you goes to Professor Wim Voordeckers for his help and supervision. I am grateful to all my Belgian colleagues who made my time in Hasselt so pleasant. My warmest thanks go to my mother-in-law Toini Laakkonen for all her help during this time; her cooking and baking are without comparison.

I am very grateful to my pre-examiners, Professor Corthouts and Docent Hall, for their challenging comments on my work raised the bar and helped me bring the thesis to a higher level.

I thank the Kataja organization and all my fellow doctoral students who offered their insight and opinions regarding my work during the doctoral courses I took part in. The expertise provided by the wonderful professors and teachers in those courses has been invaluable to my work.

My sincere thanks to all those institutions that so generously funded my research; Yksityisyrittäjäin säätiö, the Foundation for Economic Education, the Finnish Cultural Foundation's Central Finland's Foundation and more specifically the K-Retailers' Association. These foundations made it possible for me to work full-time on my thesis for which I am very grateful.

My deepest thanks go to the people through whom I do most of my own identity constructing; my beautiful children and the apples of my eye; Sofia, Samuel and Akseli, my parents Anja and Vilho Eskelinen who have transmitted their world of values to me, my brother and my life-long pillar of support and loyalty Pasi and my nephew Aku for the joy that he gives me.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband Hannu for his admirable know-how and advice, the invaluable inspiration he provides in conversations on business and life in general and for his uncompromised love and devotion for which no words are adequate to describe my gratefulness.

Muurame, Finland, November 22, 2011
Anne Laakkonen

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1 INTRODUCTION

This study explores the entrepreneurial identity constructions of family business entrepreneurs representing two different generations in two different business cultures; namely Louisiana, USA and Finland. The reasons behind the selection of those cultures for this study will be explained in chapter 6.4. The thesis focuses on both the processes of identity construction as well as the contents of those constructions. The entrepreneurial identifications of my respondents will get interpreted through a multifaceted theoretical lens consisting of identity theory, family business theory and cross-cultural theory as existing in the context of family business enterprises, utilizing the principles of hermeneutics. By nature this is an interdisciplinary study combining different fields of research; entrepreneurship, intercultural research, psychology, and social psychology. This feature of leaning on and drawing from different fields is inherent in the discipline of entrepreneurship. In the very beginning of the report I will discuss the background of the research as well as the objectives of it and the reasons that led to the formation of my research questions. To conclude this chapter, I will present the structure of this report.

1.1 Background of the study

During my doctoral studies and during the numerous courses that I took I frequently found myself explaining the reasons behind my research interest, i.e. why identity, why cross-cultural stance, why the two business cultures that appear as the cultural context of my study. I noticed early on that it was helpful to explain first what my academic background had been originally. My first love in the world of academia was linguistics; initially I started off as a student of English philology and later became a student of applied linguistics and intercultural studies which opened a door to adventure land for me because they set me on the path of cultural curiosity.

Later (much later, in fact) in life, as I became a business student, my interest in family businesses and related research stemmed from the following; entrepreneurship especially in the context of familial relations is a complex and fascinating phenomenon due to the mutual influence of business and family that they exert upon one another. Looking at family businesses from the family embeddedness perspective means that as researchers we have to include the family dimension in everything in our research from conceptualizing to interpreting (Aldrich & Cliff 2003, 574) so the study of identities in this context is different from studying identities of non-family business entrepreneurs.

Family businesses are important for economies, that has been stated repeatedly and that reason in itself warrants more and more research as does pondering on how and why they behave and perform differently from their non-family counterparts (Chrisman, Chua & Steier 2005, 237) in their pursuit of transgenerational wealth which refers to "a continuous stream of wealth that spans generations" (Habbershon & Pistrui 2002, 223). This carries relevance for entrepreneurial identity research in this context as well as opposed to entrepreneurial identities in general. The reciprocal effect that family and business exert on one another can also be seen in the entrepreneurial identity structures of family business entrepreneurs. The fact that so many family firms are about to start succession processes also is reason enough to study these enterprises more for the benefit of national economies the backbones of which are family businesses. However, my curiosity toward this economic unit goes beyond the financial in that I feel the need and desire to know more about the people that make up those enterprises. Scholars' advice often urges for researchers to study something that they are truly passionate about. They are not just paying lip-service when they say that, being passionate about one's own research usually means better quality and increased effort.

Initially I embarked upon this journey in my master's level studies and what especially nourished my interest was my master's thesis which I wrote on how entrepreneurial spirit is transmitted from one generation to the next in family businesses. Given my other keen interest; that being culture, I incorporated the cross-cultural aspect in that early and limited piece of research work and knew then that I had found something that I wanted to delve into in more depth. As I will report later, what emerges through the cross-cultural lens, eventually, are emphases placed on different issues within the family business realm that I then interpret to be influenced by the respondents' respective cultural reality. Those in turn will later be presented as themes having culture-bound implications for entrepreneurial identity constructions. The aim of these cross-cultural interpretations borrows from the field of anthropology in trying to not only find differences between the two cultural groups of respondents representing different business cultures but also make note of how they can be seen to be similar (Eriksen 2004, 14).

Sten (2006, 12) points out that for family business researchers the selection of the unit of analysis is not obvious given the choices between the family, the business and the family members involved. My inquisitiveness is focused on the individual, and in this case that purports to say the family business entrepreneur. What makes him or her tick, so to speak, is the question I'm after, in layman's terms, hence the focus on identity research and the individual entrepreneur as the main unit of analysis as opposed to, for example, the organization and its identity. While the focus is on the individual, I am building on a notion that individuals' overall identity structures involve the negotiation of multiple identifications and potentially, in the case of the family business entrepreneur this aims at forming hybrid identities at the interface of family and business.

Often the need for identity research is born out of people not knowing who they are as individuals and societies (Saastamoinen 2006, 173) which is actually a part of my reasoning as well. Identity research can be of value to family business consultancy and family members as they make decisions about the future of their firm and their individual lives; who do they want to be in the firm, what part do they want the firm to play in their lives or do they want to leave the business altogether. Given the transgenerational nature of most family businesses, the added interest is on the identity structures of different generations and how entrepreneurial spirit is fostered in the succeeding generations through identity work. Different generations can have vastly different psychological experiences (Renshon & Duckitt 2000, 9). Work identity or professional identity research has been considered important because it describes the relationship of the individual and work extensively and multidimensionally; it shows how social, cultural and individual meanings given to work are interwoven (Eteläpelto 2007, 90), and I view my research partly through that interest of science, although with an added interest for what the implications are for one's identity in a situation where in fact a large part of one's professional identity has to do with one's own family members. Hytti (2003) has studied the narrative construction of entrepreneurs' identities but identity research in the context of family businesses is new.

When I started on this path of dissertation research I oftentimes felt like Alice in the proverbial Wonderland, especially during the time I conducted my research interviews. Whether my journey took me to foreign lands, such as the American South or more domestically, the familiar Finnish provinces, I did not really know what to expect, how to act at times, certainly was unsure often as to how to interpret things, how to strive to stay reflective so as to upkeep trustworthiness as a research objective, how to separate stereotypical thinking from the rest, how to be conscious of my own stereotypes and so forth. The list goes on.

On the other hand the research process often felt like putting together a jigsaw puzzle in which the corner pieces represented the theories behind my pre-understanding but which was missing the cover picture to go by. Building a puzzle can also be seen as analogous with the basic premise of hermeneutics; it has to be looked at as a whole even before putting the pieces in place but the pieces also have to be looked at as parts of the whole in order for them to find their place in the whole. This at times felt like a puzzle of five thousand pieces, most of those blue sky and white clouds pieces but no guidance to go by. As the picture started forming, slowly but surely, the feeling was one of satisfaction as the puzzle started to come together. My readers are now viewing that jigsaw puzzle completed.

I find both the identity research and family business research to be a good fit with reflexive and interpretive approaches. Hall (2003, 22) says that "The reflexive approach represents a dynamic way of thinking about research as conversation, where conclusions drawn are arguments for making a case for a particular way of understanding reality". There has been an increased call for interpretive methods in family business research (Hall & Nordqvist 2008, 64) and this fact has been very encouraging for me during this process and I feel firmly that this methodological approach can add value to family business research efforts. I recognize that my researcher's identity has been influenced a lot by my previous studies in the faculty of humane sciences and presumably see this approach as somehow humane and certainly appropriate for identity and cross-cultural research. Therefore the interpretive approach has felt like the optimum way for me to do identity research; I see the world as socially constructed and identities negotiated in interaction through language; knowledge therefore is constructed in the interplay between subject and object shaped by cultural contexts (Puig, Koro-Ljunberg & Echevarria-Doan 2008, 140). When I took part in docent Annika Hall's (for more see her thesis Hall 2003) course on interpretive methodology, a light went on in my head and I felt like I had arrived. What she talked about and how she presented the methodological approach felt right for me and I felt like it fit with my world view and philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality.

Another affirming point for me during this process was a doctoral course at the University of Kuopio, Finland; led by professors Kovalainen and Eriksson that handled qualitative methodology in business and economics research (more on the subject see Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008). The experience was memorable due to the professional attitude and vast knowledge and experience of the professors running the course which solidified my conviction that I was on the right path in my research. In that course one of the assignments given to me involved having to read and analyze Hytti's dissertation (2003) called 'Stories of Entrepreneurs: Narrative Construction of Identities". This could not have been a more enjoyable task because obviously not only the subject matter hit close to home but the chosen method was something I found intriguing. Hytti's approach to the use of personal voice and her literary styling were also something that I could identify with. The subject of her dissertation, in my own mind, validated my research interest and strengthened my view on the need for research on identity constructions in the family business context as well. As such the need manifested itself as filling the gap in existing research. While Dunleavy (2003, 21) urges researchers not to frame one's thesis around gap but rather an intellectual problem or paradox, I content that it is my hope my thesis can be seen in the framework of both, not just as gap-filling even though identity research is novel in the family business context and thus fills a research gap.

Before that course I had had a couple of experiences where not only the qualitative approach but the value of identity research was totally undermined. I kept encountering those opinions later on as well but also felt more prepared to tackle those questions as my understanding increased. At one time I was asked how my work and the emphasis placed more on the social rather on the economic activity of a business fits with my writing a Ph.D. thesis for business and economics. I found that question frustrating but fair; fair in the sense that it is always good to question these things and one has to be able to point to some value that one's work supposedly creates but frustrating in the sense obviously that economic activity is present at all times in the research work undertaken with interpretive approach on issues such as entrepreneurship and identity as well. The pragmatic contributions of it, for example, can be taken to business consultancy the end result of which can enhance the economic output of a firm enormously and as far as family businesses are concerned, family dynamics are so important for the business that the social aspect through familial relations simply cannot be ignored. I strongly disagree with the stance that there is no place for identity research in business and economics because it is a human being that is presumably behind most economic activity taking place.

One profoundly notable and shocking experience, that I alluded to in the previous section, took in fact place during my very first doctoral course where the doctoral candidates were to discuss their research with the professor heading the workshop. The professor in charge of my group was one of entrepreneurship and it quickly became evident that his views on what entrepreneurship as an academic subject is and should therefore study were very different from my own. From what I could tell he saw entrepreneurship as a new venture creation process only and felt that there is no place for research the unit of study of which is the individual entrepreneur. Right before it came my time to tell him about my research proposal, he commented on someone else's work by saying that it was great; it involved a quantitative approach of some sort and dealt with entrepreneurial processes, if memory serves me right. The professor continued giving his feedback, unbeknownst of the miserable fact that I was to be next and would talk about entrepreneurial identity, by saying that please, remember never to do research on silly things like the person of the entrepreneur or even worse, his identity, that is just useless. Needless to say, my research proposal did not exactly shine after that but it was one of those turning points that are meaningful in the sense that a decision had to be made to continue or not. I chose to continue, all the more determined that I was doing something valuable.

In retrospect I see that as a defining moment that spurred my own entrepreneurial ambitions and identity work regarding my research and helped me shift into gear in the face of adversity. Pondering on this memory was also crucial in my voicing my ontological and epistemological views to be presented later in this report. I understood later that this professor's stance toward identity research in general and particularly in the context of entrepreneurship as an academic field of study elucidated the research traditions that still weave a prevalent dominance on how entrepreneurship should be studied. It also allowed me to see my own position within this field more clearly and prompted me to look further into ways of inquiry that would not only be in line with my own world view but that would also open up different kinds of channels for knowledge.

Another important milestone for my research was a doctoral course that handled methods and methodology in cross-cultural comparative research. As I applied to that course I was under the naïve assumption that this course, albeit in the field of business and economics, would follow the type of cultural studies I had undertaken in my earlier studies in the field of applied linguistics which attested to a large part to the value of qualitative approaches not very different from the one I was adopting for this research. The reality was to hit me smack in the face, so to speak. The distinguished and well experienced expert professors in charge of this course were all specialists in the field of marketing, in which the cross-cultural methods used have almost solely been quantitative. After the initial feeling of despair, I rose to the occasion, together with the professors who did their best to challenge me and I ended up leaving the course with what I can only assume was a reciprocal feeling of respect and appreciation for the two ends of the methodological continuum.

The questions raised in this course helped me in understanding the cultural implications of not only this piece of research but cross-cultural research in general. I had to ponder on issues like whether culture is used as a variable or are cultural variables trying to explain something. I learned that this line of investigation can add to the robustness of a study. Another issue raised was if and how cultures are related to nationalities and are we or should we acknowledge or be interested in subcultures. Cultures are closely related to identity building as well in that "identity provides a strategic, reciprocal relationship for the individual and culture" (Renshon & Duckitt 2000, 12). In other words, the concepts of culture and identity from a research point of view gained a whole new substance during that course. Knowing our cultural heritage can help us understand not only ourselves but those around us and the decisions and judgments they make (Keltikangas-Järvinen 2000, 16). The negative and positive feedback regarding methodology and substance of one's research guides it to where it is supposed to go and in my belief that is what happened to me. The negative made me all the more convinced that I would go for what I was intending to do but realizing at the same time that I had to produce quality work in order to justify my effort whereas the positive feedback was like much needed nourishment.

The main concepts that will appear in this study are those of family business, identity, and culture, approached interpretively. It needs to be pointed out that by first glance these concepts are such that in the popular writings people tend to give them substance without pondering too deeply on their actual meanings and definitions but in the academic world they all share one interesting fact; none of them have one solid and all-approved definition that could be used unanimously. This of course means challenges for the research process. In the interpretive approach one of the main issues one needs to keep in mind at all times is the transparency of the work and reporting of it so the conceptual vagueness needs to be explained away by putting rigorous effort into exposing one's own world view on these concepts. It is to that end that I will try and discuss those concepts later in the theoretical framework part of this report which also represents my pre-understanding of the phenomenon under study here. The describing of the pre-understanding forming the theoretical framework of this report also aids the readers in following my research logic better as well as evaluating my interpretations of the respondents' identity structures not to mention how those were eventually reached.

Another important function that the presentation of these theories has is that they are a review of earlier work done in these fields and therefore help to show how my work is attached to the existing research tradition, what specific gap in that tradition it purports to fill and how it is positioned in the ongoing debate. To some extent they also go to lay ground for the philosophy of science stance to be taken as well in that they clearly go with my world view as a researcher or otherwise I would have steered my research to another direction altogether.

The movement between the empirical materials and the pre-understanding forming theories can be seen in the interpretations as the zigzagging movement placing earlier research in the same context with this new developing understanding of entrepreneurial identifications and together they contribute to increased understanding of family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identifications in particular as seen in figure 1 portraying the research setting. According to Wengraf (2001, 320) "a good research text works in a zigzag motion between you describing and arguing in your language and all the others you cited or summarize in theirs" and further that "you start with your intentions and your ideas and you end with your conclusions. In between, you can and you must zag over to their ideas, their language, their words, as many times as necessary". The research as a whole has progressed in this iterative manner typical to the interpretive approach and hermeneutics. For me this has not only been a very intriguing research process but also a learning experience.

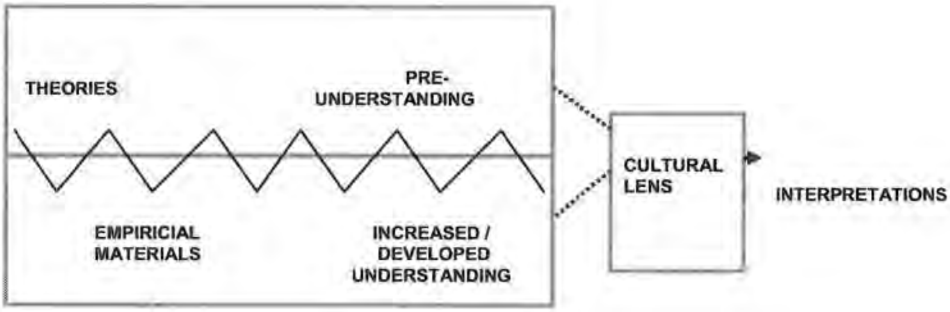

FIGURE 1 The research setting

In my aspiring to stay true to the methodological approach chosen I claim that it is of utmost importance in this type of research for the reporting to maintain active voice. Objectivity, which is often attempted through the use of passive voice, is not an aim at all but the research has to be understood as containing an ever-present element of subjectivity. Fortunately, many others (e.g. Hytti 2003; Kakkonen 2006; Kuivaniemi 2010) have taken this same route in their dissertation reporting before me so my role in this has not exactly been that of a pioneer. Suffice it to say that I have been very cognizant of my own involvement and my own voice in the production of this work and I can only hope it manifests itself to the readers as well. Conduction of this research has also meant identity work for me not only as a researcher but I've had to dig deep into my entrepreneurial qualities as well after I started this process which was to become my dissertation research. Since I have worked outside of the formal university structures on research grants, this has obviously meant that I have had to sell my ideas, work, and the resultant text to those foundations that then have seen it as valuable enough to fund and generously have done so. It has meant tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, risk taking and not knowing what tomorrow would bring or what the end result of all this would be. All the while I have had to remain optimistic, passionate about my work and research interest as well as maintain a sufficient level of self-efficacy to bring it to its fruition. As it turns out, I have seen a lot of those qualities along with many more in most of my respondents.

1.2 Research objectives and the research questions

"The construction of identities uses building materials from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations. But individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and rearrange their meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and in their space/time framework." (Castells 1997, 7)

The main aim or task of this research is to contribute to the understanding of entrepreneurial identity structures as well as building processes of those of family business entrepreneurs. I attempt to reach this aim by representing research interviews with family business owners of two different generations from two different cultural environments; the interviews are meant to elicit the family business members' own perceptions of their entrepreneurial identity structures and construction processes of those as in how they construe them in their expressions and how they enact their entrepreneurial identities (Rae 2000, 146). I then reconstruct their accounts into interpretations of the constructions of their entrepreneurial identities. This is to be done by applying the interpretive approach which in philosophical terms means for me as a researcher to come up with interpretations that not only are "probable, but more probable than another interpretation"(Ricoeur 1976, 79). The purpose of the cross-cultural perspective is to add to this task by presenting identities as being culturally and socially embedded entities. There is a call for more cross-cultural research in the field of family business (Sharma & Srinivas Rao 2000). My aim here is not to present causal explanations but to add to the understanding of the phenomenon of identity. This is meaning-making activity, the purpose of which is "rendering a new, enriched, or expanded way of making sense of some problem or issue" (Thorne 2008, 175), in this case the issue being entrepreneurial identity constructions and the related processes of construction. I don't seek to explain causal relationships of identity building processes but rather aim at making sense of how my respondents perceive their entrepreneurial identities and what substance they give to those. At this point it is valuable to also make clear that my focus is on entrepreneurial identification in particular which I see as one identification of many in the overall identity structure of an individual. Also the concepts of identity and identification can be used synonymously. Thus, the main research question is formulated as:

How do family business entrepreneurs construe their entrepreneurial identities?

Additional questions are:

What kinds of issues are related to the construction of family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identities?

What kind of similarities and/or differences, if any, regarding the entrepreneurial identity construction, emerge from the two different business cultures of Louisiana, USA and Finland?

The first additional research question can be viewed as by my answering the main question and the second additional question is extending the first through the cross-cultural comparison. It is paramount for me to state here that the form of the research question does not, by any means, assume, in and of itself that all family business entrepreneurs profess to have an entrepreneurial identification as a part of their overall identity structures. I was confronted with this question in one of my doctoral courses; someone pointed out that they thought that this kind of research question presupposes the existence of some level of entrepreneurial identification. I had to argue against that because right from the very beginning my own stance had been that it cannot be assumed at all but that probing my research question would bring answers to that and it might very well turn out to be the case that not all family business entrepreneurs perceive themselves as having an entrepreneurial identification at all. So in that case the answer to the research question would be, to put it simplistically: they don't. It was with this thought in mind that I in fact incorporated a question regarding this issue into my interview structure, along the lines of did my respondents see themselves as entrepreneurial and if so, then what would those attributes be and if not, what attributes do they see themselves as lacking (see more on the interview structure in section 6.2).

This lack of the entrepreneurial identification, in fact, turned out to be the case for one third generation family business in which neither the father or the son report having any kind of entrepreneurial identification or anything closely resembling that even though they have run their business for quite a number of years. So, to reiterate, my main research question does not try to imply a presumed entrepreneurial identification for my respondents. As I later report, however, even with this very thought in my mind, I found myself with that specific presumption as I was interviewing the previously mentioned father and son and had to do some serious reflecting on what was going on in my own mind, so strong was the stereotype of all entrepreneurs and family business entrepreneurs having an entrepreneurial identification.

My purpose regarding the gathering of my empirical materials was to gain insight into how the family business entrepreneurs perceive and construe their own entrepreneurial identities and what they see to be the construction blocks of those. Therefore the actual title of my thesis is called 'The Construction of the Entrepreneurial Identity in the Family Business Context, A Cross-Cultural Study' (in reference to the processual nature of identity building) but my research question uses the word 'construe' to indicate how something is interpreted rather than constructed. This nuance is meant to emphasize the subjective self-perception of their entrepreneurial identities of the entrepreneurs themselves as well as their accounts of those, rather than my perceptions because language can impose meaning deeper than the surface level. This line of thinking responds to Rae (2000, 148) urging researchers of entrepreneurs to use "an approach which enables exploration of the choices they make through the accounts they give". In their accounts the respondents give meaning to their own world of experiences. The point of origin for the research is that the respondents are the best experts to talk about their own experiences (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 57). The end result, though, that I will present as entrepreneurial identity constructions refers to my having interpreted the empirical materials and having written them out into entrepreneurial identity constructions. In so doing I have not merely written up what has been visible on the surface but have attempted to go over and beyond the evident. In this way interpretation is more or less speculative (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 137).

It needs to be pointed out here that the research problem, the research questions, as well as the references to the resultant interpretations as identity structures have been metaphorically formed in regard to their linguistic surface structure. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 3) our ordinary conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature, therefore the lexicon used in this research needs to be seen from that perspective as well taking into account the basic premise of this piece of research which is to say that identities are created in intersubjective interaction and thus are social constructions. The metaphors that I have utilized in expressing my research aims, research questions and the resultant interpretations lean on building-related words, such as 'construct', 'structure', 'building block' and even 'construe' the etymology of which is the same as the word's 'construct' (see also Puolimatka 2002, 21, on using building metaphors in reference to how individuals create their own reality). Rather than viewing them as separate concepts which contradict one another semantically, they need to be seen as being metaphorical in nature which is congruent with my seeing identities as being formed as metaphoric processes (Vaara, Tienari & Säntti 2003, 419) in intersubjective expression. Vaara et al. (2003, 421) point out that "metaphors are important linguistic vehicles through which they can effectively communicate without long lists of elaborations, coin meaning that is difficult or impossible to express otherwise, and thereby vividly transfer holistic experiences". It is to this end that I have used building and construction metaphors in this report, i.e. interpreting the essence of my empirical materials as 'building blocks of entrepreneurial identity structures and construction' all the while recognizing that they have been construed by my respondents in their accounts and expressions. My interpretive analysis is not based on metaphors per se but reflects subjectively the metaphors chosen in the research setting as well as the meaning given to them as explained for example for the choice of the words 'construe' and 'construct' in the previous paragraph.

Furthermore, in order to highlight the research question focusing on entrepreneurial identities through the building processes as well as those issues that are interpreted to be the building blocks and contents of identity constructs, I need to point out that in this thesis identities are indeed seen as structures as well as processes (Grotevant 1994, 63) thus viewing the contents and processes as intertwined, and not as stable final results of those processes (Eteläpelto 2007, 141) because identities are constantly developing and changing (Murakami 2003, 235). Linguistically this dual meaning and purpose can be seen in the first additional research question in the word 'construction' which can either be seen as referring to the process or act of constructing or alternatively to the thing or structure being constructed. Henceforth entrepreneurial identities in this thesis are to be interpreted as process *and* content oriented.

At the outset of my research process when I was developing my research questions my first version of the research plan introduced the research problem as studying the entrepreneurial identity constructions of founder and second generation entrepreneurs. The more I read about identity in particular and as I later read more about entrepreneurial attributes and qualities through the identity lens, and as my pre-understanding started to change and expand in regards to identity specifically, I started feeling that my focus should not be on founders and the second generation alone but that if I wanted to find out about family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identifications I should disregard the founder aspect which is often thought to be an entity on its own (on literature on founders see e.g. García-Álvarez & López-Sintas 2001; Davis & Harveston 1999; Schein 1995) and concentrate on entrepreneurial identifications in family businesses regardless of how many generations there have been before.

My line of thinking here was that since my interest is not with founding a business venture per se but with a lifelong process of an individual's identity processes that venture creation phase should not get emphasized (c.f. Shane & Venkataraman 2000). On the other hand the transgenerational aspect is strongly present contextually in family businesses; I therefore thought it was significant to include multiple generations.

It is typical to the qualitative approaches that the research question changes and is transformed during the research process and this is what happened to me as well. As mentioned before, originally my main research involved the generational aspect of family businesses through the founder and the successor generations. However, as I became more deeply involved with the identity theories in conjunction with entrepreneurship my research focus started to shift toward generational issues in general. Thence, I omitted the founder aspect. I started to feel that if the research was specifically focused on the founder and second generation, then a great deal of attention should have been paid to venture creation and start-up issues and it started to seem like this would take away from entrepreneurial identification in family businesses in general. This feature of changing and transforming is also typical to the interpretive approach itself in that a certain level of interpretation starts right at the beginning of the process and is ongoing all through it. This means that interpretations may gain new levels and get transformed along the way and it is also indicative of developed pre-understanding.

Especially during the early phases of the research process a question that often came up was one of the form of reporting this research. As dissertation researchers we have to solve the question whether to produce a monograph or an article-based thesis. It is my contention that this discussion goes back to the research problem and its nature. I firmly felt from the very beginning that the most optimal way to study entrepreneurial identities, which I see as dynamic, process-like compositions, was to write a monograph. This way the reporting of the interpretations of identities is allowed enough space without the article-writing imposed limitations and the flow of language follows that which is inherent to the interpretive approach. The monograph also allows a better way of exposing all the relevant empirical material without the aforementioned limitations.

The previously mentioned overall research aim of contributing to the understanding of entrepreneurial identities process and content wise can then yield further sub- contributions in that it can be divided into theoretical, methodological, as well as pragmatic contributions (see also chapter 7.5 on implications of the research). This research aims to add to the existing theories of identity and family business literature in presenting interpretations of entrepreneurial identifications specifically in the family business context, which has thus far not been studied; neither has this particular phenomenon been studied from a cross-cultural point of view, which is an added theoretical contribution. Methodological contribution lies in the cross-cultural interpretive stance highlighting specific requirements for cultural competency in cross-cultural research, again specifically in the family business context which is novel and finally, as the pragmatic contributive objective I will introduce identity work as a thinking tool for family business members themselves as well as for family business consultancy. For members of enterprising families business has always been an integral part of their lives and on the other hand family is the social unit in which they absorb the values and beliefs that are the basis of their identities (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 43-51) so identity work can be of help in clarifying some of the decisions that family business members have to make, whether it concerns their individual lives or the business. This might be especially fruitful to family business members in a situation where they ponder on whether to continue the family's business operations, whether to choose a career outside of the family firm and also for the older generation as they feel reluctance in passing the baton on. Identity work can be a very helpful tool in dissolving conflict and planning the future of individuals as well as their businesses.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

My dissertation report consists of seven main chapters which have been subdivided into several smaller sections. The first main chapter is the introduction of the thesis highlighting the background, research objectives, research questions and the structure of it. Chapter two deals with the methodological considerations pertinent to this research. In that chapter I extend the discussion from paradigmatic viewpoints through ontology and epistemology, hermeneutics and reflexivity to interviewing, transcribing and interpretation as a way of analyzing entrepreneurial identity constructs. Chapters three, four and five discuss the theories on identity, family business and cross-cultural lens adopted respectively and thus are a comprehensive overview of my pre-understanding regarding the entrepreneurial identity constructs in the family business context. In chapter six I present the themes of my interview guide, discuss the criteria for the selection of my respondents and the reasons for the two business cultures of Finland and Louisiana appearing as the empirical context for my study. I then discuss the connectors between my respondents before moving on to introducing the family business entrepreneurs and their family businesses along with my interpretations of their entrepreneurial identifications, or lack thereof. Chapter seven is a discussion focusing on summarizing the answers to my research questions. I revisit those questions and then present entrepreneurial identities as generational and culturally embedded constructs. I introduce novel emergent themes relating to the two business cultures under study here as building blocks for culturally situated entrepreneurial identities and discuss similarities and differences between the two cultural contexts. I then move on to reflecting on my interpretive analysis and the practical and theoretical implications of this study before concluding the chapter with a critical evaluation of my research work and suggestions for future research.

I have attempted to write this report in a manner that is descriptive of the chronological order of events and work having taken place and also of the research logic used. Hence, the order in which the previous research which also constitutes my pre-understanding is presented in the theoretical framework of this study is in fact the order in which I studied it, worked, and wrote. My wish is that this line of thinking and this way of structuring the report makes my argumentation also more clear for the reader.

2 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

"Grown-ups love figures. When you tell them that you have made a new friend, they never ask you any questions about essential matters. They never say to you, "What does his voice sound like? What games does he love best? Does he collect butterflies?" Instead, they demand: "How old is he? How many brothers has he? How much does he weigh? How much money does his father make?" Only from these figures do they think they have learned anything about him. If you were to say to the grown-ups: "I saw a beautiful house made of rosy brick, with geraniums in the windows and doves on the roof," they would not be able to get any idea of that house at all. You would have to say to them: "I saw a house that cost £4,000." Then they would exclaim: "Oh, what a pretty house that is!"

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. 1945. The Little Prince.

In this chapter I will discuss issues dealing with paradigms, ontology, epistemology, methodology, and method. I will attempt to explain my own commitments and claims regarding these issues in order to make my research process more transparent, thus aiming to add to the value and trustworthiness of my work. The Little Prince calls those who view the world through figures 'grown-ups'. This might suggest an infantile approach to research on my part. I reject that thought and merely suggest that it might be child-like in that I have approached my respondents with a child-like curiosity and sincerity in an effort to find out how they construe their entrepreneurial identities.

I chose the epigraph above from "The Little Prince" to describe my own understanding of the two ends of the paradigmatic continuum and how I position myself in it. At one end of it numbers, figures and the value given to those rule while at the other end attributes less defined by monetary value or figures but of no less importance rule. That which is 'essential' for the Little Prince, is what is essential for me as well in this study, therefore I have taken a qualitative approach to the entrepreneurial identity construction of family business entrepreneurs. I also concur with Avis (2003, 996) in saying that "it is clear that a positivist, measure-oriented, and rule-governed form of scientific method is unsuitable for investigations of the emergent and constructional aspects of intentional human social behaviour".

As valuable as different research strategies, methodologies and methods are for the study of family businesses, the importance of that economic unit is reflected also in the effort put into the study of it, drawing from different kinds of approaches, fields, and methods, all of them contributing for the improved understanding of the phenomena related to family businesses. I argue that the interpretive approach I have taken is appropriate with the research questions to be explored in this study because I see this approach to be dynamic and process-like in very much the same way that I see identity structures to be as well. The interpretative approach also recognizes multiple interpretations of the same phenomenon as trustworthy; therefore it is as versatile as the research object itself. That said, I have to acknowledge that adopting the interpretive approach is not the easiest way to do research but rather challenging. Being skillful in the method one uses is the prerequisite for posing real and fruitful questions (Gadamer 2004, 121).

According to Nordqvist, Hall and Melin (2007, 25) the interpretive approach has high relevance to family business research because interpretive methods can capture the specific dimensions of family businesses, especially those that are related to family issues which is what makes family business studies different from other organizational studies. Those who do interpretive research in management and organizations place emphasis on the social rather than the economic view of the activities of the organization (Alvesson & Deetz 2007, 33). There is an increased call for more in-depth interpretive research in the field of family business (Hall & Nordqvist 2008, 64) and interpretive approach is often used in the study of the cultural identity (Jameson 2007, 208). Interpretive methods bring elements of the humane sciences to the study of social sciences (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea 2006, 203). The interpretive research conducted in the field of family business needs to be systematic and rigorous (Nordqvist et al. 2007, 39) and it goes without saying that taking the interpretive approach does not suggest sloppiness of any kind, on the contrary. This means that detailed descriptions of the research process have to be made visible along with transparent accounts of how the eventual interpretations have been reached supported by extracts of empirical material in order to show why the most plausible interpretation appears in the report.

I argue that it is paramount for all research that the commitments toward knowledge acquisition are made clear. However, I do feel though, that these commitments are especially pertinent and need to be vocalized in a research setting such as my own where the empirical material is approached from an interpretive perspective and is indeed of very subjective nature. Therefore those views have to be made transparent and the processes need to be visible. It is in this vein that I also present the theories that have been underlying my pre-understanding of the entrepreneurial identities because discussing the theoretical pre-understanding and theoretical claims that one obviously has helps to position the study within the field by drawing on previously published research while pinpointing to the gap that this particular study is to fill (Chenail 2009, 105).

Theoretical discussion is also of essence because according to Alvesson and Deetz (2007, 37) theories are not an abstract representation of the world but represent the way one sees and thinks about the world. This again adds to transparency. Seymor (2006, 137) says that it is common for business researchers not to discuss philosophy of science in their work and he argues that this weakens the quality and insightfulness of entrepreneurship research. I am of the same opinion and feel that researchers should strive to make their claims to philosophy of science clear. Ellingson (2009, 13) urges researchers to be open about their research processes because that demonstrates research integrity and consciousness. Hence the following discussion in which I will talk about methodological issues along with philosophy of science.

2.1 Paradigmatic stance

> *"Constructionist scholarship has been devoted to understanding the generation, transformation and suppression of what we take to be objective knowledge; exploring the literary and rhetorical devices by which meaning is achieved and rendered compelling; illuminating the ideological and valuational frightening of the unremarkable or taken for granted; documenting the implication of world construction for the distribution of power; gaining an appreciation of the processes of relationship from which senses of the real and the good are achieved; comprehending the historical roots and vicissitudes of various forms of understanding; exploring the range and variability in human intelligibility across cultures; and more." (Gergen 2001, 25)*

The concept of paradigm can be used to elucidate the connection between philosophical commitments and the methodological choices that the researcher makes. Paradigms embody the world views of a certain field or group of theories, the role of the human being in all that and eventually also the appropriate ways to acquire knowledge about those (Kyrö 2004, 59). Paradigms are representative of the researchers' worldviews. They also guide the researcher in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways (Guba & Lincoln 1998, 195).

My research questions focus on the socially constructed nature of social phenomena (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009) therefore I position myself in the social constructionist paradigm in which reality is seen as getting socially constructed and language is seen as creating meaning in intersubjective interaction. According to Gergen and Thatchenkery (2004, 234) language is a system in itself that has preceded and will outlive the individual therefore speaking as a rational agent is but to participate in a form of cultural life. For the social constructionist scholarship, meaning and understanding are the focal features of human activity (Lock & Strong 2010, 6) and according to the social constructionist view interaction can change the understanding of social reality (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 14). In the socially constructed world data and facts are "the constructions or results of interpretation" (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 1) and therefore there are no means of privileging one construction of reality over another (Gergen 2001, 8). By attaching oneself to a certain paradigmatic stance, the researcher commits him/herself to certain understandings about the world and the ways to find out about it. Those commitments should not be declared haphazardly but consciously (Kyrö 2004, 59). They have implicit or explicit implications for the conduct of research as well as for the interpretation of findings (Guba & Lincoln 1998, 209).

Paradigmatic commitments guide methodological choices which in turn determine the choice of methods used both in gathering of empirical materials as well as the analysis of those. This has a bearing on how the process is molded and on those choices that get made regarding the acquisition of knowledge. It is of essence for a successful research process that the researcher make clear his/her position in relation to paradigmatic and methodological considerations for this has implications for accumulation of knowledge about the phenomenon under study. This means that it is not only recommendable but necessary for the researcher to articulate his/her ontological and epistemic commitments in order for her to be understood within and from her own academic realm.

My paradigmatic stance, however, purports in no way to insinuate that one end of the paradigmatic continuum ranks above the other or that they can even be placed on some kind of a value system. On the contrary, I find qualitative and quantitative approaches complementary to one another. As far as identity research in the family business context goes, it is my contention that qualitative research can generate better understanding of entrepreneurship as human, social, cultural, and historical action (Rae 2000, 148) thereby expanding holistic knowledge of the phenomenon. Qualitative approaches also allow the researcher to acknowledge the complexity and contextuality of business-related phenomena (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 3).

The fields of business and economics have been dominated by quantitative methods for a long time; Ogbor (2000, 624) refers to this as "the obsession with quantitative data" and Gilstrap (2007, 95) notes that studies on leadership and organization have not changed much since the arrival of positivist philosophy in the field. The study of entrepreneurship and family business, which often involve the entrepreneur as the central focus have long ignored the voice of the entrepreneur which has "become disconnected from academic study through being lost in the statistical samples" (Rae 2000, 148). Furthermore, as Nordqvist et al. (2007, 26) point out, qualitative approaches are especially suitable for in-depth comprehension of the complex and tacit aspects of ownership and management of family businesses whereas the opposing view such as the positivist view, denies the possibility as well as beneficiality of understanding as a methodological approach (Johnson & Duberley 2003, 1283). Regarding the cross-cultural aspect of my research, the qualitative perspective is suitable for the study of that as well because "our purpose in qualitative inquiry is to reveal the interrelationships between individual beliefs, cultural norms, and social rules, and to do so in a way that makes beliefs and values of other cultures intelligible against a background of shared assumptions about the world" (Avis 2003, 1001). Interestingly enough, the cultural aspect of research in general extends itself to the concept of paradigm as well; Alvesson and Deetz (2007, 49) note that the paradigmatic differences of opinion regarding management studies are culturally bound; quantitative approaches dominate in the US whereas in Britain and Sweden qualitative methods are more prominent.

Qualitative approaches recognize the researcher as the primary instrument of study (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 57) as well as emphasize and accept the notion that research cannot ever be objective but is always located and socially and historically informed (Saukko 2003, 3). It needs to be pointed out that quantitatively oriented researchers also have an effect on the collection, analysis and interpretation of evidence (Denzin 2009, 150). Therefore I reject the positivist ideal of "objectivity and the discovery of ahistorical, unbiased, universal truth" (Ellingson 2009, 4).

Another very important instrument to be mentioned is language. The traditional understanding of the relationship between social reality and language has privileged the idea that language is directly representative of reality (Alvesson & Kärreman 2000, 137) viewing language as something uncomplicated and straightforward. The interpretive approach assumes language to be complicated and not mirroring external reality as such. In the spirit of attempting to stay true to my methodological commitment I call my data 'empirical material' rather than 'data' in concert with Alvesson and Deetz (2007, 113) according to whom the metaphor 'data collection' is misleading because in recognition of the interpretive nature of research no data can be viewed as not having been influenced by the construction of the researcher.

2.2 Ontological and epistemic commitments

> *"Methodology is enacted philosophy. It is "philosophical" in that it embodies and stands upon ontological and epistemological commitments. It is "enacted" in that it is not satisfied with simply thinking these commitments, but endeavors to apply these ontological and epistemological commitments to concrete questions of how research is to be conducted" (Jackson 2006, 267, emphasis in the original)*

Contemplating the ontological and epistemic commitments that we as researchers have adds to the trustworthiness of our work and also helps our readers to position our research better in the great scheme of things. According to Johnson and Duberley (2003, 1294) not one of us can stand outside of our own epistemic and ontological commitments. Since my work is interpretive, that in itself means that my ontological and epistemic claims are of a particular nature, that is to say that I make sense of the world through interpretations, I believe that people constantly interpret the world around them. Those interpretations change and transform our understandings of reality and no two people can have the same interpretive framework. I refute the idea that reality is clearly mirrored through figures and statistics; there is always the human element that is realized through the researcher. This take on reality also means that as Edley (2001, 435) points out, language is productive rather than merely reflective and reality is not so much mirrored in talk and texts as constituted by them, in congruence with the socially constructed world view.

In ontology one contemplates the basic elements and structure of reality (Kyrö 2004, 61) and "the ideas about existence of and relationships between people, society and the world in general" (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 13). According to the subjectivist ontology that I claim as my own in relation to doing research, I take reality to be the product of human cognitive processes (Johnson & Duberley 2003, 1282) as opposed to realist ontology that assumes reality to have an existence independent of the human factor. Therefore according to the subjectivist ontology no two realities alike can exist (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 14) but multiple social realities are recognized (Avis 2003, 996). Our ontological commitments have serious ramifications to our understanding of the world and the nature of knowledge. They guide the methodological choices that we make.

Epistemology examines the essence of knowledge as in what knowledge is and how we can acquire knowledge about what we believe exists (Kyrö 2004, 61) and what justifications we offer to support those beliefs (Avis 2003, 997). Epistemology also sets the criteria by which knowledge is possible and what the sources and limitations of it are (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 14). My own epistemological understanding is in line with the pragmatic epistemological view of Avis (2003, 1002) who argues that there is no need to see reality "out there" to be discovered or that our knowledge represents it but rather that "reality is as much constructed as it is found" and further in line with Eriksson and Kovalainen's (2008, 14) definition of the subjectivist epistemological view in which "no access to the external world beyond our own observations and interpretations is possible". The emphasis lies on the subjective insider's view (Avis 2003, 996) in which the mind is a subjective system of meanings that cannot be observed by sensory perception but only through the interviewee's own accounts (Latomaa 2005, 17).

The logic and structure of reasoning lie at the very core of methodology (Kyrö 2004, 73). I subscribe to abductive reasoning which I see to be a good fit with hermeneutics, the method of interpretation. I will discuss the hermeneutical principles in the next section. In principle abductive reasoning utilizes the same kind of oscillation between parts and the whole, theoretical, and empirical pre-understanding and the newly formed understanding interpreted on the basis of the empirical materials. The role of theory for abduction is not as a mechanical application but as one of inspiration for seeing emerging patterns (Hall 2003, 66) and the subjectivist epistemology rejects the existence of a theory neutral observational language (Johnson & Duberley 2003, 1282). It is in language that ontological understanding comes to its expression (Ricoeur 2000, 11).

These aforementioned commitments also have a bearing on how the empirical materials of this research get analyzed. That is why I choose to call them interpretations rather than results or even findings. This is to keep the nature of methodology adopted coherent all through the reporting.

Due to the fact that it is through research interviews that are the media through which I get to increase my knowledge on identity constructions I also have to give thought to how it is possible to get information about the others' world and mind. I believe that in as much as that is possible, it takes place through intersubjective interaction in which intersubjective understanding acts as a bridge between the subjective worlds of people through a shared understanding of the conversational activity (Murakami 2003, 233). The constitution of intersubjectivity recognizes identities as being in flux, malleable and being constructed in interaction, therefore it acknowledges the researcher as being in as much a participant in the production of knowledge as the respondents are. The identities of the researcher and the participants inform each other mutually generating intersubjective truths (Ellingson 2009, 35). It is central to this process, though, that the discursive nature of the participants' identities is understood (Murakami 2003, 235). We have to assume the intersubjective stance in order to understand others.

2.3 Hermeneutics as an interpretive method

> *"We do not simply live out our lives in time and through language; rather we are history. That fact that language and history are both the condition and the limit of understanding is what makes the process of meaning making hermeneutical" (Schwandt 1998, 224, as cited in Gilstrap 2007,98)*

When the research focus is on human beings, interpretation of the meaning of the human factor becomes essential. The method to support that is interpretations based on the hermeneutical dialogue between the empirical material and the researcher (Kyrö 2004, 75). Gadamer (2004, 30) demystifies the concept of hermeneutical understanding by saying that it does not denote some mysterious connection of souls but rather taking part in collective meaning making in order to reach consensus of meaning.

The word 'hermeneutics' is very old, dating back to ancient Greece and the Greek god Hermes who acted as a messenger for the other gods interpreting their communications. It stands for understanding and interpretation. Later on hermeneutics referred to biblical interpretation before gaining an even wider philosophical content, especially in the German philosophical tradition of *Verstehen*. Gadamer (2004, 129) maintained that hermeneutics is much more than just a scientific method or a special feature of certain groups of sciences; it is an inherently natural human skill first and foremost. It is through language and interpreting that we exist as human beings. Discovery of facts is not sufficient for our understanding but it requires interpretation (Seymor 2006, 145).

Hermeneutics as a method of interpretation involves the problem of comprehension (Ricoeur 2000, 4) and its task is based on the contrast between familiarity and unfamiliarity (Gadamer 2004, 37). A hermeneutic problem of interpretation lies in the fact that "every reading of a text always takes place within a community, a tradition, or a living current of thought, all of which display presuppositions" (Ricoeur 2000, 3). This naturally has implications for cross-cultural research forcing to take into consideration as much of the presuppositions arising from the cultural context as possible. Interpretations are reached through understanding and it is worth noting that it is specifically this tradition of understanding which separates hermeneutics from "explanation-oriented scientific theorizing" (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 53). Understanding, though, is not a prerequisite for interpretation to take place but at times we interpret that which we do not understand precisely because we do not comprehend it, therefore the two concepts are intertwined. Understanding and interpreting something hermeneutically means seeing beyond the surface structure of the words themselves and seeing something *as* something. It also involves recognizing the other as culturally, historically, and socially embedded in their context. Hermeneutics acknowledges the role of intuition and empathy in the interpretive process. In empathy one identifies with the self and experiences of the researched (Latomaa 2005, 65). Interpretation is the focal element of the entire research process rather than an attempt to represent reality on the basis of collected data (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 12) and there is no other tool for understanding but the mind of the researcher (Latomaa 2005, 77).

Hermeneutical understanding and the eventual interpretations stemming from that are to be gained by moving in the hermeneutical circle which means that the parts of a whole are understood only through the whole and vice versa. In understanding one comprehends the chain of partial meanings as a whole in an act of synthesis (Ricoeur 1976, 72). The meaning of the whole is anticipated explicitly on the basis of what we know about the parts. Even the disclosure of the first meaning creates the expectation of the meaning in its entirety. However, the expected meaning can change and be transformed as the oscillating movement of understanding takes place (Gadamer 2004, 29-32).

While doing research it is impossible to pinpoint one absolute starting point in the hermeneutical circle but rather one enters the circle almost as if surreptitiously, with some of our pre-understanding stemming from theories that have appealed to us, some of the pre-understanding originating from everyday life. Entering the hermeneutical circle does not mean that from thereon the researcher keeps to his/her original pre-understanding and moves on with fixed ideas. On the contrary, s/he needs to remain receptive for new perspectives of the theoretical input in order to increase understanding of the phenomenon to be studied (Nordqvist et al. 2007, 31) and therefore during the research process the pre-understanding develops and changes.

The circular process involves presupposing a certain kind of whole in the recognition of the parts and on the other hand in deciphering the details we decipher the whole (Ricoeur 1976, 77) and if the parts are not compatible with the whole, the process of understanding has not been successful (Gadamer 2004, 29).

There is also another circle at work in the interpretive process and that is that of the pre-understanding and understanding. These two concepts of the hermeneutic circle can and should be seen as complementary in the interpretive process in that "the interpretation of the whole text is successively developed by the interpretations of its parts, and conversely the views of the parts are illuminated by the view of the whole. On the other hand, a similar alternation between preunderstanding and understanding is also taking place during the interpretive process" (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000, 66). This alteration between pre-understanding and understanding brings forth the importance of reflecting on one's theoretical commitments along with the philosophical and methodological ones for pre-understanding emanates to a great extent from those and the role of theories therefore is very much acknowledged as opposed to in grounded theory, for example, which builds from "passive reception" (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000, 62) of texts and uses induction as the logic of reasoning rejecting theoretical pre-understanding (Hall 2003, 66). All interpretive research involves the application of theoretical pre-understanding to the empirical material at hand (Frosh & Emerson 2005, 309).

Empirical material as a whole or its parts is not the only thing that gets altered during the oscillation in the hermeneutical circle. It is clear that theories get new meanings and content as in transformed understanding during the hermeneutical process as well. Theories get to be seen as somehow different or with a deeper understanding of them than before. In this respect the hermeneutical interpretive process becomes concrete and almost palpable, it becomes real. Even though, on the surface, the theoretical pre-understanding remains the same, the research notes dealing with previously done research and theories emanating from that remain the same, the meaning they take on in the light of the new empirical material is novel, therefore verifying the process in my mind of the parts getting meaning through the whole and the whole transforming through the parts. The iteration between the two suddenly becomes very genuine. This is reassuring; it is like a highly subjective, nevertheless valuable, sign that the method actually works. That said, however, it is necessary to recognize truth as always partial for "the key hypothesis of hermeneutic philosophy is that interpretation is an open process that no single vision can conclude" (Ricoeur 1991, 33).

2.4 Reflexivity in interpretive research

Reflexivity is a fundamental human quality underpinning our attempts to understand others (Holland 1999, 263), bridging the gap between epistemological consideration and method (Alvesson 2003, 14) and encompassing "continual evaluation of subjective responses, intersubjective dynamics, and the research process itself" (Finlay 2002, 532). That being the case it seems unavoidable that the concept of reflexivity get elaborated in a research setting the premise of which is on understanding and interpretation. As Gadamer (2004, 33) demands; it is of essence for the hermeneutically aware researcher to study the legitimacy of his/her preconceptions. Eriksson and

Kovalainen (2008, 12) do argue though, that it is not only those who are qualitatively oriented that should deal with reflexivity but everyone doing research. Reflexivity is the means with which integrity and trustworthiness are gained while the researcher engages in "an explicit, self-aware meta-analysis of the research process" (Finlay 2002, 531).

Reflection needs to extend itself to all areas of research, not the least to the language that we use from constructing empirical materials through being in an intersubjective relationship with our interviewees to writing our research report. The concepts that we choose to use in our writing reflect the wider framework of ontology and epistemology that we have assumed. This means that all through the reporting we lean on those concepts that support our world view and paradigmatic stance, thus adding to the trustworthiness of the reporting. This is also why I have adopted the first person active usage rather than passive voice which I feel would be an effort to distance myself from the research in the manner of the positivists and thus place myself outside of the realm of the study. Academic writing conventions have expanded to permit the use of first person rather than passive voice (Ellingson 2009, 35). The use of passive voice would go against the very premise of the interpretive approach which recognizes the researcher as an active meaning creating agent with a subjective take on the phenomenon under study. This of course also means that since meanings are negotiated between the speakers in the interview situation that is contextual, another researcher might create a different meaning for the same phenomena (Finlay 2002, 531).

According to Alvesson (2003, 25) reflexivity means "conscious and consistent efforts to view the subject matter from different angles and avoid or strongly a priori privilege a single, favored angle and vocabulary". Being reflexive includes discussing issues such as values, philosophical assumptions, and the choice of methods (Nordqvist et al. 2007, 37), all of which have a bearing on the quality of the research. Being reflective is not easy because often we are not conscious of those value systems that guide us; therefore conducting reflexive research requires deliberate attention of the researcher to be pointed at oneself. Unbeknownst to us our own prejudices limit us therefore we are often unable to gain insight into truth (Gadamer 2004, 21).

It also needs to be acknowledged that the interviewees are not the only party within the research setting to have their own background that needs to be seen as having influence on the knowledge production. The researcher has his/her own background as well (Sintonen 1999, 85) that s/he brings as baggage into the interview situation as s/he interacts with the respondents. Thus being reflective of one's own presence and all the implications that that entails is vital for the quality of the research, reflexivity in fact constitutes a crucial element of epistemology. We need to accept that our behavior always influences the participants' responses somehow which means that through that the interpretations to be yielded eventually also get influenced (Finlay 2002, 531). Being reflective can turn the ordinary discussion of merely listing facts in an effort to try and establish truth into an arena for opportunities for creating added understanding (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 5). Discussing the research process as a way of working and seeing processes included in it, such as the transcription process for example, in a reflective light can add to the value of the research.

As researchers in the various sub fields of business and economics we must "engage with ourselves through thinking about our own thinking" (Johnson & Duberley 2003, 1279) and question taken-for-granted assumptions. As far as reporting the course of the research process goes, this reflexivity can span from the introductory part of the research report all the way to the very end, thus adding to the trustworthiness of the entire report. As Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009, 6) describe it; "Reflection can, in the context of empirical research, be defined as the interpretation of interpretation and the launching of critical self-reflection of one's own interpretations of empirical material (including its construction)" and further (2009, 245) that "reflection means thinking about the conditions for what one is doing, investigating the way in which the theoretical, cultural and political context of individual and intellectual involvement affects interaction with whatever is being researched, often in ways difficult to become conscious of".

Reflexive research takes into account the world of values that I as a researcher possess. Ogbor (2000, 609) in fact points out that reflecting on the ideological, value-laden nature of knowledge makes for better informed and more conscious scholarship. Consequently it is necessary for me to make clear my stand on the focal point of my research which is entrepreneurship in family businesses. It ranks high on the positive side of my own system of values coloring my ideas and ideals of the phenomenon in relation to my interviewees. Later on in this report I will show in my interpretations that this can hinder or obscure the actual meaning in the interview process when two of my respondents seem to have a completely indifferent attitude toward entrepreneurship and their own family firm. Retrospectively reflecting on that situation I feel I actually tried to push my own positive attitude into their responses. I realized that despite my feeble attempts at the opposite, I may have fallen into the trap of wanting to romanticize the person of the entrepreneur and entrepreneurship in general in likening the family business entrepreneur to a heroic figure and thus not being able to comprehend why a third-generation family business entrepreneur would show a complete lack of interest or desire to develop or even upkeep his business.

Reflexive research and dialogue also serves in encouraging the dialogue between researchers and practitioners (Numagami 1998, 12, see also Johnson & Duberley 2003, 1296) offering insights and raising self-awareness which is especially suitable for contributions yielded from identity research to the family businesses.

2.5 Research interviews

> *"A story has no beginning or end: arbitrarily one chooses that moment of experience from which to look back or from which to look ahead." (Graham Green, 1959)*

It is important, for the overall credibility and trustworthiness of this study to discuss how I co-created the empirical materials with my respondents that I base my interpretations on. In light of the fact that researchers of social sciences often take the use of research interviews for granted without explicating the reasons behind that decision, Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008, 80) push for the reasons for the use of interviews to be voiced. Interviews transform information into shared experiences and interviewees into performers whose accounts are then performed by others; they are sites for the creation and performance of meaning (Denzin 2001, 24-25.).

As indicated by the quote above by Graham Greene, it needs to be accepted that interviewees as individuals decide what they say and how they say it and thereby create their own meaning for their own experiences. Alvesson (2003, 14) warns against seeing the research interview situation as too simplistic and idealistic and emphasizes the complex social nature of the event. He also argues that unless the researcher has theoretical understanding or reflexive approach to the phenomenon the interview material risks being naïve. As far as identity research goes, it is worth keeping in mind that a research interview offers an excellent opportunity to display the wished-for identities and interviewees have a tendency to try and make themselves look like good and moral beings. They work to produce themselves as morally adequate (Rapley 2001, 308, see also Alvesson & Deetz 2007, 72).

Interviews act as identity work as well. Both the interviewer and the interviewee invoke different explicit and implicit identities that are relational (Alvesson 2003, 20) keeping in mind that the interviewer is "a central and active participant in the interaction" (Rapley 2003, 317). Interviewees also try to intersubjectively orient themselves to what they take to be relevant and important thereby responding to both the material and immaterial features of the environment of the interview (Murakami 2003, 234). When one comes to the interview situation one needs to realize what Wengraf (2001, 4) has expressed well in the following; "The interviews that you do or that you study are not asocial, ahistorical events. You do not leave behind your anxieties, your hopes, your blind spots, your prejudices, your class, race or gender, your location in global social structure, your age and historical positions, your emotions, your past and your sense of possible futures when you set up an interview, and nor does your interviewee". In my case this has meant taking into account for example my gender as a woman, my position as a researcher, my cultural background as a Finn and my value system in which entrepreneurship ranks high. The setting in regards to the previous and relating that to my interviewees has added dimensions in the cross-cultural context of the research in which my interviewees exist. The same obviously goes for the process of analyzing the empirical materials.

Reflecting on one's own self as the interviewer is of essence because how that self is presented "leaves a profound impression on the respondents and has great influence on the success (or failure) of the study" (Fontana & Frey 1998, 59). As much as one would like to view the interview situation as a natural scene for a conversation, it has to be kept in mind that the power position is tilted in a way in which the researcher is not an ordinary companion to talk to so this inevitably influences the way the discussion goes. The researcher also is an active producer of knowledge in that situation for empirical materials are produced collaboratively (Rapley 2003, 318).

An epistemological problem lies at the bottom of the interview as a method for gathering empirical materials; how is it possible to really know about the other (Coelho & Figuieiredo 2003, 196). Given my interpretivist epistemological stance, the identity construction as the focus of the study as well as the related research questions, I found interviewing to be the method for the gathering of empirical materials the optimal one. According to Rae (2000, 148) the real voices of entrepreneurs are rarely heard due to the emphasis on quantitative tradition so therefore an approach is needed which enables us to explore their choices through their own accounts. Denzin (2001, 28) reiterates that by saying that "the interview is the method by which the personal is made public". Hence the interview as a way to produce empirical materials was the appropriate way to approach identity construction in my research. Participants' understanding of themselves is displayed in the interactive situation yielding analytic resources for the understanding of the phenomenon of identity constructs (Murakami 2003, 235). The aim in my interviews as a qualitative, interpretive way of inquiry was not to view them as replicable but as an opportunity for discovery (Numagami 1998, 11). This idea emphasizes the interview as a social and temporal event which renders the empirical materials as "only about a particular research conversation that occurred at a particular time and place" and to interpret those "requires assumptions and contextual knowledge and argument" (Wengraf 2001, 1).

The researcher as the interviewer needs to seek ways to build rapport with the interviewees. Rapport building is culturally bound in that a level of cultural competency is required on the part of the interviewer (see more on the concept of cultural competency in chapter 5.5). The basic model for mutual understanding is dialogue (Gadamer 2004, 74) and by participating in the interviews both the interviewer and the interviewee agree to abide by generally accepted communicative norms (Briggs 1986, 2). This is part of the identity work of the interviewer as a researcher and helps him/her to position him/herself as being sensitive to the interviewees (Murakami 2003, 241, see also Briggs 1986, 28 on rapport building) thereby increasing the quality of the interview situation. Establishing rapport is very important for understanding to take place with the interviewees and this also means attempting to see their perspective rather than impose one's own upon them (Fontana & Frey 1998, 60) keeping in mind a fine mix of distance and empathy, because getting too close might be problematic as well. Rapport building is especially important when the issues that get talked about might be sensitive, such as family related issues.

In my own interviews the interviewees approached family related issues, even of conflicting nature, seemingly sincerely and openly. They also probably liked the fact that they were not expected to talk about business operational issues such as business secrets but actually got to talk about the very essence of their family businesses. Rapport building is also important in a cross-cultural interactional situation where the burden of that rests even more on the interviewer than the interviewee due to the requirements for cultural competency (see chapters 5.5 and 6.4 on how I have taken cultural competency into account in this study). It should not fall on the interviewees to be expected to be culturally competent on cultural issues relating to the interviewer's background, on the contrary. The interviewer needs to be aware of linking language and cultural manifestations in that s/he needs to be aware of how to say things and also of the fact that some things should not be said at all (Fontana & Frey 1998, 58). Taking an interactive and dialogic stance toward the interview situation can turn it into a "relevant and fruitful setting for interaction and mutual exchange of points of view between the researcher and the interviewee" (Nordqvist et al. 2007, 32).

The empirical materials for this research were constructed through research interviews, otherwise known as in-depth or semi-structured interviews. They are a versatile way of gaining knowledge. In this type of an interview the interviewer's pre-understanding and language constrain the respondents less (Alvesson & Deetz 2007, 71) as opposed to a questionnaire-type inquiry. I also like to talk about thematic interviews due to the fact that in order to create a coherent interpretation of the entrepreneurial identity structures I created an interview guide that was based on themes that I found to be germane to the understanding of issues regarding the concept of identity in particular in the family business context. A thematic interview guide helps to focus better on the interviewees' standpoint thus allowing their own voices to be heard rather than focusing too much on the interviewer (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 48) but at the same time it lets the interviewer decide what gets talked about and when the response given is sufficient "and whether or not to reiterate the question" (Briggs 1986, 56).

The themes had come up during the early part of my research process when I built the theoretical framework and pre-understanding of the phenomenon. The issues that kept coming up in the literature, and are reflected on in the theory part of this report, then formed the skeleton of the interview guide that I used. I concur with Alvesson (2003, 20) when he says that it is counterproductive to be too explicit about the position of identities that the participants take because this might fix the responses too rigidly. It would be like conceptualizing the interpretations in advance. This is why, in point of fact, I did not include the concept of 'identity' in my questions or the general dialogue I had with my interviewees. They knew the topic of the research beforehand but the interviews were conducted in terms other than that of 'identity' itself. I was worried that it might have indeed given the interviewees' accounts too firm of a framework and discouraged them from talking freely about themselves and what I saw as their identity structures interpretively.

A narrative streak can also be seen going on in the thematic interviews. Even though the method itself is not narrative but takes on more of a dialogue-like interaction, the interviewees do create meaning for themselves in a narrative way. Sintonen (1999, 84) points out how the interview situation is unique in nature, it is impossible for the interviewer or the interviewee to return to that moment. The dialogue and discussions that have taken place within the framework of the interview remain temporally and historically embedded in that moment, which means that the identity constructions accounted for remain that way as well. The interview situation is open for interaction to change its course to any direction unpredictable at the outset because interpretations made during the dialogue have mutual influence (Sintonen 1999, 84) and can steer the dialogue to unexpected territories. This in turn can yield new emergent themes that the interviewer was not aware of. Reflecting on those against the theoretical pre-understanding abductively then allows for the new emergent themes to be more prominently seen. Hence, new knowledge gets created in the intersubjective situation. This was the case for me as well, which I will report on later in the interpretations section. Mutual understanding as a result of negotiation of meaning can yield richer material (Alvesson & Deetz 2007, 71).

The questions that get asked stem from the researcher's pre-understanding and the themes chosen guide the conversation. The interview guide that I used included issues on family, family business institution, entrepreneurship, culture, generational differences, and identity (not expressed as such). Having been an open dialogue-like situation rather than a strict question-answer form interview, it allowed me to probe into the meanings of what got talked about. The interviews lasted from just under 30 minutes to over 2 hours and were digitally recorded. Those recordings remain in my possession. The audio recording has given me a repeatable resource allowing multiple hearings of the interviews (Nikander 2008, 229). One interview conducted with three members, father, and two sons, of a business owning family was also based on the interview guide of the STEP-project (Successful Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Practices) which is a global family business research group of academic partners. The issues such as familiness and entrepreneurial orientation that are the research foci of STEP were a good fit with the entrepreneurial identity construction in the family business context so the interviews yielded good material for both my dissertation research on identities as well as for the STEP-project. The STEP interview guide's questions handled issues related to the previous research foci of familiness and entrepreneurial orientation both on the individual (as in self-perceived entrepreneurial attributes and family's influence on those) as well as organizational level so the two levels of contemplation were complementary and thus did not break the interview rhythm. All the interviewees signed an informed consent form (see appendices 1 and 2) before taking part in the interviews.

2.6 Transcribing the interviews

The choices made about transcribing need to be made explicit for they reflect the theories that the researcher holds and writing them up facilitates the examining of the interpretations made (Lapadat & Lindsay 1999, 66). Tilley (2003, 752) states that "a transcriber's interpretive/theoretical prints become visible on close examination of the transcription process and the texts constructed". Since the process of understanding and interpreting is ongoing all through transcribing as well, this does not just mean repeating the speech event in a similar manner but generating new events emanating from the text that objectifies the initial event (Ricoeur 1976, 75). Transcription represents original oral language in written form and just like talk is a social act, so is transcription (Bird 2005, 227), it represents the event but is not the event itself (Green, Franquiz & Dixon 1997, 172, see also Lapadat & Lindsay 1999, 81 and Tilley 2003, 751). Transcribing is a tedious and time consuming; yet very significant part of the research process that often is bypassed with very little attention paid to it in research reporting. As far as my own materials go, I think I spent about eight hours transcribing on the average per each hour of interview material. Transcription practices can constrain the interpretations derived from the empirical materials (Lapadat & Lindsay 1999, 81).

Since transcripts allow access for the reader to empirical materials and convey immediacy and transparency, discussing the transcription process should involve issues such as detail chosen in the transcriptions as well as how they are presented physically in print (Nikander 2008, 225-226). It is not only the end result, that is to say the written product, that is important but the transcription process as well (Lapadat & Lindsay 1999, 82). Ontology is essential to the concept of transcription since how I as a researcher view transcriptions will influence on how I treat them within my methodology (Bird 2005, 227). It is not possible to write down talk in an objective mirror-like manner but transcribing is a situated act (Green et al. 1997, 172) and since language is not transparent it cannot be assumed to reflect reality as actual interaction recorded on audiotape (Lapadat & Lindsay 1999, 65).

I argue that especially for those of us who do interpretive research pondering on the transcription process and elaborating the meaning of it for the entire process should be very meaningful. In a socially constructed reality transcriptions need to be seen as subjective. After all, language produced in the interviews as a subjective meaning making system is vital to interpretation, so vital, in fact, that it constitutes the very corpus of our research. In the act of my choosing a particular segment of transcription in my report I show that it has meaning and significance for me and I have interpreted it from a certain point of view (Green et al. 1997, 173). I render my interpretation as transparent as possible by bringing quotations into my report as 'evidence' of those interpretations. Transcription deals with bringing the spoken word into the world of its textual realm so surely transcription should get more attention in the research reporting. A lot can be gained or lost in that process.

Researchers need to consider the extent of detail necessary in transcriptions (Tilley 2003, 760-761). That said, though, I have to confess into being passionate about it on one hand, yet having adopted a less than rigid and extremist approach to how much and in what way I chose to transcribe and eventually show in the textual form on the other. While recognizing the significance of non-verbal communication to interpretation along with extra-lingual elements such as pauses and facial expressions, tones and intonations, I chose to leave those out of my transcriptions and bring 'tidied' versions of the communicative situations into this report rather than actual phonetic transcriptions. The reasons for that were what Nikander (2008, 226) describes as "practical compromises" wanting to facilitate easy reading because interview transcripts at the other extreme can make for difficult reading to those not used to them.

My nod for the call to include as much as possible to accommodate the important demand for trustworthiness is that I will include the original Finnish transcriptions (less the non-verbal and extra-linguistic aspect) in appendix (see appendix 4), for comparisons' and transparency's sake. Nikander (2008, 227) argues that to hide original data, which in my case would be the Finnish textual rendition of the interviews, would violate the "validity through transparency and access" principle. However, I did not want to include those in the actual text as parallel citations due to the fact that I firmly believe the purpose of those is going to be served even as they are right now and serve as sufficient to demonstrate how and why I reached the interpretations that I did with the idea that the interpretations that I have come up with have taken into account all that situational and contextual extra-lingual and non-verbal information.

Voicing the choices made about the transcription process can strengthen the claims of trustworthiness of the empirical materials (Tilley 2003, 771). In transcription I become the channel of my interviewees' voice, to borrow Bird (2005, 228) all the while being cognizant of the fact that my transcriptions are representations of the meaning they purport to declare. I also want to make it known that I do not want to claim the transcriptions to be mirroring actual reality in the eyes of my readers either. Transcription in fact is an interpretive act (Bird 2005, 228) in and of itself and what we perceive as meaningful language depends on our cultural knowledge of that language and this also shapes our interpretations of what we hear (Green et al. 1997, 173).

Translation from Finnish to English in addition to transcribing adds yet another layer of complexity (Nikander 2008, 229) to the entire process of interpretation as a whole. At the same time I humbly concede that had I assumed a transcriptive style promoted by discourse analysts, for example, it might have yielded a whole different kind of set of interpretations. I need to point out here, though, that the actual analysis or interpretations, as I should say, were done in the original languages as advised by Nikander (2008, 229) so I have, in fact, kept to the Finnish transcriptions when writing up my research memos regarding the interpretation of those.

I chose to do my transcriptions in the old fashioned way, manually. I did not want to use any software or any other kind of aid for the process because I knew from previous experience that the manual transcription work can be a valuable and enlightening tool for interpreting and I actually consider it a key phase of the analysis. I also concur with Yanow and Schwartz-Shea's (2006, 212) claim that software programs are not needed in interpretive analysis to legitimize the process. The transcription work done manually is by nature such that it forces one to stop and listen again and this comes closest to re-enacting the dialogue situation which in fact is impossible to return to. As I listened to some parts of the interviews numerous times over while I was transcribing them, I kept getting different meanings and multiple interpretations out of them repeatedly. I also kept adding to my research notes as the transcription advanced and this was also helpful for me as I started seeing patterns emerge from the material that later developed into emergent themes having value by adding to existing literature. Manual transcribing is also good for seeing meaning in silence because this is the phase of the research process that one can really concentrate on the material without any external stimuli or social demands and expectations and therefore silence also is allowed to speak volumes.

2.7 Interpretation as analysis

Understanding is "the nonmethodical moment that, in the sciences of interpretation, combines with the methodical moment of explanation" (Ricoeur 1991, 142). All of the events of understanding, misunderstanding, and mutual understanding are linguistic phenomena (Gadamer 2004, 90). What constitutes one of the main ideas of hermeneutics for the goals of research is "for interpreters to understand agents better than the agents understand themselves" (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000, 54) which in turn eventually, when returned to the agents in the form of the research report can result in raised self-awareness and realize itself in reflection and identity work.

The theoretical framework within which the researcher works is of foremost importance in interpretative work and it cannot be done away with because acknowledging that increases the quality of reflection. According to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009, 5) interpretation calls for "the utmost awareness of the theoretical assumptions, the importance of language and pre-understanding, all of which constitute major determinants of the interpretation". However, "languages do not speak, people do" (Ricoeur 1976, 13) and the language used in research cannot be theory or value-neutral. Interpretation as reflexive analysis also takes into account those underlying assumptions that arguments are built on (Holland 1999, 467) rendering the researcher him/herself an active part of meaning making. Gadamer (2004, 33) urges the interpreter to study the origin and validity of the presuppositions s/he has even before starting to tackle any of the empirical materials.

Bird (2005, 230) points out how interpretation begins during transcription making it integral to the whole process. I would like to argue that interpretation in point of fact begins during the interviews where we start to interpret the phenomenon of focus in situ. It might to some extent start even before that during the forming of pre-understanding. Empirical materials open up through theoretical awareness and get intensely interpreted starting at the offset of the fieldwork (Alvesson & Deetz 2007, 116). Interpretations are transforming by nature so they get constantly re-evaluated during the research process and are thus never-ending. It needs to be kept in mind when interpreting the empirical materials that, as Alvesson (2003, 20) well says, "The interviewee may also use the interview situation - in which a friendly, attentive, and empathetic listener is at one's disposal - to express, elaborate, strengthen, defend, and/or repair a favored self-identity". This is an especially relevant point to keep in mind when interpreting identity constructions. It is typical for individuals to not only do the previous but to create wished-for-identities that need to be seen as part of their entire identity construction.

The nature of the words spoken in the interviews is such that as Ricoeur (1976, 3) points out; the message delivered is individual, arbitrary and contingent but its code is collective, a message is a temporal event while the code is in time as a set of contemporaneous elements.

Interpretation as the method of analysis utilizes the judgment of the researcher instead of specific analytical tools (Hall 2003, 67). At the bottom of interpreting what the respondents say is the concept of intersubjectivity which acts as a bridge between two minds. Interpretive methods concede and give credence to empathy and intuition as tools that researchers are bound to use in order to come up with scientifically trustworthy interpretations. Empathy means putting oneself in the agent's place so as to understand the meaning of the act while accepting that only intuition can completely assimilate the mental universe of another (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000, 54).

Empirical materials are constantly open for re-interpretations and multiple different interpretations and as such they are never complete. Therefore, based on that philosophical idea, the need to establish absolute truths becomes redundant and truth as partial, malleable, subjective, and contextual becomes accepted. Gadamer (2004, 18) addresses the requirement of proving oneself right by saying that everyone wishes that others would realize that which we hold true even if it cannot be attested. Attesting facts cannot be the only way to make others comprehend our points of view. Therefore interpretation as analysis produces contributions as added and expanded understanding of the matter at hand rather than attested absolute and objective truths.

The interpretations invite the reader to draw his/her own interpretations, therefore it is important to produce interpretations that are rich in points, so as to give the reader better opportunities to re-interpret, and to incorporate quotes also to show wherein our own interpretations lie. The plurality of meanings is manifested in interpretation (Ricoeur 2000, 13). As far as my empirical materials giving evidence of the entrepreneurial identity construction of a family business entrepreneur go, they "can't be fudged, mis-represented, altered or distorted, because they are life experiences" (Denzin 2009, 151).

Rather than aiming at categorization I have let the empirical material talk back to me, so to speak, in line with Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009, 7) saying that "the consideration of open, equivocal empirical material, and the focus on such material is a central criterion" , this in fact is reiterated by Gadamer's (2004, 33-34) argument that a researcher who truly aims at understanding lets the material speak back to him/her voluntarily because a hermeneutically oriented consciousness is receptive to the multiple meanings of the material. It is through continued readings of the empirical materials and reflective thinking that I have reached my interpretations. The challenge is to make an educated judgment as to how many readings is enough, just as deciding how many references of theoretical source material is enough in establishing adequate pre-understanding.

Individuals make meaning in how they perceive the world (Rae 2000, 148) and by doing so also reflect their wished-for-identities. The interpretation of entrepreneurial identities recognizes the multiplicity of identity structures and views them as temporal and value laden. This takes into account the meaning making participation of the researcher as well who always interprets from his/her gendered, socially and culturally embedded perspective; interpretation does not take place in a vacuum but in a hermeneutical process (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 33).

Alvesson and Deetz (2007, 126) equate interviews with identity work and different identities may be seen as emerging in the responses. The question of identity does not get explicitly addressed, though; "identity can be tracked through how identities are expressed and positions taken in the interview, rather than the interview being about these themes". It is also important to understand that interview accounts are "more than simple mirrors of experiences, observations, and insights relating to the world out there" (Alvesson & Kärreman 2000, 139) and the accounts often have a different meaning than what they appear to have in their surface structure. In interpretation of those accounts the researcher attempts to look through, over and beyond the surface. "There is no original reality which casts its shadows across the reproduction. There are only interpretations and their performances" (Denzin 2001, 29). Interpreting empirical materials in the cross-cultural context, I have to assume an anthropological lens to a certain extent for anthropology represents knowledge that "has to be learned to understand events in another community as its members understand them and act in ways that those people will accept as conforming to their expectations of one another "(Avis 2003, 1001).

To conclude this chapter on methodological considerations, I will describe the procedures and phases through which the interpretive analysis took place in order to reveal the pragmatics of my interpretation thus allowing my readers to see how the reporting of the interpretations has been produced in this thesis. As Kyrö (2004, 113) points out, there is not one correct way to analyze qualitative empirical materials but that each researcher has to find his/her own way to accomplish this, therefore it is important also to make this process as transparent as possible. Grounded theory, for example, utilizes coding in analysis which according to Charmaz (2002, 684) is a process of at least two steps; initial or open coding and selective or focused coding, the difference to interpretive approach being that in this grounded theory approach the researcher studies her data before consulting the scholarly literature whereas in interpretive approach theories form the researcher's pre-understanding that is then developed in iteration with the empirical materials. In analyzing interpretively the researcher replaces the predetermined analytical tools with one's own judgments (Hall 2003, 67). The interpretations themselves will be presented in chapter six.

Sten (2006) has undergone an interpretive process in his dissertation research that is very similar to mine in principle. However, he presents his analysis process as decisions that he had to make, for example the outline of his literature review and decisions about which extracts from the comments by interviewees should be included and so forth. Nordqvist et al. (2007, 32) talk about different levels of interpretation during the analysis. I, on the other hand, see my research process and certainly my process of analyzing as consisting of different phases which I will elaborate on here and which are portrayed in figure 2. These phases are similar to those listed by Braun and Clarke (2006) in thematic analysis. Hytti (2003,72), researching narrative entrepreneurial identities has used a holistic-content approach in her narrative analysis which she has done by writing and rewriting the storied narratives of the interviewees whereas my own take on my research materials has been more of the thematic kind, where, in the manner described here I have analyzed the material on the basis of those themes that formed the backbone of the interview guide and toward which the material was observed to see how the interviewees perceived those issues. This is also indicative of how narrative analysis differs from the interpretative analysis.

As I have indicated earlier in this report, the meaning of pre-understanding in interpretive work is crucial. I argue that some level of analysis of the phenomenon under study, at least conceptually, starts during this time so that for me is the very first phase of interpretive analysis. During this phase I started to see themes relevant to phenomena of my research questions which I marked and labeled in my notes, and in fact color coded for visual clarity. I kept that practice going all through the process. The result of this pre-understanding analysis was the interview guide that was based on this initial phase.

The analysis continued on some level during the interviewing in that I as the researcher interpreted the interactional situation in multiple ways which led to changes made to the original interview guide. In other words that took place as a result of ongoing interpretation in situ. Right after the interviews I made notes and jotted down thoughts of preliminary interpretations and overall impressions relating to the themes of the interview guide as well as questions that I needed to ponder on. Here I made the point of not only letting the empirical materials talk back to me but I also presumed an active role as a research tool in posing questions to those materials, i.e. how do the respondents perceive their entrepreneurial identities, how is the context of family business present in their perceptions, what kind of meaning do they seem to give their cultural surroundings, to name a few.

In my case some recurrent patterns that I started seeing, such as attitudes toward time and networks, during my interviews with my first cultural group, led me to interpret them to be culturally embedded relevant issues to entrepreneurial identity structures in particular. This then meant that I added those themes to my later interview guide. All during the time of the interviews I made field notes and other research notes including my preliminary interpretations in my research diary which eventually consisted of several different sets of notes of hundreds of pages. The writing up of research notes has been an essential part of my entire research process and I have kept going back to them repeatedly. I have seen some of my earlier notes on theoretical issues as well as the empirical materials as having a different and/or changed meaning which signifies the walk in the hermeneutical circle through a developed pre-understanding. This interviewing period in regards to analyzing is what I call the interpretation in situ phase.

The incubation phase (Hunter, Lusardi, Zucker, Jacelon & Chandler 2002, 389) that so aptly describes the time during which the mind mulls over the empirical materials making sense and making meaning out of those, has for me been a long one and overlapping with other research phases. It is not possible to draw distinct time lines as to when and how that started but when reflecting on the process as a whole it almost feels like it started at very beginning with familiarizing oneself with the theories and certainly at the onset of the interviewing process. After that was done the incubation phase in my case turned into trying to attach meaning to those emerging patterns that I had started to see in the research material. That said, the incubation phase of analysis has been ongoing and concurrent with the other phases. During this phase I have also made notes about quotations that I have felt are indicative of my interpretations and intent. These quotations will appear later in the analysis section of this report and will aim at richness of points, which is one of the quality criteria in interpretive research.

In the next phase after the gathering of empirical materials and concurrent with the incubation phase was that of getting to know my research material in more depth. Essential to this phase was transcribing the interviews. As I have said before, transcribing is a tool for analysis and an integral part of the analysis of the material. This is what I call the preparation phase because at this time I prepared the empirical materials through transcriptions and multiple hearings for the actual analysis to come later. I transcribed the interviews in the chronological order that they took place in but later read and reread them in random order and by mixing the two cultural groups for the purpose of eliciting differences and similarities more clearly so that I would not be blinded by sticking to one group at one time. It was also during this phase that I went back to the theories as I needed to search information and acquire more knowledge on those recurring patterns that I had started to see in my interviews. Again, I wrote more research notes, marked, labeled, and color-coded those issues relevant for these new emergent themes. I also went back to my initial theoretical material forming my pre-understanding and this allowed me to see the development and changes of my pre-understanding and also be reassured on being on the right path.

In the next phase, which I call the researching phase I started to look for connecting, relating, cross-checking and cross-referencing issues in the empirical material that had started to be suggestive of the new emergent themes. Cross-checking and looking for differences and similarities took place between different cultural groups, different generations, and theory. More labeling and color coding went on at this point. During this time I was clearly able to decipher the new emergent themes and recurrent patterns that had relationships to what I saw as culturally embedded features of the entrepreneurial identification or which seemed to be related to the generational differences. I also recognized two of my respondents as having what I refer to as a boundary-crossing entrepreneurial identity which stems from these individuals as presenting qualities typical to their own cultural realm but also some qualities that are more typical in the other (see chapter 7. 4) . I then went back to my theoretical framework to contemplate their meaning. These emergent themes seen in the wider theoretical framework of this research are an indication of my having found something new that can contribute to existing knowledge and is suggestive of new theory generation.

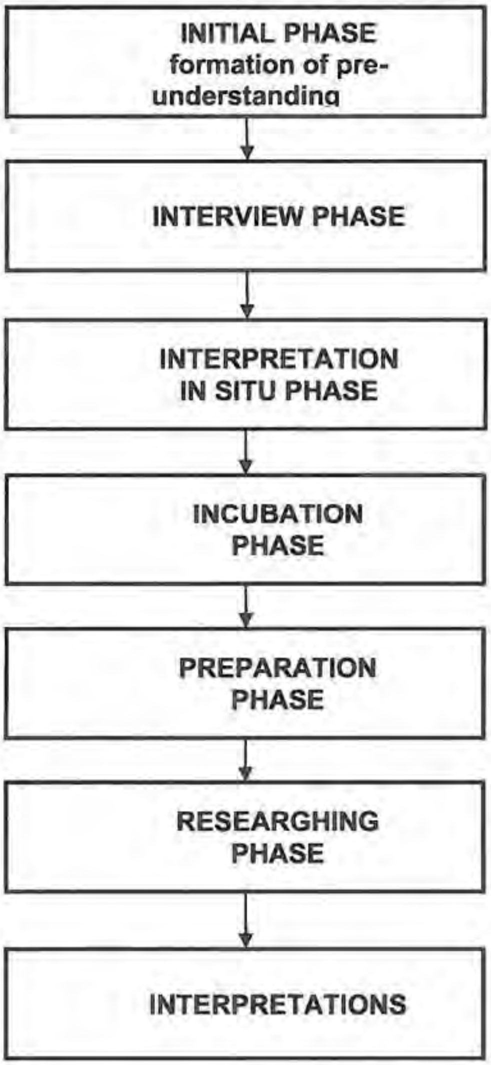

FIGURE 2 Phases of analysis

Regarding the evaluation of the interpretive research, traditional concepts of validity, reliability, and generalization are deemed irrelevant therefore they must be substituted with other means of evaluation such as the concepts of reflexivity, richness in points, literary styling, analytical generalization and multiple voicing (Hall 2003, 68-69). Denzin (2009, 140) calls for flexible guidelines not driven by quantitative criteria for the evaluation of qualitative research because the qualitative research community is not one single entity. It will be in this vein that I return to this discussion in the form of a critical evaluation of my research in chapter 7.6 wherein I will also include a discussion on equivalences based on the evaluation of comparability in cross-cultural research (Polsa 2007).

3 MULTITUDE OF IDENTITIES

"Man is like all other men, like some other men and like no other man."
(Clyde Kluckhon, as cited in Bosma et al. 1994, 12)

Identity is something that we all think we have and profess to know something about. It is through our identities that we define ourselves and create meaning for ourselves. At its core identity is psychosocial embodying the self and the other, the interior and the exterior and it is the expression of self, in response to others (Sluss & Ashforth 2007, 9). It can be regarded as a fundamental bridging concept between the individual and society (Ybema, Keenoy, Oswick, Beverungen, Ellis & Sabelis 2009, 300) for individuals do not construct their identities alone and the concept of identity creates a medium through which the self and the social interact. Identity appears to signify who we are in relation to others and how we are different from others. It is shaped by different life episodes and the patterns of those (Lindgren & Wåhlin 2001, 357) and serves as a backbone for behavior and understanding in the ever ongoing flow of interaction (Stewart 2003, 125). It spans from the molecular to the sociocultural (Rangell 1994, 36). Academic research does not nor is allowed to have monopoly on identities, identity discussions and identity work is very popular both in the scholarly discourse and among the wider public.

The concept of identity has been widely studied over the past decades; Hall (1996, 1) calls this phenomenon "a veritable discursive explosion in recent years around the concept of 'identity'". The theories differ from one another on whether they place emphasis on the individual or the societal (Eteläpelto 2007,96) and the themes related to the concept of identity are being discussed on a great number of levels varying form organizational, professional, social to individual (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003, 1163). In the Western cultures that have traditionally sung the praises of the individual, the popularity of the concept of identity in both the everyday speech as well as the scholarly writings can been seen as yet another reflection of the emphasis on the individual. This of course is the emphasis in which my study is anchored as well, the focus and keen interest in the individual, the family business entrepreneur.

It has become increasingly important for today's individual to ponder on the very essence of him/herself and probe inside of oneself by asking questions like who am I and what am I, who do I want to be and what do I want to become thus raising one's level of self-awareness. Those questions reflect the process-like nature of identity construction in that in addition to taking place in the present it has an outlook onto the future as well. In addition to the present and future tenses, identities also exist in the past tense which keeps having an influence on how they get construed in the future. The prevalence of identity research can also be seen as a kind of a sign of the new era having broken old structures thus leaving the individual to drift in the continuously changing world and environment trying to make sense of it. Reflecting on one's identity offers a means of positioning and repositioning oneself within the surrounding vicissitudes of reality. The concept of identity has turned into a key concept through which individuals attempt to understand what these social changes mean for their reality (Eteläpelto 2007, 93, see also Hall 1996, 2) and through which they yield meanings for those problematic collective structures (Saastamoinen 2006). The reasons behind the concept of identity, in particular, having become so salient to these discussions are strongly embedded in it being so versatile a concept allowing the individual to ponder on these questions from multiple perspectives taking the personal and the social into account simultaneously. According to Hall (1999, 19) the intense discourse on identities is due to the fragmentation of old identities that used to have a stabilizing effect on the social reality.

After its inception the study on identities has grown to cover a far more wide reaching area than the just the individual and his/her personal self and the self's relations to others. The discourse covers the debate from the monolithic to the multiple and from the essentialist to the constructionist (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003, 1164). The realization that identities are a complex structure comprising different identifications has led to the study of those in order to understand the multiplicity of the concept. Various different fields of research have felt it pertinent to launch their own inquiries into the sphere of identity, thus adding to the ever growing group of different dimensions of the concept. Examples of these variations are the study of the concepts of national identity, cultural identity ,gender identity, work identity (Eteläpelto, Collin & Saarinen 2007), organizational identity (Albert, Ashforth & Dutton 2000.), ethnic identity (Hall 1999), managerial identity (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003) and entrepreneurial identity (Hytti 2003). This in fact shows that it really takes more than just one theoretical approach to explain or understand the human being (Rautio & Saastamoinen 2006, 9) and therefore also goes to point out why it is so valuable to examine family businesses and their owner managers in a multidisciplinary and multitheoretical environment. More than one limited theoretical approach is needed to understand the family business entrepreneur in our attempt to create a holistic theory of the entrepreneur in the family business context.

Given the social aspect of the concept of identity, the queries into the essence of it include questions on how the individual relates to others and how others relate to him/her. The debate on individually and socially constructed identities is no longer the sole domain of the study of the adolescent but has grown to encompass the entire life-cycle of the human being. The discussion is vivid and ongoing now in both the fields of individual psychology as well that of social sciences, especially in social psychology, the focus of which is the relationship between the individual and the social (Eteläpelto 2007, 91-95). These assertions can be seen as relevant to the study of the entrepreneurial identity in the family business context as well given the generational changes within the business operations and the ramifications these have to the entrepreneurs themselves on a personal, social, and organizational levels. The multiple identities of the family business entrepreneurs are constantly going through processes of organizational and familial changes, in which incumbents move aside, children become parents themselves, the young generation members become successors and incumbent owner-managers themselves.

As the study of the concept of identity, as well as related or even synonymously used concepts of the 'self', 'ego', and 'personality' have evolved over the past one hundred years, the history of the concept has been thoroughly explained in numerous comprehensive overviews (e.g. Deschamps & Devos 1998, Eteläpelto 2007, Hall 1999, Rautio 2006) thus rendering yet another lengthy account unnecessary. Suffice it for me, for the purpose of this research, to only take a brief look at some of the main research ideologies in the different research traditions to outline the route that I have taken as I have followed my own ontological and epistemological path to set the framework for the understanding of the entrepreneurial identity in family businesses in particular. This path has laid the foundation for my pre-understanding within the realm of identities for this study; first for the conceptualizing of the phenomenon under focus, then for the preparation of the production of empirical materials and finally for the analysis of those.

As is the nature of interpretive research (see e.g. Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000/2009, Gadamer 2004, Hall 2003, Nordqvist et al. 2007) my pre-understanding formed at the outset of the whole research process has changed, grown, and become more extensive and gained depth during the walk in the hermeneutical circle. The empirical world offers new outlooks on theories incessantly, thus transforming the shape and depth of pre-understanding allowing it eventually to dispose itself of the prefix, hopefully resulting in added understanding. However, the understanding accumulated during the research process can never be thought of as final or even really comprehensive but always partial and endlessly open for added contributions to it.

3.1 Forming pre-understanding of the concept of identity

Next I will introduce the main theories and ideas that exist at the foundation of this research, reflecting my own subjective understanding of how identities are constructed. This understanding contains elements of the concept of identity on both personal and social level, thus rendering identities as multiple, fragmented, hybrid and sometimes compartmentalized, sometimes integrated, created through reflection, communication, negotiation and intersubjective interaction. Therefore my understanding of the concept of identity reaches from the interior of the individual to the exterior of the individual. This in fact is in line with Eteläpelto's (2007, 91) strive for the conception of identity as being social and cultural in nature, yet taking into account the subjectivity of the individual. I propose that elements of both personal as well as social identities in their various forms can be observed in the family business members' overall identity constructions. Given that individuals' overall identity structures are composed of different identifications, these same elements, therefore, can be found in their entrepreneurial identities as well.

The many definitions of identity vary along the dimension spanning from the inner to the outer. Despite the myriad of different definitions that have been formulated for it, it seems to exist as something so self-evident that we all profess to know what it entails without specifically defining it, at least in its meaning to us as individuals in our own social reality. Lindgren and Wåhlen (2002, 359) contend that a modern definition of identity has to reflect "both the unique personal dimensions of biography and the dialectical pluralism and tensions of modern life". The concept of 'role' is also one that often comes up in discussions about the selves and lives of an individual. I see roles as being more like socially determined tasks that people have as opposed to identities being internalized by the individual him/herself. For example, in the family business context, an individual may have the role of a manager or owner but that does not necessarily mean that those roles constitute a part of his/her overall identity or entrepreneurial identification. He may be in those roles due to circumstances such as external expectations rather than of his own will. Castell (1997, 7) defines the difference between role and identity in saying that: "In simple terms, identities organize the meaning while roles organize functions" and Sundaramurthy and Kreiner (2008, 417) say that "individuals can construct a given role - a unique set of requirements, responsibilities, and even identities associated with one or more domain", domain referring to for example the home domain, the school domain, or the work domain. These roles are influenced by traditions in the family and the business (Lumpkin, Martin & Vaugh 2008, 131) and by the time the business-related role is assumed, the family role has been influenced for years by the history of interaction with one's family members (Leaptrott 2005,222).

In this study 'personal identity' refers to the individual's conception of him/herself and the social identity refers to the individual's being a bearer of different kinds of group memberships such as senior generation, younger generation in a family business, parent, child, business-owning family member, and local business network member taking into account the context of the research (Kuusela 2006, 26).

3.1.1 Personal identity

> *"Men who share an ethnic area, a historical era, or an economic pursuit are guided by common images of good and evil. " (Erikson 1980/1994, 17).*

This thought contains the elements of socially constructed and culturally embedded identity presented by Erikson, whose seminal ideas of personal identity lie at the base of the concept of psychological identity which is a classic way of defining it. This thought can also be seen as containing the basic elements of the family business institution in that business-owning family members are bound by the same cultural, social, and economic reality in which their identities are embedded. Although Erikson's ideas regarding the identity as something personal and being in the 'ego' do not formally declare any social constructionist elements, the previous citation in fact points to the individual as being in constant interaction with others, as sharing his/her reality with others. Personal identity entails the idea of the individual being similar to him/herself but different from others and this is how one is identified not only by oneself but by others as well. It can be said to refer to a set of idiosyncratic attributes and thoughts claimed by the individual to differentiate him/her from others (Hitlin 2003, 118-120). Erikson's work can be seen as being representative of the multiple facets of identity; "identity as a structure, identity as a synthesizing process, but perhaps most significantly, identity as the intersection of the individual and society." (Grotevant 1994, 63).

The concept of ego is intertwined with that of the identity. As the ego gets defined and evaluated, that is when we talk about identity which in turn in social science is divided into the personal and social identity (Saastamoinen 2006). Erikson (1980/1994, 94), on the other hand calls ego identity "the accrued confidence that one's ability to maintain inner sameness and continuity... is matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others.". Rangell (1994, 27) separates identity from the self by saying that "Identity is the constellation by which a person is known. What he or she actually is, is the self.". Identity exists as a mental configuration whereas the self can be seen to refer to the individual's own person combining the body and mind (Graafsma 1994, 23).

According to Erikson (1980/1944, 22) "the conscious feeling of having a personal identity is based on two simultaneous observations: the immediate perception of one's selfsameness and continuity in time: and the simultaneous perception of the fact that others recognize one's sameness and continuity". This places a strong emphasis on the individual as being in the core of the identity alone. The individual feels that s(he) is and will remain the same and will be identified as such in the eyes of others as well so there is a sense of mutuality between the individual and the people around him/her. The perceptible identification of an individual in the eyes of others, in fact, is the prerequisite for his/her own sense of identity. In the formation of personal identity, the individual's self – definitions to distinguish oneself from others - are based on characteristics, experiences, attributes and values (Hoang & Gimeo 2008, 4). This kind of perspective into identities does not take into consideration the dynamics and complexities that individuals inevitably encounter as their identities evolve and change or the effect those have on identities.

Personal identity also molds and is molded by one's other identities (Stewart 2003, 121) therefore making identities not only malleable but fragile as well. It is characteristic to the psychological and essentialist view on identities not to take the previous into account but to consider identities a fixed structure. Not only individuals but groups as well sustain a unique character that is coherent in time and space (Lindgren & Wåhlen 2001, 359). This stagnant and stable view has to be seen within the limited boundaries that it has, corporeal aspect being one of those. The body within which we exist and construct our mental world will remain the same, albeit with the effects of physical changes brought about with aging and other changes in its appearance such as weight gain or loss. The space-occupying body is the central reference to self-construct, an individual's body today is the same body that s(he) can remember as having been the site for the development of multiple identities over time (Sarbin 2000, 254). A unified identity that remains the same from birth on with changes only taking place in the external reality is not possible in the light of the multiple identities and the social requirements for the construction and molding of those that my ontological views support. Identity structures change not only in the temporal sense but substance wise as well. However, the selfsameness in my view can be true even in its changing and transforming form. Chandler (2000, 211) points to this seemingly paradoxical state of affairs in saying that "at exactly the same moment we find ourselves swearing allegiance to the idea that change is inevitable, we are equally persuaded that, whenever and wherever selves are to be considered, they must, in some arguable way, also be understood to remain the same".

3.1.2 Social identity

> *"The most important thing to know about me is the people with whom my life is intertwined." (Josselsson 1994, 92)*

The discussion on identities has come to acknowledge the importance of others to the self in one's social context. Social identity as a concept refers to "that part of the individuals' self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1982, 2, see also Hoang & Gimeo 2008). Turner (1982, 36) defines a social group as "a number of individuals who have internalized the same social category membership as a component of their self-concept". Social identity-building takes place through self-categorization by which an individual places him/herself within a category and thus contributes to, albeit usually subconsciously, the creation of in-groups and out-groups conceived in terms of self and other (Vaara et al. 2003, 4239).

Social identities are the sum total of different identifications as are personal identities as well. By social categorization an individual locates him/herself or someone else within a system of social categorizations in order to define him/herself (Turner, 1982, 18). Therefore it is impossible to view identities as one definite entity, but rather they need to be looked at as an accumulation of identities that from branches of 'smaller' structures form larger structures. According to Turner (1982, 18) "social and personal identities are conceptualized as hypothetical, cognitive structures which together account for most of the self-concept". According to the constructionist view an individual's understanding of him/herself is a product of interaction with others; therefore it cannot be seen as emanating exclusively from within the person and being stable throughout life (Lingdren & Wåhlin 2001, 359). Even though the social construction of identity emphasizes the interaction of individuals with others during which identities get realized, it does not proclaim that individuals only exist as definitions by others but also as self-defined with a free will and ability to choose (Lindgren & Wåhlin 2001, 360).

Most people possess multiple identities in light of their various social positions and their need for personal positioning of the self. These identities often vary in salience and consequently situate themselves within a salience hierarchy reflecting the importance of each identity viewed subjectively and situationally. The salience hierarchy also reflects the levels of resources an individual is willing to commit to each of these identities. Since an identity that is felt to be particularly salient is more central to one's self-definition, individuals are more likely to concentrate more on the salient identities (Bagger, Li & Gutek 2008, 189-192, see also Doise 1998, 23 and Hitlin 2003, 121). Identities are not something that can be freely chosen to represent an individual. Each identity determination is continuously tested in the particular social reality the individual is involved in at any given time and his/her social position has an effect on the identity construction (Eteläpelto 2007, 140) rendering the construction process a complex and dynamic equation.

3.1.3 Fragmented identity

Identities matter (Hall, 1999 15). Individuals reflect on their identities frequently, both consciously and unconsciously. This takes place in interaction with others as we position ourselves in relation to others in our families and in society at large. Reflecting on and construing of identities offers us conceptual tools for contemplating the interrelations between the personal and private on the one hand and collective and cultural on the other (Saastamoinen 2007, 173). Constructing identities is also a way of distinguishing oneself from the others, identities are not constructed outside difference but through difference (Hall 1996, 4). For a family business owner manager the situational multiplicity of his/her identities as a whole offers a venue and a tool to discard one identity for putting on the other, as if one were able to change clothing, metaphorically speaking . This is not to say, however, that they are unable to don more than one hat at a time, for the need to wear several hats at the same time is typical for the family business entrepreneurs (as a family member, owner, and manager) at any given time in negotiating multiple identities during the business day. This may also mean that those identities conflict or even that they exist in a continuous problematic realm.

As the business environment that family firms operate in, is in constant change, old structures brake and destabilize familiar identities giving way to new, fragmented identities that sometimes are in conflict with one another or even incongruous with one another (Hall 1999, 19-22). Fragmented identities are "multiply constructed across different, often intersecting, and antagonistic, discourses, practices, and positions" (Hall 1996, 4). Fragmentation stresses the multiplicity of identities that are made up of partial fragments and the positions that they take which renders them often contradictory (Grossberg 1996, 91). Fragmentation of identities can cause confusion of identities. Identity crises can take dominant hold of the individual, thereby thwarting the individual from positioning him/herself firmly as the environment and reality around him/her changes. As the search for a definite place in the world goes on, different identity structures can become disposable, potentially having yet again a detrimental effect on the psychological well-being of the individual. Fragmentation and change, however, can also create an active search for ways to deal with identity (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003, 1167).

Identity is born at the unstable point at which the unspoken stories of subjectivity meet the stories of history and culture (Hall, 1999 11). Identity as a concept is a figment of imagination, something abstract. There can never be any other kind of an identity but a postulated one (Bauman 1996, 19), identities are only realized through interaction and communication. They are symbolic representations chosen by the individual to convey who s(he) is (Eteläpelto 2007, 118) and also who s(he) wants to be and become. Identities get reflected on individuals' past histories and hopes and wishes for the future, yet the reflection takes place in the present, therefore temporality is a strong characteristic of identities. This can also be seen in family anecdotes and other collective memories that get passed on across generations. They are also strong building blocks of family business organizational identities because family memories and family business memories are intertwined.

It is the nature of identity, however, that it always includes the element of incompleteness and artificiality, whether it be, for example, through fictitious memories, unfounded hopes, unrealistic expectations or communicative failures. According to Hall (1999, 23) a completely coherent, final, firm and consistent identity is a complete fantasy and Ybema et al. (2009, 301) note that "the appearance of stability in any given 'identity' is, at best, a transient accomplishment". This is in complete contrast to Erikson's (1980/1994, 121) idea of the final identity that becomes fixed at the end of adolescence. As far as the finality of the identity goes, I have to concur with Hall's understanding of the impossibility of the final identity. It is in line with the social constructionist ontological premise that I hold true. Therefore the implications of that understanding for this study are that the interpretations to be drawn from the research interviews for this study can only be observed as something partial, subject to change and temporal.

3.1.4 Identity in crisis

According to Eteläpelto (2007, 93, see also Saastamoinen 2007, 170-172) identities come to be a focus of debate especially when they for some reason are problematic or they encounter strong pressure to change. In the context of this research situations for the previous could be, for example, successions or economic crisis. The question of identity often comes up in a problem-oriented discourse regarding both individuals as well as organizations. Many an individual has been said to have gone through an identity crisis. Not meaning to undermine Eteläpelto's claim I need to add that it is my conviction that taking into consideration the socially constructed nature of the reality, identities are pertinent to the positively oriented discourses as well. The changing world and structures of the social environment either force or allow individuals to ponder on their future and through this they construe their 'wished-for-identities', which often are positively colored and multiple. Having said that though, I have to recognize the reasons behind the prevalence of the concept of crisis occurring in the identity discourse and discuss those here.

The meaning of the identity crisis is as manifold as the concept of identity itself. According to Erikson (1980/1994, 25, 122) an overt identity crisis at the end of adolescence forces the individual to make a selection of who and what to identify him/herself with. This is seen as something definitive in pointing the direction of identity construction. Erikson does acknowledge, however, that identity formation is indeed a lifelong process, albeit largely unconscious both to the individual as well as his/her society.

Oftentimes identity crisis has to do with the individual not being able to place oneself among others. Bauman (1996, 19) calls identity "a name given to the escape sought from that uncertainty". The discussion on identity crisis reflects the change in the focus on the concept from that of one, stable identity to the dynamic, complex identity that is prevalent today. As Bauman (1996, 18) aptly remarks on the discussion; "One hears today of identity and its problems more often than ever before in modern times…indeed, if the modern 'problem of identity' was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the postmodern 'problem of identity' is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep the options open.". For a family business owner-manager the crisis of identity may be negotiated on a daily basis in the interface of family and business. After all, "the moral order of kinship is at odds with the amoral logic of markets" (Stewart 2003, 385).

The spillover of one identity or identification into the area of the other can cause a sense of identity crisis and anxiety. This is especially common when the interests of family and business collide and a sense of inadequacy takes over.

As I will later report in my interpretive analysis of my dialogues with the older generation respondents for this study, most of them express feelings of regret and conflict about their parental identity having played secondary role to their business identity, this in turn has had an effect on their entrepreneurial identities. Another source of crisis of identity for family business entrepreneurs in particular can be the succession process and the realization of that. The older generation may be unwilling to give up on the salience of their incumbent manager identities while at the same time the younger generation may struggle with either wanting to choose a completely different path in their lives or turn into recalcitrant entrepreneurs existing in a more or less permanent crisis of identity due to this. On the other hand, the crisis situation might be necessary for learning and development to take place.

Conscious identity work can be seen as a way to alleviate identity crisis. It may be on-going in complex and fragmented contexts or a source of engagement to cope with the crisis and change in more stable contexts (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003, 1165). Constructing identities is a never ending process during which "stability appears to be either a momentary achievement or resilient fiction (Ybema et al. 2009, 301). Even when taking all that into consideration, identities are not insignificant or reflecting on them is not unimportant. Realizing these limitations, though, will lead to added understanding of oneself through improved skills of reflection and awareness. The conscious use of the concept of identity through self-reflection and identity work can therefore be regarded as a tool for negotiating individuals' different identities so as to avoid conflict, crisis, and disharmony of identities. Pondering on the positions, hopes, and wishes of the individuals of the older and the younger generations in a family firm using this tool can be very fruitful for the well-being of both the company and the family members. It needs to be, as Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003, 1165) aptly point out "grounded in at least a minimal amount of self-doubt and self-openness, typically contingent upon a mix of psychological-existential worry and the skepticism or inconsistencies faced in encounters with others or with our images of them". That view again reiterates the point that identities do not exist in a vacuum but are negotiated in interaction with others, therefore susceptible to crisis and disharmony.

3.2 Entrepreneurial attributes and qualities

Entrepreneurial attitude in the working world has become something that is very desirable today. Whether one is actually a business owning and managing entrepreneur or an employee of one, entrepreneurial qualities are much sought after. The defining objectives of entrepreneurship in general, after all, are growth and wealth creation and wealth is only created through the combination of effective opportunity seeking behavior and effective advantage-seeking behavior (Ireland, Hitt & Sirmon 2003, 963-966). Companies encourage entrepreneurial behavior in all levels of the organization forcing employees to dig deep for those qualities in order to sustain and improve their position in the corporate world. In addition to flexibility and constant learning, individuals are expected to relentlessly remold and renew their entrepreneurial self and work identity (Eteläpelto 2007, 93). These expectations do not allow for the lack of entrepreneurial qualities in an individual which in turn can become a source of anxiety and frustration. Should these expectations be held in a family business regardless of whether those identifications as part of the younger generation's identity are there or not, the result can be detrimental for both the individuals as well as the business operations for a recalcitrant successor rarely makes a successful entrepreneur.

In this section I will take a look at what the different entrepreneurial attributes and closely related concepts are in the literature. It appears to be clear that some people, but not all, have a tendency to "respond to situational cues of opportunities" (Shane & Venkataraman 2000, 218-219) which is often seen to be at the foundation of entrepreneurial activity. This is not to say, however, that all people who call themselves entrepreneurs are bound to have some or all of the characteristics accounted for in the literature, although many of them indeed seem to possess and identify with several of them. Again, this is an overview of how my pre-understanding in the area of entrepreneurial identity has formed. It will be against this that my research interviews will get reflected and analyzed.

When we view the entrepreneurial identity as a theoretical concept it is important to consider it as a different entity from that of the family business entrepreneur's identity. Recognizing that identities are multiple, I need to point out that entrepreneurial identity is only one component of the overall identity of any entrepreneur or person. Another issue that needs to be highlighted at this point is that my basic assumption is not, by any means that every entrepreneur has construed or would even concede to having the entrepreneurial identification as a part of their identity construct. Entrepreneurial identity is not a prerequisite for family business entrepreneurship for there are many different kinds of individuals engaged in seemingly entrepreneurial activities without any kind of an entrepreneurial streak in their self-concept as an entrepreneur. This will be obvious in my dialogues with one father and son of a family business to be discussed later. This can be the case even in family firms that have survived to, for example, the third generation as is the case in the earlier mentioned example of mine. The previous is reflective of the heterogeneous nature of family businesses in general as well as the entrepreneurial identity constructions in that context.

On the other hand, it is clear that family background and having been exposed to others in business do have a strong influence on the development of entrepreneurially related attitudes (Carr & Sequeira 2007, 1092) and the family presumably has a considerable impact on the development of entrepreneurial activities (Naldi, Nordqvist, Sjöberg & Wiklund 2007, 35). Family business entrepreneurs, as opposed to non-family business owners, utilize more social resources which allude to a moral order that will not classify those as 'resources' (Stewart 2003, 390). On a firm level entrepreneurial behavior is potentially fostered by aligned, common goals, valued social relationships and the long-term perspective that is characteristic to family firms in particular (Kellermanns, Eddleston, Barnett & Pearson 2008, 2).

Entrepreneurs can be thought of as having unclear boundaries between their working time and free time. They are often viewed as mobile, active, and enthusiastic planners of their own career (Eteläpelto, 2007, 131). Littunen (2000, 296) presents two different schools of thought within the discipline of entrepreneurship regarding the entrepreneur as a person. The first one is the trait model, in which the main question is why certain individuals start up new ventures successfully. The second one is the contingency model according to which the personal characteristics needed in entrepreneurship are embedded in the firms' environment and the current situation and are actually formed in the interplay between the entrepreneur and his/her environment. It is due to this reciprocal relationship then that for an individual becoming an entrepreneur can engender such a profound change in one's life that it will affect one's personality characteristics. The latter model of contingency is a good fit in my view with the family business institution from a transgenerational perspective as well because the younger generations become socialized to becoming successors in continuous reciprocal interaction with the business family members and the surrounding business culture and networks. Therefore the question of an individual either having the entrepreneurial qualities or not becomes redundant and the focus shifts to construing entrepreneurial identities as a process.

On the other hand, McMullen and Shepherd (2006, 132) present two different theories of entrepreneurship based on action and opportunity seizing. One is a system-level approach centering on how the economic system works, to this approach it is of no consequence who acts as long as someone does. The other is an individual-level approach investigating why some are more likely to pursue opportunities for profit than others. According to McMullen and Shepherd (2006, 132) these two approaches overlap conceptually in that entrepreneurial action is at the core of them both, therefore they are complementary. This thought can be seen to be a good fit as well with the family business system because it does not isolate the family firm entrepreneur from the surrounding economic reality but allows for individual level investigation of the entrepreneurial identity construction embedded in the environment.

3.3 Components of entrepreneurial identity

As mentioned before, the term identity is often used synonymously with many other terms, such as identification, self-representation, and self. When it comes to entrepreneurial identity in particular, the scholarly literature of entrepreneurship has brought out many concepts that have a strong semblance to it, albeit that the concept of entrepreneurial identity has not been given a definite definition per se. Those include entrepreneurial mindset, entrepreneurial intent, and entrepreneurial orientation. Due to their conceptual similarity I will take a brief look at those in the following, with the thought that they can be seen as contributing to the concept of entrepreneurial identity. In this study the interpretive substance given to the concept of entrepreneurial identity is through the self-perceived attributes of my respondents and furthermore, my interpretations of those, to be discussed later.

Shepherd, Patzelt and Haynie (2009, 3) define entrepreneurial mindset as "the ability and willingness of individuals to rapidly sense, act, and mobilize in response to a judgmental decision under uncertainty about a possible opportunity for gain". This in fact is in line with Turner's (1982, 20) assertion that individuals can regulate their social behavior in terms of situation-specific self-conceptions so that social stimuli are construed and behavior controlled in the appropriate manner adopting to different situations, i.e. seizing and exploiting an opportunity. Ireland et al. (2003, 967) point out the dual nature of the entrepreneurial mindset in saying that it is both an individualistic and collective phenomenon which in turn is in line with the premise of the identity as a psychosocial structure. Simply observed, those who act more entrepreneurially, have a more entrepreneurial mindset (Shepherd et al. 2009, 2).

Carr and Sequeira (2007, 1091) define entrepreneurial intent as "those initial actions an individual takes prior to formally beginning the start-up or generating initial sales related to an on-going business". They go on to explain that activities like drawing up a business plan or developing a product can be regarded as intent due to the fact that they occur in the gestation phase of the business but cannot be viewed as the ultimate entrepreneurial behavior like the actual start-up. The concept of entrepreneurial orientation is often examined from the organizational perspective. In addition to innovativeness and proactiveness, it also includes autonomy. Individuals or groups within a firm can possess autonomy and it can be found among lower-level employees or among more senior decision makers and is a vital aspect of entrepreneurial value creation (Lumpkin, Cogliser & Schneider 2009, 50-62). Entrepreneurial orientation focuses on the mindset of companies engaged in the pursuit of venture creation therefore providing a useful framework for studying entrepreneurial activity (Naldi et al. 2007, 33). Taking my social constructionist stance on identities into consideration, I have to look at family business owner managers' entrepreneurial identities not as a generalizable entity but varying in substance and form with each individual according to the different identifications that they may take on.

Hall (1996, 2) defines identification as being "constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group; or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation". Since different identifications make up an individual's various identities, I base my understanding of entrepreneurial identity construction as being one identification amongst many for any entrepreneur. The concept of identification has and can be used synonymously with that of the concept of identity. Therefore the construction of identity takes place on many a different stage of identification varying in salience and prominence, personally and socially where one identification can be dominant and other dormant at any given time (Worchel, Iuzzini, Coutant and Ivaldi 2000, 17). That said, I then focus on that specific area of identities or identifications which can be called the entrepreneurial identity, existing within the same identity construction as all the other identifications a family firm entrepreneur may have as building blocks to construe his/her overall identity with.

One has to acknowledge that every entrepreneur, that construes their identity to include the entrepreneurial identification, has other, multiple identities depending on their social environment. However, for family business entrepreneurs, the identity construction is unique in the context of entrepreneurship in the sense that they have to reflect on the family, ownership and management dimensions simultaneously, albeit situationally, whereas for non-family firm entrepreneurs it might be easier to compartmentalize their different identities and shift those accordingly. Family business entrepreneurs have to constantly negotiate their multiple identities as a family member and business operator with those that they hold dearest.

According to Littunen (2000, 297) the business activities of new firms often get developed as a part of the entrepreneur's personal strategy characterized by the entrepreneur's personality features with the thought of earning a living in mind. The thought of his/her venture becoming a family business might not be in the entrepreneur's conscious mind at the time of the start-up, but unconsciously the hope for a transgenerational business might guide the personal strategy. The same logic may potentially be detected in the successors' entrepreneurial identity composition in that the personal identification as a son/daughter and designated preserver of the family legacy in the business can guide the business (and life) strategies, although often the younger generation is acting more innovatively and is more growth oriented than the senior generation. The very fact that the older leaders are often motivated by the thought of creating a lasting legacy for the generations to come can make them conservative and risk-averse in their decision making because of the fear of losing the family wealth (Kellermans et al. 2008, 4).

The field of entrepreneurship has produced a substantial body of literature on investigating what entrepreneurial qualities are. Opportunity seeking, recognizing, seizing and exploiting define most of those. Since entrepreneurship requires action, an entrepreneur has to be able to act on the possibility that one has identified an opportunity worth pursuing (McMullen & Shepherd 2006, 132). Because action takes place over time, and because the future is unknowable, action is inherently uncertain, uncertainty therefore constituting a conceptual cornerstone for most theories of the entrepreneur (McMullen & Shepherd 2006, 132-133). In order for an individual to be able to realize entrepreneurial ends such as creation, new venture formation and exploitation of opportunities (Shepherd & Haynie 2009a, 322) entrepreneurial insight is needed to search for markets where the same insight can be applied to producing new goods or services (Ireland et al. 2003, 968). Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 323) posit that central qualities for such an entrepreneurially insightful individual are those of him/her being an innovator, risk bearer and action oriented whereas his/her peripheral qualities would be those of an organizer, facilitator and communicator. These taken together then go on to define this person's entrepreneurial identity according to Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 323).

In addition to being sensitive to opportunities, being able to tolerate uncertainty, and being action oriented, the literature frequently brings up risk taking and bearing skills, being innovative, possessing knowledge and social networking skills and generally being entrepreneurially alert as salient qualities for entrepreneurial individuals. According to Littunen (2000, 259-297) the risk factor involved is one of the reasons why entrepreneurs have to be achievers by nature as well whereas being innovative means that they must have the ability to come up with solutions in novel situations. Furthermore, Littunen (2000, 300) argues that the previously mentioned achievement motivation in addition to locus of control are the kind of psychological elements that differentiate entrepreneurs from other people. People with an internal locus of control perceive the rewards received to be contingent on their own behavior (Boyd & Vozikis 1994, 68) and they feel that they can influence their own lives, set goals and figure out how to reach those goals (Keltikangas-Järvinen (2000, 43). Ireland et al. (2003, 968) say that those who are entrepreneurially alert have "the ability to identify when new goods or services become feasible or when existing goods or services become unexpectedly valuable to consumers".

In light of the scholarly literature often referring to the requirement for cognitive skills, previous information, and knowledge, tacit and otherwise, needed for entrepreneurial action, family businesses make for excellent environment for the fostering of those. Carr and Sequeira (2007, 1092) point out that it is through the transgenerational influence, previous experiences while growing up, and the socialization into the family firm world that cognitive and behavioral skills needed for entrepreneurship are built. However, as far as the often quoted risk taking propensity goes, Naldi et al. (2007, 34-43) point out that since the ownership and management are not separated in family firms but are familial by nature, this may cause family business entrepreneurs to be more risk averse than their non-family firm counterparts. Hoang and Gimeo (2010, 42) discuss the qualities of a firm founder role identity in particular and say that they possess knowledge, cognitive skills, task-relevant abilities, social ties , self-assessment and self-targeted reflection. It is the skill of reflection in particular which, as mentioned before, is of essence in being able to undertake 'identity work' as a tool to unravel identity-related crisis and disharmony in the family business context.

3.4 Entrepreneurial identity in the family firm

Building on Shepherd and Haynie (2009a) I put forth a proposition that an essential part of the entrepreneurial identity is the need to feel distinct and for an entrepreneur in any form of enterprise this particular identification provides the opportunity to satisfy the need for distinctiveness which is fundamental for the development of an individual's identity as a whole. This part of the entrepreneurial identity is closely connected to the individual's personal or core identity which relates to the internal mental world of the individual and the desire to be different from others. According to Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 318) the entrepreneur's need to be distinct is due to the fact that "the venture requires distinctiveness given a competitive market environment" and that "the identities of the entrepreneur and his venture are intertwined". Therefore being an entrepreneur is a way for the individual to establish a unique identity that distinguishes him/her from others in their community, industry, and society. This of course also serves as a way for others to distinguish the individual and following the thought about the entrepreneur's identity being intertwined with that of his firm's, also for the business to be distinct in the surrounding business environment. Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 320) posit that the feeling of distinctiveness derived from the entrepreneurial identification plays a crucial role in establishing a meaningful sense of identity. On the firm level it is important for entrepreneurs "to position their firms relative to other firms to maximize distinctiveness and erect barriers to imitation to maintain that distinctiveness" (Shepherd & Haynie 2009a, 321).

On the other hand, Shepherd and Haynie (2009a) point out that there is an inherent need in people to feel belonging and that this need is as strong as that of wanting to feel distinct. They argue that for entrepreneurs the fulfillment of the need to feel distinct may be realized at the expense of the need to feel belonging which in turn might be detrimental to the individual's psychological well-being. Conversely, Turner (1982, 19) suggests that it is possible that occasionally an individual's social identity may turn out to be so salient that it functions to the exclusion of the personal identity. Whereas the need to feel distinct was something deeply personal, the need to belong, on the other hand, is strongly related to the individual's social identity. Whatever the individual's view of him/herself is in relation to the surrounding world, certain aspects of that view will have been contributed by the membership of social groups or categories that the individual belongs to (Tajfel 1982, 2).

This kind of two-way perspective presented by Shepherd and Haynie (2009a) into the entrepreneur's identity shows the identity as a psychosocial concept which is in line with my own ontological understanding of it as a researcher. It is my contention that in the context of family businesses, their owner-manager entrepreneurs derive the feeling of distinctiveness from the entrepreneurial identification while at the same time getting to fulfill their need for belonging through the familial ties. Furthermore, in regards to seeking, seizing, and exploiting opportunities, the ability of which is constantly present in the entrepreneurship discourse, families play a powerful socializing influence on the behaviors, values, and attitudes of people (Carr & Sequeira 2007, 1090) making family experiences fertile ground for the transmittance of entrepreneurial spirit. Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 323) argue that entrepreneurs can develop "a super-ordinate" identity which represents the multiple identities of an entrepreneur in a holistic way. Some of those identities then serve the need for distinctiveness and others the need for belonging. I will later refer to this phenomenon as a 'hybrid identity' in the context of family businesses. I refute the concept of a super-ordinate identity in this study and in the analysis of the interviews for the connotation of that is that it seems to signify something that is far removed from reality. For its stead I propose and will use the term 'hybrid identity' the connotation of which is something of a mixed origin, to demonstrate and signify the multiple and contemporaneous identifications of the family business entrepreneur's entrepreneurial identity. The concept of 'hybrid identity' as such is not novel but can be found for example in organization science (e.g. Arregele, Hitt, Sirmon & Very 2007; Foreman & Whetten 2002) wherein it is used to refer to hybrid identity organizations regarding organizational identity. However, in the context of research on family businesses where the focus is on individual family business members, the concept is new.

3.5 Summarizing identity as a concept

It is my attempt in this piece of research to study identities as a psychosocial and culturally embedded entity across the different dimensions of the family business institution to contribute to the understanding of the entrepreneurial identity construction of family firm entrepreneurs. Based on the previous it is necessary to view identities as developing in the interaction of the personal and the social and as continuously being re-constructed, re-formed and negotiable (Eteläpelto 2007, 140). Therefore in studying how family business owners construe their entrepreneurial identities it is of paramount importance to take into account both their personal as well as their social identities as family members, owners, business operators, and managers, embedded in the network of the local business cultures. In this study I take the stance of viewing the concept of identity as a complex, dynamic, multiple, temporal and socially constructed one. More specifically; a family business entrepreneur construes his/her identity at the interface of the business, ownership, and family. It is a compilation of personal and collective identity building blocks which combine to form a multiple identity construction, dynamic, complex and socially and culturally embedded. When an individual in the family business context goes to define their entrepreneurial identity structures, they do not do so in isolation from others but the different dimensions of the form of enterprise that they operate in, including their familial relationships, are ever present.

The entrepreneurial identity construction also includes temporal dimensions in its essence, not only due to the concept of identity itself being a temporal concept but in relation to the perspective of the continuum of the business, familial and ownership relationships. The family business has a past that is reflected in the family's past and often the family's future is parallel with the business's future. This does not mean to imply, though, that the only view into the future is that of the continuation of the family business across generations. As individual identity structures are complex, often paradoxical and dynamic, so are the family businesses organizational identities as well whose development and changes encounter equal challenges.

By virtue of the fact that family businesses comprise different, seemingly confrontational entities mixing family with business, family business entrepreneur's entrepreneurial identity therefore follows suit. The starting point for interpreting those identities has to be the nexus of the different realms that form the identity construction under focus. This multiple identity constellation can be viewed as a formation of different identifications that the individual has taken on, entrepreneurial identification being one of them. That would obviously be the element that is important for them to be successful in business, and to seek, seize, and exploit opportunities. Not all entrepreneurs, though, relate to having a strong entrepreneurial streak as a part of their identity construction.

Given the interrelated nature of the individuals' multiple identities, the family business institution creates a unique context for the entrepreneur's entrepreneurial identity causing it to take on a different form than that of non-family entrepreneurs (see Hytti 2003 on narrative construction of the entrepreneurial identity in a non-family firm context). Although it is a given that no one constructs their identities alone but always in the social context that they live and operate in, as far as entrepreneurial identity goes, for a family firm owner the familial connection plays an even greater part in that.

4 FAMILY BUSINESS AS THE CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

"Embeddedness, once achieved is, like holding and attachment, silent rather than active and eventful. It is the framework that gives shape to selfhood, the context in which we define ourselves, the togetherness in which we are alone."
(Josselson 1994, 98)

This chapter aims at introducing the context of the research as well as relating previous research to the formation of pre-understanding of the context. In the term 'context', the prefix 'con' indicates union, therefore a text, be it on theories or on empirical analysis of spoken words, is never without context. This chapter will take a look at what kinds of theoretical issues in the field of family business I have considered to be relevant to the entrepreneurial identity construction in this particular context. Inferences as to the role of tacit and culturally embedded knowledge in meaning making between people can be made through contextual description. The extant related literature on family businesses, that being the theoretical context of construction of entrepreneurial identities has been dissected from the perspective of how it sheds light on entrepreneurial identity construction. The context of construction refers to the specific space, symbolical and natural, wherein individuals engage in meaning making. (Hansen 2006, 1049-1054)

As I reviewed the literature, I wrote up emergent themes pertinent to the entrepreneurial identity construction context in my research notes and later brought them here in order to form the theoretical base for the family business aspect of the research. This was done in the manner inherent in the hermeneutical approach and thus represents my pre-understanding on the subject. This also connects the present study to the existing research. The themes that emanated during the process will be introduced here as existing as the point of origin for the interpretations to come later and as representative of my contextual pre-understanding in particular. The following sections will also discuss the importance and the unique nature of family businesses and related research connecting the context to the proposed contributions of this research.

Familial relationships and their importance to individuals in family businesses have become recognized due to the growing interest in the sociocultural context of entrepreneurship (Anderson, Jack & Drakopoulou Dodd 2005, 140). Previous research (e.g. Heck, Hoy, Poutziouris and Steier 2008; Chrisman, Steier & Chua 2006) has suggested that in order for there to be value in studying family businesses as an entity on their own, there must be a priori acknowledgment of them being somehow fundamentally different from other types of profit generating forms of enterprise. In consequence of the unique integration of family and business, which Naldi et al. (2007, 34) refer to as "a contextual hybrid" (c.f. 'hybrid identity' in the previous chapter on identities), it can also be presumed that family business owner entrepreneur's entrepreneurial identity construction must include some different elements from that of the non-family business entrepreneur's. As Chrisman, Chua and Steier (2003, 444) contend, research in the field of family business must take this uniqueness into account. Reay (2009, 1269) finds it surprising that application of identity theories to the family business studies is rare even though the very strong connection between family and business renders the concept of identity particularly relevant for family firms.

The challenge is to examine if the distinctiveness is truly due to the family's involvement in business (Pearson, Carr & Shaw 2008, 949). Lumpkin et al. (2008, 134) argue that business family members do not, merely by the virtue of being a family member, exert greater influence on the business than would be the case in a non-family business setting. This unique integration of two profoundly different systems, as they stand alone, is often seen as incompatible with one another, which is an argument that would also imply incompatibilities in the identity structures and cause conflicting identifications in business family members' overall identity construction. However, in the light of the hybrid identity construction that I have introduced in the previous chapter, I put forward a proposition that the synergies coming from that can make for a positive and satisfactory identity construction resulting in positive outcomes for the business operations as well. This in fact is in line with Chua, Chrisman and Steier's (2003, 331) claim that in order for family businesses to be sustainable in the competitive marketplace, which many of them are, a synergistic and symbiotic relationship between the family and the business is required, meaning that the two entities have to find a harmonious balance in existing together in order for this symbiosis to yield synergistic benefits for both.

The previously mentioned synergies rise out of "congruence of goals and shared assumptions and values" (Royer, Simons, Boyd & Rafferty 2008, 18) that the business family members put into practice. This synergistic symbiosis that is called the family business can yield mutual value in the pecuniary and non-pecuniary sense for the two subsystems, entrepreneurial identity construction being one component to benefit. After all, as Shepherd and Haynie (2009b, 1252) put it; "family business represents an extreme case in the context of "managing" multiple identities". These different identities are activated concurrently (Shepherd & Haynie 2009b, 1252) creating a hybrid identity structure. In the family business system, the two subsystems cease to be separate units and combine to form one that needs to be observed as such for "the defining function of a system cannot be carried out by any one part of the system taken separately" (Habbershon, Williams & MacMillan 2003, 456). The defining function of the enterprising family social system, according to Habbershon et al. (2003, 462) is "that which synergistically and positively enables them to create transgenerational wealth".

4.1 Family business as a field of research

Family business research as an academic field of study which is practically oriented (Zahra & Sharma 2004, 338) has grown exuberantly during the past three decades (Sharma, Hoy, Astrachan & Koiranen 2007, 1020). It is on its way to becoming an essential part of what is published on entrepreneurship in leading academic journals (Zahra & Sharma 2004, 331). It is acknowledged now that if family involvement is ignored by theories of entrepreneurship, they are likely to miss critical factors in the theory building that are in fact family-related (Chrisman et al. 2003, 442; see also Heck et al. 2008). Due to its unique nature that as a research object combines the most fundamentally human aspect with that of the economic one it has become, at its best, to be realized as a multidisciplinary field. Right from the beginning this field "has borrowed heavily from other disciplines, including psychology, sociology, economics, law, and family systems" (Zahra & Sharma 2004, 336) blending disciplinary orientations and various methodologies in new and creative ways (Heck et al. 2008, 318) making good of that which is inherent in the discipline itself. This is in line with my earlier contention in the chapter on identities that it does indeed take more than one theory to understand the family business entrepreneur.

In terms of contributions and numbers, family businesses have come to be recognized as the dominant form of enterprising throughout the world (Chrisman et al. 2003, 441; Miller, Steier & Le-Breton Miller 2003, 513). The numbers vary according to the family business definitions used per each study. The criteria that are used for the formulation of definitions play a big role in the overall perception of the family businesses' contribution to economies (Astrachan & Shanker 2003, 216) but regardless of that variance their importance is inevitably significant. According to Pistrui, Welsch, Wintermantel, Liao and Pohl (2000, 252) an estimated 85 percent of the businesses in the European Union and 90 percent of the U.S. businesses are family controlled. Family firms are also estimated to represent anywhere from 40 to 60 percent of the GDP of the United States (Chua et al. 2003, 331; Davis & Harveston 2001, 14) and in 1996 over 60 percent of the U.S. business revenue was generated by family businesses (Olson, Zuiker, Danes, Stafford, Heck & Duncan 2003, 641). Studies show that approximately 80 percent of all Finnish companies are family owned (Sten 2007, 169), 46 percent of all midsize and 30 percent of all large companies are family businesses (Tourunen 2009, 101).

Astrachan and Shanker (2003, 212) note that the unique intangible aspects of family businesses do make quantifying their economic impact difficult. They are seen as major sources of technological innovations and economic progress, important creators of employment, incubators and financiers of new businesses (Zahra 2005, 23), boosting not only the economic development of local communities (Zahra & Sharma 2004, 331) but having a major impact on the growth of national economies as well (Ibrahim, Soufani & Lam 2001, 245). Family businesses creating value through product, process, and service innovations fuel growth leading to wealth (Zahra, Hayton & Salvato 2004, 363).

Given the undeniable economic importance of family businesses, it is important to generate research that will aid in determining predictors of family business sustainability (Olson et al. 2003, 642). On the other hand, given the human factor as in the family dynamics, it is also of substance to pay attention to research with the purpose of sustaining and improving the well-being of the business family members and their relationships both in the familial as well as business realms. Identity research offers a means to answer to both the previously mentioned needs through helping to raise self-awareness skills and helping individuals to reflect on their family and working lives, past and future and the wished-for-identities.

4.2 Defining family business

The basic premise of defining the family business is fairly clear in combining the two systems of family and business, yet the academic research of it still lacks consensus as far at the definition of it goes. The family business comprises three independent subsystems (family, managers and owners) that overlap and interact (Moores 2009, 169; Aronoff 2004, 55) and therefore is "a complex, interactive web of relationships encompassing both the family and the firm" (Pearson et al. 2008,956, see also Olson et al. 2003). Myriad of different definitions exist depending on the emphasis and viewpoint that each researcher has taken. Family business definitions need to be specific about those dimensions of the system they refer to and should measure what they claim to measure and furthermore, they need to reflect transparency and unambiguousness (Klein, Astrachan & Smyrnios 2005, 322).

Basco and Pérez Rodríguez (2009, 82; see also Aldrich & Cliff 2003, 574) say that often research focuses on the dichotomy of the family business which tends to place the focus on family- or a business-first approach. They go on to call for a more holistic perspective underlining the need for not only similar but simultaneous attention to be paid to both family and business. This need is congruent with the needs of any identity research conducted in this context.

Astrachan, Klein and Smyrnios (2002) have developed an F-PEC scale to assess the extent of family influence on power (the proportion of shares, the percentage of top management positions and the proportion of board seats held by the family), experience (the sum of experience that the family brings into the business), and culture (the extent to which family and business values overlap and the family's commitment to business). This scale is meant to encourage researchers to move toward exploring the mediating and moderating effects of family involvement in the business rather than taking a bi-polar perspective to firms as family or non-family firms (Sharma 2004, 4). The benefit of taking this stance on the family business definition dilemma is that it allows "robust comparisons across studies and samples" (Anderson et al. 2005, 137) and it acknowledges a great deal of diversity among family firms (Sten 2007, 169). The F-PEC scale can be useful to identity research in this context by helping to pay attention to the multiple dimensions active simultaneously in the ongoing negotiation of identities of family business entrepreneurs.

However, in light of the previously suggested issues regarding the use of definitions for each study, the basis of this research lies in the definition formulated by Koiranen (2000, 3): Family business is a business operation owned and controlled by one family that has either transferred, is in the process of transferring or will transfer to the next generation and a family business, regardless of its form, is the economic unit in which the business operations of the family take place and in which the interactive interests of family life, ownership, and business are applied to the ever changing circumstances. This definition is a good fit with this identity research in that it, like the F-PEC scale, also embodies the different building blocks of family business owners' entrepreneurial identities, or lack thereof, with a temporal essence. It is not so much geared toward measuring and comparing but rather gives a more general contextual reference in support of creating understanding of the phenomenon under focus here.

4.3 Defining family in the family business

"A society that is concerned about autonomy, liberty, the spirit of enterprise, responsibility, or solidarity – which are all major constituents of a business culture – would be wise not to ignore the family, the place where we first begin to learn all of these virtues." (Belardinelli 2002, 269)

Echoing Belardinelli's quote above, Olson et al. (2003, 659) emphasize that family's effect on business ventures is significant. Family members have a high degree of interdependency and they share resources in an unrestricted manner unlike the other types of economic units that allocate resources based on wealth or ability (Lumpkin et al. 2008, 133-134). A family is "an organization with an identifiable structure" (Leaptrott 2005, 218) that influences its members' way of thinking in that it also has consequences on the strategic decision making in the family firm (Sharma & Manikutty 2005, 297). According to Lumpkin et al. (2008, 134) families are "multifaceted, interdependent systems of individuals who share resources and paradigms of tradition, loyalty, equality, and inclusiveness".

Families in business are as heterogeneous a group as are the family businesses (Sten 2007, 169). Therefore, for the purpose of doing research on family related issues in business, the definition of what is referred to by 'family' needs to be explicated (Aldrich & Cliff 2003, 592).

Given the cross-cultural aspect of this particular research which introduces empirical materials from Louisiana, USA and Finland, I will look at two culture-specific definitions next: Aldrich and Cliff (2003, 578) quote the U.S. Census definition of a family by saying that it refers to "Two or more persons living together and related by blood, marriage, or adoption". Koiranen (2000, 14) quotes the equivalent Finnish institution the Statistics Finland by saying that a family refers to individuals, married or in a common-law relationship, and their children, who live together or to single parent families as well as to childless married couples or individuals in a common-law relationship. The prerequisite for being a family therefore is to share an address. The U.S. definition does not include common-law relationships in the family definition and the Finnish one does not specify adoption as a means of being related. Leaptrott (2005, 218) makes a valuable point in saying that it is very common for family firms to include family members that reside in their own households rather than all living in a single household. In this study family is understood to refer to individuals sharing familial ties either through marriage, a common-law relationship, blood, or adoption who may or may not live together.

It is of utmost importance to point out that the concept of family and the dynamics related to it are very much culture related. Sharing a household is viewed upon differently in different cultures as is the status of a couple in a relationship. As the previous definition showed, common-law relationships are prevalent in Finland and often enjoy equal prominence with those through marriage whereas some cultures might not give them the same approval. Aldrich and Cliff (2003, 578) make a mention in a footnote of another type of culturally embedded issue relating to families by saying that "unlike much of Europe, in North America, unmarried adults usually do not reside with their parents". It needs to be pointed out here that Nordic countries, like Finland, are not like "much of Europe" in this respect. It is a general norm that unmarried adults live on their own and not with their parents; obviously exceptions to this rule exist. Generally speaking, though, families strive to raise their children into independence which in pragmatic terms means that the children leave the nest when they come of age whereas in some other European cultures the younger generation stays in the same household with their parents until they find a spouse. This difference in how families relate to what is regarded as the norm, or suitable, even, can affect the identity construction process and identity's overall structures. It can also have strong ramifications for the entrepreneurial identity construction in particular regarding the succession process, to give an example. If unmarried adults are expected to reside with their parents, one can ponder on how this influences the expectations of continuing the family business regardless of the younger generation's own aspirations and how that influences their identity negotiation.

Family is what acts as the central institutional regulator for interaction between human beings in embodying the most fundamental relationships one has (Hall 2003, 18). It is this aspect that has a great bearing on the overall identity construction of the family business owners and carries great implications for their entrepreneurial identity construction as well. Identities are both the cause and consequence of the relational world (Josselson 1994, 102). Being in business together is a formidable part of family business members' individual lives (Gersick, Davis, McCollom & Lansberg 1997, 1) and the entrepreneurial spirit as well as other attributes needed for successful venturing are cultivated in the family (Belardinelli 2002, 169). It is indeed the family unit in which the socialization of the younger generation into entrepreneurship takes place through learning and doing things together. An ideal learning orientation would be that of "within and between generations" resulting in "commitment to transgenerational learning" (Moores 2009, 177). This type of reciprocity allows individuals' voices to be heard and appreciated within a family, for "individual family members, each with their own subjective interpretation of reality, contribute in recursive fashion to existing dynamics within the family system" (Puig et al. 2009, 142). Individuals within family or family business systems are required to draw interpretations of each other's deeds, intentions and feelings (Eteläpelto 2007, 140). This type of optimal environment of socialization is beneficial for the ongoing identity construction of both generation members in business together for while it helps to steer the business into the future successfully, it is also helpful in teaching, reinforcing and supporting the successor as well as helping the incumbent to let go and make changes in his/her identity construction accordingly. This in turn lessens the potential identity crisis during changes related both to the individuals' lives and their businesses.

Familial relationships are interdependent, long term, emotionally laden and often complex. They influence identity in a different way than those relationships where the familial connection is nonexistent. Familial identification is based on a common origin and shared characteristics with feelings of solidarity and allegiance as its foundation (Hall 1996, 2). Therefore it is important to ponder on what is meant by family and business influencing one another to produce the context for the entrepreneurial identity construction as the fore mentioned interdependency bears heavily on identities as well. The quality of familiar relations goes a long way in determining the well-being and happiness of both an individual as well as society at large (Belardinelli 2002, 170). This in turn means that reflecting on those relationships is of essence in building solid overall identities as the importance of family for the identity is significant. As Hall (2003, 34) points out; "any relevant understanding of the family business must be built on an understanding of the dynamics of the family".

Families exist in a state of constant change. The individual's position within the familial web of relationships is transformed over his/her lifetime and is reflected in the changing identity formations as well. An individual goes through phases of being identified as someone's child and possibly a sibling, later on they might become parents and eventually grandparents, they might see their families brake as a result of death or divorce which has a profound effect on the family dynamics. All the changes that possibly take place have their own influence on the individual identity. All the while the family's business is going through and reacting to changes as well, whether they be in the business environment or in the family itself. The family and the business go through parallel transformations. The life cycles of the family are intertwined with those of the family business. As Moores (2009, 177) puts it; "individuals in business families progress through identifiable stages that see them first learn business, then learn their family business, learn to lead their family business, and finally, learn to let go".

Temporality is present in the family, the business and the multiple identity structures involved thereby adding to the complexity of the phenomenon. Shareholders' expectations towards changes in the business and the ownership of it vary materially from generation to generation (Thomas 2002, 322). The future tense and outlook reflects the wished-for-identities as part of the entrepreneurial identity structure and often take the form of transgenerational business operations through successions. This can influence family relationships through, for example, expectations towards the young generations or through the reluctance of the older generation to give up power and control.

4.4 Family value systems constructing identities

Values are an integral part of any family and value systems get transferred across generations as families are often said to have a shared identity. This is then demonstrated through a shared value system consisting of personal and collective values that the family wants to perpetuate. The shared value system is transmitted through "myths, stories, and rules" and is clear "in family's traditions, rituals, and its relational laws" (Lumpkin et al. 2008, 130). These traditions, shared memories of the past, stories of family history and legendary accomplishments of the generations past lay the ground for the future actors and are intrinsic for their entrepreneurial identity construction. Therefore the collective system of values and beliefs is pivotal for transgenerational wealth creation as well.

Value systems are descriptive of what the family and their business consider important and include beliefs about which goals are better than others (Koiranen 2002, 185). Parental values defining acceptable ways to carry on relationships between family members are inevitably absorbed by generations (Sharma & Manikutty 2005, 297) affecting the socialization process into entrepreneurship as well. The family business offers a "uniquely meaningful opportunity to sustain and extend a legacy of values" (Aronoff 2004, 57).

According to Hubler (2009, 225) "the manifestation of the soul in family business comes as a result of the emergence and discussion of family values".

The ownership and control of a business may give a sense of freedom and success for the business family members due to them being able to live out their personal value system (Denison, Lief & Ward 2004, 63). Values are shared through communication; in verbal and nonverbal ways, in everyday small talk or through contractual writings. Family business values, defined and shared, can aid in resolving the potential conflicts of interest between the family and business systems (Koiranen 2002, 177) and also form the basis for reciprocal trust and responsibility (Belardinelli 2002, 172). In psychology trust is viewed as the first component of a healthy personality derived from the experiences of very early childhood (Erikson 1980/1994, 57). What the family as a whole and what they as an economic profit making unit believe to be ethical and morally right is pronounced through their value system.

In practice shared and defined values improve communication between family members and form the basis for general understanding within the family facilitating the interpretation of emotions, anger, dreams for the future, shared business ethics and moral views and transmittance of entrepreneurial spirit. Values and norms have a significant bearing on the strategic decisions made in the family firms (Sharma & Manikutty 2005, 294; Koiranen 2002, 285) and can promote top performance and support a long-term view (Koiranen 2002, 177) inherent in and essential for the perpetuation of the family business institution. Values get constantly negotiated as identities get negotiated and just as identities, values have a past, present and future and are susceptible to change.

4.5 Owning and managing the family's business

Family businesses reflect the heterogeneity of the business owning families in their approach to management and business operations. For example, they do not all have "a single rationality for governance" but they each approach it differently (Basco & Pérez Rodríguez 2009, 83). Some firms have no formal contracts between family members or no regular meetings considering governance or business operational issues, others can have a high degree of formality in their organizational practices (Leaptrott 2005, 221). Governing the family business means taking both the emotional bonds to ownership as well as financial performance equally into account (Thomas 2002, 321).

It is the family aspect that unites these types of enterprises that have come to be known as family businesses. The inference to be drawn from the previous with regard to the entrepreneurial identity construction is that those are multiple and heterogeneous as well but share the influence of the family dynamics. This in turn purports to say that the reinforcement of the entrepreneurial spirit in families is often a task focused on the individuals whom differ in their approach and expectations for the family's business. It is indeed widely recognized that entrepreneurs do not form a homogeneous group of people (García-Álvarez & López-Sintas 2001, 210). However, within the family unit people have shared histories and often shared life experiences.

They should therefore have "similar sense-making interpretations" (Leaptrott 2005, 224) which facilitate communication and mutual understanding.

For many families the business represents a legacy to be perpetuated and therefore is always more than just a business. The business represents the family's history and reflects their hopes for the future. It is comparable to a family heirloom. For the business to continue as a source of transgenerational wealth, the entrepreneurial orientation must be enforced, refreshed, and kept going. Through the succession process and transgenerational value creation the business can also be seen as "extending the owner's and the preceding generations' selves into the future" (Zellweger & Astrachan 2008, 35). When it comes time for a member of the younger generation to enter the business he/she has already been a member of the family and thus had years of history and interaction with others in the family therefore having been subjected to the normative influences from both the family and the business (Leaptrott 2005, 222). On the other hand, if the business family members are only interested in financial returns and see the business as "interchangeable with any other asset offering comparable returns" (Aronoff 2004, 57), there is no genuine will to sustain the business as a family business and the business is not seen as representing a family heritage to be continued hence the financial perspective becomes a "self-fulfilling prophecy" (Aronoff 2004, 57). This might carry significant relevance to how an individual's entrepreneurial identity is structured.

4.6 Family businesses as distinctively different

The reciprocal role of family and business distinguishes family business studies from its sister disciplines and makes them a complex research setting (Zahra & Sharma 2004, 333-335) which needs to be appreciated when undertaking a study in the this field. According to Chrisman et al. (2003, 443-444), "family involvement is worthy of consideration in research on new and existing businesses only if that involvement leads to materially different behaviors and outcomes from what would occur were there no family involvement". As far as building family business theories goes, Klein et al. (2005, 333) say that the distinctiveness and uniqueness of the family firms need to be described along with how it comes about and further, how all this leads to competitive advantage. This ambitious goal lies at the base of this research as well in that the aim of it is to interpret the components of the entrepreneurial identity construction in light of the unique and distinctive features to be found in family firms as the context.

How are family businesses different and unique? Family involvement has to signify a source of added value to the business entity and vice versa, otherwise family's involvement in the business would be of no consequence and of no advantage (Chua et al. 2003, 331-332). According to Aronoff (2004, 57) the family business's distinct culture and unique values do make it different from other enterprises and do thus offer indispensable competitive advantages. In general there is a conscious effort to strive for both pecuniary performance and non-pecuniary performance, such as "independence, tradition and continuity" (Zellweger & Astrachan 2008, 348) and the family companies usually have broader goals than merely wealth maximization in order to serve the both systems involved in a more comprehensive way (Chua et al. 2003, 332, Pearson et al. 2008, 959; Hall & Nordqvist 2008, 57).

The long-term orientation that permeates the family businesses' outlook on planning also helps them to maintain long-lasting relationships with their stakeholders, which in turn can facilitate opportunity recognition and exploitation for wealth creation (Zahra 2005, 23; Poza, Hanlon & Kishida 2004, 101; Sharma & Manikutty 2005, 302). The long-term nature that is ingrained in family businesses, also "allows them to dedicate resources required for innovation and risk taking, thereby fostering entrepreneurship" (Zahra et al. 2004, 363). According to Zahra (2005, 38), the involvement of multiple generations in a family firm allows the company to capitalize on "talents, skills and connections of different family members" spurring innovativeness and venture into new market arenas.

The family dynamism plays a part in a family firm's strategy development. Strategy formation of family firms includes varying degrees of both the family system and the business system elements (Basco & Pérez Rodríguez 2009, 83) and the family's influence on strategy permeates through the personal values embedded in the surrounding culture (Sharma & Manikutty 2005, 300). Denison et al. (2004, 61) say family firms not only perform better because of who they are but also because of what they do strategically. They go on to link this claim to the shared histories and identities that connect the business family members to the core values and standards of behavior within the family leading them to success. This assertion is reiterated by Steier (2001, 259) saying that this strategic advantage stems from the "social capital" or "relational wealth" that family businesses have accumulated over time. The essence of social capital, continues Steier (2001, 260), is in the ability of people to work together. Changes in strategy are often brought about by changes in the life-cycle of the firm, such as the succession process (Chrisman et al. 2003, 442). A family business owner entrepreneur's personal issues rooted in his/her history or the family's history may influence and mold the entrepreneurial strategies put in place therefore involving not only cognitive but emotional factors, too, in strategy formulation (Kisfalvi 2002, 492). The formulated strategies can then be transferred from one generation to another in ways that do not exist in non-family firms creating a clear advantage for family firms (Poza et al. 2004, 101). According to Steier (2001, 263) social capital in particular, in the context of family businesses and successions, is "one of the least tangible and least fungible assets".

Unlike in other types of enterprises, maintaining family ties is of utmost importance for the human resource practices of family firms (Basco & Pérez Rodríguez 2009, 84) and often overrides the business operational choices that might have been a better alternative for the firm. Habbershon et al. (2003) investigated the unique combination of systemic conditions present in family firms and as a result coined the term 'familiness'. It is defined as "the idiosyncratic firm level bundle of resources and capabilities resulting from the systems interaction" (see also Pearson et al. 2008; Zahra et al. 2004). The underlying premise of familiness is that it is not the family system itself that is the source of advantage per se but its interactions with other organizational systems that create value (Zahra, Hayton, Neubaum, Dibrell & Craig 2008, 1040). Their focus is on family firms whose performance goal is transgenerational wealth and wealth creation potential, the families of those firms are called "enterprising families" (Habbershon et al. 2003, 451). They go on to say that "enterprising families are those committed to transgenerational wealth creation, which is shown to be a function of a family-based advantage". The transgenerational aspect here is in line with the family business definition used in this study and is seen to be relevant for entrepreneurial identity structures in this context.

Familiness is a source of competitive advantage and "an explanation of various relationships within family businesses" or "a means to discriminate between family and nonfamily firms" (Pearson et al. 2008, 949). It arises from the synergies among the behavioral and social resources contained within this system (Pearson et al. 2008, 956) and "reflects the positive aspects of overlapping subsystems of family and business "(Zahra et al. 2008, 1047). Familiness as a term, by its etymology alone, emphasizes that which is unique for family businesses and represents well that which is unique in the entrepreneurial identity structures of family business owner entrepreneurs as well. Familiness resources are one of the intangibles that make family businesses different from their non-family counterparts and one that can create competitive advantages for family firms (Moores 2009, 173-174) in helping to enhance the family firm's capabilities and possibly ending up in organizational performance payoffs going beyond the economic performance (Pearson et al. 2008, 959-963).

Another advantage that makes family businesses distinctive are shared communicative skills, or "collaborative team skills" (Hubler 2009, 257) having been created over a life time, allowing the family business members to understand one another more easily and therefore constitute another important resource. Tacit knowledge accumulated through socialization taking place as children grow "can pay economic benefits through the exploitation of the know-how conveyed in this manner" and "the long-term affiliation of family members provides the environment to attain tacit knowledge transfer levels superior to nonfamily firms where relationships among participants are shorter in duration" (Leaptrott 2005, 225; see also Royer et al. 2008, 17).

The occurrence of conflict and its resolution also differentiate family business from other types of enterprise. No matter what conflicts are about or how they are resolved, they have a considerable effect on the family business members' lives in and outside the business (Vago 2004, 73). As mentioned before, familiness is an important factor for entrepreneurial identity construction process. It is a clear component of the identity structure and can facilitate conflict reduction within the family firm resulting in the firm being able take advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities (Reay 2009, 1267) therefore it is useful for it to be explicated in connection to identity work and conflict resolution.

Succession is a widely discussed and yet another unique and strategically important issue for family firms (Ibrahim et al. 2001, 245; Royer et al. 2008, 15) and it has produced a wide body of literature. It is understandable given the well acknowledged economic impact of family businesses on one hand, on the other the reality is that only less than a third of family businesses make it into the second generation and only 15 percent to the third generation (Ibrahim et al. 2001, 246; Miller et al. 2003, 514). Successions should be properly planned for and the planning should start early in the successor's life (Ibrahim et al. 2001, 256) to prepare him/her as well as possible. This has clear benefits in regard to the family business but at the same time raises questions of what implications that has to the identity construction of the younger generation members. Does this stifle the true wished-for-identity constructing forcing the offspring into a position that they are reluctant to assume, possibly resulting in recalcitrance? Erikson (1980/1994, 111) writes about George Bernhard Shaw saying that he was forced into business somehow from which he decided to break away in order to "avoid the danger of success without identity". A recalcitrant and reluctant successor might turn out to be successful but discontent if he is continuing the family business for the wrong reasons. On the other hand, if the true direction of the identity constructing is in the way of the family business, early preparation for succession serves well in enforcing the entrepreneurial identity within the overall identity structure of the successor.

The transfer of business specific tacit knowledge from one generation to another (Royer et al. 2008, 28) plays a fundamental part as a building block for the successor's entrepreneurial identity construction. It can also play a vital role in giving rise to a sense of commitment towards the family's business and thus it is often that business specifically that the young next generation entrepreneurs identify with and therefore it becomes the arena for not only perpetuating the family legacy but realizing one's own entrepreneurial ambitions as well. Successions can also be seen as a kind of rite of passage (c.f. Eriksen 2004, 93), to borrow a term from anthropology, for both generations where the transforming identities get negotiated concurrently. The younger generation assumes those positions that used to belong to their parents and parents move into the next phase of both their personal as well as their working lives. Transitional rites offer a solution for societal transfers from one phase to another, i.e. successions, and they can also be considered tests of endurance in a way during which the participants demonstrate their competency needed in the realm of their newly adopted identities (c.f. Eriksen 2004, 93).

4.7 The downside of being a family business

Conflict is inherent in human relationships. Familial relationships and certainly business-related relationships are no exception to that, hence a lot has been written about conflict in family business. According to Lumpkin et al. (2008, 135) out of all forms of governance, family firms are the most prone for interpersonal conflict. For family business members the source of conflict often lies at the intersection of family and business identity (Shepherd & Haynie 2009b, 1246). According to Shepherd and Haynie (2009b, 1246) conflicts may originate either from business issues such as "disagreements over growth targets, succession, product offerings, or even seemingly mundane issues like hours of operation" or family-related issues such as "time spent away from the home, marital differences or inattention to important family events". The previous list of possible sources of conflict emphasizes the distinctiveness of family business again, for the "mundane" issues are not likely to play such a big role in other types of enterprises.

Shepherd and Haynie (2009b, 1246) introduce a concept of 'the family business meta-identity' as "the structure through which conflict at the intersection of family and business is resolved". The concept of meta-identity is useful for the development of identity work in not only conflicting situations in family businesses but for example in the succession planning as well. Dilemmas and disharmony involved in negotiating identities involving intersecting issues need to be brought up as they reflect negotiating the boundaries of each identification as well (Eteläpelto 2007, 140). Olson et al. (2003, 659) give an example in numbers of the impact that conflict has economically by relating research results according to which "if 10% of business-owning families reduced their family tension by 4%, family business revenue in the United States would increase by $389 million". This goes to show how prominent a role conflicts play and why it is so important that ways to deal with conflict are researched.

Other potential problems specific to family businesses are being resistant to change, a tendency to follow conventional strategies possibly delimiting their growth and profit-making ability, older generation reluctant to give up control, nepotism (Zahra 2005, 23) and cronyism (Chrisman et al. 2006, 720). Nepotism is often viewed to be the deciding factor behind the succession process implying that family ties play a superior role to competence in the selection process. It is, more often than not, considered to be a very negative feature in an organization. However, according to the logic of kinship this kind of favoritism is not unjust but more like a sign of faithfulness and solidarity (Eriksen 2004, 162-163). This potential difference in views on nepotism is representative of the interface of internal and external worlds of reality in the family business context. Royer et al. (2008, 26) say that the selection of the successor is to some extent, at least, based on functional reasons as opposed to purely nepotistic.

Family members often accumulate considerable amount of business-specific knowledge over time which makes them the opportune choice for a successor.

In regard to strategy, Gallo (2004, 136) points out that family businesses have a lower concern for strategic change and developing the employees skills. The aforementioned 'familiness'-factor can also have negative effects in that it can "induce uncertainty about the consistency of their earnings streams (Zahra 2005, 25) and stifle and inhibit growth (Moores 2009, 174). The overlap of management and ownership subsystems may hinder the effectiveness of external control mechanisms thus exposing the business to self-control problems (Moores 2009, 173). Although it is important that family firms innovate and aggressively pursue entrepreneurial activities (Zahra et al. 2004, 363), some family firms tend to become complacent in their existence and in their business operations. When a certain level of success that is deemed sufficient is reached, entrepreneurial spirit may get diluted and the goal to be reached is merely in the sustaining of things as they are instead of actively reacting to change and looking forward. This may have implications for socialization of the younger generation into entrepreneurship and also for the construction of their entrepreneurial identities. As Vago (2004, 72) aptly says; "Comfort is the enemy of change. Money and time are its arch-enemies".

The much talked about and researched succession process is not without problems (e.g. Miller et al. 2003, 513). Differences in expectations among family members and between generations can lead to what Davis and Harveston (2001, 16) have defined as "preference incongruity among individual family members". This can lead to reluctant successors being brought into the business and management and can be a source of identity crisis and conflict. The wished-for-identity is not what the expected identity is. It can also be caused by the reluctance of the incumbent to leave his position and thus give up control. This is related to another common problem in family businesses which is a lack of open communication (e.g. Ibrahim et al. 2001, 254). The communicative problems pervade both realms of business and family and are transported from one system to another. This situation prevents the expectations to be voiced that individual family members might have regarding their hopes and aspirations both as family and business members.

In sum, there is ample evidence based on the existing literature on family businesses that family does indeed carry great relevance to the business operations and entrepreneurial activities in the family business context. Therefore it can be assumed that this is the case for entrepreneurial identity building as well. Family business entrepreneurs' identity construction does not take place in a vacuum but has to concurrently actively draw from the systems of business and family therefore the family's relevance to the entrepreneurial identification structure needs to be seen to be of essence as well much in the same way as the family dimension is recognized in the context of family firm operations.

5 LOOKING THROUGH THE CROSS-CULTURAL LENS

"The only true exploration, the only true fountain of delight, would not be to visit foreign lands, but to possess others' eyes, to look at the world through the eyes of others"
(Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, as cited in Smith, Bond & Kagitcibasi 2006, 1)

This chapter will embark upon discussing the meaning of culture for identities, the phenomenon of the genesis of stereotypes that invade our cultural understanding, what constitutes cultural and intercultural competence needed in conducting cross-cultural research and finally, the cultural framework within which the Finnish and Louisianan family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identity constructions are perceived. That framework is contemplated through cultural stereotypes and connected communicative features specific to the two cultures. The differences in ways of communication reflect larger cultural differences that might affect individuals' perception of a particular culture; therefore they might have a bearing on interpretations drawn from the empirical materials at hand.

The discussion takes place through existing research in the field of cross-cultural and intercultural studies and thus is representative of the theoretical framework in addition to the real world experiences that I have as a researcher conducting cross-cultural research. The following then forms the basis of my pre-understanding of the cross-cultural aspect of the research and lays ground for the interpretations to come. The issues and concepts discussed here are those that have emerged out of the literature through the hermeneutical process and abductive reasoning inherent to the interpretive approach. They are deemed to have had relevance to not only the identity construction process but also to the interpretive process aiming at understanding identity constructions through a cross-cultural lens.

It is of essence for me as a researcher to be deeply aware of how cultural issues influence not only my respondents but me as well, the interactive situation of the interviews, and even more importantly, my interpretations of the empirical materials. Drakopoulou Dodd (2002, 524) reiterates this point by saying that "any analysis is subject to the cultural preconceptions of the researcher in question" and Bird, Osland, Mendenhall and Schneider (1999, 164) say that "a cross-cultural experience almost always involves self-reflection and questioning one's own cultural values". Recognizing those cultural influences in myself as a researcher and their significance on the entrepreneurial identity construction of my respondents is not sufficient per se. As Ross (2000, 72) points out; any research that gives an essential role to culture must also specify how the influences attributed to it come about. This is not uncomplicated because the source of cultural differences and similarities is not easy to identify due to the complex nature of culture (Moghaddam, Taylor & Wright 1993, 27). The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is also to take into account the methodological concerns that the cross-cultural setting imposes.

It needs to be pointed out that this study does not aim at unveiling definite large scale cultural differences and/or similarities between Finnish family business entrepreneurs' and American family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identity constructions (see chapters 6.4 and 6.5 respectively on the selection of the two business cultures as well as the connectors between the respondents). The purpose here is to observe those identity constructions in their cultural surroundings without laying claim to generalizations or definite all surpassing truths. It is my avid attempt to be aware of cultures as well as the individuals themselves being affected by numerous subcultures, such as national, regional, ethnic, linguistic, as well as local business cultures. What emerges from the empirical materials observed through the cross-cultural lens, eventually, are emphases placed on different issues within the family business realm that I then interpret to be influenced by the respondents' respective cultural reality. Those will later be presented as themes that have implications to the entrepreneurial identity construction in particular, that rose out of the empirical materials. Therefore the comparison of cultural differences is not the end here but rather the means to reach the interpretations.

The aim of the interpretations borrows from the field of anthropology also in trying not only to look for differences in the two groups of informants representing different business cultures but also to make note of how they can be seen to be similar (Eriksen 2005, 14). The value in the cross-cultural setting of the research is contributing to the family business as well as identity literature from the standpoint of cross-cultural studies. Pragmatically this type of research can be valuable in adding to the self-awareness of the family business entrepreneurs themselves in helping them see themselves through the eyes of others.

Cultures have a profound influence on identities. Cultural influences on the negotiation of identities increase progressively from infancy to adulthood (Smith et al. 2006, 81-82). Family businesses have their own culture which is manifested through values, beliefs, and goals which in turn are embedded in the family history and social relationships (Hall, Melin & Nordqvist 2001, 193). According to Wilenius (2006, 43) "In Western societies, culture and economy are still understood to be two separate things. The concept of culture is associated with something sublime and distant, while business is seen mostly in terms of moneymaking". Given the socially and culturally embedded nature of identity constructs, including the entrepreneurial identification, and given the cross-cultural setting of this research, it is necessary to take a look at what the issues are that lie behind the meaning and significance of culture, what culture itself can entail, what the implications of culture are to the entrepreneurial identification of family business entrepreneurs, and how all this eventually influences the interpretations rendered from the interview materials in this research. It is likely that family businesses in different countries have different cultural characteristics (Hall et al. 2001, 206; Zahra et al. 2004, 375).

Cross-cultural research and identity research seem to be eminently complimentary to each other in as far as the mutual benefits go. Cross-cultural research contributes to the understanding of how the different identifications of an individual's overall identity structure are fostered within a particular socio-cultural context (Smith et al. 2006, 100). The multiplicity of culture as a concept reflects that of the identity as a concept as people are subject to many different subcultures. Pondering on that socio-cultural context facilitates the understanding of social identity structures (Tienari, Søderberg, Holgersson & Vaara 2005, 223) as well.

5.1 Cross-cultural studies as a field of research

Today the importance of culture is well recognized in explaining variations among research findings (Cohen 2007, 273). Geert Hofstede's (1980, 2001) seminal and pioneering work in the field of cross-cultural research has gained enormous importance and has been cited ad infinitum. Hofstede collected data from a large multinational corporation, IBM, through an employee attitude survey program between 1967 and 1973 producing answers from 72 countries in 20 languages (Hofstede 2001, 41). He then developed a set of value dimensions to study and compare cultures. Those dimensions are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity and long-term versus short-term orientation. This work was the real point of departure for organization and management theories to start paying attention to the role of culture in research being conducted within business and economics.

Hofstede's work reinforced the equation of country names and nation states to culture (Joy & Kolb 2009, 70) rendering the concept of culture a very static one. Many have voiced criticism against Hofstede's theories (e.g. Bird et al. 1999; McSweeney 2002; Voronov & Singer 2002; Jameson 2007). According to McSweeney (2002, 110) the prefixing of the name of a country to something to imply national uniformity is over-used and Hofstede fails to justify his claim that an average tendency in the responses in a questionnaire from a limited number of employees in a single organization is also the national average tendency. As far as the groups of informants are concerned; "the participants were highly educated and highly skilled managers, technicians, and other white-collar professionals. Indeed, it is questionable how representative such a sample would be for any country" (Voronov & Singer 2002, 466).

The dimensional measures fail to say too much about the culture itself it purports to measure and offers no explanation for the relationship between the dimensions and the variables of interest (Tipton 2009, 147). Voronov and Singer (2002, 461) are of the opinion that "such descriptive labels evoke unduly fixed and caricature-like mental impressions of cultures or societies rather than representative pictures of their complexities". Obviously it is much easier to get information about the nationality of an individual than, for example, their religious beliefs or socioeconomic class, which also constitute the kind of variables that add to the methodological complexity evident in cross-cultural research (Jameson 2007, 205). This type of take on culture fails to acknowledge that different cultures may co-exist within nations, each with its own norms, religious beliefs, language and world views (Cohen 2007, 274). McSweeney (2002, 99) questions how national cultures are said to influence occupational contexts on the one hand but on the other, that national diversity is not assumed to create national differences in occupational and organizational cultures. It is an approach that restrains our comprehension of business issues, problems and strategies (Jameson 2007, 204). It also fails to pay heed to the fact that the world is forever changing which has constant ramifications for cultures as well.

Tipton (2009, 156) contributes the now ongoing change from a static view of culture to a more dynamic one to the symbiosis of education and media in that their interaction extends the public sphere hence broadening the range of choice and narrowing the range of self-evident and matter-of-fact statements about the world. This thought is iterated in Voronov and Singer (2002, 476) saying that correspondence between geography and cultural boundaries can no longer be assumed due to the immense amount of information exchanged continuously between countries and continents. d'Iribarne (2009, 309) adds to this discussion with an epistemic and methodological argument; "the idea itself of a national culture, in the case of modern societies whose key feature is pluralism in the conceptions of existence, is generally challenged by those using an interpretative approach".

Regardless of how one evaluates Hofstede's work it certainly has increased the attention paid to cross-cultural research although, as McSweeney (2002, 112) succinctly points out in criticism; "the on-going unquestioning acceptance of Hofstede's national culture research by his evangelized entourage suggests that in parts of the management disciplines the criteria for acceptable evidence are far too loose". Hofstede' theories offer a macro model for understanding cultural influences, whereas my research is based on comprehending those from a micro perspective in which localized meanings are emphasized. Concentrating on nation-level differences and similarities does not allow for observation of those within the subcultures or micro cultures thereby excluding the complexity of differences and similarities of identity structures (Alasuutari 2005, 64).

In addition to organizational and management research, the science of marketing has benefited greatly from cross-cultural studies, albeit that marketing has mostly focused on culture on the macro level. Cross-cultural research has been used, for example, in uncovering core values in different countries with the understanding that those values have a powerful effect on consumer behavior (Watson, Lysonski, Gillan & Raymore 2002, 923). Cross-cultural perspective has entered the field of entrepreneurship as well; for example from the point of view of business ethics (Bucar, Glas, Hisrich 2003), entrepreneurial traits (Mueller & Thomas 2000), venture creation; Baughn & Neupert (2003, 313) argue that "national culture is seen as shaping both individual orientation and environmental conditions which lead to levels of entrepreneurial activity in different countries" and further that "entrepreneurs are embedded in country-specific institutional arrangements that may facilitate or constrain new venture formation" and succession in family businesses; Sharma and Srinivas Rao (2000, 321) make a cross-cultural point in saying that "if we remain too cautious of differences across cultures, it will not allow us to recognize how stark the similarities are between them" echoing the anthropological view. Pistrui et al. (2000, 253) argue that in order to understand variations in entrepreneurship and economic development across geopolitical regions, it is of essence to understand the cultural forces behind them.

As can be seen, researchers take different stances on how they view and apply cultural influences in their studies, whether they side with nation-level approach, concentrate more on the subcultures or whether they integrate both views. However, not much research has been done on the influence of cultural values on behavior and attitudes at the individual level (Cohen 2007, 274). My approach to the cultural aspect of this study is "idiographic" (Helfrich 1999, 132) in that I look at my respondents as unique individuals within their own cultural surroundings.

5.2 The etic and emic perspectives

The very premise of cross-cultural research lies in the fact that the researcher him/herself is working from his/her own cultural frame of reference and is aware that his/her informants possibly represent some other frame of reference. When possible differences or similarities emerge from the empirical materials, their value as to the universality of those features needs to be discussed and explicated as to what kind of cultural sphere they serve. The terms etic and emic focus on this. The question of the extent to which the social processes observed in one society are particular to that (emic approach) and the extent to which they can be generalized to other or maybe even all societies (etic approach) has been the focus of cross-cultural research right from the beginning

(Moghaddam et al. 1993, 44) . Emic issues of society are more easily uncovered by the qualitative approach (Polsa 2007, 1).

These terms have their origin in linguistic terms phonetic and phonemic, etic paralleling the universal assumptions made in the study of phonetics, the study of sounds and emic, focusing on local meanings drawing most readily on information provided by persons within that cultural group, paralleling linguists' focus on the phonemic attributes of a specific language (Smith et al. 2006, 18). In the etic approach one can start with the universal assumptions and keep looking for evidence to support those or one can start by studying the distinctive attributes of one specific group with an emic approach focusing on local meanings (Smith et al. 2006, 18). Smith et al. (2006, 27) call for evidence of both etic and emic outlooks in research and Berry (1999, 168) urges to adopt an approach in which the relationship between etics and emics is seen as symbiotic. The terms etic and emic can also be used to describe the life as experienced by the members of society as emic and respectively the analysis and explanations of it of the researchers studying it as etic (Eriksen 2005, 58).

In regards to cross-cultural research, the concepts of etic and emic are valuable tools for the reflection and self-awareness essential to the interpretive approach. Even if we discard the notion of aiming at etic truths, that does not remove the culturally laden perspective from which the researcher acts which still influences the entire research process, even when adopting the most objective approach in search of emic findings; "the emic approach is just as culture bound and culturally dependent as the researcher and his/her premises and methods"(Helfrich 1999, 137). When the researchers fails to self-reflect and incorrectly or thoughtlessly assumes that his/her research instruments and techniques are appropriate for comparison in the alien culture, this leads to an imposed etic (Helfrich, 1999, 144). The previously mentioned methods used by Hofstede were, in fact, imposed etic (Smith et al. 2006, 172).

Ethnocentrism (Friedman & Antal 2005, 75) or ethnocentric fallacy (Eriksen 2005, 20-21) which means that the researcher or any individual, for that matter, feels that their own culture is better than others' might be behind the imposed etic approach. Renshon and Duckitt (2000, 6) express concern regarding cultural imperialism, which can be likened to imposed-etics. In cultural imperialism strong cultural traditions "repress, restrict, or even moderate, modify, revise and transform" other traditions for their own benefit. Huntington (1993, 41) is acutely aware of the research traditions having been dominated by Western cultural ideology in saying that: "The very notion that there could be a "universal civilization" is a Western idea". That can be seen as questioning the motive and the need for universal culture-related assumptions to begin with.

When viewed as research approaches, the emic approach is seen to be particularly suited to understanding individuals; their attitudes, motives, interests and personality (Berry 1999, 167) because it tries to reconstruct the experiences of the individual through his/her own reporting (Helfrich 1999, 136). However, no approach is without its dangers. According to Helfrich (1999,

136) the specific perils with the emic approach are systematic bias and arbitrariness; "Systematic bias occurs when individuals misrepresent their own behavior. Arbitrariness refers to the subjective status of scientific knowledge". I position this research as aiming for the symbiosis of both etic and emic ideas with reflexive caution and awareness for the systematic bias and arbitrariness.

5.3 The meaning of culture for identities

The concept of culture itself is elusive. Etymologically the origins of the word culture come from the Latin word *colere* which means 'to cultivate' (Eriksen 2005, 15). The inference to be drawn from that is that culture then refers to something that is man-made rather than existing naturally on its own. The same kind of definitional dilemma surrounds the concept of culture as does the concept of identity. Definitions are many and they vary in substance and purpose reflecting the complexity of the phenomenon and this brings about methodological problems as is always the case when no consensus of a definition exists. Ross (2000, 72) says also that attention needs to be paid to how those effects that are attributed to culture come about in regards to theory building. He goes on to note that "It is not good enough to simply say, 'They did it because they're Chinese'".

The human agency of culture in the previous is echoed in Moghaddam et al.'s (1993, 2) definition of culture as "the human-made part of the environment" because it presents culture "first, as a combination of both social and material products of humankind; second, as already being there when the individual arrives in the world; and third, as more than all that is in the minds of individuals". Watson et al. (2002, 924) say that culture is "a society's personality" or "the glue that binds people together". When looked upon how cultures are linked to identities, it is clear that just as identities in general are multiple, so are the various cultural identifications. The multiple cultural influences are embedded in individuals' larger "cultural repertoire" (Friedman & Antal 2005, 74) and they are "layered and situationally defined" (Ross 2000, 68). Therefore one component of individuals' identity construction is that of the cultural identity.

Jameson (2007, 199) points out culture's link to social identity which he defines as "an individual's sense of self derived from formal or informal membership in groups that transmit and inculcate knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, and ways of life" and further that "a broad conception of cultural identity should not privilege nationality but instead should balance components related to vocation, class, geography, philosophy, language, and the social aspects of biology". This type of conceptualization of culture, according to Jameson (2007, 199) accentuates those identifications that are related to business, such as economic class and professional affiliation. This outlook then provides the link between culture and entrepreneurial identification as well. In family businesses the dominant organizational culture is "manifested in and protected by a web of cultural artifacts such as rituals and myths" creating a fairly homogeneous business specific cultural framework (Hall et al. 2001, 196). Family businesses create their own business-specific culture which often has a significant impact on the way the business owning family members think, feel and act (Schein 1987, 20) and in order to understand the individuals in these organizations one has to understand their organizational culture.

The nature of cultural identity is parallel to the overall identity structure in that it is temporally, spatially, and situationally oriented. As Jameson (2007, 199) puts it; "Cultural identity changes over time and evokes emotion. It is intertwined with power and privilege, affected by close relationships, and negotiated through communication". Culture is the ubiquitous force influencing us all. Although we recognize it as something constant, its contents vary and its practices are highly diverse (Renshon & Duckitt 2000, 4). Cultures embody maps of meaning that render the world understandable and identities constructible (Lehtonen 2000, 17-21). Eriksen (2005, 15-16) narrates culture as abilities, conceptions, and behaviors that humans have adopted as members of society. He goes on to say that on the one hand every individual is a cultural being and in this sense all humans are the same, on the other hand they have acquired different abilities and understandings and therefore due to their respective cultures differ.

Given the critique toward the nation level approach to culture in the previous section on cross-cultural research, it then becomes evident that the meaning of culture to identity constructions is complicated and thus it is not sufficient to see it solely from the point of equating culture with national or geographical boundaries. Rather than being true cultural entities, nations are political entities whose boundaries have been defined historically and within which institutional channeling and empowering shape the processes of socialization that then influences their inhabitants (Smith et al. 2006, 57) and their identity construction. Often it is not nationality that is the most prominent factor of the entire identity structure (Jameson 2007, 205) but it could be any of the other elements that are more situationally pertinent.

5.4 Defining different levels of culture

Next I will discuss the different levels of culture that might have implications for the entrepreneurial identity construction viewed as culturally and socially embedded. Given the complex nature of culture, it can be looked at as consisting of wider entities as well as narrower ones. According to Smith et al. (2006, 77) it is good to conceptualize both wider characteristics, such as the ones on national level and the narrower ones relating to individual processes. I will present those that I have seen as forming the cultural framework for the purpose of interpreting family business owners' entrepreneurial identity constructions in this research, starting with the concept of civilization and then moving on to the smaller entities. The purpose of presenting and handling culture this way in this research is by no means to make value judgments of any given culture but to lay ground for reflexive observation and dialogue not only for myself and my empirical materials to be presented later but also for the reader and my research to make my own cultural understanding and point of origin more transparent.

Studying phenomena within a different cultural framework than our own can shed light on the same phenomena in our own culture. Phenomena in different cultures take on different meanings. Lehtonen (2000, 18, see also Watson et al. 2002 on possessions reflecting cultural values and Zellweger & Astrachan 2008 on emotional value of owning a firm) gives a good account of the previous in pointing out how material possessions are important to many of us within the Western cultural realm whereas in some native Indian cultures they signify great misfortune. If someone has too many earthly possessions it is seen as that person not having had enough friends to share those with. Attachment to possessions varies across cultures (Zellweger & Astrachan 2008, 356). Smith et al. (2006, 99) remark that "Euro-American societies, which combine affluence with endorsement of individual agency, are also the ones that provide the conditions that make such agency somewhat possible". It is this wider cultural standpoint of the Euro-American society, of course, within which the entrepreneurial identities get constructed in this research. In addition to attitudes toward possessions, culture unites groups of people in how they relate to issues such as time, space, privacy and security (Jameson 2007, 213).

It seems rather obvious that the concept of culture, understanding it, perceiving, and experiencing it has to embody some common elements, otherwise the concept would not even exist or be used the way it is used. There are elements of it on a wider level with which a large number of individuals within a given group can identify with and draw influences from.

Huntington (1993) presents the 'big picture' of culture in his famous article "The Clash of Civilizations?". He defines civilizations as "the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people" (Huntington 1993, 24; see also Smith et al. 2006, 65 on supranational classifications of culture). Therefore civilization is the highest level of cultural identification with which an individual identifies. According to Huntington (1993, 25) people of different civilizations differ on their views on "the relations between God and man, the individual and the group, the citizen and the state, parents and children, husband and wife, as well as differing views of the relative importance of rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy". Huntington (1993, 25) lists eight major civilizations; Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and African. He points out that the Western civilization has two variants; European and North American. This civilizational definition has obvious implications for the cross-cultural aspect of this research; the respondents all ostensibly belong to the same civilization, the Western one, yet one group of respondents are European and the other North American. This is where the potential for the diversity starts, regarding the 'big picture' of the culture, not yet taking into account the sub cultural diversity that is ever present in the identity construction. Each individual constructs not only their own identity but their own personal culture as well in the increasingly heterogeneous cultural environment (Helfrich 1999, 135).

Once we have established the larger cultural framework as civilization, we then can assume that labels such as European and North American follow suit. Further down the line enter labels like North European, Nordic, and Finnish, advancing to nationally regional labels like Central Finland and Kainuu, specifically for my Finnish informants. The same logic for my American informants would be American, Southern, Louisianan and North Louisianan. Although these are based on geographic reasoning, they comprise subcultures such as ethnicity, local business culture, religion, and language, not to mention issues like rural or urban, gender, composition of family, political preferences and so on, which are constantly present and certainly weigh heavily on identity construction. This again highlights how the dynamic and fragmented nature of the concept of culture resonates with that of the identity as a concept of multiplicity and complexity.

Cultural systems are learned through socialization which also acts as a transgenerational transmitter of the cultural categories meaningful to that particular culture (Eriksen 2005, 90). This is what takes place during the succession process in a family business, both implicitly and explicitly, as the younger generation is socialized into entrepreneurship. The process is ongoing and obviously starts before the actual legal and contractual proceedings of ownership transfer take place. The parents in the business owning families raise their children with the values that they themselves have adopted and eventually transfer those values that reflect their cultural values as well, onto the next generation. Socialization into the culture acts as the venue for the continuation of that particular culture. What needs to be kept in mind though, as Smith et al. (2006, 100) point out is that "variations in the value attributed to children, in family patterns and in the emergent self-reflect the global human diversity". Just as identities do not exist in a vacuum but get negotiated in interaction so does culture as well; "we create and shape culture, and are in turn influenced by our own cultural products" (Moghaddam et al. 1993, 3).

5.5 Communicating intercultural competence

Cross-cultural encounters of various kinds have increased considerably through globalization. Renshon and Duckitt (2000, 6) argue that since it is impossible to avoid cultural contact in today's interconnected world, changes resulting from this situation need continued attention. People have been separated from local identities through economic modernization and social change which also have had a part in weakening the nation state as a source of identity (Hungtington 1993, 26). It is due to this that the amount of cross-cultural research has increased as well and spans different fields today, very much the same way as identity research (see e.g. Zhu 2008, Molinsky 2007, Smith et al. 2006). Identity negotiation through encountering oneself and the other in addition to intercultural learning, sensitivity, and competences are included in developing intercultural orientation (Alasuutari 2005, 64).

The prerequisite for conducting reliable and robust cross-cultural research is for the researcher to possess a sufficient level of cultural and intercultural competence. What does being culturally or interculturally competent entail then? The answer to that is somewhat context-dependent. According to Wilenius (2006, 45) cultural competence can be looked at from three different angles; firstly, it can be seen as the ability to develop products related to cultural capital; secondly, cultural competence is cultural literacy which refers to the ability to read the signs and symbols of cultures; and thirdly, it is the ability to create an organizational culture allowing for the emergence of creativeness and innovativeness.

Focusing on intercultural encounters, the role of language becomes prominent. Language is an inseparable part of the human being and it is born in interaction with others, therefore it is intersubjective knowledge (Lehtonen 2000, 30). Languages define cultural groups and interact with other cultural elements like regional identification or profession (Jameson 2007, 214). Language thus produces identities which are multiple linguistically (Lehtonen 2000, 47-51) as well as cross-culturally diverse. Lapresta and Huguet (2008, 263) insist that individuals belonging to a group of people sharing a way of speaking in fact take on a social identity the content of which is purely linguistic. However, language is not necessarily a source of other types of identifications such as ethnic or national. Individuals' ways of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, reflect their cultural orientation (Smith et al. 2006, 150) and presuming that the other person always sees things the way we do can constitute the greatest hindrance for intercultural interaction (Lehtonen 2005). The use of a shared language does not necessarily ensure understanding of the other party's aims and meaning therefore a prerequisite for being cross-culturally skillful is to be aware of others' assumptions possibly differing from one's own as well as to have the ability to adapt one's behavior to enhance mutual understanding (Smith et al. 2006, 221).

When individuals find themselves in intercultural situations, this in fact, from an identity point of view, means that several of their subcultural identifications such as gender, religion, ethnicity, and nationality meet (Alasuutari 2005, 64). This then renders the communicative situation complex and susceptible to misunderstandings. Not understanding cultural framing present in intercultural interactions can lead to asynchronous intercultural communications (Wilkins 2007, 243). The way to become competent in a foreign culture is to learn its rules of interpersonal communication (Molinsky, Krabbenhoft, Ambady & Choi 2005, 380). Communication is "a prominent nexus for and locus of societal, individual and relational lives" (Carbaugh & Berry 2001, 355) and intercultural encounters, so culturally laden, are often burdened with expectations for communicative practices not met (Wilkins 2007, 245). Auer-Rizzi and Berry (2000, 264) define intercultural communication as "a mixture of communicating across cultures and across as well as up, down, and around social and professional identities in different cultural landscapes".

An interculturally competent person is able to encounter cultural differences in a positive manner (Jokikokko 2005, 70) and is able to recognize and use cultural differences for learning and constructing an appropriate strategy (Friedman & Antal 2005, 70). In addition to language skills, being interculturally competent refers to the ability to use and interpret non-verbal means of communication, such as gestures and codes as well as skills of negotiation and conflict resolution (Jokikokko 2005, 70; see also Molinsky et al. 2005) and understand shared views on what is polite and how to handle threats to face (Smith et al. 2006, 170). This kind of knowledge is attained implicitly through cultural exposure (Molinsky et al. 2005, 382) and intercultural communication abilities are enhanced by adopting a more complex conception of cultural identity (Jameson 2007, 206).

The influence of gaining intercultural competence can be reciprocal in nature in regards to identity construction. It is in these intercultural encounters that one's own cultural identity gains salience and becomes more prominent. According to Smit et al. (2006, 220) speakers of English as a first language often fail to appreciate the fact that language is an important factor on the outcome of an intercultural interaction (see also Carbaugh & Berry 2001 on the American culture and the English language). This of course is due to the prevalence of the English language as a second language worldwide and can raise high expectations on the part of the native English speaker toward the foreigner. Should the language competency not be there and therefore the potential for misunderstanding evident, this might lower the production of substance regarding the matter at hand on the part the native speaker. It needs to be pointed out here, that the nature and purpose of different intercultural encounters vary, obviously. Therefore, in the case of research interviews, the burden of competence is placed on the interviewer rather than the interviewees, whom cannot be expected to possess such skills nor even be expected to be particularly aware of the intercultural nature of the encounter.

As is the case with identity structures, some aspects of culture are stable, some ever changing. Even though, as previously mentioned, rapid social change and globalization transform our perception of culture and "although the world may appear smaller as transmissions of communication span the globe, people nonetheless live and act at least partly through their local forms of participation" (Carbaugh & Berry 2001, 364). To develop cross-cultural understanding valuable in those encounters is to be able to perceive different cultural groups positively for that affects how people behave towards one another (Robinson 1988, 49). We are often not aware of how we let unconscious labeling of others influence our opinion formation (Lehtonen 2005) and how we interpret culturally based practices without relating them to their cultural context (Lehman, Chiu & Schaller 2004, 704). It is my contention also, that cross-cultural competence and understanding can be a helpful tool in developing self-awareness and reflection for it widens individuals' world views hence helping them not only to understand others' but their own identity structures, too.

5.6 Stereotypes as inherently human

Stereotypes permeate through our cultural perceptions. Hilton and von Hippel (1996, 240) define stereotypes as "beliefs about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviors of members of certain groups". Stereotypical thinking is considered to be fundamental for the human inferential system and stereotypes are a part of the overall value system, world view and knowledge structure of an individual (Lehtonen 2005). This may have to do with culture in general arising "in part from an epistemic need for verifiable knowledge, and for certainty and confidence in our perceptions of the world around us" (Lehman et al. 2004, 692). Contrary to the stereotype of what a stereotype is, it can actually be seen as neither good nor bad but something inherently human. The basis for the conception of stereotypes lies in the fact that people do not have the access to knowledge about others that they have about themselves so they therefore tend to over-rely on cultural generalizations (Jameson 2007, 201). According to Hilton and von Hippel (1996, 237) stereotypes emerge in different contexts to serve specific functions necessitated by those very contexts rendering stereotypes "a notion of context dependent functionality".

Lehtonen (2005) says that "by applying stereotypes, perceivers are able to derive viable, although potentially erroneous, impressions about the social environment at very little cognitive cost. In this way they can reduce the complexity of the social environment to be perceived and thus preserve the limited capacity of the cognitive system for the processing of other information". It needs to be accepted that stereotypes are not only negative but can be positive as well. One example of that could be that Americans (as a nation) are thought to be very entrepreneurial, an adjective the connotation of which is very positive. Very often stereotypes hold some kind of truth value in their general framework but "in everyday usage they are most often understood as irrationally based negative attitudes to certain social groups and their members" (Lehtonen 2005).

The less one knows about others or their culture the more likely one is to employ unconscious stereotypical generalizations which assume that all those others share the same values, personality traits and behave in a predicted way according to one's expectations. Often people have stereotypical ideas of others, for example, citizens of any given country, whom they have never even met. It is also possible for stereotypes to be formed in people's mind on the basis of having known one representative of that culture. The mind then unconsciously connects all the behavioral and other features to all the members of that culture because out-groups are seen as more homogeneous than one's in-group. Distinguishing characteristics that get attributed to a country and all of its inhabitants are national stereotypes. Cultural stereotypes are often intertwined with ethnocentricity and are resistant to change. They tend to stay the same in people's minds even after having been exposed to mismatching information. (Lehtonen 2005).

From a methodological point of view, stereotypes can carry a lot of weight. They can potentially determine not only what kinds of themes are touched upon during research interviews but certainly dictate the direction of interpretive analysis if utmost reflexiveness and caution is not practiced. Using hofstedean-like dimensions, for example, may prevent the researcher from seeing and understanding behavior that does not fit the stereotype (Bird et al. 1999, 163) because people are often seen as more similar to the stereotype than they really are (Hilton & von Hippel 1996, 250). On the other hand they might be helpful in locating emergent culture related themes in that stereotypical thinking is based on previous knowledge termed as pre-understanding in this research. In order for one to be able to move beyond cultural stereotypes and continually reassess one's perceptions, reflection and a willingness to learn is required (Bird et al. 1999, 164).

5.7 The myth of the silent Finn and superficial American

Building on the outline and arguments made earlier in this chapter, this section will discuss the cultural and intercultural features of Finns and Americans specifically. This discussion relies mainly on intercultural communication presented through an interview situation in an American TV-show. The purpose of this is twofold; firstly, from the perspective of the wider cultural framework it handles features particular to the two cultural entities and secondly; it shows how stereotypes of these two cultures in particular can hinder our cultural understanding, therefore also raising potential for methodological problems given the interpretive approach.

Referring to the highest level of cultural identification as presented by Huntington (1993) and discussed earlier in this chapter, I take as the starting point for the cultural observations of Finns and Louisianans the Western civilization. That would be the level, if left at that, that would yield a very similar cultural frame of reference for the two distinct groups of informants and the context of their entrepreneurial identity construction, less the linguistic identification, of course. The cultural relationship between the US and Europe is evident in Huntington's (1993, 34) explaining his concept of civilizations; he tries to exemplify the interconnectedness or the lack thereof of civilizations in saying that "The economic issues between the United States and Europe are no less serious than those between United States and Japan, but they do not have the same political salience and emotional intensity because the differences between American culture and European culture are so much less than those between American civilization and Japanese civilization".

This in fact is an interesting and valuable point in regards to identity research being conducted in that traditionally the concept of the independent self is viewed fairly similarly in the two cultures in general; "there is a belief that people are inherently detached and distinct in American and many Western European cultures where the cultural norm is to become independent from others and to express one's uniqueness" (Yamazaki 2005, 530). The same emphasis on individualism can be found in child-rearing values of parents from industrialized Western cultures studied by Tulviste and Ahonen (2007, 137); they "place emphasis on individualistic values related to self-achievement and self-actualization". Considering the USA and the European Union (of which Finland is a member state) as units of analysis Glatzner (2006, 169-170) points out similarities acknowledging differences as well; "The United States of America and the European Union are surely different types of "societies", but both belong to the world areas where in the course of history wealth has been broadly accumulated and modernization of the societies have taken place". Later differences start emerging more clearly in Glatzner's (2006, 170) discussing the problematic definition of quality of life and notes that "the problem of defining quality of life was, due to the challenges of the respective context, solved very differently: in the United States a strong preference for the subjective approach to quality of life gained acceptance, while in Europe – at least in Scandinavia and to a certain degree in other parts of Europe – more emphasis was given to objective indicators which measure social conditions in the eyes of statistical experts".

On the wider level of culture, when looked at the cultural influences from the perspective of Europeans and Americans, research shows differences of meanings attached to a variety of issues. One example would be how Europeans and Americans view poverty. Alesina, Di Tella and MacCulloch (2004, 2011) say that "when asked about poverty, in fact about 60% of Americans believe that the poor are lazy while less than 30% of Europeans have the same beliefs" and further (Alesina et al. 2004, 2035) that "71% of Americans believe that the poor have a chance of escaping from poverty. In Europe that number is 40%". The two views reflect the larger scale cultural and societal differences of viewpoints regardless of their similar stages of development which is portrayed in Alesina et al.'s (2004, 2035) argument that "European observers object to the higher ... inequality in the US. American commentators argue that European society's "obsession" with inequality stifles creativity and creates a vicious circle of welfare addiction of the poor". Thomsen, Sidanius and Fiske (2007, 462) elaborate on the two large scale cultural views by arguing that "Americans organize the plurality of their educational, occupational, political and recreational peer relations according to competitive equality of opportunity, whereas Scandinavians work to maintain equality of outcome of these relations" (Thomsen et al. 2007, 462). Tienari et al.'s (2005, 223) research supports this view in regards to the Nordic discourse which is seen as nurturing equality and equal opportunities. They do show awareness of cultural diversity within the Nordic context, though, in saying that "despite their apparent similarities, it can be maintained that the Nordic countries do not form a monolithic block from a cultural point of view".

As pointed out earlier, although geography is behind many a cultural group, it is not merely national borders that dictate the geographical existence of cultures. Regional differences are often well recognized within nations. They influence people's value systems, attitudes and behavior (Jameson 2007, 212) just like other cultural frames, i.e. ethnicity, religion, population density, or language. This is evident especially in the USA given the great diversity of all the previous within that one nation. Louisiana, where all the American informants of this study are located at is obviously a Southern state strongly identified with the Southern way of life and culture. Finland can be seen as relatively homogeneous in comparison to the US. For example, over 90% of Finns belonging to a religious group are Lutherans (Koiranen 2002, 181) thereby ostensibly, at least, conforming to the Lutheran work ethic. It has to be pointed out, though, that regional differences in general cultural features are indeed strongly perceived by native Finns as well. The respondents' perceptions of their regional culture and the influence of that will be presented in the interpretations of their entrepreneurial identities as reported later.

Next I will briefly introduce examples of research from the field of intercultural communication that have relevance to the interactive situation between a Finn and an American. Stereotypes permeate our cultural thinking and they can affect intercultural communication. Therefore the reason for me bringing up these examples is the research setting in which I, the interviewer, am a Finn, interviewing not only my compatriots but Louisianan family business owners as well, hence the implications of intercultural communication to this research. The following "demonstrates different cultural premises and preferences for forms of social interaction, different premises about ways of reporting cultural self to others, and different preferences for conducting social interaction in public (Carbaugh & Berry 2001, 361).

Esteemed CBS newsmagazine show called '60 minutes' aired an episode in February of 1993 titled "Tango Finlandia". Since then the episode has been rebroadcast so many times that it has become the most often shown episode of this program (Carbaugh & Berry 2001, 359). Given the cross-cultural communicative stage on which the interviews in the program take place, it has also proven to be quite a fruitful source of analysis for intercultural communication for researchers in that field (Carbaugh & Berry 2001, Wilkins & Gareis 2006, Wilkins 2007). The program contains "forms of social interaction that are culturally distinctive and that create, through cultural discourses, a sense of the other as a stranger or of otherness as strange" (Carbaugh & Berry 2001, 360). The purpose of my introducing pieces of it here is to show how cultural perceptions can influence not only the interactive situation, such as an interview, but also the interpretations coming out of it that might lead to misunderstandings. This can be referred to as 'asynchronous intercultural communication' (Wilkins 2007, 243) and can reveal the kinds of undercurrents that exist in our cultural perceptions of others. This in turn, from a research point of view, carries relevance to the methodological concerns that need to be considered when doing cross-cultural analysis.

In the show an American journalist Morley Safer goes to explore what he wants to present as the mythical Finn. This perception of the Finn is based on existing cultural differences viewed from the American cultural perspective and exploits that to the fullest, albeit for an intended humorous effect. Safer introduces Finland and Finnish life like this (keeping in mind that the program was first broadcast in 1993): "With a good part of Europe going to hell in a hand basket of ethnic and religious bloodshed, last February we decided to visit a place where if people don't exactly love their neighbors they at least live in harmony with them. Finland's the place isolated by language and geography where the national mission seems to be to not be noticed. It's the most sparsely populated nation in Europe. It shares hundreds of miles of border with Russia. Half of it is permanently dark all winter. All of it suffers from the permanent glooms. But a rich country, who's only excess is massive intake of alcohol and something else that we'll get to later" (Wilkins 2007, 244). Surprisingly, perhaps even to Finns themselves, at least today, that something else is tango. Some well-known Finns, including a media personality Jan Knutas and singer Arja Koriseva are interviewed to describe what Safer calls the Finns' "clinical shyness, almost terminal melancholy" (Wilkins 2007, 244), the purpose of which is to show that "Finns are so intensely private that to be noticed is an embarrassment" (Wilkins 2007, 247). This is cultural positioning of the "silent expressionless Finn" and the social, talkative American with the thought that the remedy to cure the Finn is to be an expressive individual who communicates and expresses feelings freely, as American do (Carbaugh & Berry 2001, 362). The end result of course is that the American audience is left with a feeling that the people of Finland are "a strange and cold breed" (Wilkins 2007, 245).

The graver communicative consequence of this program is intercultural asynchrony that the show abuses on purpose for a humorous effect that is lost to the larger audience, because Americans take the given message at face value and the Finns might be unaware that Knutas, a Finn describing Finnish people to Americans, is purposely practicing self-deprecating humor and doing black satire here describing his people in a tongue in cheek manner as brooding and asocial. He is clearly competent enough interculturally in regards to popular American culture to know what kinds of things to say to achieve the wished for effect. This leads to a situation where "viewers are left with an impression of Finns of others as not like Americans, but offered little by way of understanding who they are from their view"(Carbaugh & Berry 2001, 363). As Americans get portrayed as superficial in some cultural contexts due to misunderstandings of their communicative features so are Finns misunderstood here where the values that Finns regard as positive, such as silence, privacy and solitude (Carbaugh 2001, 363) get turned into negative through equation of those same values with

Finns having to be depressed and forever melancholy. This is done also purposely by the way the show is edited, further elaborations on the Finnish state of mind are left out ignoring Knutas' portrayal of his fellow countrymen as " honest and conscientious people who never play roles and are trustworthy" (Carbaugh & Berry 2001, 363). In a larger scale the show utilizes a culturally specific feature of the Finns' self-deprecating humor which is in line with a cultural value given a lot of significance; modesty. This value has to do with how the independent self is presented and the Finns' valuing modesty as a venue for that is countered by the North Americans' strong feature of self-enhancement (Thomsen et al. 2007, 446). Self-enhancing behavior is considered bad manners in Finland with the idea that even though someone might be very sure of him/herself and his/her abilities, s/he waits for others to notice this rather than touts his/her own horn (Keltikangas-Järvinen 2000, 118). Offering no explanation, for that would ruin the intended shock effect; the episode perplexes the American viewer causing him/her to view the country and its people as strange and also discontent within their own culture. Based on this cultural information they would probably be further perplexed by research that shows that: "According to the existing measures of quality of life it is obvious that the small European countries in the Northern and partly Western regions show the highest quality of life in the world" (Glatzner 2006, 186).

This same program has also been used to study how emotion expression differs cross-culturally. Emotional states at their foundations may be universal but how they are interpreted and expressed differs across cultures (Wilkins & Gareis 2006, 55). Again, the point of comparison here are Finnish and American speaking cultures. According to Wilkins and Garei (2006, 52) "a study of emotion expression is also a study of the moral, cultural, and political life of a people and can yield anthropological knowledge about the social structure and cultural values that are reproduced and negotiated in the communication of emotions". Koriseva, the Finnish singer, depicts the difference in emotion expression between the Finns and Americans: "we don't use "I love you" so much as you do. You love almost everybody (laughs). When a Finnish guy or man says "I love you", he really means it." (Wilkins & Gareis 2006, 52). An American journalist living in Finland also interviewed in the segment says that Finns do not confess their love even to their own lover which leads to an American interpretation of the Finns as cold and unfeeling (Wilkins 2007, 250). As Wilkins and Gareis (2006, 52) aptly put it; "while the commentaries are artfully edited for playful and humorous effect for American consumption, what gets lost in the translation are the particularized and highly cultural inferential structures involving social scenarios and moral attributions that participants use to construct their commentaries about declarations of love."

The conversational rules that speakers go by in their own environments are embedded in culture and dictate what is considered polite or impolite (Auer—Rizzi & Berry 2000, 264). Even though Americans and their communicative culture is often viewed as being uniform it is worthwhile to point out that the USA is a multicultural society each culture possessing their own speaking patterns and norms. In general though, Americans like to express themselves and their idea of doing so is to speak up and frequently. The topics covered are often about personal issues and emotions and small talk comes easily to them. Small talk does not only serve in avoidance of silence but it serves a very particular social function essential for networking and social worth. Wilkins and Gareis (2006, 70) list features of what could be seen as typically American in the generalized sense as far as communication is concerned; "use of first names in professional settings, high informality, high self-disclosure, and congeniality and ease with strangers, and lower privacy concerns than a diverse number of other cultures". Americans, in general, have a low tolerance for pauses and silence in speech which may lead others coming from different types of speaking cultures to view them as superficial. Wilkins and Gareis (2006, 70) point out that the amicable patterns of speech used by Americans are often misunderstood by others as "a sign of having gained access to the private realm". Once the other understands that this is not necessarily so, value judgments of Americans as shallow and superficial get made.

Another example of how misinterpreting American communicative features lead to the same conclusion is the use of the word 'friend' which is more broadly categorized in the US than in many other cultures, for example Finland. Wilking and Gareis (2006, 70) comment on that phenomenon in the following: "With the term being susceptible to incorrect translations, linguistic generalizations and even the interpretation of the American friendships as inflated and devoid of intimacy are not uncommon". Finns, on the other hand, tolerate long pauses in turn taking which in turn might lead to turn taking by others causing this to be perceived as rude interruptions by the Finns. Overlapping speech is perceived as impolite. It could also be interpreted as intrusive (Auer-Rizzi & Berry 2000, 273). Americans in general have a preference for debating with or challenging the other (Auer-Rizzi & Berry 2000, 274) and often engage in overlapping speech to that end.

6 INTERPRETATIONS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL IDENTITIES

In this chapter I will firstly present a recapping of the definitions of the main concepts used in this study. After this I will discuss the structure of my interview guide; what themes emerged from extant literature of the focal points of my research, that is to say identity, family business, and cross-cultural research that led to my guiding the actual dialogues with my respondents around those issues pertinent to the entrepreneurial identity structures. As I was accumulating my theoretical pre-understanding it felt as if though the theories on identity, family business, and culture opened up in a layered and multidimensional manner in the hermeneutic process allowing me to construct a theory-based mental image of the potential entrepreneurial identity. This theoretical structure then acted as a mental map for the creation of the interview guide.

I will also discuss the interviewing process itself along with related issues such as what led me to find and choose the individual entrepreneurs that then became my respondents, what the connectors are between them and also what led me to select the cultural contexts that appear in this research, i.e. Louisianan and Finnish. I will then proceed to introduce the business family members whose accounts of the themes in the interview guide directed our conversations and later my interpretations of their entrepreneurial identities.

Eventually I will move on to presenting my interpretations of the respondents' entrepreneurial identity structures that are socially constructed and culturally situated. The interpretations will show how some parts of the entrepreneurial identifications appear to be culturally bound. They will also show how many entrepreneurial attributes accounted for by the entrepreneurs themselves as being essential for their entrepreneurial identities are in line with the ones to be found in the scholarly literature on entrepreneurial qualities. Differences in the identity structures emerge between different generations' identities. What can also be seen in the interpretations is that not all family business entrepreneurs acknowledge any kind of entrepreneurial attributes as part of their overall identity structure. Echoing Rae (2000, 150) I argue that I gained considerable experience in interpreting these accounts and found the process highly elucidating albeit complicated.

The gathering and analysis of the empirical materials was done in compliance with the ethical guidelines of the University of Jyväskylä. Those dictate, among other points, that honesty and ethically sustainable methods must be the basis of action. This involves, among other points, the usage of informed consent forms, which allow the respondents to clearly see what they are getting into (see appendices 1 and 2). More specifically, in reference to acquiring empirical materials, the guidelines say that one has to consider that participating in a research project can be detrimental to the participants and their benefit and well-being must take priority. I bring this up here because, as it turned out, I practiced my responsibility as a researcher and decided to conceal the identity of two of my respondents in fear that my research might potentially be less than beneficial to them and their reputation. They themselves would have had no problem in being presented by their own names but I came to a different conclusion during my interpretations. I will present these later in this chapter along with an explanation.

6.1 Recapping the main concepts

Before I move on to discuss the research interviews and the interpretations of the entrepreneurial identities of my respondents I will go over the definitions of the main concepts used in this research that arise from the theoretical framework presented earlier that constitutes my pre-understanding of the phenomenon under study here. Here I concentrate on the positions I have taken in regards to those concepts in order to clarify my own stance on them.

Methodology; to recap the methodological concepts that I go over here are related to the philosophy of science that I commit to in this research. The relationship between them, following Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008, 12-13), is such that the paradigm forms a unified framework within which the rest of the concepts are related. Paradigm refers to my world view and belief system (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 16) which has guided me in my work and the choice of the methodological approach that has ensued from that paradigmatic stance. I position myself in the qualitative, and further, the social constructionist paradigm, which has guided my ontological and epistemic understanding of how to understand reality and how to gain knowledge about it. What follows from this, in scientific philosophical terms is that reality is socially constructed in intersubjective interaction which can change understanding and in this world view empirical materials are seen as constructions or interpretations which remain partial and open for reinterpretations. In regards to my methodological approach, i.e. my logic of reasoning, I have adopted the abductive approach which I see as being compatible with hermeneutics, the method of interpretation in which the iterative movement between the parts of a whole and pre-understanding takes place with the whole and understanding.

Hermeneutics as a method of interpretation means taking part in collective meaning making in which we interpret that which we do not understand but on the basis of the pre-understanding that we have and in which we reach interpretations through understanding therefore the concepts of understanding and interpreting are intertwined. Interpreting and understanding take place in a hermeneutical circle in which the parts of the whole or our pre-understanding are understood through the whole or developed understanding and vice versa.

Moving on to the rest of the theoretical framework underlying my theoretical pre-understanding in this study the main concepts that I have adopted here can be given nutshell definitions as follows;

Identity; I understand the concept of identity as a psychosocial entity which is constituted in intersubjective interaction and which is socially, historically and culturally embedded and continuously renegotiated. Individuals' overall identity constructions or structures (can be used synonymously) consist of different identities or identifications (can be used synonymously), such as the parental identification, entrepreneurial identification, gendered identification, and professional identification, among other possible identifications. Identities have a temporal essence and thus are dynamic and constantly changing. I claim that family business owners constitute their identities at the interface of business, ownership, and family and further; I view their overall identities as hybrid identities which allow them to activate their different identifications across the previously mentioned domains concurrently.

Identity work; Identity work as a thinking tool is a metaphoric expression used in this study to refer to a discursive (c.f. Watson 2009) and reflexive resource available to people as either individuals or members of organizations which brings together the personal aspects of identity with the social aspects of it and through interactive reflection has the potential to raise individuals' self-awareness in matters related to their multiple identities.

Entrepreneur, entrepreneurial identification; In regards to defining the concepts of entrepreneur and entrepreneurial identification I refer to Hytti's (2003, 40-41) contention (to be discussed later in chapter 6.1) according to which she questions the need to give an overall definition of an entrepreneur but rather urges to elicit those definitions from the respondents themselves. I concur with her proposal, adopt it as well and extend that to the definition of entrepreneurial identification in having my respondents give substance to it themselves, but keeping in mind the extant literature on this subject in the field of entrepreneurship. The theoretical dominant entrepreneurial qualities found in the literature that I reflect upon in my interpretations are opportunity seeking, seizing and exploiting, tolerating uncertainty, being action oriented, proactive, possessing risk taking and bearing skills, being innovative, possessing knowledge and networking skills and being entrepreneurially alert in general.

Family business is defined as a business operation owned and controlled by one family that has either transferred, is in the process of transferring or will transfer to the next generation and a family business, regardless of its form, is the economic unit in which the business operations of the family take place and in which the interactive interests of family life, ownership and business are applied to the ever changing circumstance (Koiranen 2000, 3).

6.2 The themes at the heart of the research interviews

The themes for the building of the interview guide lean on my preceding analysis of the theories, processes and structures pertinent to the phenomenon under study (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 47). The main theoretical concepts that I had based my pre-understanding on involved literature on identity, family business, and culture. In line with the thematic approach to interviews, I wanted to keep the focus on the context according to the research question, that of the family business, so that the respondents could position themselves in relation to that rather than just narrate about their lives either as family members or business owners per se. They were also aware that the criteria for them having been asked to participate included the transgenerational aspect of family businesses; I did need to be able to talk to senior and junior generations' representatives. They were also aware that the study was to be about identity construction, as explained next. The Louisianan interviews were conducted in February of 2009 and the Finnish ones in March and April of 2009. All the face-to-face interviews were digitally recorded and those recordings remain in my possession. The interviews lasted from just under half an hour to over two hours and all took place at the place of business of the entrepreneurs. The Louisianans were interviewed in English and the Finns in Finnish. All interviews were transcribed in the original languages and the Finnish extracts were later translated into English. The original Finnish extracts can be found in appendix 3. The interpretations will be infused with selected quotations from the interviews and through those the original voices of the entrepreneurs contribute to the interpretations (Hall 2003, 64).

I started the interviews by asking my respondents to sign an informed consent form (see appendices 1 and 2 for consent forms both in English and Finnish). The title of the project as being: "Construction of the Entrepreneurial Identity in the Family Business Context, A Cross-Cultural Study" appears in that form so my respondents knew what my research focus was on but the concept of identity did not get explicated any further than that. Had I specifically kept inquiring about the respondents' 'identity', this would have rendered the respondents almost with the role of the researcher thereby allowing me to step aside from the center of the interpretation and in so doing forfeit the responsibility and/or the right to analyze the different identifications myself. This in turn may have produced interesting accounts of identity as presented by the individuals in my research but completely void of any interpretation on my part. This, I felt, would have severely lessened the trustworthiness of my research.

It has to be noted, though, that even though my respondents knew the subject of my research as being that of 'identity' they seemed to be completely disinterested in the concept but very interested in the cause of family businesses in general as if having shifted the focus of identity from the surface aside letting the institution of family business to surface and become the focus. The respondents also knew they were participating in a PhD research on family businesses which obviously sets the stage for particular power structures in positioning me as the researcher and the respondent as the object of the study thereby rendering the dialogue a lot more formal than a spontaneously occurring dialogue, obviously.

At the onset of the interview I told my respondents that the questions I was about to pose would be open by nature and that they could approach my questions freely and speak however they felt most comfortable with. By doing this I wanted to create an atmosphere where the respondents could feel that they were not restricted by any strict yes and no- answer formula. Defining the interactive situation with the dialogue consisting of open-ended questions was important, in my view, in generating new insights and interpretations that might not have existed in the extant literature. After all, it is not possible to predict at the offset what turns the interview as an interactive speech act will take, the emergent themes cannot be known or predicted beforehand (Sintonen 1999, 84-85).

However, I also cautioned my interviewees about my possibly interrupting them at times in order to clarify something or maybe inquire more about some topics. This is also important for the sake of generating new insights and allowing emergent themes to surface through follow-up questions by asking the respondents how and why questions in order to see over and beyond the initial response. Qualitative interviews often utilize additional questions to reach a deeper level of the meaning of some issues that emerge as being of substance to the research question. I then told them that since the questions are open-ended and hopefully prompt a free flow of response, the order of my questions that I had in my mind before the interview might seem funny and therefore I might change my own interview guide's structure to better accommodate the way the discussion was going. In this sense the interview guide was continuously developing (Lauring 2008, 348). It was my attempt, though, to touch upon all the themes that I had come up with in all of the interviews. This, I thought, would be of essence for the analysis and eventual interpretations of the identity constructions; I wanted to hear about the core of similar issues from all of my respondents regardless of where they ended up taking me in their own worlds. As themes began to emerge during the interviews of my first group of respondents, the Louisianans, that my interpretive senses found to clearly have significance for my research question, I added questions to my interview guide to accommodate those issues. This of course meant that those respondents that exist in the latter group, chronologically speaking, got to hear questions that the first respondents did not hear. Those emergent themes found their way into my interpretations later regarding the group that was interviewed first as well. By that time I had grown sensitive to those themes and was able to see related accounts that in fact supported the interpretations.

The beginning of my interview guide dealt with general background information of the respondents. I wanted to know how old they were, what their educational background was, what their position in the company was and then I asked them to tell me about the history of their company and how they themselves ended up where they were at the time of the interviews. Hearing about the history of the company allowed my respondents to reflect on the history of their families as well and this shed light on the important people in their lives that had had significant impact both on their overall identity structures as well as their entrepreneurial identification. In recounting the story of their family's business they got to talk about family, management, and ownership issues, all of them at the core of the family business literature. The history of the family business also positions not only the respondent but his/her company in the context that they operate their business in and in addition to this it defines both the respondent and the family firm's identities as having a past, present, and future, thereby underlining the identity as a temporal construct.

In regards to the concept of identity, I felt that all of the questions and all of the answers, and in many instances, all the stories told that spurred spontaneously to my delight, had a bearing on their overall identities and yielded material for my interpretations on identity continuously all during the interview and later in the analysis stage. Therefore all the matters dealt with during our talks were of essence to the final interpretations of identities. However, since my research task was to create understanding of their entrepreneurial identities in particular, I asked them if they would describe themselves as entrepreneurial, what they thought were those main attributes that made them and their families entrepreneurial and should they not consider themselves entrepreneurial, what attributes did they then in that case lack in their own perception. This line of questioning gives emphasis to the way I see identities as being formed and that is in interaction and through language; as being construed by the individuals themselves rather than me branding them with a scholarly approved stamp of entrepreneurship. Hence the question that might sound overly obvious if not explained in its context.

Hytti (2003, 40-41) questioned this positioning of rendering the individual entrepreneur objectified by others by saying that "An interesting question related to the difficulty of defining an entrepreneur is; do we need overall, universal definitions of entrepreneurship, or are we, rather, encouraged to seek the definitions the practitioners themselves use (and how these definitions will eventually change over time)?". Encouraged by Hytti's (2003, 40-41) thoughts with which I agreed I felt that by asking my respondents to define entrepreneurial attributes themselves is indeed encouraging them not only to come up with those definitions they themselves use, as suggested by Hytti, but also 'forcing' them to reflect upon the very question of do they actually assume an entrepreneurial identification *at all* and if so then what does it consist of. I then draw my interpretations of how they make sense of their entrepreneurial qualities.

During one of the doctoral courses that I attended, someone told me that my topic of 'construction of entrepreneurial identities' presumes the fact that all family business entrepreneurs take on a self-perceived entrepreneurial identity which in fact may not be the case. I was surprised that she had read my topic in such a manner because that was not my presumption at all, on the contrary. My study was to delve into this problem specifically, of what it consists of if and when the entrepreneurs profess it to be a part of their overall identity structures. At a second thought this feedback presented itself of being of utmost value, of course, because it made me realize how important it was, for the sake of the research problem, to explicate the true substance of the research question rather than just naively assume it to be self-explanatory. Family businesses in particular can be places where reluctant entrepreneurs or individuals with seemingly no entrepreneurial qualities whatsoever operate due to their feelings of responsibility or the expectations of their parents reflecting their own wished-for identities on their offspring. They can also be playing fields for individuals who remain there out of complacency wherein their true identifications that now lay dormant get thrown away due to the dominance of expectations reflected on them by older generations' wished-for-identities leading to transference of identifications.

Given the context and research interest being that of family businesses, I asked my respondents how their family relationships had influenced their entrepreneurial qualities and also if they considered themselves different or similar to their parent or child as an entrepreneur. I thought that responses to this question would highlight any potential similarities or differences as per the respondents' own perceptions between the two different generations within one family business. It was often evident that even though family members work in close contact with one another, they rarely consciously reflect on these qualities and most of my respondents seemed to enjoy talking about their parent or their child as an entrepreneur and lit up when they started pondering on possible differences and similarities between the generations. This also often seemed to lead to a sense of gratitude and appreciation in getting to be in business together with their close family that they rarely have the time to reflect upon in everyday life. These questions regarding the entrepreneurial attributes and generational differences and similarities are part of the identity work (Alvesson & Deetz 2007, 124) that aims to distinguish oneself from others while defining what is unique to the individual.

I then moved on to discuss the meaning of the family for their businesses in that I inquired as to how they saw the family ownership and management as having influenced their business, whether those had been a competitive advantage, resource or a restraint. This line of questioning was meant to emphasize the context of the research being that of family business in particular as opposed to non-family enterprises and acted as an impetus for reflections on the family's business specifically in their own contexts and in direct relationship with their stakeholders which again also shed light on the individuals as being embedded in their own social, economic, and historical environments seen through their family's business. It also reflected the respondents' value systems in that it revealed their thoughts on family ownership and management from a personal point of view as well as from the family's point of view. I was able to draw inferences of the entrepreneurial family's influences on entrepreneurial identity constructs from this discussion as well. After this it was natural to move on to inquire about the respondents' thoughts about transgenerational wealth creation, their thoughts on succession in their businesses as well as thoughts on the future of the company which also reflects their thoughts on their individual futures, therefore being suggestive also of their future oriented wished-for-identities. This kind of discussion, if perpetuated further, can create an atmosphere of a self-fulfilling prophecy through the wished-for identity structures which can be beneficial to formulating a thinking tool for family business consultancy where visions of future in relation to, for example succession, can be verbalized. I also asked them how they thought entrepreneurial spirit would best be kept alive, those answers were descriptive of their entrepreneurial identities from the social identity point of view in that the respondents reflected on entrepreneurship and family businesses in general as a family unit and also as an organizational unit, all within a larger business network context. This question also serves the purpose of making visible my, and the family business research community's at large, aspiration of supporting transgenerational wealth creation by attempting to "embed the entrepreneurial spirit in both the family and its enterprise" (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 14) which can be achieved by becoming cognizant of it.

Given the prevalence of the concept of identity crisis in the scholarly literature on identities, I felt it necessary to incorporate some kind of questions approaching that issue into my interview guide. It is during critical situations when people are especially reflective of their lives (Lindgren & Wåhlin 2001, 361). I did mention previously in the chapter on multiple identities that I want to approach identities from a positively colored perspective rather than wanting to discuss them in a perpetual crisis point of view. I thought about how to pose a question that would not assume a crisis in the very negative sense as being defining for identities but that would allow for any major incident, or force, in the respondents' lives that they either felt took them forward or hindered their ventures or ambitions or simply had a great influence on them in any way at all, all the while keeping the context of family business present in these questions.

According to Erikson (1980/1994, 25) certain crises force a person to make radical selections identity-wise. I therefore ended up inquiring about major forces or incidents that have influenced them or their families or their businesses. I thought this kind of an approach encompasses both the negative as well as positive and is also a valuable venue for the entrepreneurs to ponder on their relational world since, as Josselson (1994, 101) puts it; "The crucial events that people recount in their odysseys of identity are usually fundamentally relational, rooted in ongoing efforts to affirm themselves in relationships, to express themselves with others while taking account of others' needs and interests, to recognize and resolve conflict, and to learn to live with irresolvable conflict while still sustaining connection. Identity is an integration of ways of "being with" with others with ways of "being with" oneself".

Given another frequent feature in the extant literature, this time in the family business literature, which is the frequent discussion on conflict within the family business institution, I felt it important to ask about how my respondents perceived the role of conflict in their personal and business lives and if they felt their businesses and families as having been in conflict with one another somehow. Naturally, both at the time of the interviews as well as while interpreting them, I have had to keep in mind that I am treading on thin ice here with this question because I am dealing with issues of the sensitive nature and I have had to keep in mind that this is not something that one would open up about to a complete stranger, not even for the service of science.

However, all through the interviews and even during the talks regarding conflicts or other heavier subjects, I kept getting the feeling that my respondents, to the extreme that they were indeed willing to speak openly, did so with utmost sincerity. I also felt that they relied on the fact that I would use my discretionary skills when writing my report so as not to hurt them, not even unintentionally by writing something that was of too delicate nature for public consumption. Taking this into consideration is challenging, especially in the interpretive analysis phase because sometime it means that one of two things has to be compromised; either the actual interpretation of the nature of some difficult, challenging yet very meaningful, often family related issue, or the ethics of the research which first and foremost have to protect the respondents and be completely equivalent with their wishes on what they want to get reported. There can be no question as to which of the two gets compromised; it has to be the actual interpretation rather than the ethics of the research. How I have dealt with that is rather than trying to write around a difficult issue or adopt some kind of a muted tone in regards to it, I have left it out completely and made a conscious decision to probe into other matters of identity rather than risking writing too much. I will discuss this issue and my decision as to how to solve this problem later in the evaluation of the research chapter.

A very salient part of this research was to take a cross-cultural perspective and incorporate that into not only the selection of respondents but also bring that into the analysis and interpretations of entrepreneurial identities. Since values are seen as essentially embedded in our culture, be that familial, organizational, regional or national, and values also are integral part of our identity structures, I asked about my respondents' and their families' core values and if those could be seen in their business operations as well. I also wanted to know how they would describe their own family business culture. Given the multicultural context of the research I also wanted to hear how the respondents saw their own cultural environment; their local, regional, and national culture in relation to their being family business entrepreneurs and how those have influenced their respective businesses. Each country consists of different regional cultures which might have a stronger bearing on identities than national cultures at large, therefore those also might be at the heart of stereotypes to be attached to certain regional cultures and thus valuable for reflection on cultural issues. As far as the nature of national identity goes, it is metaphorical anyway and not something that would be coded in our genes (Hall 1999, 45). The respondents were not asked to provide information about their own cultural identity building process per se, this aspect was integrated in questions regarding the surrounding business culture. The culturally related questions were not meant to yield direct comparisons of two different business cultures but rather yield interpretations on issues that are culture bound and related to entrepreneurial identities in particular. Eventually, pondering on the interpretations, I did see culturally embedded issues that had meaning in the respondents' respective business cultures and therefore bearing on their entrepreneurial identities as well.

I concluded the interviews by asking the respondents about how they saw their respective futures and how they saw the future of their companies. This question shed light on how the entrepreneurial identities were seen in the future tense, reflecting the respondents' wished-for identities.

It quickly became obvious that each of my respondents had their own interpretation of my questions through which they reflected on the previously mentioned issues and themes. The questions appeared to get interpreted by the respondents through their own individual situations and through what they experienced was important to their lives in particular rather than seeing them as general questions on wide subject matters. After having initially been perplexed at how every individual seemed to have a different take on questions that I thought supposedly had the same meaning each time with each respondent, I started enjoying seeing the individual variation in the meanings attached to my questions. The questions related to culture, to give an example, were understood in various different ways and not in the way I had expected. Eventually my own original expectation ceased to have interpretive meaning for me which allowed me to see the responses in a different light, irrespective of my initial thoughts on the subject. This of course meant that as my questions got a different meaning in the mindset of my interviewees, this then steered the dialogue further into various different directions not in my original interview guide. I became conscious of the fact that I had indeed started my interpretations of my respondents' identity structures at the moment I first realized they each were relating their experiences from their own perspectives beginning with how they viewed my questions because it started to seem obvious that they engaged in dialogue with me based on what they felt was salient from their own individual perspectives and this gave me the feeling that these dialogues were genuine in that respect.

Identities are realized in interactive situations where the multiplicity of identities can vary in salience as also expressed by Weick (1995, 20) in saying that "identities are constituted out of the process of interaction. To shift among interactions is to shift among definitions of self". In practice this meant that the respondents did not only interpret the questions in a different way from how I had intended them or how I had expected them to be answered, as naïve as that may seem now in retrospect, but that each individual did indeed render my line of questioning with their very own individual interpretations viewed from various different perspectives of their selves. This of course also meant that this unexpected way of responding was a valuable reminder for me in that the respondents' reality may be completely different from mine (c.f. Friedman et al. 2005, 79; Rae 2000, 150) and that I as a researcher invoke certain identities to become salient through my questions and their responses (Alvesson & Deetz 2007, 125).

I may have been perceived as less intimidating as a researcher because my subject matter may have been seen as being representative more of the humane sciences than actual business issues, in that the respondents knew not to have to go into specifics about their business operations and financial details and their approach to me was one of benevolence while at the same time many of them seemed eager to have an ear to talk to about their personal lives as well as their businesses. Given the limitations that we inevitably meet during our research, time being one of them, I had to be able to focus on issues that would have to do specifically with the research question. However, some of my respondent entrepreneurs used the research interview as a venue to make their personal voices heard, to vent their feelings about their work and lives in general, as if the interview were a pseudo-therapeutic tool. This thought reinforced my initial pre-understanding and thought about the importance and relevance of identity work in the family business context. This in fact was what was taking place, either inadvertently or consciously.

To summarize the content of the research guide; the main themes included in it were on a general level identity, family business and culture which then were probed by the help of sub-questions having to do with entrepreneurial attributes, family dynamics, influences on identity building, value systems, generational differences and similarities, thoughts on future regarding both the individual as well as their businesses, culture through local, regional and national issues. In line with the thematic approach to interviews, I wanted to keep the focus on the context according to the research question, that of the family business, so that the respondents could position themselves in relation to that rather than just narrate about their lives either as family members or entrepreneurs per se.

6.3 Conducting the interviews

After the interviews I asked my respondents if they would like to appear anonymously or by their own names in my dissertation report. They were aware at the beginning of the interview that should they choose to remain anonymous, they would obviously have that option. This was written in the informed consent form that they had signed at the beginning (see appendices 1 and 2). Obviously anonymity is thought to be an ethical value in research in which we as researchers have to first and foremost privilege our respondents' rights to privacy. I don't think anonymity in itself is an ethical value, though, because even if the research dialogue handles sensitive issues, such as family or business operations, it has to be acknowledged that interviewees that have been promised anonymity still might remain cautious or aim to present themselves as moral and good beings and give accounts that they think they should give rather than what they might give to somebody else, for example a friend.

As it turned out, as I anticipated, most of my respondents not only did not have any problem with being presented by their own real names and company names but some of them actually demonstrated a strong entrepreneurial quality in wanting to be distinctive in their venturing, show their values in being proud of their work, companies and family name. Therefore they, without question, wanted to be presented by their real names. To me it felt that those respondents want to utilize every opportunity to gain visibility, to use every possibility for potential entrepreneurial benefit of some sort, to market their business; it felt as though no stage is insignificant or pointless in that respect. I also felt that attitude to be very strongly indicative of how they construe their entrepreneurial identities. It seemed that using the companies' real names along with the individuals' real names in these instances was giving a name and a face to not just their individual identities but their family business organizational identities as well. On the other hand, those individuals who preferred the use of pseudonyms were also reflecting their individual entrepreneurial and family business organizational identities in their wish to remain anonymous in that this way they were thinking through their professional identities first which they seemed to feel required them to conceal their names for the good of the business, the nature of which being such that it calls for sensitivity in regards to the business owning family and/or their customers and stakeholders in general. This is why I respected both options and brought the ones who wanted their actual names used with their company names into this report and those who did not were given pseudonyms, all of which I will explain in connection with each business owning family member.

My most difficult encounter with the issue of research ethics came up with one of the family businesses whose members did not have any problem being presented by their actual names and the actual company name in my dissertation report but after much thought on research ethics I felt the only possible way for me to write about them was not to reveal their names or any factual details about their business, as I will explain later in this report.

Two of the entrepreneurs that had originally agreed to be interviewed did not get interviewed. One changed his mind and declined later and the other one's schedule changed so that it was not possible for me to interview him face to face. He did, however, agree to be interviewed by email (see appendix 3 for interview by email) and although the accounts in that sense are limited, descriptions thin and obviously lack the interaction of the face-to-face interviews, he did provide valuable information that I then used for my interpretations. This will be explained in the interpretations section.

I conducted the interviews in two separate parts or that is how I at least viewed them. Tables 1 and 2 following this chapter present the respondents and give basic information about them and the research interviews. What made them two separate parts was the fact that my first group of respondents live in Louisiana, USA and the second group in Finland (the numerals referring to the chronological order of the interviews). Given the logistics of me living in Finland, a lot more organizing and practical effort, not to mention resources, went into getting to interview the family business entrepreneurs in Louisiana, all of whom were interviewed at their respective places of business in Louisiana. That is why I was set on arranging those interviews first. Which group got interviewed first and which one second has no bearing on the interpretation process per se but it turned out that novel themes that emerged during the first interviews were later incorporated into the interview guide and the emergent themes that came up during the second group's interviews obviously did not get discussed with the first group but rather got interpreted within the hermeneutic circle of pre-understanding – understanding as they existed.

culture	name	generation	company/ industry	face-to-face/ e-mail interview	presented by real name/ anonymous	length of the interview
Louisiana	Tom	older	funeral business	face-to-face	anonymous	55 min.
	Kate	younger	funeral business	face-to-face	anonymous	39 min.
	Jacob	younger	family office	face-to-face	anonymous	2h
	Randy	older	Ewing Timber	e-mail	real name	n/a
	Brandon	younger	Ewing Timber	face-to-face	real name	1h 21 min.
	R.D.	older	Thomas & Farr Agency	face-to-face	real name	34 min.
	Joe	younger/ older	Thomas & Farr Agency	face-to-face	real name	1h 8 min.
	Peyton	younger	Thomas & Farr Agency	face-to-face	real name	38 min.
	David	older	The Cohn Law Firm	face-to-face	real name	1h 22min.
	Brian	younger	The Cohn Law Firm	face-to-face	real name	1h 22 min.

TABLE 1 Presenting the Louisianan respondents

culture	name	generation	company/ industry	face-to-face/ e-mail interview	presented by real name/ anonymous	length of the interview
Finland	Matti	older	K-retailer	face-to-face	real name	1h 38 min.
	Jussi	younger	K-retailer	face-to-face	real name	51 min.
	Veijo	older	Koneistamo Alm	face-to-face	real name	1h 29 min.
	Mika A.	younger	Koneistamo Alm	face-to-face	real name	1h 46 min.
	Arto	older	Imagon	face-to-face	real name	2h 15 min.
	Mika O.	younger	Imagon	face-to-face	real name	2h 6 min.
	Mikko	younger	Imagon	face-to-face	real name	1h 38 min.
	Kari	older	jewelry business	face-to-face	anonymous	25 min.
	Jari	younger	jewelry business	face-to-face	anonymous	29 min.

TABLE 2 Presenting the Finnish respondents

6.4 Criteria for the selection of the respondents - a matter of convenience?

The most important prerequisite for the selection of my respondents was that they needed to be members of a family business that has or will go through succession, because the transgenerational aspect defines family businesses so strongly and for entrepreneurial identity's sake it was important for me to be able to yield accounts from two different generations. There are inherent differences between generations (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 28) which are reflected in the identity structures. Another important factor was the fact that given the cross-cultural stance of my study, I needed to find respondents from two different cultures. Needless to say, the interpretations of the entrepreneurial identities that I am about to present would have been different, had my group of respondents been different. In interpretive research all dimensions of the research setting have a bearing on the outcome of the study so who I interviewed along with who was not interviewed influence the interpretations, however, they still contribute to the overall understanding of the phenomenon of entrepreneurial identity.

I looked upon my respondents as the best experts of their own identities; therefore I also viewed them as equal participants in the knowledge construction process, not just with myself but with one another. In as much as the question of whom my respondents were and why, influence on the interview situations also stemmed from who I was as the interviewer and researcher. This meant reflection on my part as to how my nationality, my gender, my ethnic background, my education, my age and my position as the interviewer influenced my interviewees along with how they perceived my attitude and value system in relation to the context at hand, of family businesses.

I was also very cognizant of the powers of social networking, especially in Louisiana, because I had the opportunity to interview these specific individuals only through the good name of my friends, family business owners, the Holyfields. I felt that my respondents were doing a favor not only to me but first and foremost to Ms. Holyfield who had contacted them initially on my behalf. This insight was later very much enforced by the interpretations drawn from the entrepreneurs' social identity structure of which entrepreneurial networking is an essential part.

Regardless of the fact that, as pointed out in my explaining the contents of the interview guide, I was curious about the educational background of my interviewees, it was not because education itself played any particular role for my research but because I wanted to see what kind of linkages the respondents' education had, if any, with their entrepreneurial careers. This, I thought, was also interesting in the light of the transgenerational business that the family business entrepreneurs operate for this could also be indicative of how the possible choices made regarding educational choices connected with the industry of their family's business, possibly signifying of the individuals originally having chosen a different path education wise but still ending up in the family business. Hytti (2003, 92), on the other hand, had purposely limited her respondents to those with an academic degree based on her methodological approach more than anything. Her research question delved into the narrative construction of entrepreneurial identities, therefore she felt that given the heavy emphasis on the narrative method, the prerequisite for the respondents to capably narrate their "experiences, thoughts and motives" was an academic educational background which would render them with an ability to "verbalise their thoughts and meaning making systems and structures".

While I understand and agree with her take on the narrative method as posing certain demands on the verbal abilities of the respondents, I refuted that stance in regards to my own choice of respondents. Firstly, my take on the interpretive approach is such that the burden of understanding and interpreting the respondents' experiences, thoughts, and identity structures in the framework of the research question rests with myself rather than the linguistic capabilities of the respondents. Secondly, I am not sure that academic education per se is any guarantee of anybody's linguistic skills in the form of verbal production of meaning making. I felt I did not want to limit or rule out any potential respondents on the basis of their education but felt that if asked the right questions in the right way, as pompous as this may sound on my part, I would be able to decipher knowledge interpretable into identity constructs. That said, though, I do acknowledge that in regards to the narrative approach a certain level of verbal abilities is indeed necessary to reach a sufficient level of narration. I also found out that mere yes and no answers can prove to be a frustratingly stressful source of knowledge, as will be evident later in my interpretation of one father and his son.

Hytti's reasons for choosing only respondents with an academic degree might also be suggestive of a very culture bound issue of us Finns placing heavy importance on academic education in general. Finns as a nation looked at on a wider cultural level are very proud of the excellent educational system that we have and therefore tend to attach a lot of positive values to higher academic education. According to my own personal experience and intuition, it is my contention, though, that Americans as a nation, while valuing education as well, place even more emphasis on actually being successful in life, regardless of one's educational background, as is obvious in the many 'from rags to riches' -stories that abound. Hytti's (2003, 92) argument that "people with an academic degree do have a wider range of opportunities open to them, making the alternative and the related choices more visible" in my opinion is very much culturally situated and would not resonate well with the American national consciousness.

I need to add here that not all of my family business operations actually fit in the family business definition that I had adopted from Koiranen (2000) and this has mostly to do with ownership structures. For example, the Farr family and their insurance business is in fact a partnership with a non-family partner so therefore it is not owned and controlled by *one* family meaning just the Farrs themselves. However, I chose to interview them because the ownership of a business that now is a partnership has on the Farrs' part been in the family for a long time and most likely will have a third generation owner from that same family. The family ownership is realized in this company as well but most importantly they show great transgenerational wealth creation potential. On the other hand, family businesses are viewed as being extremely heterogeneous so I do not see these issues to be in contrast with the research context.

6.5 Why Louisiana and Finland?

Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008, 29) call for researchers to discuss the value of them having chosen a cross-cultural approach. My own reasons for this were many and varied from highly personal to seeing added value in cross-cultural lens being used for identity research in particular; identities being culturally and socially embedded. My keen interest in all things cultural was the decisive reason on why I wanted to study entrepreneurial identities in a cross-cultural context. I also thought that the kind of variation that this kind of research context offered would be beneficial due to "increasing the diversity of variation in the sample, the researcher can have more confidence in common patterns that emerge while being able to describe unique variation" (Cole 1997, 358).

As mentioned before, the value of cross-cultural research as well as the call for more culturally related research is prevalent and well recognized today in all the fields of business and economics research. I had had good practice in doing cross-cultural research in my master's thesis which focused on how entrepreneurial spirit is transmitted from one generation to another in family businesses. For that study I interviewed the members of one business family in the States and another one in Finland and utilized a cross-cultural lens in interpreting the empirical materials from the two business cultures. As I started pondering on my dissertation research I felt continuing on that same path in as far as including the cross-cultural aspect was not only natural for me but something I feel passionate about. I also firmly believe that given the research question about probing identities, the cross-cultural context can yield valuable insight on those.

Why these two geographical locations and two business cultures specifically then? This is a question I have had to answer many times over during my dissertation research in order to justify my choices of these two business cultures, most often during the various doctoral courses that I have taken. Often though, my choice of the Louisianan business culture has been met with what could be described as annoyance of sorts. It has felt as if some of my colleagues have considered the US as too obvious of a choice for this kind of research dealing with entrepreneurship, America being the cradle of entrepreneurial spirit and all, as if everything about that culture is already known. It has been recognized indeed that "much of the research on family business has been based on samples and theorizing from the United States" (Bird, Welsch, Astrachan & Pistrui 2002, 348). In my opinion that fact does not render the value of this study insignificant but of being presented as an addition to the cross-cultural research for which there is an increasing call in this field (Bird et al. 2002, 338). Certainly, to begin with, this research has novelty value in any case because family business entrepreneurial identities have not been studied that much or specifically through the cross-cultural lens. The discussions that I have had with my esteemed colleagues have been very valuable and fruitful because they have forced me to think deep and hard about the reasons behind my work and they have also been helpful in really clarifying the contributions to be yielded from this study. Entrepreneurial learning works both ways, culturally speaking so insight from two different cultures can raise self-awareness in both. I also feel strongly that it would be a mistake to disregard the American family business owners' insight due to the abundance of research that exists there merely based on volume.

Why Louisiana and not the entire United States? Why Finland as a whole and not just Lapland, to pick an example? Often the selection of respondents is also a matter of convenience (Wulf, Odekerken-Schroder & Iacobucci 2001, 38), it makes common sense to utilize those connections and resources that one might have or those that are convenient to get access to. Obviously the grounds for our choices have to be plausible in other ways as well in order for us to produce meaningful interpretations. I had some family business contacts in the States and I also had cultural experience and knowledge of that foreign place in addition to the interest that I had in their culture so it felt natural to focus my inquiries there.

It was clear to me from the beginning that when I chose the US as being a representative of the cultural equation for my study, it could not be a nation-level context by any means. The sheer size of the nation clearly means that it is a very heterogeneous society with many different regional cultures and subcultures and any attempt at the type of qualitative research that I would conduct would be doomed if I wanted to draw inferences of general cultural nature. That went without saying. My own experiences of the US South were the biggest reason why I chose Louisiana; I felt adequately culturally competent and acculturated in that cultural environment due to some years spent in the South. Mogghaddam et al. (1993, 140) are of the opinion that a prolonged stay, if not permanent, is a prerequisite for psychological acculturation and true acceptance of a new cultures. Further, Drakopoulou Dodd (2002, 524) suggests that it is desirable that enough cultural similarities exist between the interviewer and the interviewee for there to be adequate grounds for analytical analysis to be carried out.

The anthropological requirement in cross-cultural research poses certain requirements for the conduction of the study also. When one goes to evaluate life in a different society than one's own, one has to make an attempt to understand life from the inside of that society, otherwise these insights have no value because what is considered 'good life' in one culture may not be that at all in another (Eriksen 2005, 20) and a certain context may carry different meanings to different cultural groups (Zhu 2008, 189). Obviously my connections to some family business people in the US through whom I was able to get into contact with my respondents-to-be guided my selection of them. I also felt that since a fair level of cultural competency is required for any researcher to do cross-cultural research the US South would be my comfort zone in that respect. I had studied English Philology and Applied Linguistics at the University of Jyväskylä through which I had gained sufficient language skills and awareness for issues related to cross-cultural encounters, in addition to which I had also resided in the US South for some years which in my view had created some level of cultural understanding to render me as much culturally competent as I could be under these circumstances without being a native of that area.

I was very aware that the reason I was able to get in touch with these family business entrepreneurs was indeed through my own friends, family business entrepreneurs themselves, whose extensive network of business and social contacts I was able to tap into. This family appeared in my master's thesis so they knew what kind of research I was to conduct and apparently felt comfortable in putting me in contact with their friends in their local network of family businesses. This kind of networking proved to be an essential part of the entrepreneurial identity constructions and typical to that business cultural context, as the interpretations of the empirical material later on in this report will show. As one of the Louisianan respondents said, referring to how I got to interview him through my friends; "It is not what you know, it's who you know".

The way I ended up selecting my Finnish respondents was a different scenario, albeit somewhat colored with personal factors as well. It needs to be pointed out that although Finland is often viewed to be a culturally very homogeneous country (Koiranen 2002, 176; Jokikokko 2005, 70) in the self-perception of Finns themselves (Sintonen 1999, 10), one has to acknowledge that there is cultural variation in Finland as well and it has been multicultural all through its history (Sintonen 1999, 10; Jokikokko 2005, 70). Koenig (2006, 72) points out that "the cultural homogeneity of the nation is only imagined". Cultural variation in Finland is often related to regional cultures and increasingly to ethnic issues as well. However, my selection of respondents was not based on any cultural factor as such but the self-perception of my respondents in regards to culture was incorporated into the interpretations of the interviews, as with their American counterparts.

I am originally from Kajaani, Kainuu and despite of having left that Northern Finnish province a long time ago, I remain very affectionate about it still and try and follow different news media on all things Kainuu-related. It was through a newspaper article that I learned about a family business in its third generation in Kajaani that had celebrated its 100th anniversary and this article prompted me to contact them. However, they refused. I was not surprised about them not wanting to take part in my research but I was astonished at the reason why; the managing director and owner of that company felt that I should interview somebody else, somebody that actually felt entrepreneurial because he felt so strongly that he was just doing a job, working there as it were, rather than practicing entrepreneurship. His response in fact prompted my first thought of how it cannot and should not be assumed that all family business entrepreneurs relate to having an entrepreneurial identification as a part of their overall identity structure.

The fact that I had set my sights on Kainuu due to this previous company which ended up not appearing in my study had made me look into other Kainuu area family businesses and it was through this search that lead me to contact Imagon's Arto Okkonen. I utilized the so-called 'snowball effect' (see e.g. Lambrecht & Lievens 2008, 300) to find Arto. At first I had found another firm that I thought was still family-owned but had in fact been sold to a non-family entrepreneur. He suggested immediately that I contact Arto Okkonen, who is a prominent family business entrepreneur in Kainuu. Arto demonstrated a very entrepreneurial eagerness in immediately wanting to take part in my study and also let me know that he is almost completely sure that his son Mika would also say yes. He was so entrepreneurial in fact in his attitude toward my research and what I took to be the idea of promoting family business research in general that he wanted me to contact and interview his younger son Mikko as well. This felt to me like this was also his way of involving Mikko, who was a young business student at the time, in the workings of the family business in a less than traditional way by having him reflect on the meaning of the family's business through this research that was to include his dad and brother. Arto reminded me of his American colleagues in his attitude from the beginning because of his entrepreneurial attributes and, for example, his attitude to networking. This will be explained in more detail later.

It was at Arto's recommendation that I contacted the next family business, The Alm's family firm and eventually interviewed father and son Alm. The third Kainuu company came to my attention again from the news media. Just like the first company I had contacted, this was another third generation family firm who had just celebrated a milestone anniversary. Due to reasons that will be explained later in my analysis, I will not go into any firm specific detail regarding this business.

A research grant that I received led me to my fourth Finnish business-owning family. The Central Finnish Regional Fund of the Cultural Foundation of Finland and more specifically the retailers' association of the K-group, had granted me money for my research and I got a phone call from the regional director of Kesko, which is the central organization of the K-group, who suggested that since the retailers in their union are family businesses, some with very long traditions, that I consider bringing one of those families into my research. Their interest in granting me money to begin with was obviously based on their desire to support the family business institution which is what their organization is built on. Since the K-group and their stores are well known for co-entrepreneurial couples and their families being very involved in the business operations and often for generations I thought that this was a good idea from the point of view of transgenerational wealth creation. After I got some potential names whom I contacted I ended up choosing a local family business from Central Finland, the Peräläs and interviewed Matti and his son Jussi Perälä.

Given my interpretive and cross-cultural stance I want to refer to Hytti (2003, 91) discussing a linguistic issue that may have some influence on the self-perception of my respondents, specifically the American ones. Hytti (2003, 91) points to a difference of meaning made between small business owners and entrepreneurs in the American literature that views entrepreneurs as "those who capitalise on innovative combinations of resources for the purpose of profit and growth whereas small business owners run more or less stable enterprises to further personal goals and to produce family income". Hytti then points out that the difference of meaning does not really exist in Finnish. I, as Hytti, take the all-inclusive view of considering my respondents entrepreneurs regardless of whether they would be called entrepreneurs or small business owners in the American discourse. To further add to the equation, I call my respondents family business entrepreneurs due to the family dynamics present in their business ventures.

6.6 The connectors between the respondents

As mentioned before in the chapter on family businesses as the context for this research, family businesses abound both in Finland as well as in the USA, where they are the dominant form of business (Feltham, Feltham & Barnett 2005). A lot of family business research has also been conducted in both countries so despite the obvious differences in size and numbers the basic point of origin is the same for both countries therefore posing a connecting starting point for the selection of respondents in regards to their respective business cultures (see the other cultural references in chapter five on cross-cultural research).

At the base of the thematic interviewing is the presumption that the interviewees all have experience of the same phenomenon and situation. The main connectors between my respondents were that they all had a family business of some sort and they are family business entrepreneurs, obviously. By calling them family business entrepreneurs here I am merely referring to them being business owners and family business members, not to them necessarily perceiving themselves as entrepreneurial but rather refer to them as entrepreneurs as a way to describe a work-related and profession-related status. Therefore what was not assumed automatically was that they would all profess to having an entrepreneurial identification as a part of their overall identity structures. The size, industry, turnover and other factual information like that was of no interest per se to me at the time of the selection of the companies because the focus of the main research question is on an individual level rather than on organizational level and my research interest lies in the individual entrepreneur's identity within their own specific context. Although popular belief often brands family businesses as small, even old fashioned mom and pop businesses, many of them in fact are big companies. However, even the smallest family businesses are worth studying, as Cohen and Musson (2000, 32) argue as well in saying that "small businesses, and the individuals who populate them, are worth studying" because "small businesses are commonly populated by people who perform both managerial and operational functions". As it turned out, the industry and profession were in fact of utmost essence to the entrepreneurs themselves; they related their thoughts and experiences regarding their entrepreneurial selves mostly through their own industries and professions.

I wanted to engage in dialogue about what I thought was essential, to borrow the Little Prince, to entrepreneurial identifications with people representing two different generations of family business entrepreneurs in a family firm that either had or was going to go through a succession process and therefore had transgenerational wealth creation potential. Therefore, one of the connectors was the transgenerational business operation. Eventually, not all of my respondents fell into my ideological framing of what family businesses are (as per defined by Koiranen 2000, 3). Originally I had been determined to stick with my self-determined necessity to be able to conduct face-to-face interviews with representatives of two different generations from the same company and the kind of an enterprise that would have only one family in the controlling role. However, as it turned out, one representative of the older generation of one enterprise declined altogether, after I had already interviewed the younger generation member and in another company the older generation member turned out to be out of town at the last minute, hence his interview was done by email. One of the family businesses was less than traditional in the sense that it represents a partnership in the insurance industry but with generational continuum and definite family operations going on in regards to ownership and management and transgenerational wealth creation potential with the half of the partnership that was the business owning family members' that I got to interview. All of these different scenarios took place with my American respondents and in retrospect I became to view this situation as being representative of the great extent of diversity that there is in the American business culture in general. I ended up being very happy and satisfied with the empirical materials that resulted from my interviews in Louisiana so even though not everything went as planned, what came out of those encounters was fruitful.

6.7 Interpreting entrepreneurial identities

In this chapter I will first introduce my respondents, the family business entrepreneurs representing two different generations per each company. Interpretations of their entrepreneurial identities through their accounts follow each introductory part. I will present the older and younger generations' accounts from one company together before moving on to the next. Louisianan interpretations are presented as the first cultural group followed by the Finnish interpretations as the second.

Since a few of my respondents wanted to remain anonymous in this report, I also wanted to present them in a way that would not include very much other personal detail about them either that I considered irrelevant anyway to my research so in some cases I have assumed a less than particular factual approach to issues such as age or education in order to allow them more anonymity on one hand but on the other emphasizing what I thought to be relevant to my research. So, rather than listing different individual's actual educational achievements or other bits and pieces of factual and detailed information I have chosen to present my interviewees in a more general of a manner. Those educational issues that I see as having significance to entrepreneurial identities I have brought forward.

In order to make my interpretations as transparent as possible and also to add to the trustworthiness of my interpretations, I will introduce quotations from my respondents in the following interpretations. These, as representative of the original voices, contribute to the interpretations (Hall 2003, 64) yielded not only by me but by the reader as well in the light of the possible multiple interpretations. The meaning of the quotations is also not only to produce thick description of the empirical materials, as opposed to weak description that merely presents facts (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 145) but to "invite audiences to experience these performances, to live their way into these scenes, moments and lives we are writing, and talking about" (Denzin 2009, 151). My interpretations of these accounts cannot be separate from the accounts themselves. The quotations will appear in inverted commas and will be written in italics to separate them from my own text. The purpose of the quotations is to provide transparency, trustworthiness and empirical closeness (Hall & Nordqvist 2008, 57).

6.8 Tom, Kate and their funeral business

My first interview appointment was with a father and daughter of a funeral home family business in north eastern Louisiana. They requested that they be presented anonymously; hence the names that they appear here by are not their real names. I interpreted their desire for this to stem from the delicate and sensitive nature of the industry that they are in more than anything else. I took this to be a sign of them not wanting to draw unnecessary attention to their persons through a project like this albeit that they were very open and friendly in their approach to my research. I randomly picked names for them and decided to call the father and daughter Tom and Kate respectively. Kate is the only female family business entrepreneur in my study but her gender has no particular value per se in this study since I am not focusing on gender issues. I will return to the gender issue later in the chapter introducing future research ideas.

Kate is a mother of one in her forties with two undergraduate degrees. She was born and raised in this north eastern Louisiana town, where the main operations of the funeral home are today. Kate has two sisters, neither of whom currently works for the family business. Kate left her hometown and moved to New York at the age of 22. She lived and worked there for 13 years, up until the terrorist attack of 9/11 took place or as Kate poignantly puts it; she *"lived through 9/11"*. During her time in New York she got married and started a family. After the 9/11 attack Kate, her husband, and son decided to return to her home town so that she could start to run the family business. She now is a part-owner of her family's funeral home business.

Kate's family has a long history in the funeral business. The funeral home was founded by Kate's grandfather and grandmother originally, after the grandfather's death Kate's dad and uncle ran the business for about 50 years before Kate's dad bought his brother out so now the business is, as Kate says, *"strictly my father's and mine"*. Her dad and her uncle still continue to have other business partnerships together. The funeral business has four locations, Kate is in charge of running the daily operations of all four locations and her father *"pretty much does the financials and comes in pretty regularly but does take a great deal of time off when he wants to, he's earned it."*. The business offers insurance services as well and Kate's husband in fact works in that side of the business whereas Kate herself has become a licensed funeral director.

Kate's father Tom, who now is in his late seventies, is a college-educated family business owner. In addition to having spent decades in the funeral business he also has been in the life insurance business for many years. After having gone to school, Tom returned to his home town and bought his dad's business with his brother. They then grew and developed the business building the four different funeral homes that they now have and then Tom also moved on to creating insurance services: *"After that we decided we needed to get into other business because we weren't making enough money in the funeral business to take care of our needs for our families, so in the funeral business we decided that needed to get a life insurance company to sell life insurance to the people so they have money to pay for a funeral and so we got into that and I stayed in the business until this year, we just sold the company out"*.

In addition to these businesses Tom has other ongoing business ventures, too. Tom would like to have seen his other children in the family business as well but they chose otherwise and Tom respects their decision. Children in business owning families are often socialized into entrepreneurship but Tom feels that he never actually had an entrepreneurial role model at home, despite of his dad having been an entrepreneur. Tom feels that the fact that him leaving and going to school elsewhere allowed him to see what was going on in other places and this made him strive for material things that he had not been able to have before: *"It just happened, when you don't have very much money and you get a chance to go to school….and you see what other people have, you want some of it. So that's what it is. I'm not elaborating, that's a true story"*.

6.8.1 Tom's account

Tom, in addition to representing the older generation in a transgenerational business, also represents the successor generation because their company was started by his dad. In this way his entrepreneurial identification can be seen as constituting different generational elements. However, he feels that rather than having adopted entrepreneurial qualities at home from his parents, he was driven more by circumstances that were not affluent. After he went to school and saw places other than his home town, he also got to see what other people had in the material sense and this prompted him to go for it himself. This was not based on envy of what others had but an ambition to make it, to acquire those things for himself and later on for his family.

> *"After I got out and saw what was going on with other people, always wanted to have a little bit more than what I had when I came up so I decided I was going to work for it and get into some areas that I thought I could make some money at so that's what I did"*

The biggest turning point in Tom's life for his personal identity as well for his entrepreneurial identification seems to have been having found a person that has unconditionally supported him in all of his ventures; his wife. This can be interpreted as something highly individual or it can be interpreted through the role of the spouse in family businesses which can be substantial. Obviously for Tom his wife has been an integral part of his identity and entrepreneurial action in that she has supported him and stood by him through the decades. She has also been the sounding board for his entrepreneurial ideas offering feedback to his thoughts. The only regret that Tom accounts for is that he feels that he probably did not spend as much time with his kids as he should have but seems to have reconciled with that thought feeling that he knows and loves his children. Presumably his wife has made up for his absence.

> *"She was somebody that ...I would tell what I was going to do and we talked about it and she supported me all the way through and if it hadn't been for this woman that I was married to and the mother of these children I couldn't have done some things without her support, whether I was right or wrong she was always supportive of me. I mean, she would tell me what she thought and I would most times do what she said but it didn't make any difference, she supported me from one end to the other, so that was the best thing that happened to me, it was her."*

Tom's value system is built of a combination reflecting the importance God and family, and in that order, as he puts it. The desire to make money and the modest circumstances of his childhood are what drove him to succeed as an entrepreneur possibly more than any other factor, such as freedom to work for oneself or creativity. Along the entrepreneurial way, money seems to have turned into a value for him. Often money per se is not seen as a value but a means to an end, but Tom's attitude toward money can be interpreted as if constituting a value in and of itself. He talks about money frequently and candidly during the interview as opposed to talking about money implicitly and as a tool to satisfy needs with. His other values of family and religion get enhanced through the value of money as well. His desire to bestow his success on others through money also reflects his early childhood and lack of material possessions back then.

> *"All this stuff made a lot of money, all of them…I would go back and do it all over again…I have always been very liberal with what money I have been able to make in my church and with my friends and with my family and I think that's because when I came up I didn't have any of these things."*

Tom was in business with his brother for over 50 years and the brothers never got into conflict severe enough to damage their co-operation. It appears that their style of communication, value system, world views, and opinions on how to do business were so similar that they managed to avoid big differences of opinion. They fed each other's entrepreneurial ambitions through working together in their family business. Since an entrepreneur has to satisfy both his need to feel distinct as well as his need for belonging (Shepherd & Haynie 2009a) it appears that in Tom and his brother's case their entrepreneurial endeavors allowed them to satisfy both those needs; the family business in which they shared ownership, management and family membership took care of the need for belonging but then they each also had separate individual business ventures that allowed them to be distinct and realize their need for individuation. Both also got to realize portfolio entrepreneurship through these various enterprises. Tom's other ventures include owning hamburger businesses, oil and gas business, a mini warehouse business, and buying and selling land. His businesses are spread over several states. Those other business ventures were probably the key to such a long and harmonious business relationship that the brothers shared. Eventually Tom bought his brother out at the time when he was ready to slow down.

> *"Well, I was in this business with my brother over 50 years, we never had a falling out, never, not one time, so we stayed together…Now, we had different opinions about different things but we didn't fall out…so he came to me one day and said Tom, I'm ready to get out of the business or I'm ready to buy you out of the business and he's older than I am and I know what he would have…well, what he would have done is bought me out and then sold the whole business but he knew I wanted to stay in business for a while and so he made me an offer I couldn't refuse to buy him and so I bought him out, we're still friends and all that kind of stuff so we didn't have a problem there, we didn't have a problem with all these other different things that we got into together and some we didn't get into together I did on my own"*

Tom is a self-proclaimed portfolio entrepreneur also in the sense that this type of action is precisely through which he sees entrepreneurship. He has given portions of ownership of his various enterprises to his daughters who have grown into business ownership through this as well. Sharing ownership among family members can be interpreted as way of creating commitment for and engagement in family entrepreneurship.

> *"I understand entrepreneurial means that you are in several different things…businesses and so forth like that."*

Despite operating very much in a way that fosters entrepreneurship within the family, Tom does not have too emotional of an attitude toward the idea of a family business when looked upon in the external world. He sees no added value in family business operations as such in general and is of the opinion that stakeholders do not care who is behind the business as long as products and services work. However, being business savvy, he sees added value in family giving face to the kind of services that funeral homes offer in small towns which makes it easier for their customers to come and do business with them. It appears that Tom can fluctuate in his entrepreneurial identification from identifying as a family business entrepreneur to an entrepreneur in general taking advantage of the previous whenever needed.

> *"A small business serving a small community, a family business deal is fine and that's what we've been but if you're really going to make a lot of money it doesn't make any difference about being a family business. You got to get out there and get you some good people…but in our business, it's particularly important when you're in a small area to have family in there running that business because they will relate to each other in the funeral business but in these mini warehouses and other things that we've been in, they don't care. People doing business with us in these other things, oil and gas business and things like that, no. Family business don't mean a thing."*

According to Kellerman et al. (2008, 4) aging leaders often place more emphasis on a smooth transition when the succession draws nearer than on pursuing entrepreneurial endeavors. This is not the case with Tom who seems confident that the transition will indeed go smoothly and he seems to have a lot of trust and respect for his daughter's abilities to take the company even further than where he has been able to take it. This is in congruence with his daughter's own ideas of the future of the company, reflecting both the father and daughter's wished-for-identities in the future. Tom is still very entrepreneurially oriented in keeping up with the changing times in his industry constantly innovating products and services that support the core business, for example developing cremation and insurance services.

> *"My thoughts are these; cremation is going to be a factor, right now it's 13% cremation here in this part….if we do 100 funerals, we do 13 cremations. We can make money off off cremations because we are charging more for it and we are, you know, we don't take in as much money but the cost of doing cremation is much less so we can still make some money out of cremations and we have to charge enough on the cremation to make as much out of a regular cremation as we do regular service, we have to because we have to stay in business and pay our people and take care of these buildings and all that kind stuff."*

Tom seems to have a clear wish for the continuance of his family business that is now in its third generation. He reflects the future of his daughter and her son with the idea of wanting them to do what they really desire to do but clearly the hope for the perpetuation of the family legacy is there. Seeing the future of the business remaining in the family is distinctly a part of Tom's entrepreneurial identification. He has a lot of confidence in Kate's abilities to succeed while seeing his own role as that of a teacher. He thinks that in many ways his daughter is like him but on the other hand he also sees his daughter as more cautious than himself and possibly more risk-averse. However, Tom seems to believe that this is just her way of naturally developing into a more aggressive entrepreneur as time goes by and that Kate will find her own way channeling her entrepreneurial ambitions.

> *"She hadn't really got to the point yet where she's not afraid to do it. She wants to do things better way than I did, she wants to be sure that everything is alright now and plenty money everywhere before she wants to spend some more money and step out and borrow any more, she wants to be sure that everything's ok right now but she will move forward in my opinion but slower than me…I don't mind going to the bank and…if I think a business deal is good and borrowing two or three million dollars…it doesn't bother me at all if I have checked it out and know that the opportunity for making money is there, then I'll do it."*

Tom clearly feels proud of Kate's entrepreneurial attributes and is demonstrating some kind of a secondary self-efficacy in that he is reflecting Kate as having all of the valuable characteristics needed in entrepreneurship in the funeral home business in particular.

> *"So Kate decided she wanted to get back in the business after she came home or before she came back home and she's been a real big time asset, you found out pretty quick she's a people person and she knows and she's smart and she doesn't mind working and she's really good for the business and I think the future of the company is going to be much more prosperous in the future than it's been in the past under her leadership and my role has been to try to teach her as much as I know about the business and then me slip out and start going fishing and hunting and that's what I plan to do."*

Tom views the concept of culture very strongly through his local business culture and the social and professional networks that exist in that culture for him. These networks have benefited him in his businesses and are of utmost importance in that business environment. They can and have made it easier for him to access resources and other opportunities (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 13).

> *"Well, we've always grown our business and been connected with different things, you know, like in the banking business and Chamber of Commerce, and the clubs and supportive of that and the church and all these different things and it's helped our business."*

The most noticeable part of Tom's entrepreneurial identification seems to be him defining himself through the constellation of his different business ventures, making him a portfolio entrepreneur more than anything else. The meaning of family and family members in business with him is significant which can also be seen in his hopes for the continuance of the family business albeit the context of family business is at times in the background in his entrepreneurial identification if it appears to have no economic benefit for entrepreneurial actions. However, in his overall identity entrepreneurial identification appears strong and it seems to exist in the interface of family and business. His attitude is optimistic and positive, embedded in self-efficacy and he does not seem to be influenced too much by the recession that is ongoing at the time of the interview. Tom views the future as an opportunity.

6.8.2 Kate's account

According to Kate the funeral business is something that one is born into rather than something that one chooses for a career. It seems important for Kate to emphasize that she has had a fairly long career outside of the family business in a totally different industry but it appears that the funeral business as an industry has indeed been in her 'blood', for when she and her husband decided to leave New York and come back to her hometown to work in the family's funeral home, she fit right in and felt familiar with the industry. Even though she left for 13 years, she did feel, in the back of her mind, that one day she would return to run her family's business. However, the time spent elsewhere has given her invaluable experience and a chance to try her wings on her own. Incumbent generations of family businesses often want the members of the younger generation to acquire professional experience outside the family business operations.

Kate had seen her father and uncle run the business all through her childhood and like so many other children of entrepreneurs she feels that she grew up in the business and therefore she not only constructs her identity through entrepreneurship in general but namely through the funeral home business. This also reflects the influence of her family on her entrepreneurial identification.

> *"We did our homework here, when we came from church and every time after church we'd come to the funeral home and dad would do his paperwork and we either do our Bible studies or we would do our homework in the funeral home, it was just a given....I get asked that all the time, Anne, how do I do what I do every day, every day, every day. When your father owns the funeral home and your uncle owns the funeral home and pretty much all your family has worked in the funeral home at one point or another, it just becomes second nature but I caution when I say that because I don't mean it like it's just kind of like old hat, because it's not, it's not, but what it is it gives you that ability...it's just kind of in the blood, so to speak."*

Kate feels that their business being family owned and run and having a long local history is especially important in the industry that they are in. They know the families that they service operating in a fairly small community. Kate also feels that family business as a form of enterprising in this field of business in fact actually adds value to the customer due to the nature of the business. A family owned funeral business can give 'face' to the service therefore making it a personable service rather than a faceless business operation. The difference to the stakeholders in a sensitive situation that funeral arrangements and funerals are can be vast between a family and non-family owned service provider. The service gets identified with the family that is offering it. The staff that works there gets treated in a family-like manner, too, and Kate feels that they, as the business owning family, are responsible also for their staff. This indicates therefore that the influence of the family business as a context is strong for Kate's entrepreneurial identity as well.

"If you compared us to another funeral home that was maybe corporately owned, publicly owned…I…there is no way you could possibly get the family attention or the personal attention that you get because they're working for an entity, we are working for ourselves and we are working for our own families that we support and the staff that work for us and have worked for us 20 plus years, 15 plus years….we have a family to support as well as a staff of families to support whereas a public company may not have that dynamic and may not understand…or maybe they do…but certainly not the way we do 'cause we are very close with everybody that works with us and being in a small community pretty much know most of the families that we service on one level…..we have a staff of about 25-30 people that we support and we support their families, we support their mortgages and we support their children's college tuitions or funds or whatever…"

The tragic events of September 11, 2001 had a profound effect on Kate's life, her family's life, her identity as a parent, a professional, and a daughter of a family business owner. The terrorist attack changed Kate and her husband's conception of what truly is important in life, what the difference between a career and work is, and also how they wanted their son to be raised. This event made them reflect on the small town values they both had been raised with; they wanted their child to grow up in the same town where they work because in New York they had had to commute long distances. 9/11 appears to have signified a permanent sense of insecurity related to their lives at the time in New York for them which was magnified through their desire to protect their son and have him grow up in a different kind of an environment. According to Hitlin (2003, 121) "the behaviors that we enact as a result of our identities can cause us to reflect on our values, and, over time, to find different values most compelling. When this happens, we experience shifts in our personal identity, our sense of "who we are". Kate may have gone through this kind of shift in her personal identity as a person and a parent that then reflected on her professional and social identity as well and this change in identity resulted in her leaving New York and returning to her home state.

"9/11 was a critical factor for us, critical, and our want and desire to raise our child in a much more structured and much more safe environment."

The family business seems to have represented more than just a company to work in for Kate when she returned to her home town. In contrast to the life style in New York the family business seems to have offered security and stability. Coming back to the family's funeral home business has offered her and her a family an opportunity to return to her roots not just literally but culturally and socially as well thereby consolidating the value system that she was raised with and that she seems to have adopted in her childhood. The family business represents the Southern values which she feels can be seen in the organizational values as well, a safe environment for her son to grow up in and in fact the business seems to have offered her the venue to not only put all of her entrepreneurial qualities into action but also to be able to do that in a more controlled and safe environment enabling her to be successful as a business woman and content as a parent thus yielding all around benefits.

Her value system is embedded in the Southern culture in which she grew up and in which her family's business operates and these values appear to be essential to her entrepreneurial identification as well. The most important values for her are openness and being honest. She also emphasizes that they are "*very by the law*", paralleling the personal value of honesty with their organizational system of values. She also feels strongly about philanthropic activities to benefit her community and this again is a reflection of the company's organizational identity as well. This participation in community-building activities allows them to enjoy a high degree of trust (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 106) in their community which is of utmost importance particularly in the industry that they are in. Kate sees these voluntary activities as giving back to their community. They can be seen as indicative of the company's organizational values and therefore the organizational identity as well making it visible to the surrounding business environment.

> *"That's not something we have to do, it's something we want to do, giving back to the families that let us serve them and that's not just something I set up, that's something they set up, 20, 30 years ago, we do a lot of maintaining common areas like around bridges and veteran's homes, we do a lot of garden planning and fences...and you know, just keeping it looking neat...it's a part of our community service that we're able to do".*

When it comes to her individual entrepreneurial attributes, Kate perceives herself to be a very strong, decisive, and entrepreneurial person and to her that means being involved in a lot of other business ventures as well beside the core business of the funeral home industry and running her business with a growth oriented frame of mind. She thinks she is very much like dad as an entrepreneur. She also thinks that starting up businesses is strongly related to being entrepreneurial; this seems to indicate that she views entrepreneurial action to be at the core of an entrepreneur rather than specific traits. She possesses a strong intrapreneurial streak as well which is evident when she recounts her story about her earlier career in New York where she felt she ran the business she worked for like it was hers even though it wasn't.

> *"We have a lot of business interests that are outside the funeral business, most definitely...I may not be entrepreneurial in the sense of starting a business but as far as being able to run one and grow one and maintain one, yes, I would say that I do have an entrepreneurial spirit"*

A strong feature of Kate's entrepreneurial identification is her attitude to challenges and change which she likes; every day is different in her industry. Entrepreneurs are often seen as agents of change. In her view the funeral home business is a service industry and she perceives herself as being at her best in servicing people in situations that are very challenging and difficult. She appears to possess self-efficacy in her attitude toward her succeeding in fulfilling her role in servicing her families.

> *"It changes; there is no monotony to it. There is no just going in and pushing papers and there is always a great deal of different work to be done and every family is different and every family's dynamic is different and that's why I enjoy it so much because it is never boring...it is never tedious and it's really a service industry which is where my suit is, where my strong suit is. And each family comes to me for a reason, they don't want to be here, they have to be*

> *here and I think that's probably my strongest suit, us being able to handle the dynamic of something that's really very difficult for somebody."*

Her move back happened to coincide also with her father's desire to lessen his workload after about 50 years in the business. Although the move had been prompted by such terrible events that shook the entire societal structures it happened to fit well into the life cycle of the family business and gave her a platform to start realizing her entrepreneurial identity to the fullest. Hoy and Sharma (2010, 79) say that "in the context of entrepreneurial firms, to effectively pass the baton of entrepreneurial spirit across generations of family, members of both generations must be well prepared for their respective jobs of handing and taking over the family firm. Similar to relay races, the timing and communication between the two generations must be well managed, too". It appears that Kate and her dad not only have a great deal of mutual respect for one another but communicate their respective expectations on the future of the family business well.

It has taken a while for Kate to find her own way of doing things in the family business in her father's shadow. It is essential for her that she, as the successor of the business, gain a feeling of independence and a sufficient amount of distinctiveness and individuation to construe her entrepreneurial identity in balance with the other identifications that she has, such as the social identification of being a younger generation member of a family business. This can be seen as identity work having taken place for Kate; constructing an identity that contemporaneously negotiates her personal identity, the successor's identity and business owner's identity. It has involved pondering on expectations to be met and taking her own space in her father's shadow while continuously being compared to him. It has been rooted in a fair amount of self-doubt which is indicative of skills of self-reflection which in turn is a skill often practiced by successful entrepreneurs.

> *"It took me a long time to try not to follow in my father's footsteps because I wanted to be my own person and my own individual....but you want to be able to say, you know, I have done, maybe in a different field but certainly successful life and career on my own so that's important, it's important to be your own person before you can ever take on a legacy...like I've taken on...it's imposing and it's strong and it's ....am I ever going to be as good and....or am I ever going to be taken as seriously."*

It appears that Kate and her dad have indeed managed to negotiate the succession processes in such a way that conflict, either past or present, is minimal therefore making the transition phase that much easier. Kate does not perceive there really to be conflicting situations to any remarkable extent, only those that stem from generational differences. Those can also be fruitful in taking the business forward. In any case, as mentioned before, good communicative skills and mutual respect on both the father's and the daughter's part are a problem solving tool in these generational differences in points of view.

> *"We just talk it out. There's a difference here between someone that's had 56 years' experience and someone who's had 6 years' experience...he's an unbelievable man, very strong, very strong values but very, very business, very bottom line, but that's how he got to where he is today".*

Kate is clearly eager to usher the family business into the future, successfully, in order to not taint the legacy that she has been given but to take it forward in her own way leaving her own mark of the younger generation in the business operations. She strives to make it even better while paying homage to her dad. She is ambitious to succeed and this future orientation is clearly a definite part of her entrepreneurial identity reflecting her wished-for identity. It is typical for the younger generation in a family business to strive for distinctiveness in finding their own way of running the business to detach themselves to a certain degree from the older generation leadership. Often they are growth-, development-, and future-oriented. Kate, as an agent of change, has an entrepreneurial approach to the ever changing business environment to which one has to stay sensitive if one is to carve and enhance one's own niche. She is observant of the cultural considerations in her industry as well and recognizes the need to remain innovative in response to the cultural and societal changes.

> *"Obviously I'm the next generation of it, of the funeral business so...and that's a great deal to digest and a great deal to....and understand and not only to keep a legacy together but grow it in a manner that...you know the world keeps changing ...the funeral industry is not exempt from the changes and what's going on in cultures and races and religions and cremations and burials, I mean there is a lot to keep up with, it's not exempt from changes and quite frankly it's probably the one that gets hit the most on some levels that ...that would be my biggest...I think attribute...to maintain his legacy and his tenure at the home and make sure that that never gets diminished or never gets tainted with my leadership but also bring in a more contemporary and younger portion of the business that is necessitated now."*

Kate's thoughts on the future of the family business from the transgenerational point of view reflect the frame of mind that is typical to family business entrepreneurs; on some level, even if their children are young, they vision the future of the business with the thought of continuance of it within the family. She says she'd like to see her son continuing the family business but only if that is really what he wants to do and she would never force it on him. Kate's wished-for-identity regarding the future enmeshes elements of the parental identity with the entrepreneurial identification in that she needs to privilege her son's own ambitions over those of her own concerning the business. Depending on the situation, different identities get enacted in different situations (Hitlin 2003, 124).

The funeral home business in America in general is an industry dominated by men. According to Kate about 80% of all funeral directors and embalmers are men. The fact that Kate is a woman in this field and determined to be successful can be interpreted in multiple ways. One way to view it would be that she is resistant to the gender bias in her industry and determined to make it despite of that, being the strong and decisive woman that she is. The other way to see it is that her family's influence on her choice of coming back to the family business is so strong that she has entered the field in spite of the gender issue. Most likely both interpretations play a part in her choices; it does seem like her gender is neither a hindrance nor any special advantage either in her own mind. Her entrepreneurial identification seems to take precedence over her gender identity.

When the topic of the conversation moves to that of culture, Kate calls her own culture the "*small town culture*". This is suggestive also of the Southern way of living in which people know each other, family values are strong and often transferred to organizational values. This also denotes a collective entrepreneurial identification shared by the local entrepreneurs which in practice translates into peer support and networking that is beneficial to all involved. Other family business entrepreneurs offer help when it's needed and the social and business networks ensure that businesses weather difficult times easier.

> *"There's many people; my banker, you know…I need to borrow some money because I had something happen in one of my facilities and we need to renovate, it's nice to know I can get a bank loan and I don't have to show him every bit of my income because they know what it is, they know my checking account, they know….I don't have to go through the rigmarole of getting something done because I'm in a small town and those people know me and they know our history and they know our financials and I' don't have to go through ….somebody's just trying to go in there and get a loan, that could take up to three weeks whereas if I needed the money on Thursday, I'd have it Thursday and I called yesterday".*

Kate also feels that this small town culture fosters family business-type entrepreneurship more so than for example New York or California. She says that in her area there are no publicly owned funeral homes but that they all are family owned. She also points out that African Americans use African American owned funeral homes indicating that funerals are very much embedded in the ethnic tradition as well. Rather than pondering on specific cultural characteristics any further, Kate quickly equates culture with the economic situation that is in dire straits at the time of the interviews with the recession that has started not too long before in 2008. The recession then gets looked at from the perspective of her industry in which economic changes can quickly be seen. She explains that five years prior to the time of the interview people might have made different choices regarding caskets than what they do at the time.

> *"The global economy effects what people may be able to afford for a funeral."*

For Kate the entrepreneurial identification appears to be a salient part of her identity and she constructs it specifically through the industry of the funeral business. An important part of that is also being involved in several other business ventures making Kate a portfolio entrepreneur. The defining moment for her to go into the family business stemmed from the tragedy of the events of 9/11. Kate grew up among the family business operations and this has had a great influence on her identity formation. And while it is important for her to have had a career outside the family business, which she sees as a legacy, her entrepreneurial identity is driving her forward to take over the business and take it into the future in her own way promoting transgenerational wealth creation. She is an active member of her community and the local business network. The family value system is very much her and the organization's value system as well, honesty being the definitive value which is also reflective of the local Southern small town culture. Kate's husband's values appear to be congruent with hers allowing the wished-for-identities to be constructed in similar ways both on the personal and collective levels in regards to the future of the family business. This influences the transmittance of entrepreneurial spirit on to the next generation as well. It is also indicative of the important role of the spouse in a family business, regardless of gender.

6.9 Jacob and his family office

Jacob asked me to change his name for this report so that is what I have done. Jacob's father was to take part in my study as well but as it turned out he was out of town during my visit with Jacob and subsequently refused to answer my interview by email- request.

Jacob is in his fifties and has a master's degree in economics and finance. He clearly is very talented in economics and understands and derives satisfaction from dealing with matters of financial nature. Jacob now runs what is called a family office. He works there with his dad and a small non-family staff. He has two sisters who are not actively involved in the operations of the family office. Hoy and Sharma (2010, 227) describe the concept of family office as follows; "The financial success of many family businesses has led to the formalization of family investments. Family offices have been established to enable family members to invest as a group similar to private portfolio management firms, but without imposing those external costs. The primary purpose of a family office is to provide centralized planning for the investment of family wealth. Offices are created when families determine that they have a surplus beyond the immediate needs of the venture and the maintenance of family members, and when there are substantial numbers of family members who are not directly involved in the business. An office provides economies of scale in buying and in reducing investment management costs. The theory behind such offices is that they will be efficient and effective in asset management. In addition, they often provide advisory services for family shareholders" and further that "the family office operates separate from the business and helps preserve and build wealth for shareholders who may not possess investment expertise".

Jacob himself is very aware of the fact that family office is not what most people think of as a family business and he himself calls a family business *"an operating business to manufacture something, distribute something, or provide a service to customers"*. He sees the difference in the two through the nature of business operations as being either those of action, as in what family businesses usually do, or investing capital derived from those actions as in what family offices do. The family dimension plays no part as such in this difference.

Jacob's family had businesses that he says were family businesses; family owned, run, and managed. They started in wholesale grocery distribution, after the prohibition they became *"a wholesale wine, liquor and distilled spirits distributor"*, later they formed a co-operative and started to finance local independents that had joined the co-operative, and started building their stores for them. Eventually they started building shopping centers and got into real estate business. They are not building new centers any more but are still operating their old shopping centers. Jacob also has and has had several other business ventures; *"We have several different companies that we operate, several different partnerships, and corporations and.....they're all structured differently"*. The family business operations are now in their fourth generation. Over the years most of those businesses have been sold so now they are investing all that capital in the family office. Jacob's dad is in a very active role still in the family office and Jacob also has two sisters who along with their families as well as Jacob's own family have assets that are held by and invested through the family office. They have hired a professional manager to help them do this: *"We've actually hired a professional manager or full time person who is now the CEO and president of this business, he is not a family member but he's located here and that's ....my father's in that office and I'm in this office and he's up in the front office....we operate with ....we've actually formalized a board of directors and I'm a director and on my business card it says principal so I'm an owner and that's my title...so that's really what we're doing, it's kind of a different thing for us because for years we were operating different businesses, in that respect I'm fourth generation"*.

6.9.1 Jacob's account

Jacob shows a very strong reflexive streak in his identity structure and this is obvious also in the written documents pertaining to the values and mission of his family office with which he seems to show his self-awareness in addition to making visible the organizational identity of the family office. This is shown by the Family Office Proposal that he has drawn up. The value system resonates with the American cultural ideal of freedom, individuality, and autonomy, essential for Jacob's entrepreneurial identity as well. The values are also reflective of an inclination for responsible ownership and the form and content of the proposal suggestive of Jacob's meticulous approach to his business operations.

The Family Office Proposal (listing 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation members by name referring to them as 1st, 2nd and 3rd *financial* generation, emphases in the original)

"**Family Mission**: Our mission is to promote and enhance family values; to create an atmosphere in which family ties and affection can flourish and in which family members can improve their chances of knowing, respecting and caring for each other; to be a forum in which they can work together for the good of both themselves and the wider community; to assist in developing each individual's character, education and training so as to promote a healthy and talented diversity in the family; and to provide a means of minimizing family divisions and tensions, including the just settlement of family disputes when they arise. "

"**Family Values**: These are the values that we believe in and are striving for:

1. To act with integrity
2. To cherish individuality, independent thinking and freedom of choice
3. To serve as responsible "role models" of productive and creative people
4. To pursue a balance of work, family and community
5. To encourage the participation and empowerment of every family member
6. To commit to communication and the resolution of conflicts
7. To create wealth and confront the responsibility and challenges of wealth
8. To demonstrate proactive compassion and generosity
9. To accept that we are not in competition with each other and will support each other
10. To acknowledge excellence as personal expression with freedom to learn from mistakes
11. To earn and maintain the trust of all family members."

After this the family office proposal goes on to narrate the history of the family office. I have left it out of this report with respect to Jacob's wishes to remain anonymous. The history of the family's business operations goes to underline and emphasize the pride felt about the family's enterprises and will leave an imprint on and make the next generation members cognizant of their own history therefore encouraging them to treat their family's enterprise as an heirloom and appeal to their familial sense of responsibility in addition to nurturing the wealth creation.

The proposal then continues on to state the purpose and vision of the Family Office:

"Our purpose and vision in having a family office is: 1. to protect and enhance the family wealth along with assisting in pursuit of leadership in philanthropic endeavors, 2. to secure a sound future for ourselves and for future generations, and 3. to assure that future generations understand the responsibility of their inheritance and how they can benefit from it."

Functions of the Family Office:

1. Investments
2. Personal Accounting/Financial Reporting
3. Trust administration and accounting
4. Investment and portfolio administration and accounting

5. Wealth Transfer assistance, coordination and implementation
6. Coordinating Philanthropy
7. Tax compliance assistance, coordination and implementation
8. Accounting services for business investments
9. Management/Oversight of business investments
10. Education and involvement of family members

Philosophy of the Family Office:

"The essence of the Family Office should be that of a service company created to serve the business as well as financial, administrative and estate planning needs of the individual Family Members. Any number of services could be provided, all of which are listed about in the Functions of the Family Office.

This is not to suggest that the Family Office must perform all of these functions. Rather, that it is anticipated at this time that the Family Members will want to do so. Over time, the functions of the Family Office might change, adding or subtracting services as the needs and wishes of the Family Members, who are its Clients/Customers, change or as the expertise and capabilities of the management and staff develop and/or changes. Furthermore, it is not determined that these functions will necessarily be performed "in house". Many of them may be outsourced to third party professionals, business or even to family members, all in a strategy to create the most highly effective and cost effective mix of "in house" and "outside" talent possible.

The principle standards for the Family Office are:

1. It is crucial to distinguish between the "scope of power and authority" that the Family Office hold and the "functions" that it is charged to perform. In short, the Family Office must be created to serve the Family Members' needs, both individually and collectively… not the other way around.
2. It should be by individual choice, not by obligation, of Family Members to (or not to) utilize the services of the Family Office.
3. To the greatest extent possible, successive generations should not be bound by the decisions of prior generations.
4. No Family member or Family Office business entity shall be required to participate in investment opportunities with other Family members. If a Family member offers an investment opportunity to a third party non-strategic investor, the investment opportunity should be first offered to the Family Office and to the other Family members.
5. There should be a reasonable and fair process by which individual Family Members can separate themselves and their holdings from the Family Office. The process for this should provide a reasonable amount of time for the remaining Family Members to obtain necessary funding and pricing should be on a fair market value basis (all factors such as minority interests, etc. taken into account).

6. Except very specifically defined and agreed upon, no individual Family Member should be required by others to contribute or add capital to any new or existing investment, business entity, etc. Except as specifically defined and agreed upon, any dilution that occurs as a result of the infusion of additional capital by others shall be 1 to 1 (without penalty) and shall be calculated on a fair market value basis (all factors such as minority interest, etc. taken into account). "

Action Plan:

The family will move forward with a plan to transition the Family Office from its current management and oversight structure into a professionally managed organization with board governance and oversight. The plan represents a focused agenda that addresses the greatest immediate need, involves minimal complication, and shares broad agreement among the family members. Important issues that are not addressed at this time will be dealt with through a continuing process, doing our best to anticipate issues before they become too difficult to manage.

Policies of the Family Office will be established by a board of directors initially consisting of one representative appointed from each of the 1st and 2nd Generation families. Each member of the board of directors has the duty to act in a manner consistent with the Family Mission and Values to serve as guide toward the fulfillment of the Purpose, Vision, and Functions of the office. Each board member will have one vote and decisions will be made by majority count. The board's authority extends to the office and businesses operated within the office. Its authority is limited to issues that concern operating policy, strategy, education and the like and it does not have authority to act on behalf of family members regarding long-term investment decisions.

A new CEO, CFO or COO (hereafter called COO) will be hired by and will be accountable to the board of directors. This person will be responsible for the successful fulfillment of all goals associated with the operations of the Family Office. This includes oversight, coordination, implementation of trust and corporate administration, accounting, money management and investments, portfolio administration, investment tracking, insurance, tax compliance and wealth transfer plans. The position also entails oversight of the commercial real estate and public warehousing business operations, coordination and implementation of the family's education program. The primary role of this person will be to manage the Office and its personnel, to coordinate the fulfillment of the required functions in an accurate and timely manner, to provide regular and informative financial and other reports to the Board of Directors regarding the status of the office, personnel, projects, goals, strategy, policies, etc. and to bring related proposals to the board."

Jacob calls himself *"the entrepreneurial investor"*. In his perception entrepreneurial attributes seem to do with processes of seizing opportunities. He considers himself to have a strong entrepreneurial streak which according to him means that he likes to see something come out of nothing and he enjoys building something. He is always on the lookout for new opportunities. For something to come out nothing, the nothing must have had an opportunity with it to begin with. Jacob explains how he has not really been a specialist in any of those fields in which he has started businesses. Often entrepreneurs define their entrepreneurial identities particularly through their core industries but in Jacob's case his core industry is money, therefore his entrepreneurial identity is constructed through investing. A large part of his entrepreneurial identity is also in being a portfolio and start-up entrepreneur.

> *"Entrepreneurial business....it was about creating everything to do with the business from nothing...building something out of nothing, watching the thing grow, that's entrepreneurship".*

Jacob has actively sought ways to foster his entrepreneurial attributes. The strongest way of fostering those for him seems to come, to a large extent, from peer support. He has been a member of an international organization called The Young Presidents' Organization or YPO which either can be interpreted as having been most significant to him as the aforementioned peer support or alternatively also a way to distance himself momentarily from the familial business operations to give a fresh outlook on business operations elsewhere. To be able to belong to YPO, one has to be a president of one's own company before the age of 40. He has not been an active member on the international or even national level but on state level in the state chapter. He has belonged to this organization since his early 30's, the group is still together, and they meet once a month. The life stages of the group are parallel with Jacob's and the family business' and the core meaning of the group has changed accordingly. The meaning of this group appears to have been significant for not only Jacob's entrepreneurial identification but his overall identity.

> *"Within each chapter, each organization's chapter we have what we call forms and the form is made up of different business people, usually in different businesses that live in an area together and they are small groups from anywhere of maybe seven or eight people up to as many as twelve and I joined this forum, this YPO forum back in 1993...now it's becoming more social, and everybody's lives are changing....there are eight of us in the group and so we watch each other and we talk about these issues, we've talked....in the early days it was about business issues, now it's about transition issues and it's about life, different life issues."*

Transgenerational wealth creation is a goal in itself for Jacob and his family office. The purpose of investing family wealth is to make sure it continues to provide well-being for the growing family well into the future. However, family offices are complex entities having to deal with differing opinions and attitudes emanating from the family dynamics. This means "keeping these many diverse people connected as a family, and aligned around the vision, values, and strategy of the family" (Jaffe & Lane 2008, 82) and striving for cohesiveness of the family organization and in support of the business "as an expression and example of the family's values and a primary means of achieving the family's aspirations related to its values" (Aronoff 2004, 57).

According to Jaffe and Lane (2004, 82) families of substantial wealth have to be active stewards and responsible owners of their assets not leaving their operations to chance nor completely delegating them to advisers. It appears that it is to this end that Jacob is trying to act. Future considerations of a family office are also a challenge. Jacob, however, appears to be very future oriented in his thinking, he has his sights set on how to take the family office on to the next generation, however challenging that might be. This can be interpreted as being reflective of his wished-for-identity as a part of his entrepreneurial identification; his goal is to create transgenerational wealth.

> *"We have a very small staff, and our customer's different, our customer's ourselves or our family members and eventually it's gonna be family members who are less involved, when we get this next generation….you know...I doubt that all nine of those kids are gonna be involved, so the question is how do you find the…and which ones are and which ones aren't and how do you make sure that it's fair for everybody?"*

On a more personal level, Jacob's account is a survival success story in a way. Not in the sense of having had to struggle financially or business wise but as an individual in a family business trying to find his own path from under the generational shadow, to strengthen his identity, to be distinctively himself while remaining a family member. His account of his personal and entrepreneurial history is also an account of conflict in family business in which everybody has a vested interest but most family members have little interest otherwise to run it professionally. Jacob admires and respects his father but the relationship has been complex, the father has led the businesses in a patriarchal manner. His relationship with his sisters has been somewhat complicated as well; the sisters have not been very active in the family office matters and have seemed indifferent to Jacob's efforts to take care of the family wealth. Kaye and Hamilton (2004. 157) say that "when only one or a few family members pay attention to business or wealth matters, their siblings and cousins often forfeit any means of reviewing them and setting their compensation". Hubler (2009, 256) points out that the family relations are often at risk in families of wealth because financial differences can erode those relationships. In Jacob's case it is not the financial differences but the lack of interest on his sisters' part that has frustrated Jacob. His sisters appear to have trusted his abilities and desire to always do what is best for the family without really paying attention or taking responsibility themselves. Jacob's job is more difficult in some ways than his dad's has been because he and his siblings have not had role models for collective ownership under their dad's patriarchal operations (Kaye & Hamilton 2004, 156). Jacob has wanted his sisters to participate because otherwise, he feels, they cannot understand what is going on.

It sounds like Jacob's dad has been so headstrong and insistent on doing things his way that he has put the parent-child relationship at risk at times over the years. According to Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 322) there is evidence suggesting that there are entrepreneurs who risk personal and family relationships. However, the family dynamics are such that father and son sit in the same office still and despite him recounting a story of a difficult relationship, the respect that Jacob has for his dad is obvious. The way of doing things is different for different generations this being indicative also of generational differences in the entrepreneurial identification. Jacob feels that given his educational background in a business school his approach to business is through more formal and structured types of processes and procedures whereas his dad's approach to business has been more intuitive which Jacob has found somewhat frustrating over the years.

> *"He's very bright, and he's very disciplined about things and he has a certain way and I was a different generation and I approach things in a different way..."*

Jacob seems to have wanted acknowledgment for his work in the family office but not just for acknowledgment's sake; it is as if he has demanded respect based on merit. This is indicative of his ambitions as a business man; he wants to be rewarded for his effort if his effort is worth the reward. His attitude has not been without feeling despite his professional considerations and he is full of emotion and zeal during the interview as well. I interpret his account in a way that he would have liked to have seen some emotional reaction from his sisters as well in regards to his efforts to take care of the family legacy. Vago (2004, 74) in fact urges stakeholders to "connect not only through their thoughts and opinions, but their feelings, with each and every option they're considering for the future". The following quotation describes Jacob's positioning of himself in the family office in how he would like his siblings to see his position. It is as if he is looking for his family members to corroborate his position. It is also suggestive of the hybrid identity that is a part of his entrepreneurial identification.

> *"I wanna understand what is expected of me and I want somebody reviewing my performance and I wanna be paid accordingly and if we...and if I'm not happy with how I'm being paid I'll let you know and I'll let you know why and if we don't agree I'll have to go find another job or live with it. But I'm not in that position, I'm not in that job. Today as a director, other than my father I'm the only....I'm the most active of our board of directors and I am drawing a salary because while I have no official line, authority in the business, I'm still a part of the day-to-day decision making process and what we all agreed to was I froze my salary at where I was back when we hired the external CEO, which was not very much, and as a result it's not a full time job. I'm free to go work at my other business or make other investments as well so it's kind of amorphous; it's kind of a hybrid arrangement".*

In Jacob's opinion his siblings have rendered themselves as somewhat passive to the complicated issues that might have arisen with their dad and at the same time rendered Jacob with the role of protagonist to bring discussion about those issues. It appears that the sisters have withdrawn "their human capital from governance" (Kaye & Hamilton 2004, 157). He is very reflective of his own position and role; reflexiveness appears to be a skill that Jacob uses to negotiate the sometimes conflicting identities within the family office. His reflections appear to extend themselves on to how to transfer his own kind of entrepreneurial spirit into the rest of the board members as well so as not to let it get diluted or treated passively. Responsibility for the future of the family wealth colors Jacobs wished-for-identity clearly.

"What I'm really concerned about going forward is how do we engage board members and what's the incentive for somebody to want to not just sit on a board but to sit on that board and put real effort into it and real thought into their position....we're struggling now in some ways to try to find what that level, what the standards need to be and what the....and once that's determined then how do you entice somebody to subject themselves to that whey they can sit back and be passive? Well, in my opinion and it's my opinion we're not there yet...because there are a lot of folks who may feel they wanna be on the board but they don't really appreciate the responsibility and the role and the expectations and aren't prepared to rise to those levels of expectations so that's part of the struggle we're dealing with right now."

It seems that Jacob's entrepreneurial identity is seeking a formal outlet to control the potential frustrations and conflicts that might arise because in governing the family business operations both "the emotional bonds to ownership as well as financial performance" (Thomas 2002, 321) need to be taken into account equally.

They now have hired an external advisor with the help of whom rules of governance (see appendix 5 for the rules of governance) have been issued. These have allowed Jacob to formalize his good ownership-principles and to get better control of the various relationships in the family with an outlook into the future as well, as the next generation is about to enter the picture more formally. Governance structures nourish and foster the entrepreneurial spirit of family business members (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 8). It is as if this is forcing some commitment and responsibility to be shown by all and Jacob no longer stands alone but through the rules of governance he gets to have a more structured and more formalized way of operating the family office and guarding the family wealth. As Thomas (2002, 324) points out; "challenges to continued ownership should be anticipated in any family business and governance structures and practices should be in place to accommodate such challenges, thereby maximizing the possibility for family relationships to be maintained and the business to survive as a family business, whatever the outcome of the challenges". Although Jacob's family office is not what family businesses traditionally are, the same philosophy applies. They now have an external CEO who is in charge of the daily operations. Today Jacob's and his dad's relationship is good and they get along well.

Jacob is very proactive in his attitude toward business issues and problem solving. He is active in seeking external help and sees great value in it. The family office has also been in contact with an organization called the Family Office Exchange (http://www.foxexchange.com/public/fox/welcome/index.asp) which has helped them in the more formal issues of family offices. Jacob is very future-oriented in his thinking and very proactive also in his approach to transgenerational wealth creation. These actions and all the formal documents and meetings are indicative of Jacob's desire to be entrepreneurial in a very structured way; that is how his entrepreneurial identity is constructed. The governance documents are a structured way of committing the next generations' members into the formal aspects of caring for the family's wealth. In addition to that the family office has formed what they call 'a next generation group', in order to prepare them for the future.

"We got with them and they helped us with some of the details of hammering out our governance documents and we're still...we have a governance committee, we're reviewing some of our operating agreements, our decision making process, we have a board, we're continuing to review that 'cause the board right now is made up of all of us but it's more generations and now we're gonna have to begin to find out...how do you determine who's gonna be on the board going forward so we're proactively ...that's....I spend a lot of my time trying to think about those things and we spend a lot of time, have little committees, trying to make these decisions because now I have...my parents have nine grandchildren..."

As Jacob's frustration grew over the years he started to understand how significant a formal family council and regular meetings would be for the overall well-being of the different family members. This kind of formalized meeting meant getting the family members together to not only discuss financial formalities but to "have the kind of dialogue that allows for the emergence of moral infrastructure and ethical norms" (Hubler 2009, 256). These types of meetings alleviate potential conflicts as well because "face-to-face communication is effective in defusing tension among family members" (Ibrahim et al. 2001, 256).

"I had been pushing since the early 90's to begin to have family board meetings, I said we're all investors in this, we should have meetings periodically, we need to bring a facilitator in to try to help us develop some governance, we need to figure out how we are going to treat each other going forward...everybody has different expectations about what the business is about and how it's gonna work and more importantly how decisions are going to be made and who's making the decisions and who and how we're gonna each work together going forward."

Jacob's value system seems very important to him, as a matter of fact so important that he has written it up in a mission statement (below). It states Jacob's "superordinate goals" (Hubler 2009, 256) both in his personal and professional life. The statement reflects Jacob's ethnicity and religion as well as his ideas about responsibility and the balance between business, family, and himself. Jacob's social identity is strongly presented in the mission statement which verbalizes his belief in interactions and relationships between people being at the core of quality of life. The core values of honesty, integrity, selflessness, and justice are voiced; they are "even more important to a family business than to a nonfamily business because the two realms (business and family) can have so many conflicting interests" (Koiranen 2002, 178). Jacob's mission statement is also suggestive of him having brought the family realm into the equation in a professional way, translating the personal values into guidelines of owning and managing businesses.

"Try to be for others as much as you are for yourself. And try to be something, do something in your life, that's bigger than you are, if you can. You know, to be involved with something that's bigger than you. Be responsible."

All in all the mission statement is reflective of Jacob's belief in individuals taking proactive responsibility for themselves and a certain kind of awareness. It is suggestive of his wished-for-identity since he calls these thoughts his aspirations which means that this is not necessarily who he is but who he would like to be. All of these thoughts have come out of his meetings in the forum of his peers which seems to have been very important in offering a place for Jacob to get outsiders' insight on business and life issues. While his peers are outsiders in the sense that they have nothing to do with his family or business, they are people who have been in the same situations and share similar life experiences and have gone through the same life stages.

JACOB'S MISSION STATEMENT (emphases in the original)

"The mission for my life is largely summed up in three questions once posed by Moses Maimonides in the 12th century which intertwine to create their own answer.

If I am not for myself, who will be?

My actions and decisions reflect my belief that I alone am **responsible** for my feelings and my behavior. I live my life in a manner that helps me to feel a sense of **accomplishment**, **pride** and **inner peace**. My day-to-day actions and decisions are based upon a **system of values** which guide me along the path of **righteousness** toward a **mature understanding** of the world around me. My complete **faith** in God's creation and the miracle of life **leads** me to maintain **perspective** and **balance**. Perspective in terms of my own **importance** in the universe and Balance, in terms of **business, family** and **self**.

If I am for myself alone, what am I?

I believe that the path to **fulfillment** and true **riches** is found through **interactions** and **relationships** with other people. My behavior allows me to **share** my feelings and accomplishments both with those whom I **love** and with **others**. My day-to-day **thoughts** and **dealings** with others are guided by values of **honesty, integrity, selflessness** and **justice**. It is my sincere yearning to **understand** and **respect** the needs, situation, and perspective of others and, through this understanding, to **help** them along their path to success.

If not now, when?

I **lead** my life in a manner that maximizes my **spiritual, intellectual, financial, physical** and **emotional well-being**. I take **positive, pro-active** and **appropriately timed actions,** balancing the areas of **family, business, service** to others, and self. These things I do **freely** and with the **confidence** necessary to exhibit **love, compassion** and **empathy** for my fellow man."

The regret that Jacob has reflecting back on his past has to do with his own family and time spent away from family. His spouse has had a very important role, obviously, in making sure the home front is cared for therefore making it possible for Jacob to concentrate on his business ventures. This regret of Jacob's can also be interpreted as his parental identity having taken an inferior role to his entrepreneurial identification before refocusing on his family again. An alternative interpretation could be that his wife's role as a spouse of an entrepreneur facilitating the prioritizing of his time for the benefit of his business operations is a crucial part of his entrepreneurial identification.

> *"I've got a wife and family and I love my family, and a part of the problem was I neglected my family early on more than I should have...I think life is about tradeoffs and balance and I got out of balance for a while...I think I would have regretted it had I not caught myself in time to fix a lot of it, I missed my older kids growing up, their youth, their younger days...I had to kind of overbalance the other way for a while, and I think I did and we have a very good relationship...I've got good kids, I'm very lucky...my wife's a great mother because if it had been me...I mean if...if she had been more like me they'd all be juvenile delinquents by now for sure, I'm telling you, because I was inattentive, she's the one that went on the board of their school and she's the one that was involved in their sports and she's the one that took an interest in their friends and tried to guide them and steer them, I was the guy that came home at night after they finished having dinner and were getting into bed and I'd say good night."*

Reflecting on issues pertinent to his life is a natural part of Jacob's life and identity. It is almost as if he is conducting identity work continuously through reflection. His entrepreneurial identity yearns for structured and formalized ways of doing things; he is interested in formal rules for governance and family council meetings. His entrepreneurial identification is salient and permeates his overall identity. Unlike many others he does not view his entrepreneurial qualities through any specific field but then again, his field is money. He has been proactive in trying to find solutions to his own frustrations; he has done that through much reflection, demanding respect based on merit, seeking peer support, external support, drawing good governance rules, thinking up a mission statement reflecting his ethnic background and hiring consulting help to be the trust catalyst (Kaye & Hamilton 2004, 156). Jacob's father's generational shadow still defines a part of his overall identity and his entrepreneurial identity as well. A large part of his life as an entrepreneur and constructing his own identity has been finding his own path and being distinctively himself.

6.10 Randy and Brandon Ewing of Ewing Timber

Randy Ewing is a 65-year-old college-educated past president and owner of Ewing Timber. Unfortunately the timing of my visit to Louisiana coincided with Randy's out of state trip so due to these scheduling difficulties I was unable to conduct a face-to-face interview with him. He did graciously agree to be interviewed by email, though (see appendix three for interview by email). Randy has ventured into state politics and has run for governor; he is no longer officially involved in Ewing Timber but is constantly in contact about the goings-on of the company with his son Brandon and is a considerable support system to his son. They also have numerous other business ventures going on together.

This is how Randy explains the history of his family's business. He does it by giving a personal history of his dad, himself and his son. These individual personal histories carry the story of the family firm in them. This parallel history of the family and the business is unique to this form of enterprising and is also indicative of individual and organizational identities in family businesses being intertwined:

L.C. Ewing

Ewing Timber, Inc. was begun in the early 1950's by my father the late L. C. (Lew) Ewing. He was reared on a small farm in Jackson Parish, Louisiana. His father worked for a large timber company part-time. After leaving home, Lew found himself in the middle of depression with no means of making a living. He got a job on the student farm and a second at the cafeteria at Louisiana State University. While working, he went to school and got a degree. From LSU, he went into the Civilian Conservation Corp, a program begun by the federal government to give people a job during the depression. It was during this time that he met and later married his life-long partner, Louise. From the CC Corp, Lew volunteered and entered the Army Air Corp.

After the end of World War II, Lew, Louise and I moved back to Jackson Parish where he began working for a timber company marking timber by day and driving a gasoline delivery truck by night and building a small house in the meantime.

The developing economy in the area was built around the timber industry, and Lew got a contract with one of the area paper mills and began delivering pulpwood by railroad car. Ever the aggressive businessman, he continued to develop more orders for pulpwood and grew the business to one of the largest pulpwood suppliers in the South. In doing so, he developed many management agreements with landowners and contracts with paper mills.

Randy Lew Ewing

In the middle 60's, I joined the business and, not long after, the rigor of the business wore on my father and he retired, although he stayed active in managing his personal property and business. At the time of his retirement, most of the work in producing pulpwood involved manual labor and low man-hour production. I did not think we could continue operating as we were and launched into an aggressive change to mechanization and expanded our saw log operations to accommodate the growing demand for lumber and plywood. We also intensified our timber management component of the business. Later on, we expanded our business by developing a wood chipping operation that added a substantial volume of tonnage to the business. During this 25 year period, we expanded our markets and became a major supplier of raw material to nearly every saw mill, paper mill and other wood using facilities in the area.

While I have involved myself in other areas of business, such as banking, farming, and real estate, the timber business has been the main stay in my life.

In mid-1990, Brandon Ewing joined the business and brought to it new energy, computer expertise, and good business savvy along with just plain good common sense and judgment. Since 2002, he has run the business and maintained its strengths in a very challenging time. As companies have merged or sold to other companies, often not to traditional timber companies, the challenge to maintain markets and meet competition has intensified. Yet, through 2008, Brandon has run the business effectively and profitably, and better than either I or his grandfather did.

However, he now faces the greatest challenge ever faced by our business as the recession is hitting hard at the timber industry and traditional markets are taking steps that are self-serving and offer no stability or assurance to suppliers such as Ewing Timber."

Brandon is a 40-year old college educated father of two, owner, and operator of Ewing Timber. Although Ewing Timber is what Brandon seems to define himself through business wise he does say that the timber business is just a small section of what he and his father do, they have several other business operations, for example land holdings that they manage. Ewing Timber was founded by Brandon's grandfather as was seen in the company history related by Randy. According to Brandon, he represents the fourth generation in this industry; his great-grandfather was in this business already albeit not in this company. This in fact is indicative of how often in family businesses it is not only the entrepreneurial spirit or ownership that is inherited but the interest in the specific industry that the family operates in.

Brandon has a business degree that he could have gone into other things with as well but after having started his master's studies he got tired of studying. After having contemplated his options it started to feel that coming back to the family business would be the best thing for him because he was interested in it and seems to have felt connected to it strongly. He had always worked there during his summer vacations and obviously had been socialized into family business entrepreneurship in his growing up years and keeps seeing the company as an extension of the family in that he sees it very much as a family organization: *"I can't say that I knew that I was going to come back into this business, it wasn't until I was in graduate school, burned out of school and thought what can I do. And at that point I said, alright, I'm going to go back in, it's what I wanted to do, it's...my dad was getting out of it into politics at that time and also he had one of the owners retiring so I came in, bought out that owner and came back into the business, I've always been attached to the business, but never knew that hey, I'm going to go and do that for the rest of my life but I knew everybody here, just 'cause it is a small family organization....every summer I worked here, whether I was in the woods, working in this office or something."*

At the moment Brandon is the sole owner of Ewing Timber but he has several other business ventures going on with his father. Randy is also involved in this company in an unofficial role as offering his advice and support to

Brandon continuously. Brandon sees the concept of family business through the idea of *'connectedness'* by which the meaning of family for the business is emphasized. In the best case scenario all the members of the family stay connected and truly want what is best for the company, regardless of how ownership is divided. He communicates constantly with his dad and rarely makes big decisions without dad's input and his sister still wants to know how the business is doing although she has no share in it; Brandon feels all this goes back to the old nuclear family when they all lived together and had each other's best interest in mind. This seems to be suggestive of some kind of a collective legacy without any formal ownership ties, which further is indicative of the collective memory of the family that has been and will continue to be. Brandon sees that the small size and committed attitude often shared by family businesses creates a tremendous competitive advantage to those businesses.

6.10.1 Randy's account

Randy perceives himself to be independent, competitive, driven and willing to take risks and these are the attributes that make him entrepreneurial. His family background (see the historical account by Randy in the introductory section) has had a great deal of influence on the development of his entrepreneurial identity. Another strong identification in his overall identity is that of being a parent and a spouse which has driven his entrepreneurial identification. This is also reflected in how he views conflict. The only way in which Randy has seen his family and business in conflict with one another is through the running of the business having taken time away from his family, reflecting the paradox between the parental and entrepreneurial identities of family business entrepreneurs.

> *"I have found my business endeavors the best way to provide for my family."*

Randy reflects on the different issues that may have an influence on the family business operations in the following;

> *"Obviously business downturns, changes in the management and ownership in large companies and resulting changes in philosophy call for adjustment and renewed efforts on the part of our business. If you are not successful in maintaining your positions in the market, your livelihood and that of your family and all who depend on you is at risk. Death of/or loss of key business associates also has an impact."*

In comparing himself to his dad and his son, he considers them better businessmen than himself but complementary to him and this combination seems to have collectively served the best interest of the business and through that the family. The family's core values that have been passed down the generations are hard work, vision, honesty, fairness, and compassion. Zellweger and Astrachan (2008, 351) say that "owners derive value from passing on the legacy of the enterprising family tradition, emotional bonds between family members, and nostalgia".

Randy has a lot of respect for his son Brandon and Brandon's skills and sounds very proud of him. He simply thinks Brandon is the best. Randy sees himself a risk taker, more so than his son, but this seems to have been so in response to circumstances which have required more risks to be taken. Prior research indicates that the succeeding generations are often less willing to take risks than their parents (Molly, Laveren & Deloof 2010, 133). Successful entrepreneurs often have the ability to not only respond to "situational cues of opportunities" (Shane & Venkataraman 2000, 219) but also respond to situational cues requiring increased risk taking.

> *"Both my father and son are better businessmen, but we have made a good combination. They are more detail oriented and cautious. Lew Ewing, my father, demonstrated a strong work ethic and desire to succeed and built a strong base known for hard work, honesty and fair dealing. Even though markets, labor, and machines have changed over the years, those basic characteristics have served all three generations. I was more of a risk taker (out of necessity), as the harvesting techniques demands changed but along with a great staff did position us to grow with the changing times from the early 1960 through the end of the century. Brandon, in addition to his own skills, did inherit some of the best characteristics of both his grandfather and me. Both his grandfather and I find pride in knowing he is the best."*

It appears that for Randy entrepreneurship is also something that due to being a challenge makes it appealing. The feeling of independence that is an important entrepreneurial feature for Randy can be seen in the following quote in which he derives strength and vigor from being the one as the entrepreneur and business owner that everything is depended upon.

> *"When you own and are responsible for your own business, when everything depends on you, it is a challenging and invigorating thing."*

Randy sees great value in the family business institution as being a strong economic factor for the national economy. However he also recognizes that successions and transgenerational business operations are not without problems. As the business is transferred on further down the generations, problems start in Randy's opinion after the third generation. The potential for conflicts become greater and Randy's thoughts also reflect the entrepreneurial spirit becoming diluted as the business matures over the generations. However, he clearly sees the family's enterprise as a legacy to be perpetuated thus being more than just a business. Elements of good ownership and being a steward of the family's wealth seem to form the backbone of his owner's identity.

> *"Family businesses are one of the strongest components in our country – I hate to see it wane. …It is difficult after the 3rd generation – conflicts of interests between owner/management and other owners…In a family business, you develop an attitude that you owe it to the previous generation to not let them down or disappoint them and on the other hand to not fail in passing the torch in good stead. It is one of the best lessons in stewardship"*

Randy's thoughts on cultural issues reflect the nature of the business in his industry in his local business environment. They also reflect the difference of the temporal orientation in organizational identities in family businesses versus non-family businesses; the previous' typically being long term oriented.

"The local culture is very competitive and demands an aggressive attitude on the part of our company. As far as regional and national, most of the management divisions and policies are centralized at national corporate headquarters. Focus of the management is on quarterly results and seldom is long range in nature. When we began our business, many of the companies we supplied were family owned and operated. Through the years, mergers and buy outs have concentrated ownership in large companies run by hired hands focused on their climb up the corporate ladder and the personal financial gains that accompany."

Randy's entrepreneurial identity is constructed very much through his own industry. He is no longer the owner of the core business of the family but is still involved in other ventures with his son. Therefore Randy is a portfolio entrepreneur but this appears not to be the most salient part of his entrepreneurial identification. His parental and familial identifications seem to take equal prominence with his entrepreneurial identity as building blocks of his overall identity structure. His identity reflects a strong social identification as being active as well.

6.10.2 Brandon's account

To Brandon one of the most rewarding things about being a third generation family business owner is the way in which the local community relates to his family. The people know and remember his grandfather and father and tell stories about them often comparing them to Brandon in a positive way. This has obviously influenced the development of Brandon's entrepreneurial identity in a beneficial way. It also seems to have influenced him in a way where he wants to behave in a similar manner fulfilling these same kind of expectations he feels his position as a third generation member of the business places on him. However, he needs to accomplish this in his own way without compromising his own personality but rather seeing that as complementary to his dad's.

"Working with dad has helped me realize that you can kind of let go and take your foot off the base and stretch out and do that, I mean it's got to be calculated but I think it's ....I think a lot of it goes back to kind of personalities...I mean he raised me and we are extremely close, we do a lot together but our personalities are different, he's a lot more outgoing than I am and a lot more of 'hey, let's just go figure out how to do it' whereas I want to figure out how to do it before I say that's where we're going and it has really helped working with him and realizing that there is a tremendous amount of give and take. There are times to be structured and cautious, there's a lot of times you just kind of roll with the flow and a lot of give and take and I learned that from him and I learned that a lot of people kind of reinforce him, kind of his position saying...you know, he....people tell me that your dad knows how to work things out, I'm thinking alright, that's a key to success, I gotta figure out how to just work it out. Even though it's not the way I want it, it gets us to the same, it gets us where we gotta get."

Brandon reflects on the generational differences between him and his dad in much the same way as his dad does; he sees his dad as more aggressive and more of a risk taker than himself while seeing himself as somebody that takes good care of things as they are being more of a manager than an entrepreneur. His perception is based on seeing entrepreneurial action as fairly aggressive action in which something new is created as opposed to keeping things stable. He talks about his dad with great respect and sees himself as being more cautious than dad. In his opinion an entrepreneurial person is constantly seeking something new which is something desirable, especially given the economic situation at the time of the interview which was very strongly colored by the recession of that time. Brandon's attitude suggests of the kind of modesty that, seen through the cross-cultural lens, is reminiscent of the value given to modesty in the Finnish culture.

> *"I don't know that I'm so much as an entrepreneur as my dad…because my strength is to take care of what we got whereas my dad is very good at going out and getting something new, I have a hard time describing myself as an entrepreneur, I wish I was, my dad is…this is the conservative approach but it has worked and I need to be more entrepreneur and less of a manager, I think, in today's time"*

He thinks that in regards to entrepreneurial qualities he lacks *"the ability to go out and figure if something will or will not work and having the desire to find out if it will or will not work"* which is yet again suggestive of Brandon seeing entrepreneurial proactive action as essential for entrepreneurship.

Brandon's account is given through his own industry, which is indicative of him constructing his entrepreneurial identity mostly through his own core field of business although he has many other business ventures in which he is involved. To him the portfolio of business ventures appears to be the backbone of his entrepreneurial identity but the passion and energy regarding it seems to come from Ewing Timber, the family's core business operation. The nature of the industry also seems to influence his thoughts on the future of the business. He has two daughters and he is of the opinion that the industry is not the most suitable for women indicating a culture bound idea of gender based thinking of men's work and women's work so the thought process as to how to eventually solve the question of the future has started. One of his daughters seems very interested already in the goings on of the business so she might one day break the gender boundary and practice her own kind of entrepreneurship in the male dominated industry. The thought of continuance and the future appears to be a part of Brandon's entrepreneurial identity, reflecting the temporal character of identities, and not just because of his own family but because of the people that work for him as well. Responsible ownership constitutes a strong part of Brandon's identity and he frequently reflects on that during his account.

> *"It'll be a tough decision, I'm the first one that hasn't had a son since we started this business and so I don't know and I think about what do I do with this, do I hire somebody that would want to come in and buy it or do I wait and see if one of my daughters marries somebody that I would want to fool with it. I have a nephew that could run it if he wanted to, I mean…. his personality…he's 12, he's got the disposition and he's pretty laid back but…at this point I don't have to make decisions and I don't know what I'll do…trying to figure out how to keep it going… there are people that have worked with three generations of Ewings and there are people that I have worked with or we've worked with three generations of their family, so to speak, so it kind of…it goes both ways and we …that we are not a corporation, we are not going to have turnover that where we come in, clean house one day and start over with the same name, different people and so we…yeah, we gotta figure out how to continue to do that and being that I'm 40 I'll probably work another, hopefully work another 20 years and by then have a direction, I mean I'll probably have direction in ten years, that's what we'll do but there's no pressure to have a direction right now."*

Brandon, despite of seeing his own industry as men's industry, has brought his daughters up in much the same way as he has been brought up; that is to say into wealth management and ownership. He has given his kids ownership in many of the things he owns thus creating commitment and responsible attitude on the girls' part for the family wealth. This can also be seen as creation and transmittance of entrepreneurial spirit with a very future oriented, long term view, typical to family business entrepreneurs. This also suggests of socializing the children into the portfolio of ventures-type of thinking through having them be involved in various different things through ownership from early on.

> *"The kids have ownership in a lot of what I own now, land that I own, farm land and things like that so they will, whether they want to or not, they'll have to figure out what to do with it....everything that we're into they will be into also and...whether they want to manage it or hire somebody to manage it...but they will be into kind of natural gas, owning land, and figure out what to do with it. It might not be selling it to a paper mill but they'll have to figure out what to do with it...figure out if they want to keep owning it and things such as that so they'll almost be forced into it and figure out how to work with it so I hope they want it so maybe I' forcing the entrepreneurial....put them into a position where they don't have an option so that's how I'm going to do it."*

While Brandon is passionate about his business, feels tremendous amount of respect for the accomplishments of his grandfather and father and definitely feels very responsible for the ownership of his family's business, the thing that most seems to define his identity is that of the parental identification. To him the defining moments in his life have been the births of his children and they take precedence in his accounts of the events of his life, much more so than his entrepreneurial endeavors or making more money. He uses the privilege of being the owner manager of his business to take the time to go to different events where his kids need him; he appears to be extremely devoted to his family. He seems to have been able to create a balance between his family and work in a way that allows him to fulfill his parental role to the satisfaction of his overall identity needs. This can be interpreted to mean that to Brandon the most salient part of his identity is that of the parental identity. His father's attitude, albeit more aggressive in its entrepreneurial aspects, is very similar to the importance of family. The family as a value is shared by father and son.

> *"Having the kids was a major turning point in my life; it made me realize what was important and what wasn't important. I mean I was...before kids money was a lot more important to me than it is now. People's feelings were a lot less important to me, that's one thing I recognize...and it has taught me about the importance of feelings because you don't realize how hard it is until somebody hurts your kids' feelings."*

Another issue in Brandon's life that has greatly influenced him is the experience of his father running for governor. Randy did not get elected and as much as Brandon admirers his dad and supported him in the election, he now views the experience in hindsight as having been a very valuable lesson for him reflecting the importance of family and his social environment. He knows that had Randy been elected, this would have meant that his responsibilities as governor would have kept him away from his children and grandchildren but Brandon feels grateful now to have him present.

> *"But that was a learning experience working with people, seeing the need of the state, I think that kind of has changed my perspective of hey, life is bigger than your little world of getting up, going to school, going to work and just the little circle, I mean most people ride in a circle between their work or school and their church. And there is nothing wrong with that but I do think that this campaign allowed me to see a lot more and get out of that circle and make friends all over the state. Those are I guess my life changing things, having kids and learning a lot through dad's politics, so to speak."*

The importance of family is evident also in Brandon's value system. He regards both himself and his father as family men and this is a value both the Ewing men have carried over to their business operations and organizational identity. Brandon gives his workers the same kind of chance to follow their kids' activities when needed as he himself takes. He feels that goodness in general is contagious, reflecting a Christian ethic in treating others as one wants himself to be treated. He sees business value in this attitude as well in thinking that people get to see how he treats his workers and this reflects well on the organizational image and business. This is suggestive of family and business values of not being incompatible but complimentary in wealth creation. As Hoy and Sharma (2010, 237) contend; "by watching family members in business, lessons about how core values of integrity, consciousness, openness to new ideas, sharing and receiving, and fairness toward employees and other key shareholders are implemented in the context of entrepreneurial firm are learned".

> *"I do think a lot of those values do carry over, I mean everybody here is kind of involved in their family…so I do think we kind of…I don't know if the word is instill or allow, everybody is involved in family, I think that's a good thing so we…a lot of the values that we have, have passed on to this business and maybe it is 'cause we hire people that have those values."*

Brandon's value system is deeply embedded in the Southern culture that he benevolently refers to as the 'redneck' culture. To him it appears to signify responsible ownership and accountability to a large extent and he also appears to equate family businesses with small businesses. This also reflects the difference between the concepts of an entrepreneur and a small business owner in the American culture that Hytti (2003, 91) points out and that I commented on earlier. This type of thinking can be seen in Brandon's reluctance on calling himself an entrepreneur and seeing himself more as a small business owner.

This kind of responsible and accountable ownership is seen as being typical to family businesses in particular along with a long-term-oriented thinking. The rural or small town culture is reflected upon through his industry as well, in which he as an entrepreneur distinguishes himself and his social environment as being independent of the government and also as not being in the same position as some other businesses in different fields of business. However, the local social networks are important. The recession at the time of the interview is also present constantly in Brandon's accounts reflecting the temporal essence of identities; to the entrepreneurial identification the economic situation in the present tense is crucial. His survival technique in that situation is to operate on a day-to-day basis at this time. His wished-for-identity is more dormant at the time in preparation for the future, he knows he has to steer the business over the recessionary times now.

> *"Have you heard the term 'redneck' yet? We're all rednecks, some of us just went to school longer than others, and that's the bottom line…I guess everybody either kind of grew up here or came back to how they grew up in a different location so it's rural but….we learn not to count on the government to survive…a lot of it is maybe I don't know any different, I mean I don't know what it would be like to be a business owner in a progressive state and so I just know to work with what we got to work with, we don't get a whole lot of support, we don't get the support that the oil and gas industry get from the state or even the sugar cane industry, even though our crop produces more revenue for the state than everything else combined, I think….I think even in our business and the other things I'm involved in; a bank, a school and things like that, we're held accountable, probably by ourselves more than bigger businesses…I think in my business I'm thinking long term, it's not …I say that and I'm operating day to day right now because of the economy that we're in...but it is…knowing that we're going to be held accountable for that five or ten years, I don't know if big businesses see that, I think private, family owned business does see that and we try to…we're not as risky or calculated on our risk and realize that we're closer to the people that it affects if it doesn't work."*

In a way the family business ideal is congruent with Brandon's world view and overall identity; the strong family values are reflected in his business operations the main purpose of which is to provide for his family. He sees the two entities through 'connectedness', one serving the other and vice versa, with the main goal being the well-being of his family. His account is indicative of a degree of modesty and humbleness in his approach to business and life in general which resonates a lot with the values ranked high in the Finnish cultural realm prompting me to see him as a 'boundary-crossing' family business entrepreneur by which I mean that while he is not completely unlike the other Louisianan respondents, he does seem similar to the Finns in his attitude toward modesty as an approach as well as money and time in that in his identity structure time spent with family takes precedence over time spent in entrepreneurial ventures to make more money. 'Boundary-crossing' therefore refers to the cultural thematic present in these interpretations, nothing more. Brandon has the portfolio entrepreneur quality in his entrepreneurial identification even though being interpreted as a culture boundary crossing entrepreneur, which is to emphasize that this feature is typical to other Louisianan entrepreneurs in this study so in this respect he seems to fit in the American cultural realm but has some features in his entrepreneurial identity that could fit the Finnish cultural realm.

Responsible and good ownership is a very strong part of Brandon's entrepreneurial identity and he appears to be driven more by family related issues than money. A lot of his entrepreneurial identification is defined through his core business and industry. Brandon's parental identity is possibly more salient in the hybrid identity of a family business owner because in his approach to transgenerational wealth creation his priority is in making sure his kids are taken care of rather than growing the business. He also appears to have a very strong social identification in that his workers and his social environment seem important to him. During the interview Brandon demonstrated great skills of self-reflection typical to successful entrepreneurs, despite of his modest attitude, and he seemed to welcome the opportunity to reflect on his life and business; the past, present and future of it.

6.11 R.D., Joe and Peyton Farr of the Thomas & Farr Agency

After my initial contact via email with Joe Farr regarding my request to get to interview him and his son for my study, Joe immediately agreed and in the same instance let me know that I would also get to interview his dad. This of course offered a very interesting view into three different generations of entrepreneurial action within the same family. Joe's attitude toward bringing his dad into the study as well reflected deep pride felt toward the older Mr. Farr and his accomplishments but it also indicated a definite marker of transgenerational wealth creation as a goal for family enterprising. The Farr family business ventures differ from my original definition of what I think a family business is in that the insurance company that they run is indeed a partnership whereas the definition that I otherwise use states that the business should be controlled by one family but as I learned more about the Farrs, their accounts and insights seemed too appealing and valuable to pass so I made a decision to contact them anyway. The empirical materials yielded from those interviews are very beneficial to the research problem indeed.

The Farrs' business is insurance and Joe Farr is in partnership with Jerry Thomas as owners of their insurance agency. R.D. Farr describes the challenges of this particular industry as follows: *"Insurance is an abstract thing, not like buying a car where you can look and see what you're buying…or a house…and you have to inspire people to have confidence in you… and honesty and integrity and knowing what you're doing…and real professional…and that's what we've always tried to do and I guess it's worked for us"*. This is the company introduction on their website: "Large Enough to Handle Your Insurance Needs, Small Enough to Care. The Thomas & Farr Agency is the largest independent insurance agency in Northeast Louisiana. We represent customers, companies and brokers through the United States and are capable of handling all of your insurance needs. Our agency continues to develop target markets and specialized products for existing and prospective clients. We believe target marketing and specific industry specialization will allow us to continue to meet, and exceed, your expectations in this ever evolving insurance marketplace. The principals of Thomas & Farr Agency are Jerry W. Thomas and Joseph P. Farr. Thomas & Farr Agency is the result of the merger of the Thomas Insurance Agency of Monroe, Inc. and the Rodriquez-Farr Agency, Inc. in 1983. The Thomas Agency dated back to the 1940's while the Rodriquez-Farr Agency originated in 1923." (http://www.tfins.com/index.php)

R.D. Farr, Joe's father and Peyton's grandfather, is a 92-year-old college-educated former Navy pilot, who still comes to work every day. After he got out of the Navy he got married and then got into the insurance business through a friend of his who *"had enough knowledge but I didn't have any money but I loaned some money so I could open my own agency"*. Eventually his son Joe came in to work with him and finally R.D. sold the agency to his son; *"I sold him the business and by that time we were a pretty sizeable agency and got out of the small agency category and then further down the line he merged his agency with Jerry Thomas....Thomas & Farr...and I stayed on"*. So after the sale of the company R.D. worked for his son and later his wife also worked in the company for 15 years, until the age of 76. Obviously officially he has reached his retirement age a long time ago but he still has his own office in the building that he comes to every day and is there to offer his insights and experience for the service of the company. This is invaluable for his son and grandson not only information and advice wise but also as a very strong intergenerational bond that enforces both the familial as well as transgenerational entrepreneurship ties. R.D. says that: *"they call me a consultant now"*. This presence of different generation family members in the business creates "a recurring opportunity for both interdependence and interaction" (Pearson et al. 2008, 962).

Joe, R.D.'s son, is 55 years old and college educated. He has two sisters who have not been involved in the family's business ventures at all. Joe started working for his dad in order to make some money during his college years. After college he went to work for dad full time for a couple of years, then quit because he didn't really know what he wanted to do but this only lasted for a couple of weeks and since there was no money coming in from anywhere he started feeling that maybe this was the right industry for him after all so he went back to dad. Dad must have been pretty sure that his son would return because the company car keys were still in the same place where Joe left them on his way out. Some time later Joe bought the company from his dad.

Joe financed the purchase of the company with a loan from dad. Joe feels strongly that his father was wise and smart, both as a parent and a business man, going about the sale of the company like this: *"I bought the company, he financed it which was about the only way I could have done it. And I have two sisters and my dad was wise enough to tell me that if I was interested in the business that I needed to buy it from him because if I didn't and something happened to him I would be in business with my sisters who knew nothing about insurance...so...but he was also a good enough father that if he died I would owe them part of the money that he financed because they would have inherited it so it was fair all the way along but he was wise enough to see down the road"*. This incident reflects the respect that Joe obviously has for his dad but in addition to that it is indicative of the family businesses as unique entities where the sale of a business, financing, and other business decisions can be made on familial grounds outside of the realm of the external business reality.

Joe feels that in order for one to get to know one's industry and how to do business, one has to do everything in the beginning. Carr and Sequira (2007, 1092) point out how research shows that not only do many entrepreneurs have a parent that was self-employed but that they used their family's business to teach them the required skills, values and confidence to become entrepreneurs themselves. So Joe was cleaning the office that he also owned, he was doing the books and eventually he started to understand how the business worked and how he would be able to grow it.

In the course of time Joe merged his office with Jerry Thomas who was also looking for growth so the merger created better opportunities for that for the both of them. Joe sees their individual attributes as complementary and combining those as an opportunity which then serves them well in wealth creation: *"Everybody's friends so as I got into the agency business and started talking to Jerry about insurance, I told him I thought we could do better together because the things that he liked to do I didn't really like to do that much and the things I liked to do he didn't really like so we really kind of complemented each other and so twenty-five and a half years later here we are and so when we started we had nine people when we merged our two agencies, since then we've probably gotten about seven or eight other agencies over those twenty five years and we grew total sales…back then it was about 3,5 million and now it's a little over 60 million and so we have three offices and almost 50 people"*.

Peyton, Joe's son, is 24-year-old, college educated and married, he has no kids yet. His position in the company is that of a producer, as he puts it; *"I just produce and solicit new business"*. Peyton has no ownership of the business yet but that is his definite goal one day. He feels that because his dad and granddad were in this industry, he always had a thought in the back of his mind to continue in their footsteps. He feels his personality is suitable for it too, he feels he is *"real sales-oriented person and real outgoing and likes to talk to people"*. A big affirmation to his earlier reflections came in the form of college education. He went to college on a baseball scholarship and that college just happened to have a very good insurance program so that was a natural subject for him to major in.

By the time college was over he was engaged to be married and despite of the fact that he had other opportunities offered to him, he felt that his upcoming marriage brought a certain responsibility with it and coming home and into the family business was the smart and responsible thing to do, on the one hand. On the other, Peyton saw an opportunity in the form of the network of contacts and a good name with good reputation that he could use in order to seize those opportunities demonstrating a very strong entrepreneurial streak in him, that is very strong in his dad as well; *"I mean….it's a great program, it's like 99% job placement out of school, but I was engaged at the time and you know, they made an offer to come back here and I felt with me being from here, it may help me starting out knowing the people from here, to sell, you know, so I already had contacts here so that was a big thing about me coming back and then too maybe trying to keep the business in the family, at some point that played a huge part into it, too"*.

6.11.1 R.D.'s account

R.D. manifests himself as the quintessential American family business entrepreneur to me as a researcher observing him through the cultural lens. He comes to work every day at the age of 92, has his own office, and is greatly respected by his son and his grandson who still go to him for his insights and opinions. Even though he has sold his business a long time ago to his son and has formally been retired a long time, he obviously derives a great deal of energy and joy from coming to his office every day. To him the decades of work have not meant gaining free time away from work as a reward but rather work and entrepreneurial action in and of itself is the reward. This is suggestive of a very strong and salient entrepreneurial identification in his overall identity. It is also suggestive of a difference in the two cultures under study here in that more value is placed on free time in Finland, especially after a long and successful career in business; the success buys the free time.

R.D. seems to have a very structured approach to entrepreneurship and running a business. He also views business operations as having both a short term orientation and a long term orientation. The latter is something that is often a part of family business entrepreneurs' identity, combined with a desire to see the business continue across generations. The business transforms into a family business specifically as the entrepreneur has children.

> *"To run a business you have to have a plan for operation just like you build a house you gotta have plans and specifications. I had a short range plan that I wanted to accomplish and a long range plan. The long range plan was to continue …at that time I had two daughters and no son and long range plan was to have a boy if I could and have them in the business…family business. That was my theory of operation."*

Given R.D.'s respectable age, his thoughts clearly indicate not only generational differences in identity structures but differences reflecting historical aspects. In his time the natural expectation was to have men running businesses and not women. His value system reflects this gender bias as historically embedded. It can also be seen reaching into the future in that R.D. is very pleased to see his grandson Peyton continuing in dad's and granddad's footsteps and would like to have seen Joe's other son there, too, but does not have the same expectations for Joe's daughter. This is an indicator of identity as a temporal concept; historically, socially, and culturally embedded in time. R.D.'s account also reflects the wish-for-identity that he had constructed based on the idea of a transgenerational business but with the thought that this would have to be congruent with Joe's own wishes. A sense of autonomy is highly fostered in the American culture (Erikson 1980/1994, 76).

> *"We really wanted to have two children, a boy and a girl but the first two were girls so…I said ok, I said that better be a boy so I finally convinced her…a boy…had that been a girl, it would have been ruined…so the long range plan…birth…was to have him in the business sooner or later but I wasn't gonna insist on it, I wasn't gonna try to talk him into it because if he didn't like it, it would be my fault, it was gonna have to be his idea and his desire to come in."*

The insurance industry is what the main part of R.D.'s entrepreneurial identity is constructed through. It is important in this industry that people know who they are dealing with and have trust in the service provider. Therefore the Farrs have always tried to be active in civic affairs and as a result have accumulated wide networks of contacts. All the other components of R.D.'s entrepreneurial identity seem to be secondary to the industry itself. The industry is through which he sees his son as a business man as well, that is how strong the industry identification is. Hard work and business savvy are a part of his value system as reflected on his thoughts about his son, whom he has respect for. He also accounts for the organizational identity that his son Joe has rendered visible through an artifact symbolic of the entrepreneurial identification of the agency; a new office building. The building can also been seen representing the younger generation taking the business forward in their own way.

> *"He has done a lot really and Joe's a good business man and a good insurance man, he's a hard worker... I asked Joe, I said well, why do you think you got to have a two million dollar building and he says well, the agency is growing, thank goodness and we're having to hire more people and that's what I think we need and of course that's working, we're hiring people all the time and our business is really good."*

Transgenerational wealth creation has truly been a goal for R.D. and a definite part of his long range plan. He feels great joy and pride over having his grandson Peyton in the business as well.

> *"It worked out exactly like I planned it and like I wanted it."*

R.D. sees entrepreneurs as agents of change and this is especially so in his industry. The entrepreneur has to be always willing to keep up with changes in the environment and remain sensitive to those in order to solicit more business. Being proactive, willing to learn and inquisitive while working hard are prerequisites for success in the insurance industry in which the product is abstract rather than concrete. The value system of the family consisting of honesty and integrity has been carried over to the organization.

> *"Well, I think finding something that you think you like and then trying to make it as good and big as possible and working hard at it and...pick up ideas and...reading everything you can read....the business that you're in...our business is constantly changing, you can't just sit there and wait for the business to come in, it won't do it."*

R.D.'s entrepreneurial identification is very strong and it also contains a strong wish for transgenerational business operations. His identity manifests historical, temporal, cultural, and social embeddedness of the identity as a concept. He appears to view himself as an agent of change and is very future oriented even at his age.

6.11.2 Joe's account

Rapley (2001, 306) says that researchers should try and include some level of interactional detail regarding the conduction of the research interview in the research report. I think this attempt is especially relevant as far as Joe is concerned. It was during this interview that I had the hardest time to stick to my interview guide. Joe was extremely talkative and the kinds of pauses and silences that Finns use regularly were non-existent in this interview. He talked a lot on and off the themes in my interview guide. I interpreted this to be related to several issues. Firstly, he obviously has a great deal of respect and admiration for the Holyfields, who are the couple whose good name put me in contact with Joe. It was because of Linda Holyfield that I got to sit down with Joe, his dad, and his son and it was because of her, I'm sure, that Joe wanted to make as good a contribution to my research, as possible.

"It's not necessarily what you know, it's who you know but that's the whole world. That's how you got us."

Secondly, being social appears to be Joe's second nature. He is a natural talent at socializing with everybody and hence also at creating networks of contacts in every possible area of life. I also interpreted his way of talking to me as being representative of his entrepreneurial identification; Joe probably never ignores the slightest chance of becoming visible and marketing his business. Interestingly enough, his son Peyton told me that dad only says what he wants to say. I believe Joe is very skillful in bringing forth only what he wants to bring forth. It was through his account that I got a glimpse of the world of a very sincere, very entrepreneurial, and driven person. This interview also represented Joe's identity work in relation to transgenerational wealth creation and his wished-for-identity in regards to the future of his business and family.

"You gotta be a part of the community, you gotta be…you gotta have a good reputation, you gotta work hard you gotta be involved and have friends like Linda, you know, not only would she recommend us for something that she thought was worthwhile for you but she would recommend us for insurance because she has that kind of confidence and trust in us, not only because of our personal friendship but our business friendship and so that's what you gotta have and it all works easy but until you put all those things into place, success in the insurance business doesn't solve anything or come easy."

Joe was very active in also offering me the opportunity to interview not only his son but his father, which really was an opportunity that could not be turned down. He was clearly very proud of his father and his father's career in the insurance business and as a business owner. He also appeared to consider it self-evident that he would be presented in this report by his own name and his company name. I interpreted this to be yet another marker of his entrepreneurial identification which leaves no stone unturned or opportunity to gain visibility unused, as insignificant as it may be. He considers himself very entrepreneurial and in much the same way as his father; being an agent of change and a self-starter. He does think these are attributes that cannot be forced on anyone; nobody can be made a self-starter. Joe exudes self-efficacy, internal locus of control and optimism. He appears to have a very positive and proactive look on life in general. His entrepreneurial identity is enhanced (Ybema et al. 2009, 304) by the external signs of success, such as the new office building, that reflect the materiality of identity.

"You have to be entrepreneurial in this business….it's the survival of the fittest and you have to change and adapt…you always gotta be looking and you can't just do what the rest of these people do, you gotta be different and that's the reason people use us rather than someone else

down the street, but I think what really helps me is I'm a self-starter, I mean you don't have to tell me when to get up and when to go, I mean I'd do that anyway, I'm probably not the smartest guy out there but I'm always thinking about it and I'm looking for a way to make it work, not why it won't work and I think a lot of people have that problem because a lot of people are negative and they go, oh, today's terrible, did you see the news... I can do anything I wanna do as long as I get up early enough and focus and go do it. The only difference in doing it and not doing is doing it."

Most likely the greatest influence on Joe's entrepreneurial identity has come from his father, R.D.. Carr and Sequeira (2007, 1092) say that a positive attitude toward business ownership comes from the important people in our lives who evaluate business ownership positively. That same influence has extended itself across generations to Joe's son Peyton as well and through this a commitment to transgenerational learning (Moores 2009, 177) has been created. A large part of satisfactory feeling of ownership regarding Joe's identity seems to come from the successful and harmonious business relationship that he has with his business partner Jerry. The two seem to complement each other and balance each other out. It appears that Joe has been able to construct an optimal number of identities thus being able to respond and be validated by a variety of people and stakeholders (Pratt & Forman 2000, 22). He has a hybrid of successor identity, parental identity, professional identity, business partner identity, business network member identity, and a spouse's identity which create synergistic energy for his entrepreneurial actions.

Some kind of turning point in Joe's life was definitely him buying his dad's business because that did not only define him as an entrepreneur but also acted as a divisive event in his sibling relationships. Joe is very candid in recounting how his dad financed the purchase of the company by lending money to Joe but how his two sisters saw the purchase of the business as somehow partial on their father's part and it appears that from there on, Joe's relationships with his sisters have been colored with jealousy and resentment on the sisters' part. He seems to be at peace with the situation and this may have made him all the more determined to succeed in the business. Joe also reflects insightfully on the generational differences that exist behind his father's world views and choices made in regards to his sisters at the time of the sale of the company. His dad is a member of an older generation and a product of a culture that did not yet see women as quite equal with men. His dad's thoughts have obviously influenced the lives of Joe and his siblings in most likely instilling the entrepreneurial spirit in the younger generation in a gender biased way rather than on an equality principle. On the other hand Joe's dad must have tried to find balance with loyalty to all members of his family and being fair with an outlook into the future. All this is bound to have influenced Joe's entrepreneurial identity as well, specifically in the family business context.

"...like my dad and them's generation....yeah, the girls did the girl stuff and guys did the work and took care of the family and all that kind of stuff so that's the way my dad's always treated me which in a girl's eyes looked life preference, you know, and then too with the business and all...that I was gonna get the business, well, I bought the business because I don't even wanna get something I don't deserve but my sisters don't look at it that way, they

> *look at my dad set it up to give me the business and then we did this, and maybe they could've done that so there's always been jealousy."*

The advice from his dad and having seen his dad in action have stayed with Joe and formulated his entrepreneurial identity. R.D.'s influence seems to have made Joe's attitude very customer-oriented which in turn has become an organizational value benefiting the business. On the other hand he is strongly seeking making his own mark and being distinctive, both in his industry as well as a member of his business network and member of his community locally. His identity appears to seek visibility in every possible way and this visibility is symbolized by the new office building and is also a symbol of the organizational identity that Joe wants to project.

> *"We built our building a little over a year ago and it's amazing how and I tried...I said our image, our people, our customers need something new, visible, different and so his [partner Jerry's] first question, how much money and I said, it's going to be a lot but once we got this building built and he got over that money issue, this location has helped us grow our business, maintain our business, it's made our employees come up a level from productivity, they dress better...but it's just helped the whole image of the company and so our revenues are up because of it and now people see it, they're curious about what we do, we have been stopped and asked, what do you all do, we sell insurance, and they say well, I'm gonna get my policies and let you all quote just coming by the door and everybody talks about it because it's unique."*

Joe has a large network of contacts expanding all areas of society and his life. This idiosyncratic knowledge consisting of personal contact and networks (Royer et al. 2008, 18) is essential to not only his business but his entrepreneurial identity as well. He is keen to see these networks being utilized by his son as well. According to Moores (2009, 177) "this focus on intentional commitment to establishing networks for future generations and safeguarding the vital institutional memory distinguishes sustainable business families". His networks are dense within the industry on the national level as well. These networks allow him to draw on information about nation level operations and therefore open up new opportunities nationally.

> *"I was ...at an insurance company meeting...I'm on their advisory board...on four or five of those boards, which gives me a chance not only to meet the company people but agent friends all over the United States."*

Joe is clearly proud not only of his father but his children as well and appears to find great satisfaction out of his son Peyton working in the agency and showing talent for it, too. He proudly tells me that Peyton could have gotten a job elsewhere as well and with better pay but he came to work for his dad. This situation is indicative of successful and entrepreneurial family business owners not letting their children off easy; the children have to earn their money and their position has to be based on merit rather than kinship. Joe points out that despite of his wish for Peyton to come to work for him he was never going to push this opportunity on his son, it had to be his son's own desire to do so.

Now Joe wants to remain in the background and let Peyton make his own career.

Joe would like to have had his other son in the business as well but never expected his daughter to come to work for him. She left her home town to be an aspiring actress and all Joe wanted for his daughter was for her to be self-sufficient and not to have to rely on any man. However, Joe seems to accept his other son's choices as well even though he firmly believes his other son could have been an asset to the agency. Entrepreneurial family business owners accept that not every sibling is alike and respect the differences between them not expecting them to be clones of one another (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 237). Joe has been able to tap into the opportunities his daughter and her choices have offered him. She is married to a music business manager and lives in California and Joe has seen an opportunity there to expand his business to the entertainment industry. As Sten points out (2007, 173); some family members are not formally or even informally involved in the family business having focused their interests elsewhere but this does not mean, for Joe, however, that he cannot seize opportunities through the contacts his daughter may have provided. Entrepreneurial families are able to use resources that family members, albeit not formally involved, can add to the business (Basco & Pérez Rodríguez 2009, 85).

> *"His sister [Peyton's] married a young guy that's managing the Jonas brothers…that's let us off into the entertainment insurance part…that's just more diversification and then you don't have to fight the local market…we go out there [California] anyway, we might as well do business so we're taking some of these friendships and some the family stuff and branching...making another branch…anyway, that's pretty interesting from my standpoint because the economy is tough and any kind of diversification helps stabilize or increase your income."*

Regardless of the fact that Joe and his wife grew up in Louisiana and identify themselves very strongly with the local culture and value system, Joe is not afraid to look elsewhere in his desire to grow his business. He uses every opportunity and venue to take the business to another level, which is indicative of an aggressive and innovative entrepreneurial proactive orientation.

> *"I went to Brazil with my client and so…we're looking if we can have him over there and he can have me over there and whatever so it's just like Peyton getting in the entertainment industry, we're not sitting here in Louisiana, we're in New York City, we're in Los Angeles, California, we're going wherever they go so if you adapt and you go find the money and what's hot, that's what you gotta do but if you sit here twiddling your thumbs in Monroe, the world will pass you by now, all this affects us now, you can't run from it and if you do, you're gonna go away but if you engage it, and go to Brazil and go to New York and go to LA and try to find new things, and feel those new things…you know."*

Joe reflects a responsible attitude toward his staff even though he appears to be sensitive to the requirements of the economic realities at the time of the interview. His attitude appears responsive yet optimistic, determined to get over the recession, together with his partner in steering the company on to the next generation. It is as if his demeanor is such that he is refusing to be anything but forward looking and optimistic.

"You can let it get to you if you want to, if you worry about it enough, times are pretty tough. Yeah, we let a lady go last week...and it's hard to do that. But I also have 50 people that I have to take care of so we'd rather spare one than 50 because of what a lot of owners do is they don't ....can't see the forest for the trees and then they let the whole business go bankrupt. Jerry and I aren't going to let that happen here, I mean we've got not only family but we got people that have worked for 25 years and they believe in us and I'm not gonna let them down. I mean Jerry and I will be the first ones to take a pay cut before these people because they're why we're here and like I told him don't get so smart that you think you can do it without these people 'cause you can't."

Joe's entrepreneurial identification is salient in his overall identity structure. His parental and family member's identity is important as well and he, as an entrepreneur, appears to identify and perceive himself very much as family business entrepreneur with an outlook to continue transgenerational wealth creation. Joe has other investments as well beside his insurance agency, such as hunting land, but he appears to construct his entrepreneurial identity as being an insurance man, through his core business so much so that his portfolio of other ventures does not really surface in his accounts. Joe is a master networker and through his business and social networks seems to serve his need for belonging yet he has a very strong need to be distinct as an entrepreneur and this need to feel distinct can also be seen as part of his organization's identity which is made visible through artifacts such as the building that they operate in (c.f. Shepherd & Haynie 2009a). He appears to be very driven, proactive and not afraid to explore new markets with a very optimistic outlook on opportunities. His values are embedded in the Southern culture with God as the supreme being and family as the next important value. Having three generations of Farrs in the office has created a transgenerational learning experience that is beneficial to all parties and the organization. The question of business operations transferring on to the fourth generation is not current as of yet, but Joe would like to see that happen.

6.11.3 Peyton's account

The defining moment for Peyton as an insurance man seems to have come at the time when he got a baseball scholarship to a college that happened to have a good insurance program. This pushed him forward to follow in his grandfather's and father's footsteps and solidified his entrepreneurial aspirations in this industry in particular. Another important event in his life was getting engaged in college which bestowed a different kind of responsibility on him and his future further directing him to go back to his hometown and start working in his dad's company.

Discovery of new things and innovative ways of doing old things are entrepreneurial attributes that Peyton professes to have and does consider himself very entrepreneurial. He seems himself as similar in many ways to his grandfather and father but at the same time sees his own role specifically as bringing something new to the company and being sensitive to the changing environment, as an agent of change, thus reflecting a successor's entrepreneurial identity in a family business. This is not unlike how his dad has realized his successor's identity in his own time and Peyton reflects on that as dad having had a similar role to his in that dad has brought computers to the agency as a response to the requirements of the ever changing times.

> *"Just seeing him [dad] take...you know....the necessary steps to keep up with our ever changing world and that's what I think I'm gonna be able to bring to the agency, the sense of a younger person's mind...so I think I can bring that side of keeping up with the world changes...you know...you have to adapt and develop new ways to run your business."*

The thought of continuous move and development forward appears to be an indispensable part of Peyton's successor's and entrepreneurial identity. He reflects this through manifesting an attitude that is entrepreneurially aggressive and growth-oriented and that will not allow complacency at how things are.

> *"You can't be satisfied with where the company is at, you gotta look to do more and to find more and just when you think, you got it pretty much...all your goals accomplished, I mean you look up and you know there's a lot of business we're not doing, yeah, we do a lot of business but there's a lot more business out there, there's more opportunities to hire people and grow...there is always room to grow and be more profitable."*

Peyton has grown up seeing his dad's entrepreneurial actions in not just operating the business but creating wide networks of contacts and establishing himself as somebody that has a position in his community. Peyton sees business value in giving back to the community realized in good reputation as well and dad's influence as an entrepreneurial role model is palpable. Peyton feels that entrepreneurial upbringing in the home takes place by parents acting as examples of the desired behavior and feels that his dad never told him what Peyton should have done but rather always let him find his own path. Joe never brought him to work or talked insurance to him but coached his football and baseball teams as he was growing up so really Peyton got socialized into the workings of the social interaction more than the insurance industry itself. Peyton found his calling on his own but has learned the valuable skills of how to be successful in this industry by following his grandfather and father in action. Peyton's perception is congruent with R.D. and Joe's and many other older generation members' attitude in that even though their wish is to see their children continue the family's business operations, their greater wish is to see their children be what they really want to be. This in fact is how Peyton himself feels about his future kids. However, the wished-for-identities reflected on the younger generation regarding the perpetuation of the family business might act as self-fulfilling prophecy to some extent as well.

> *"I can think about....little stuff like how my dad....how we could be in an airport in Chicago, Illinois, and it seems like my dad would know five people just walking through the airport, you know...may dad has been involved in a lot of charities and stuff like that to give back to the community that they're not getting anything for it like as far as money but you really are, you're getting...people recognize you as doing good things with the community so therefore*

> *they would like to do business with somebody like dad more so than somebody that doesn't give back and so...that's one of the things I can pinpoint in my mind growing up, just seeing how everything really does come together and so it's really neat."*

In Peyton's opinion the fact that the family is so visible and gives face to the organization in addition to being local is of special value and a resource especially in the industry in which they operate. The networks and Joe's visibility as a prominent member of his community acts as trust creator for their stakeholders allowing their customers to feel that the company has really made an effort in producing quality customer service with the customers' best interest in mind. Giving a name and face to business operations is especially pertinent to the entrepreneurial identity in the family business context. However, Peyton does acknowledge that this familial connection does not play a role in their business operations elsewhere in the country but is typical to the Southern culture.

> *"I think that's the thing that's made this business be what it is today, there are so many large companies and corporations out there that they just buy up all these agencies and they're run by whoever but I don't think as far as the business that we do...95% of what we do is based on how...the customer service 'cause there's a lot of agencies out there and there's a lot of people doing what we do but I think the thing that separates and makes the difference in this business is customer service and making your customer feel like that....you're here for them, you're not some big...and the fact that we're locally owned and operated with the surrounding area, I think that makes a big difference...and the fact that we've been here so long and been stable and have always done the right thing for the customer."*

Peyton credits his family's values as definitely having influenced the organizational values as well. The value system of the Farrs is based on philanthropic actions and attitudes and transferring that to the organization is bound to yield added value to the business operations through the good name of the company. This reflects also the local, regional and national culture in which the agency operates; the social infrastructure is not as much geared to taking care of the less privileged as it is in the Nordic countries so the role of philanthropy is much greater and often used in the business world for immaterial gains such as added value through good reputation.

> *"I think family is big in our family and treating people with respect, and like I said, always giving more than you get I think is one of my family's biggest values and I see this in this agency every day but the more you give away and the more you help people, donate your time and all that, the more it comes back to you, I don't know how it works, it just does. I think that's one of my family's biggest attributes and mine and I think that Thomas & Farr's biggest attribute is just being like a model citizen and the model business for the community and for their employees...the values seen in my home and the business and it's through and through, I mean I can see the characteristics are identical."*

While obviously feeling a tremendous amount of admiration and pride over his grandfather's and father's careers in the insurance business he does reflect on the conflicts that dad's parental identity must have had in conjunction with his entrepreneurial identity. Peyton feels that it must have been difficult for his dad not to have been able to spend more time with his kids, this may be indicative of Peyton's own feelings of dad having been absent a lot when he was a kid.

The sacrifice that Peyton feels his dad had to make time wise may have been equally his own. Time lost or spent away from the family is a sacrifice much reported on the part of the older as well as the younger generation in this study as well. Later on in life the balance in the successor's and in this case in Peyton's life comes from the transgenerational learning in the presence of the older generation on the one hand and from giving ample space to the younger generation on the other. This has to do with both generation's life cycles being in synch as well; as Hoy and Sharma (2010, 54) point out; "when both father and son are going through life stages when social interactions are easy and they are comfortable with their self-identity, the relationship with each other is harmonious and effective". This situation is beneficial not only to the agency and the business but the perpetuation of the family business operations into the future as well.

> *"I've been here a year and a half...we've come across situations where I handled it one way and he [Joe] would have handled it another way and we've had disagreements about that but as far as anything major, nothing has really conflicted us of right now 'cause basically the first six months I was here, I was kind of training, getting all my licenses and stuff like that and now I've been selling and for the most part it's been good, you know, he kind of stays out of my way and I stay out of his way and you know I guess he's doing that for a reason, kind of letting me figure it out on my own which I think is great."*

Peyton's entrepreneurial identity is very future- and growth-oriented reflecting his wished-for-identity in taking the business to a whole new level with much the same fearlessness and optimism that his dad has had. He aspires to do this with respect for the traditions that have been passed down from his grandfather on through to his dad. To Peyton growth is a definite goal rather than sustaining things as they are, this being in his opinion an essential quality for anybody representing the younger generation of a family business.

Peyton understands that a certain amount of risk taking is involved in running this business and does not shy away from that. To him risk taking is also a way to respond to the changes in the environment and therefore in this way risk taking is also a survival tactic. He views the transgenerational operation of the business as a kind of an evolution and this is indicative of his avid sensitivity to the ever changing environment. He clearly enjoys the industry being a very sales-oriented person and therefore is far from reluctant to continue the business, on the contrary. He wants to not only grow it but take it further by entering new market areas and creating new innovative products in a goal-oriented way. He appears to be driven by his vision of developing and owning the company in the future.

> *"I'm very proud to be a third generations member of a family business and I don't own the business by any means yet but that is my goal in the future and it makes me happy to know that...or privileged, I should say, to be able to work with my granddad and dad at the same time 'cause that's very rare that people get a chance to do that so I feel very blessed for that and I love the idea of a family business and I think if it's run the right way and handled the right way , they can be very successful as proved of our business today but I just wanna work hard and...'cause that's my dream one day to own this business and to carry it on and whether I pass it on to my kids or not but just do those things and always try to stay ahead of society and things that are new and new ideas and new markets and I would like to try to be*

able to take our company to a whole other level where it's never been before...I would like to maybe expand to more cities or...you know, in this area and grow and I would like to be more profitable than we've ever been before once I...if I ever own the company...there are just goals I have...what I wanna do in my life is take this thing to a whole new level and just expand and grow and add employees."

6.12 David and Brian Cohn of the Cohn Law Firm

Before I introduce David and Brian I want to refer back to Hytti (2003, 91) and her reasoning for the selection of her respondents because I interpret there to be another very culturally related issue worth pointing out. Hytti (2003, 91) says that she "excluded medical doctors, lawyers and other representatives of 'strong' professions" from her study basing this "on an assumption that e.g. medical doctors have a strong identity based on their profession, and would not necessarily consider themselves entrepreneurs although they had a private practice". I think she makes an excellent point in that and this is a very good indicator of a culturally significant factor again. I tend to agree with her in that Finnish doctors might feel more like doctors than entrepreneurs and the same probably goes for lawyers but my feeling as culturally intuitive is that their American colleagues do not have that same kind of dichotomous feeling but can fluently assimilate their professions with being entrepreneurs as well and give those identifications equal value and might sometimes give their entrepreneurial identifications even more salience as their professional identities. Two of my American respondents; David and his son Brian, are lawyers and my interpretation on their identity structures seemed to attest my earlier intuition. They appear to have a very strong entrepreneurial identification as can be seen later in my interpretations.

David is a 55-year-old lawyer and the owner of The Cohn Law Firm in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The firm provides "quality legal services for clients in real estate, business law, estate planning, banking law and creditors' rights" (http://www.thecohnlawfirmllc.com/). David has two sons, one of whom works in the firm as a lawyer. Another lawyer that is not a family member also works in the firm. After law school David practiced law in partnership with other lawyers until eventually going to *'solo practice'*. The reasons behind this break away from partnerships are embedded in David having had a different philosophy on how to run a law firm, explicitly as a business. This is a strong indicator of him indeed having a strong entrepreneurial identification along with the professional lawyer's identification as parts of his overall identity structure. In David's case the entrepreneurial identity often presents itself as more salient even than that of the professional identity. As is often the case with entrepreneurs, David's parents were in business for themselves as well; *"When I was growing up, my daddy and mama owned a business so they were entrepreneurs, so I got to see that, you know, as a kid...and I mean when the billing time of the month came out even when we were 8, 9 years old, you know, we'd be in there licking stamps and putting invoices in envelopes to mail them out on Sunday night so... I mean...it* *was, you know…when time came to do some things we somehow knew how to do it. And then when I got to be a teenager I worked in the business from age 14 till…really until I left at age 23 to go to law school."*

Brian, David's son, is 32 year-old father of two and a lawyer working alongside of his dad in the law firm. He says his mom has an office in the back as well for her own business so Brian describes their firm as *"a family oriented environment"*. He has never been a lawyer in any other firm. After law school he had opportunities to go work elsewhere but he chose to come to his dad's firm. Brian was intrigued by what it would be like to work with family but it appears that this decision was made based on both family and professional reasons; he feels that he got more practical legal experience quicker than he would have gotten working for a bigger firm. He also feels that he has grown faster in certain areas of law than some of the people he graduated law school with. The family firm has thus benefited his professional development; *"We have a pretty good family relationship amongst all of us and, you know, I don't know if I was just taking the easy road or if I just really wanted to be working with family but ultimately I decided that I wanted to do work here and made the right decision. And I've had other people approach me since I've been here to try and hire me away and I've actually turned them down so I'm happy, I know I made the right decision and I think I've learned a lot more and a lot faster than I would have working for somebody else, somewhere else."*.

Brian views being a lawyer as action that is very entrepreneurial in nature in that he equates it with any other business or service. He sees his work as very business and sales-oriented action and appears to approach it rather aggressively as a business man; *"You gotta get out there and get business, you can't get it by reputation, you have to get it, you experience that as a young lawyer…when my first….I guess my first three or four years of practice I spent a good time calling on…in meeting and cultivating relationships with people of my age that are in the banking industry and the real estate industry, trying to establish relationships….maybe that's the entrepreneurial part of being a lawyer, you have to go get business, you have to do things to establish relationships"*. Again, Brian's entrepreneurial identification is in no way subordinate to his professional identity, as is the case with his dad as well, so in this sense it appears that in their business culture the 'strong' profession of a lawyer does not indicate a lesser drive to be in business for oneself (c.f. Hytti 2003, 91).

6.12.1 David's account

David's account of the development of his entrepreneurial identity, which indeed is strong and at times seems stronger than his lawyer's identification, is also a developmental story of someone who, having been socialized to entrepreneurship in his childhood and having grown up in adversity related to his father's alcohol abuse, has become a family business entrepreneur who is also very much a portfolio entrepreneur with a strong risk taking propensity in that he appears to have continuously ventured to other fields, such as pest control besides his own core industry, which is law. The defining moment in his life that made him determined to go and make it on his own he now views to be his childhood experiences; *"you have to start with the people who raised you"*. David says his dad was an alcoholic and this created continuous tension and fear within the family. His mother's role in keeping things functional seems to have been crucial. The dad was also in business for himself and David thinks this was because his dad simply could not work for anyone else due to his problems with alcohol. However, he does recognize some good qualities in his dad as well, business wise. More importantly, as far as the development of David's own entrepreneurial identity is concerned, he saw the freedom and autonomy in his dad's life as somebody working for himself and this sense of freedom seems to have become the defining motivator behind his own entrepreneurial actions.

> *"By the same token those same things started his growth as a business man and he was a smart business man when he was on his game but it's hard to be on your game when you're lit up all the time but my mama held it together, made it work, in the office all the time, working long hours and stuff like that so I was able to see it in early age that even somebody who when you're not hitting on all cylinders, if you're working for yourself, there's an opportunity for there to be money coming in even when nobody will hire you so I saw that side of it and I got to see all his independence."*

David grew up in an entrepreneurial family and it in fact appears that in addition to his dad's influence, his wife and the co-operation with his brother have shaped David's entrepreneurial identification and this influence has been transferred onto his two sons. Starting businesses and having a constellation of them is the way to be while the main everyday work takes place in the industry which is at the heart of David and his son's professional identity. David's wife's influence seems to have been constant ever since the two left their home town together. She does not surface frequently in David's accounts of the present day but definitely sounds to be the support and encourager and the glue that holds the family together, she is present in the background of his accounts at all times. He finds the business community of Baton Rouge, La. to be lively and very competitive, which is congruent with his own entrepreneurial identity which he has used to his benefit in creating wide networks of contacts. He appears very forward looking and optimistic, a sense of self-efficacy is evident in him, even during the economic situation which defines the time of the interview, the economy at the time is in dire straits.

> *"Since I've been in practice in 1980, I've always made more money in the bad times than the good. Good times, you make money, you're doing good things but in the bad times things happen, people have problems so when they have problems, they need lawyers, lawyers solve problems, good or bad and I said that's gonna happen and it has, it's started happening that way. It's funny how it did but it did."*

David has not been afraid to fail but takes it in his stride when that happens nor is he afraid to take risks, which is "a distinct dimension of entrepreneurial orientation and that is positively associated with proactiveness and innovation" (Naldi et al. 2007, 43). His thinking is very much long term-oriented and he's constantly seeking new opportunities. He has involved his sons in this kind of business operational activity always and this has made them portfolio entrepreneurs as well.

> *"I got out of college and basically went in to run the business but it didn't work out and I recognized that. My dad and I didn't see eye to eye on a lot of things and it was his business and I respected that so if there had to be a change it needed to be me. And I made that change, it was a better move for me as all things worked out and so when I came down here, my brother…I held…to do that kind of work [pest control] you have to have a license from the state and federal law mandates that if you're gonna use or possess restricted use pesticides, then you're gonna be licensed and gonna do some spraying and all that stuff. Well, I had a license to do this kind of work and I could have gone into my own business with it if I wanted to, I was in law school at the time so my brother, younger brother, four years my junior, moved from Monroe when he was about 19 and he started out the business here in that field and under my license and I worked in it just a little bit during law school, not a lot. I helped him do some night time spray work in a contract he had secured on state office buildings downtown and it was all my work and I could go work once a month and pick up 25 bucks and back then it was a lot of money for us…But I left when I got out of law school and my brother of course by this time became licensed himself, he didn't need my license anymore and then he went on with the business, similar business that my dad had except much, much more successful at it. My brother is a wealthy man, he has a very good, not just solid business but enormously profitable business, he's a very good money manager and business man so…my brother in the bug business has vastly exceeded all the other children that were my brothers and sisters including me and in that category but there has always been some form of entrepreneurship in our family dating back then and when I, later on probably about 94, 95…my brother and I bought a couple of small businesses in Florida and Alabama, one in Alabama and one in Florida and now the one in Florida is a very nice business, I mean it…you know, I could make almost as much out of that doing nothing as I can make here, I mean it's that good but when I say doing nothing I mean my role in it is very insignificant and even my brother's role is insignificant in a way because we have somebody over there in Florida that runs it and so, you know, it's not like it takes a lot of my time and then my two sons and I started one in Central Florida…"*

David appears to be driven and motivated very much by the sense of freedom and autonomy that entrepreneurship and business ownership gives him. It has given him a sense of him controlling his own destiny which he likens to the traditional American dream. David seems to have a very strong internal locus of control; he is responsible for his own success or failure. He will not even consider going to work for someone else; freedom for him appears to be even more motivating than money. The need for independence can be seen in his thoughts on his past when he worked in a partnership, his entrepreneurial identity is so much geared by his need for autonomy and a sense of achievement on his own that he appears to be much more content in being in solo practice than in a partnership. David's account of the partnership experience is indicative of a certain sense of disillusionment in working for or with others which in turn seems to have sharpened his view on all that represents freedom.

> *"Well, if it's the American dream to work for yourself and have your own freedoms then I've lived it and I'm still living it…I think moreover your hope is that as a business person your financial well-being will be rewarded more because of your singular effort that you're not having to depend like in my partnership days, my success and failure depended on other people and….for that law firm and that partnership I was a cash cow…not only was I not rewarded personally for the effort but the things that I do…that I thought needed to be done wouldn't be implemented either because I had partners who wouldn't adopt them and did what they wanted to do but as the captain of your own ship you got nobody to blame but you"*

When comparing himself to his son David sees himself different entrepreneurially in the sense that he has done everything first and his son is entering the business at a later stage in the business's life cycle. This of course is indicative of the generational differences in family businesses in general in the sense that the younger generation always gets to grow up in the business that their parents have worked so much for before and the younger generation's starting phase in entrepreneurship is different, not necessarily easier, but different. It appears that rather than constructing identities through the concept of family business, David does it most through being a business person transmitting this kind of thinking on to his son as well. The thought of family business operations is implicitly present in the entrepreneurial identification. It seems that David has consciously allowed Brian to grow into entrepreneurship step by step by developing both his professional and entrepreneurial identifications while allowing Brian to tap into the human, social, and capital resources that have already existed. David views transgenerational wealth creation and the future of their firm through Brian's own wishes, David wants Brian to do what he is happy with.

> *"When he [Brian] got out of college and then went to law school, I mean I think that's when working for himself and working with family, you know, probably was important to him and I think that when you first start out he has the luxury of not having to worry about what....whether he had a client or whatever so his attention got focused more on just trying to learn his craft and his trade, as time has evolved he has taken on more of those...I don't know...they're really not duties but he's taken on more of the activities that relate to getting clients, understanding that you have relationships and this business is a relationship based business like a lot of them are so he's begun taking time to build on...building relationships...I think it's not important to me that he take over and do what I'm doing, the joy is to watch his continued development and growing processes."*

David seems to believe in the powers of communication and apparently has fostered a very communication oriented environment conducive to the transmittance of entrepreneurial spirit. In this communicative forum he has not only discussed successes but failures as well. David believes that the next generation is brought into the world of entrepreneurial orientation by letting them share in the successes but come time for failure those get analyzed in detail with them in regards to what their own role was in the failure so as not to repeat the same mistakes. This can be seen as enhancing the entrepreneurial identity of the younger generation which is strongly present in David's accounts of his sons.

> *"As far as keeping the spirit, you gotta let the younger people grow and I only know that from my own experiences that when they have an idea, don't just dismiss it and sometimes that's easy to do...the trial and error of that critical thinking and discussion helps them get there so I mean the biggest thing is don't dampen the spirit, foster the spirit and they have seen that being around me or my brother their whole lives."*

The value system that David claims as his own is a mix of political features in it on one hand and ethical elements on the other. His mother was Baptist and his dad Jewish so this has caused a certain sense of confusion in David regarding religion, politically he veers to the right from the center implying values related to that. However, the foundational elements of his value system are ethics and a strong moral fiber. It is important for David to emphasize that his kids have adopted a strong sense of right and wrong. David talks about money often and in a way which can be interpreted as money constituting a value to David, albeit that as important as money is to him, family does take priority in his value system in that it seems to represent a source of happiness for David. His own core family's importance and stability gets magnified in relation to his childhood family which was plagued by the father's alcohol abuse.

> *"If you can't find happiness within your own family, the money won't give it to you…We may not be on the front row of any pew on Sunday but we live every day what we believe and rather than sit there and talk about… on Sunday and so…something else from Monday through Saturday so our core values are basically built around the golden rule do unto others as you'd have them do unto you and ethics in business are impeccable. There's not one of us that can't look ourselves in the mirror every day and I can sit here today and tell you I've never made a dime off the back of anybody in a fraudulent illicit way. Everything's been straight up, upfront and in many times to my own detriment so I've got no skeletons to worry about in my closet."*

The money and freedom as values are seen very much as driving forces for the younger generation as well. David seems to have been wise in bringing Brian into the business in phases that have been congruent with Brian's development as a lawyer and an entrepreneurial person. Hoy and Sharma (2010, 31) comment on this type of leadership in entrepreneurial family firms by saying that "astute leaders of successful family firms have been found to be attentive to the developmental needs of the next generation using every opportunity to instill in them the values of strong ethic, high integrity, consciousness and a sense of ownership for one's life, which are foundational for success over the course of life".

> *"When he [Brian] gets to take advantage of more of the financial reward, he's getting some of it now but he'll get more of it later and that will peak his interest and then he will be the bird set free and that's the way it's gonna go."*

David seems to construct his entrepreneurial identity a lot through his core business; that of practicing law. This can be heard in his accounts and this is the field in which he has worked all his life even though he has had other successful business ventures on the side all his adult life. Being a portfolio entrepreneur is very much in his identity and being a business man often seems to rank higher in his identity structure than that of being a lawyer even though on the outside he definitely is identified as one. David's attitude toward business seems to be very optimistic. Shane and Venkataraman (2000, 223) maintain that "the decision to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities is also influenced by individual differences in optimism" and David seems to adhere to the high end of that variance and apparently transfers this optimism into seeking and seizing opportunities constantly.

6.12.2 Brian's account

Brian has deep respect for his father as a parent, entrepreneur, and lawyer. Clearly his dad has been the greatest influence on Brian's entrepreneurial identity and professional identity as a lawyer, as well as his parental identity. Brian is also cognizant of his dad's business man qualities through his various business ventures other than the law firm, therefore making portfolio entrepreneurship natural for Brian as well. David has introduced this way of being entrepreneurial to his sons early on and made good of his beliefs by setting up companies with his sons, all the while running his core business, the law firm. Brian has grown into portfolio entrepreneurship. Brian's account also reflects his dad's account regarding the future of his sons in that Brian genuinely feels that dad has encouraged his sons to find their own path in life rather than encouraging them to follow in his own footsteps as a self-serving purpose.

> *"My father, he's kind of like…we've always…we've had good upbringings, my parents are rock solid, my dad…he's been a real good influence on myself and my brother, he's always been encouraging as far as entrepreneurial stuff, my dad, he's got tremendous business sense and street smarts to go with it. He's a business man himself, he has his own side businesses outside of being a lawyer, he's always encouraged me to make sure this is what I want to do, he said there are options out there, we had some discussions prior to starting work but we've always, me and my brother…myself, I've always been encouraged to think of other ways to do things…we do have a side business that I'm part of with my father and my brother, a pest control company in Florida. Our family has big background in the pest control industry. My father, and you'll find out from him, too, but he has a side business with my uncle in the pest control industry just between them. I don't know that this has really been etched in stone but we tend to invest in side businesses as opposed to investing in the market…we do devote some time to those side businesses but it's not as time consuming as you would think, we have people in place that manage them and stuff. My father is pretty rock solid when it comes to that, he makes a lot of good decisions and he's always been encouraging us to participate in that kind of stuff."*

The generational differences in father and son that Brian recounts appear to be related to his own lack of experience and street smarts rather than actual differences in the personality or entrepreneurial attributes of the two. This may also be indicative of the tremendous amount of respect he has for dad in that his attitude toward comparison is humble. In a way it can be interpreted as being typical to the successor's entrepreneurial identification as well. Brian has a very proactive and positive attitude toward learning, not only in his profession but in business in general, which is also a part of his successor's identification. In the future he would like to see the firm acquiring more clients, thus projecting growth- and future-oriented successor identification. Having the constellation of the side businesses facilitates this learning process. In his entrepreneurial and professional reflections, Brian appears to possess a fair amount of self-efficacy.

> *"I have a pretty good personality in the sense that I have the ability, I guess, I think, to get people to like me and what I found out is that people, if they like you, you will be ok. You can be a lousy lawyer, but people like you, you'll get the business so…over the last four or five years I have befriended people that are my age in certain industries that I practice law in, such*

> *that whenever I get referrals from them for other people that have ultimately turned out to be some clients of mine and I mean it's kind of like this...that I guess in a small scale, that's the kind of things that I can do to help my practice."*

Dad, as a role model, does place certain pressures on Brian as well, him being an ambitious person and not wanting to disappoint dad; *"I'm not gonna sit around here working a 40-hour week when I see him [dad]cracking out sixty"*. These pressures can be interpreted as being motivators for Brian's entrepreneurial orientation as well. Another motivator that has come from dad has been financial; dad has paid him less in the beginning of his career than what his colleagues elsewhere have earned. Brian has had to earn his position in the firm.

> *"I'm not gonna sit around her working a 40-hour week when I see him cracking out sixty...I'll tell you that most of my motivation around here is to do right and I do put in a lot of long hours because I see him doing it."*

The downside of working for dad is presented in Brian's thoughts on how his father's attitude toward Brian differs from his attitude toward others in the office. However, Brian has a pretty relaxed, yet respectful, response to this so it does not appear to constitute too big of a problem. This is indicative of how the different identities of the members of both the older and younger generation in a family business are worked concurrently; the professional and entrepreneurial identifications can be active while parental or child's identity is in effect as well, together they form a family business entrepreneur's hybrid identity potentially creating synergies beneficial to the business operations and transgenerational learning.

> *"I think the biggest overlap is that my father still looks at me and my brother like we're in high school. I've never had an employer-employee discussion in this firm; it's always a father –son discussion. Even dealing with a case that I'm working on and I have a question for him or whatever, it's no secret, I mean it's almost comical that the other lawyer that's in here, he's only a couple of years older than me and we have a really good working relationship and a social relationship, we're kind of partners and we kind of joke about how my dad's temperament toward me is different to anybody else's in the office but, you know, that something that...It's not bad, I'm used to it, you just take it 'cause he's your father and I'm respectful, he's my superior, I still go to him for advice for things and he's still my father and he's gonna give me his advice, whether I ask for it or not, whether it's wanted or unwanted."*

Brian feels that operating in the context of family business poses some benefits to them in regards to their recurring clients when these know the dad as well as the son both of whom know what the client is talking about therefore making it a little bit easier on the client and also someone knowledgeable being accessible to the client in the firm. Another benefit of the familial business operations can be seen in the attitude of the local clients who appreciate the features connected with a family firm. However, Brian does not think this matters at all to out of state clients or corporations.

> *"Local clients that we get business from, they appreciate it and I do think they like the family atmosphere and the loyalty and they see we have good relationships."*

As is often pointed out, family as a social system is one in which values are passed on through generations and often those core values carry over to the family's business operations as well. Brian reflects this in his account of his value system; he sees his parents as not very religious but rather as moral beings firmly rooted in ethics and he has adopted the same kind of an approach to values. These have also carried over to the family's law firm. The meaning of religion is often brought forward in the American value discourse in the context of discussing business networks and social capital because going to church and being an active member of a church is also an important factor in successful business operations. The Cohns are forward in saying that they are not the most active church goers but replace that with a moral philosophical discussion. This is strongly indicative of a culturally embedded part of identity; Finns discuss religious issues very rarely in connection with business. Religion and going to church are considered to be highly private matters and not suited to profit-making-oriented discussion. That in turn reflects Lutheran ethics of self-serving purposes to be connected with religion seen as improper. In general for many Americans money is an intrinsic value and as such something that is morally suitable to be discussed and therefore religious context is also suitable for business-oriented networking ultimately resulting in profit generating behavior.

> *"There's some serious core moral and ethical values in my family and it's prevalent in this firm...because my parents don't have a big...or my upbringing was not a big religious upbringing...but so there's not really a religious aspect to this firm, I don't know if some do or can, or if they're even allowed to do that but there is a good moral ethical value here, I mean we do the right thing, keep our noses clean and stay out of trouble."*

Money appears to constitute an intrinsic value for Brian as well. By this I mean that obviously the purpose of any business anywhere is to make money but the significance of money and especially making more and more money varies from individual to individual and culture to culture. For some money is just a tool and means to an end, for some money is a value in and of itself in which case there can be no amount that is sufficient because money is not made to attain something but money is made for the purpose of acquiring more money. The Cohns' entrepreneurial identity is constructed to a large extent on the desire to make more money, they like money and to them the thought of making more money is deeply satisfying. Brian has a very hard time relating to my trying to explain that the dividends of entrepreneurial activity can take different forms beside dollars and euros; the reward for it can be free time as well. This is not at all compatible with his world view and he clearly dismisses that as a foreign thought. He mentions greed as a reason to work a lot and strive to make more money in America but he does not identify his family's drive to working hard with greed; *"my family is not greedy, they just like money, but I think greed does play a role, a part in business in America, there's a reason why people work 60 and 70 hours a week."*.

"You gotta remember, everything's money driven, decisions are based on money and lawyers that make the most money are at the top of the pyramid so if you have a practice that's big enough to where your own practice is generating enough revenue to sustain you and a couple of lawyers below you, that's where you make the big bucks. You can make money on your own employees just like anybody else does, that's kind of what I'd like to see...See, we like money...he [dad] likes it, that's why he's working so much. I've got an uncle who's twenty times as successful as we are and it's just not enough, he wants more and more and more."

Regarding money as a value to be attained then translates to time spent at that endeavor. Brian is driven to work long hours firstly out of respect for his dad who still works very long hours and secondly out of his personal ambition to do well as a lawyer. He needs to be accessible to his clients and perform well not only for his own sake but his clients' as well. He has never taken a week off; he says he may have missed four days of work. In his business it is simple; he won't make money if he doesn't work. He says that he might take a couple of weeks off in about ten or fifteen years' time but right now it is impossible business wise. To him free time is not an end or a sign of success having been attained by work hard and successful ventures.

Brian identifies very strongly with his culture that he views from an economic system's perspective. It represents the equal opportunity for all to go out and make it and it is congruent with his entrepreneurial identification in that it represents his value system and places strong emphasis on the individual being an active agent pursuing wealth. Failures are accepted and to be expected but tolerated and seen as inevitable. They are something that do not dampen the entrepreneurial vigor of an individual but are something to learn from.

"I think that we're a capitalist market. What is it...carpe diem...seize the day, just get out there and seize it and go after it and I don't think there is impediment set up in America to prohibit people from going out and doing a legitimate business purpose, there are impediments when you are doing something wrong, but if you're trying to get into an industry, you do your research, you do your work, and a lot of times it will work for you. I know there are a lot of business failures but there are a lot of successes, too."

Brian's thoughts of transgenerational wealth creation have not really extended to his own children yet; his two kids are very small still. He is more interested in the succession process that has been initiated at the time of the interview in which the Cohns' goal is to transfer ownership of the firm in a controlled manner. However, there seems to be no doubt in his mind of the influence of entrepreneurial family members in instilling entrepreneurial spirit in the future entrepreneurs' generation and he reflects on his own situation with pride. These reflections are suggestive of the strong effect his dad and uncle have had on the construction of his entrepreneurial identity and on a more general level of familial influence on the family business entrepreneurs as a source of entrepreneurial spirit.

"First of all I have the luxury of having family members that are in business for themselves. They started companies from nothing and had sizeable companies, big companies. For my daughter and my son, if that's something they're interested in, there's prime examples for something for them to look at. And the people that run them and started them up and have them where they're at, those owners, they're readily accessible for my kids to speak with them

about because they're my family. They're my brother and my dad and my uncle so I have within an arm's reach examples of companies that they could...and people with good ideas that started them and can assist me in educating my own kids about the prospects of being on your own and what you have to do and what you have to see to get from point A to point B, not to get lost in the forest for the trees, so there are...it's not like I would have to go find somebody to talk to them, I have them, they can supplement anything that I tell them, I'll certainly be encouraging...for them to look and to do it, something on their own but if they choose to go be a doctor or a lawyer or engineer or whatever else, they do whatever they want."

Brian constructs his entrepreneurial identity through fairly aggressive and proactive attitude to being in business. His identity has been deeply influenced by his family members, the entrepreneurial identification in particular by his dad and his uncle from whom he has also adopted his value system. A strong part of his overall identity is also his professional identity, that of a lawyer, and business wise that of a portfolio entrepreneur which is something that has been strongly promoted by his dad. Religion does not play an important part in his identity building; he identifies more with a moral philosophical discourse.

Brian's account concludes the part in which I have interpreted the Louisianan family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identities and I will now move on to my Finnish cultural group. The quotes appearing in the Finnish accounts have been numbered for clarity; their equivalent original Finnish extracts can be found by those numbers in appendix 4.

6.13 Matti and Jussi Perälä, the K-retailers

Being a K-retailer in Finland means that the retailers belonging to the K-group are members of the K-Retailers' Association and Kesko (the central organization). There is a chain agreement between the retailer and Kesko that "enables the retailer to join one of Kesko's retail store chains" (http://www.kesko.fi/en/). K-retailers are also Kesko shareholders and operate as independent family entrepreneurs. The K-Retailers' Association promotes the profitability, competitiveness and operational conditions of the K-retailers in cooperation with Kesko. The K-group has long traditions in family entrepreneurship in particular; many of the K-retailer families have a history of several generations of retail business in the K-group and very often are operated by co-entrepreneurial couples. Kesko defines their retailers as "an independent chain entrepreneur who, through good service, competence, and local expertise, provides additional strength for chain operations. The K-retailer entrepreneurs are responsible for their stores' customer satisfaction, personnel, and profitable business operations" (http://www.kesko.fi/en/). The different retailers in the K-group specialize in food trade, home and specialty goods trade, building and home improvement trade and/or car and machinery trade. Matti and Jussi Perälä both have been very active in the various Kesko-group positions of trust and the father and son both are owners in the family's business operations.

Matti is a 65-year-old widowed father of two who has run K-retailing stores in Central Finland for decades. At the time of the interview, the family business itself of the Peräläs' was 134 years old. As families are as heterogeneous as family owned businesses are (Sten 2007, 169), so are the way in which the families behind these businesses are formed. In the Perälä case, Matti had been adopted by Kerttu Perälä whose husband Johannes Perälä had died only after six months of marriage and thus the marriage was childless. Matti is the middle child of Kerttu's nephew's five children and at the time of the adoption he was six years old. After Kerttu Perälä's passing the business operation passed on to Matti in 1963. One can suggest that Matti was adopted not only to the family but the family business as well; his last name was changed to Perälä which has allowed him to identify visibly with the family business, too. To him the long history of the family business is his own history for blood ties alone do not make a family. Kerttu Perälä must somehow have recognized the potential for store keeping and business in Matti and thus she has seen and seized an opportunity of the human resource kind for Matti has fully grown into the business operations and they and their success are an essential part of his identity. Sundaramurthy and Kreiner (2008, 426) point out that "integration of family and business identities can foster the entrepreneurial spirit in more mature firms as well" and this seems to be the case with Matti and his family's business with a very long history. Also the family ownership of the individual businesses in the K-group has always been seen as a competitive advantage and the K-retailers themselves have internalized this attitude reflecting it in their business operations.

In order to learn the trade Matti went to a commercial institute to study after which he was given the keys to the store, so to speak. Right from the beginning he was an enthusiastic member of the K-group, which is a membership that is very meaningful to his overall identity and through which he seems to define his entrepreneurial identity. Matti's wife Paula became a very important part of his business life as well, they ran the business operations together for several decades up until her death in 2004; *"we became a very good co-entrepreneurial couple"*(1). Their first child, son Jussi was born in 1970 and their daughter Matleena in 1974. Tragically, their middle child, a boy, died at birth in 1972. Matti's business operations have included grocery stores and hardware stores in several locations in Central Finland.

Jussi, Matti's son, is a 39-year-old father of two and a graduate of a commercial institute who says he has worked in their stores ever since he has learned to walk. For one summer he worked for someone else, but that was a hardware store also in the K-group. This is indicative of how strongly the K-group membership defines the Peräläs' entrepreneurial mindset and how they feel loyal to the K-brand. Jussi's wife Minna is a very important part of his business operations, in very much the same way Paula was for Jussi, Minna sits on the board of the company.

6.13.1 Matti's account

The defining factor of Matti's entrepreneurial identity is that of being a K-retailer. Belonging to that organization as a family business entrepreneur and also as a person of trust in various organizational positions is the backbone of his entrepreneurial activities and he feels passionate about the K-group, the membership of K-group truly permeates not only his entrepreneurial identity but his overall identity as well. He also feels that one has to understand what success in fact means, and to him this has meant keeping statistics all through his entrepreneurial career of sales numbers and competitor information. His success has gained substance in him having compared himself to his competitors or his own previous results and to him these statistics seem to represent a way of professional self-reflection. He has been innovative in bringing computers and related services to the retailing trade.

To Matti the most important entrepreneurial attribute one can have is to be passionate about the industry one operates in, thus reflecting the importance of one's expertise to one's entrepreneurial identity. He has been active in creating networks of contacts within the K-group and to some extent in social organizations like the Lions Club and also politics. However, the meaning of networks to him seems to come from the peer support that has been available through his activities in the K-group, more so than using networks specifically in the profit-making sense. The peer support gained through these networks has been important to his professional identity as well and it appears to have yielded mutual benefits through their co-operation. He also contributes a certain amount of significance regarding entrepreneurial characteristics to being ambitious by nature, as the driver for entrepreneurial action. He says this cautiously, reflecting the Finnish cultural ideal of modesty according to which expressing too much ambition is not appropriate. Obviously it does not mean that the ambition is not there, it is just not voiced often.

> *"I think the most important thing is that the industry...the basic starting point is that you have to have the enthusiasm for it, you have to like it and then...this is probably not nicely said but ambition is closely connected so that if one becomes an entrepreneur he has to be ambitious, otherwise he will not succeed, that's the starting point."(2)*

A salient factor in Matti's identity is that of being a part in a chain of generations of retailers going back over 130 years. He has pictures on his office wall of his forefathers and mothers who were retailers before him, as if to remind him constantly of the legacy and heritage that has been handed down to him. Although he was adopted to the Perälä - family, it in no way seems to have lessened his identifying with that family and its long history in particular.

> *"...and then what happened was that when I was a young storekeeper, I got noticed by Kesko and I was chosen for all these positions of trust and...and to the youth division and the chairman of the district and then the representative of the district...to the board of directors of Kesko...I did all that for about twenty years, really until I was about 50 years old...spent many years doing that, and two summer conventions were organized in Jyväskylä during my time, I was very much involved in that and I have to tell you that my son has inherited that*

role but has made it much further than I did. I was never the national chairman, but Jussi has already been the national chairman."(3)

Another strong feature of Matti's entrepreneurial identity is that of him having been profoundly involved in the family's business operations with his wife, Paula. They worked together for decades and did everything else together as well, the boundaries of work life and free time were blurred. Her influence on his overall identity and entrepreneurial identity has been intense, even after her passing. The couple became co-entrepreneurs early on during their marriage and worked together until her death. Paula appears to be a strong presence still. The couple was bound together not only by their entrepreneurial ventures and frame of mind but also by tragedy; their second child died at birth. As it turns out, Matti's son's Jussi's life has taken a very similar path; he found a wife with whom he became a co-entrepreneurial couple in the family business, and they are bound by the tragedy of also having lost a child at birth. The effect of these events has shadowed the Perälä men's lives but also made them all the more determined to succeed in their business with their spouses.

"The family is indeed a resource and especially my wife, she was an irreplaceable resource, we had two pairs of eyes overseeing things and two sets of brains...I couldn't imagine having done this alone with my wife somewhere else, we were welded into this profession, and when we went to have our coffee in the morning, we had to laugh when we noticed that as one of us started talking, the other one had the exact same thought and we grew together and with the job...it was a basic characteristic of ours and we tended to overdo it, did not take our vacations and worked seven days a week and every Sunday night went to work...we had domestic help all the time and we lived here, the kids lived upstairs, they were almost made in the store...the work and the hobby were one and the same."(4)

In regards to the blurred boundaries between the business and the family life, the one regret that Matti now has is the time spent away from his kids. Now, in retrospect, he feels he could have been there more for them, particularly during their teenage years. Matti's daughter Matleena reflects on dad as a parent and on his attitude toward his business operations which have obviously been more to him than just a way to make a living. Matleena's thoughts were published in a book (Vuolle 2006) written to commemorate the 130th anniversary of the Perälä family business.

"To my dad business was not work but a way of life. He was a strict parent and often absent due to his positions of trust connected to his work. Even though our parents did not have much time to concentrate on our hobbies, dad was always supportive of our athletic endeavors and very proud of our accomplishments. He was a very enthusiastic retailer and wanted the Perälä stores not only to be 'open' but for the Perälä stores to be 'in service'." (Vuolle 2006, 95, extract translated by A. Laakkonen)(5)

It appears that the family business's life cycles have been synchronous with the family's life cycles, in a way. When Matti's and Paula's first child, Jussi, was born, they started to add to their business by starting up new operations, first in the grocery business and later by starting up their first hardware store. The responsibility for those was divided between the couple so that Matti took responsibility for the building and home improvement trade whereas his wife was responsible for the food trade. Again, working with his wife as a team seems to have been of paramount importance for Matti and seems to have served as an entrepreneurial stimulus for him. The two kept expanding their businesses and adding stores to it for decades, both being very goal-oriented and sharing their goals.

> *"Jussi was born in 1970 and as soon as we got him walking, we started to expand our business, and then the K-hall was completed, and then we founded a hardware store...we acted very independently, we both were bosses, but yet in close proximity, we had our offices situated so for 35 years that we always kept a visual contact, this was significant...we slept side by side, we ate side by side, we lived side by side, and worked very hard...my wife, Paula, was very hardworking."(6)*

Even though Matti got to enter a business that had been in operation for decades before his time, he feels that as an entrepreneur he started from nothing and that he has learned the ropes by having done everything by himself in the beginning. This differentiates him from his son in his opinion as well, in that Jussi got to start in a business that was already successful and everything was in place. In this way the situation suggests of generational differences in the entrepreneurial identities within family businesses. In practice, though, Jussi did not get to be the boss right from the beginning but started off as a sales person which was thought to be necessary as a learning experience. Jussi has had to prove himself and his competency in the business.

> *"Jussi got to come more directly to this system than I did, I had to start from the grassroots level and one grows up in that but....the best schooling for me has been that in the beginning I did everything by myself, I didn't even have any workers, but then I learned to delegate and I learned to be a leader and this is something that makes me content. So I have grown into it....but Jussi got to come directly to the leader's place."(7)*

Matti is very proud of the long history of his business operations and feels responsible for the heritage that is the family business, ever since his aunt designated him as the successor as a young man. The core values of the generations past based on Christian and *"bourgeois"* thinking with a strong belief in an individual's right to ownership and integrity have been passed down and carried over to the organizational identity of the family business. The expectation that his aunt had for him had to be responded to responsibly but it also appears that Matti did indeed have the passion for it, too. This has formed his entrepreneurial thinking in a profound way and to him the thought of the family business continuing through the generations means everything. He has clearly had the thought of perpetuating the business right from the beginning of starting a family. Matti thinks that his own leadership qualities are different from Jussi's in that he sees himself as more controlling of a leader and Jussi as somebody that trusts his workers. This may be an indication of each style having served well in its own time because focus on excellent management is a prerequisite for multigenerational survival of a business (Aronoff 2004, 59) such as the Peräläs' which is over 130 years old.

"I would not have been this enthusiastic to continue to have this store this long, had I not had a successor, but traditions oblige…and I really have not known what else to do, I started as an entrepreneur when I was 18 years old…it means everything to me…I can't even imagine a situation where this would not be continued. The deceased would turn in their graves if it wasn't like this. I have no other view on this but that it is naturally clear that I started my family with the spirit that the company continues and I suspect Jussi thinks the same way. The world does change but I think one day Jussi's boys will be retailers. It cannot go any other way, this is how I think, they'll be able to go work in the store in a few years, what else could they be?"(8)

Matti has fostered a very intrapreneurial atmosphere in his businesses. Several members of his staff have wanted to become entrepreneurs themselves and particularly in the retail industry. Matti has encouraged them and also supported them in their effort by allowing them to utilize his contacts with the K-group so that they have been able to start their own stores up. This kind of promotion of corporate entrepreneurship has been an essential part of Matti's entrepreneurial identity and he seems to view himself as some sort of entrepreneurial visionary as to who has what it takes. In any case, Matti has supported a lot of people into entrepreneurship as a part of his own vision of entrepreneurial orientation. In addition to sending off members of his staff to become business owners themselves, has also set up business within his business with members of his staff, this being yet again suggestive of a strong streak of being a promoter of intrapreneurial action.

"I have had more than ten workers leave to become retailing entrepreneurs themselves and I've always seen who will succeed and who will not succeed and so far I've been right. Not everybody is an entrepreneur, that's what I've noticed. You have to be strong by nature to be an entrepreneur."(9)

"I had two good ladies over there in the grocery store and told them that let's set up a company and you become the manager of it and I'll be the chairman of the board and let's make one of the ladies the managing director and the other a member of the board."(10)

Now that Matti is 65, there are bound to be some changes in his entrepreneurial activities. He has thought about retiring, at least from the most active operations but now that Jussi is about embark on his biggest venture yet, which is the opening of their biggest hardware store thus far, the time may not be mature for Matti to step aside just yet. However, it does sound like he has taken more time off and enjoyed those rewards that come with hard work and success, for example travel. He talks about traveling more and being active in affairs more connected to his hobbies than business while remaining in the background and being very cognizant of what is going on in the business.

"I was supposed to retire already but it is really not suitable for this present situation, I did leave an application for retirement verbally but Jussi said that we don't have time to retire right now…for sure it would be difficult, because I still hold the strings firmly and am the CEO. I will encounter big changes soon because Kesko will not renew a chain contract with a 65-year-old…my son and I just flew to the Canary Islands, Spain, a couple of weeks ago to celebrate my birthday."(11)

The defining factor for Matti's entrepreneurial identity is being a member of the K-group. This in turn entails a very strong identification as a family business entrepreneur which is the traditional form of enterprising within the K-group. The thought of transgenerational wealth creation means everything to Matti and has guided the construction of his entrepreneurial identity. His local culture and the values embedded in that culture are essentially important for him because they are at the basis of his business operations also from the perspective from his stakeholders to whom his personal entrepreneurial identity is parallel with the organization's identity. His name is the company's name and he is a visible character in his region giving face to his business operations. The meaning of his spouse to his entrepreneurial identity is paramount.

6.13.2 Jussi's account

Jussi grew up literally in their family's business in that they lived in the same building where the family's grocery store was located at and he played in the store with his sister and the staff was like his family to him, reflecting the familial atmosphere of family businesses in general where the opportunistic behavior, for example, is rarer than in non-family businesses (Zahra et al. 2004, 368). Right from the beginning Jussi felt drawn to the retail industry and having worked in the store all of his life during his vacations from school, he felt that he was not interested in getting any more education after the commercial institute. He wanted to start work in the family business right away and says that he walked directly to behind the counter at the store after coming home from school.

The turning point that solidified his future plans as the successor of the family business came when his dad got a cerebral hemorrhage which kept him on the sidelines for the better part of a whole year. That changed everything overnight and the daily operations of the business were left in the hands of Jussi and his mother. This made Jussi grow up and assume responsibility and respond to dad's expectations to continue the business, no matter what. It is against this that Jussi reflects on the long history of the family's business also being a burden to some extent; it becomes a matter of honor for each new generation not to be the one to put an end to the family business. Matti's specific instructions to Jussi at the time of his illness were categorically not to shut the business down. After this incident Jussi seems to have felt as having grown as an entrepreneur and leader for at this time he felt that two bosses do not fit under one roof and subsequently the Peräläs opened another location where Jussi transferred. This development may have been due to the value systems shared by the two; it appears that Jussi feels that their values are so similar that they actually could be too similar at times which might be a cause of conflict. However, Jussi also sees the value of experience of the older generation and respects that as a worthwhile resource.

Interestingly enough, Matti did not talk about this incident of having fallen ill in his own account at all; to him the meaningful and defining event had been his wife's illness, cancer, with which she battled for many years, finally succumbing to it. However, Jussi talks a lot about what kind of an effect his dad's illness had on him. All in all the Perälä men have had their share of tragedy transforming them profoundly; their entrepreneurial careers have been marked with death and illness. However, these tragedies seem to have strengthened the familial relationships, which has been beneficial to the business.

> *"These hard misfortunes, these losses…dad's illness…and my brother died and two years ago to this day my daughter died at the age of one week and it has…and mother's death and all..they are events which stop you in your tracks and cause you to question if anything has any sense at all."(1)*

Jussi attributes a lot of anyone's entrepreneurial tendencies to the upbringing they receive at home. He definitely seems to hold his parents' as his entrepreneurial role models and the source of entrepreneurship being in the blood; he was socialized into entrepreneurship at home. He also thinks that the family gives a face to the business and his stakeholders appreciate seeing the family name in the business's name. Now, as a parent of two boys, he is doing the same at home where he sees his sons imitating him. The boys play store at home and are exposed to business matters in their parents' discussions on a daily basis. Dad would like to see them work in the store one day and he definitely wants them to be in business for themselves, his own attitude of seeing so much value in freedom that business ownership offers is what he wants his boys to enjoy as well. As much as he sees the entrepreneurial spirit being fostered and carried on through parental role modeling for children, he also believes that there can only be one person per each generation that has the ultimate control of things; he says straight out that he would have found it difficult to have had his sister in on the business. He has noticed that with time and across generations ownership gets so fragmented and in-laws of all sorts get involved that this is detrimental to the business.

In addition to that the individual traits that he identifies with of being competitive, ambitious, and desiring to be autonomous can be seen as being building blocks of his entrepreneurial identity. He appears to perceive himself as having a long-term-oriented approach to doing business.

> *"I claim that it is the upbringing, to a large extent, I did not know of anything else. It was my mother's and father's example of how they ran the store…it must the biggest reason that the entrepreneurs blood comes from there…the desire to make decisions and influence them, that must be it…I think the greatest thing is the parents' role that guides…at least for me…one needs to be persistent and like what one is doing…you can't become an entrepreneur with the thought that let's do this in a year and that's it…founding a store takes three years to get it somewhere so it must be perseverance...probably the competitive instinct needs to be strong, you can't do this just for money, because that is not persistence..and ambition, you have to have it ."(2)*

Jussi's experience regarding getting married and having a family is very similar to his dad's. His wife Minna is an inseparable part of his entrepreneurial ventures just as his mom was of his dad's. To Jussi family is a value.

"Minna is in my mother's boots in a way, I was incredibly lucky to have found Minna before my mother got sick so that she had time to teach Minna to do her work and the whole thing continued by Minna taking on mother's work as this business has grown so much that it has given everyone their share...The family is important, is it a value? I guess it is a value. The family is important, the family is needed and we do things together, it is just that it is a part of this deal, there's no other way I can express it, I would be in trouble if it wasn't for Minna and if it wasn't for Matti it just would be terrible"(3)

In regards to generational differences that Jussi sees between himself and his dad, he mentions aggressiveness. It is suggestive of the younger generation's entrepreneurial identification as taking on a more aggressive approach than the older generation's. In Jussi's case this seems to translate itself into his drive to go for bigger sales numbers and less emotion in regards to the actual locations of the business operations. This is indeed indicative of the generational differences because back in Matti's younger days as an entrepreneur in the K-group the individual entrepreneurs used to own the buildings housing their stores whereas nowadays the size of the stores has grown so much that the entrepreneurs do not own them anymore but the central organization does so the nature of the business has changed in that respect. For Matti the building itself has symbolized business ownership whereas to Jussi the business activity itself appears to be at the core of ownership. Matti feels more emotional about issues like that or giving up locations in order to concentrate on one big one, such as the new big hardware store Jussi is about to own.

A definite culturally idiosyncratic feature surfaces in Jussi's account on the nature of the kind of retailing that their family has been in, the context for which if often a small town culture, that he refers to as the village culture, with small circles and a lot of attention being focused on successful entrepreneurs. Jussi talks about envy and being the 'victim' of envious behavior, something that appears to be typical to Finns. Even in his account it seems that Jussi needs to explain to me that whatever monies have been made have been put back into the business, as if some explanation is needed for what they do with their own money. This account can be interpreted firstly as envy being something embedded to the Finnish culture that entrepreneurs have to learn to tolerate and secondly the reference to Matti's travels abroad can be interpreted as value indicating success attached to travels abroad. This implies that the entrepreneur is successful enough to take the time off and afford to travel abroad which ranks highly in the Finnish value system. Further, Jussi's account is reflective of the long-term-oriented economic thinking that is part of his entrepreneurial frame of mind, not to squander everything as soon as one gets it but build a sustainable business with a long term perspective.

"These village retailers don't even dare to buy a new car, if they do they get the same color as the old one so that the villagers won't notice...my dad never boasted with his money and he never had any because whatever he had...he put ...and the Toivakka store was expanded about 17 or 20 times...so as soon as we got a little we bought new machines or something so we put everything back in there, this must be the first time that dad can travel abroad with good conscience....the family business entrepreneurship...as soon as you don't trade in a new Audi but get the business going first, family business is a strength but if you do trade during the first year...that car is a good symbol of it."(4)

Jussi has learned to take more time off, prompted by his wife. He is also learning to take his vacations and has a summer house project going on, which is highly typical to Finns as a way of relaxation. However, the business is always present at home and during vacations due to laptops and cell phones. This is different from physically being at the store all the time, though.

Jussi's entrepreneurial identification is strong and constructed of much of the same elements as his dad's. Identifying himself as part of the K-group is important for Jussi and his wife is an essential part of his entrepreneurial identity, just as his mother was for his father. The successor's identity can be seen in a self-perceived more aggressive and less emotional approach to business operations than the older generations'. Jussi sees envy coming from his environment as something to tolerate and his value system is very similar to that of his childhood family.

6.14 Veijo and Mika Alm of Koneistamo Alm

Koneistamo Alm is a subcontracting machine workshop that is owned and operated by father and son Alm in the city of Kajaani, in the province of Kainuu. The company employs about 40 people. The industry that the Alms are in is especially challenging in nature in that very heavy investments and new, costly machinery are needed continuously in order for them to stay in the competition; the Alms feel that this makes strategy formulation and business development difficult. On the other hand the starting point in this industry is an emphasis on risk taking and continuously borrowing money for investments which is a given. The succession process in the company has started and is ongoing at the time of the interviews.

Veijo is a 58-year-old mechanical technician who founded Koneistamo Alm in 1982. His company got its start as a one-man-enterprise in his garage. By 1985 he had moved his business out of his garage into their first real business property where they stayed for the next 15 years and which piece of property he eventually actually bought as the company started growing. By the end of 90's that place had become too small for them at which point he bought the industrial hall in which they still operate. Veijo identifies himself professionally as a machinist that operates on component level production. They have begun to do assemblage production and are one of the first systems suppliers in Finland which is to say that they manufacture the product from beginning to the end including testing it. Their customer is left with only packaging the product.

Mika is a 36-year-old father of one. He has a master's degree in technology and before coming back to the family business, he worked for 8 years for three different companies in Jyväskylä, Central Finland. Mika has two brothers who also have a master's in technology only with a different area of specialty. In 2005 they had to decide whether one of them would continue the family business or whether it would be sold. Mika is the eldest of the three and he came back to run the company. His dad remains as the main owner of the company but ownership changes are ongoing.

6.14.1 Veijo's account

Veijo's entrepreneurial identification is embedded in the traditional Finnish realm of agricultural entrepreneurship which has commonly not been considered a form of enterprising before even though in practice that is what it has been. Farming has given a strong model for hard work for many a Finn in the past. Now Veijo is officially retired from the daily operations of the business but is still a strong presence in the company in order to coach his son Mika through the recessionary time and the beginning of his owner's career. Hoy and Sharma (2010, 107) comment on the recession that defined the economic picture at the time of the interviews by saying that "during a recessionary period, such as the one that began in 2008, it would not be surprising to see a family business owner postpone retirement, perhaps to the dismay of the next generation.". Veijo has indeed postponed his total retirement in the sense that he is still there to offer support and advice but in the Alms' case it is definitely not to Mika's dismay, on the contrary; dad's experience has been invaluable in the challenging economy of that time. It is indicative also of the kind of a responsibility and unselfishness an entrepreneur in the family business context feels; the parental identity is concurrently active with the entrepreneurial identity on Veijo's part; he is not going to let his son deal with the challenges by himself.

Veijo's wife has been an essential part of his entrepreneurial career in that she has supported his choices from the beginning and later came to work in the company as well. Most of her immediate relatives have been in business for themselves so Veijo's background of agricultural entrepreneurship at his childhood home and his wife's relatives have allowed him to draw on "double the family incubator experiences" (Hoy & Sharma 2010). This is also indicative of the Finnish culture where business owners' spouses and women working outside the home in general is more prevalent than staying at home which is rare. Veijo and his wife's retiring reflects the cultural perception of free time as a goal attained through successful business operations and hard work of entrepreneurs. All of Veijo's accounts of his entrepreneurial life emanate modesty, a value in high regard in Finland.

> *"I come from the country side, and farming of course is...maybe it didn't used to be considered enterprising the way it is considered now, but I come from a farming background which is entrepreneurship in its own way and then of course I've seen a lot of...we have a lot of businesses in our family, on my wife's side, almost all...my brothers-in-law are all entrepreneurs and I'm the youngest so I've seen all that and got interested through that, I'm not sure if it was also the fact that they were pretty successful...and then we decided together that I will continue as an entrepreneur and later my wife came along and worked here in the office, she is the same age as I am and she too retired last fall."(1)*

Veijo has three sons out of whom he thinks Mika is the most like him. As is often the case and perception of the older generation and especially the founder of a business, Veijo sees that Mika's circumstances as a starting entrepreneur are much better than his own were; the business is there to be taken and Mika has a good education to back his ventures up. The different circumstances define the generational differences of the entrepreneurial identity. Veijo sees the succession process as a long-term one; it takes years to be complete. At one time his middle son was considering coming back to the business but his wife could not get a good enough job in Kajaani so they decided not to come. Mika on the other hand did come back and Veijo carefully says that he might have sacrificed in coming back. This is indicative of the successor feeling responsible for the perpetuation of the family business operations and family legacy. However, it is important for Veijo to emphasize that that this was not forced on his son in any way, but an opportunity if he wanted to take it. Otherwise it would have been sold, like any other piece of property. This is the kind of a dimension that makes family businesses different from non-family enterprises, becoming an entrepreneur has a dimension that is value laden and often based on a sense of duty, at least to some extent.

> *"I've been of the opinion, from the very beginning, and I've said this always that everything is for sale, which means that the company is for sale, if need be…this is not bigger than life, to give up and sell to a stranger, it has given me personally what I have wanted, I've made a living, and then retired, so that's that. But of course it feels good, I won't deny it, that the business continues and in my own family, no less."*(2)

A strong feature of Veijo's entrepreneurial identity is that of withstanding envy coming from his environment, both social as well as work related. When he founded his company his biggest customer was his former employer and this was a source of envious mockery from his former colleagues who felt that he was getting to take the easy ride and getting rich by selling his work to his mates, in the service of his former employer. At the very beginning he got a dose of the green monster, that is to say envy, from his neighbors who apparently were worried that now that Veijo was an entrepreneur, the money would just come in through the doors and windows and this would really be bad. Envy is a culturally embedded feature that entrepreneurs and a lot of other people, especially those who are successful in any area of life, have to tolerate and come to terms with. Hellsten (2009, 85) comments on the culture of envy by saying that envy is born out of somebody else getting something that one would want for oneself but what one is not able to allow oneself to have. In principle the opportunity for entrepreneurial action is the same for everyone but not everyone has the courage to be an entrepreneur, hence the envy. It might be difficult for Finnish entrepreneurs to convert the perceived envy into a positive energy because that contradicts with another cultural force; that of high value given to modesty. To react to envious behavior by thinking and declaring that one is doing well does not resonate well with the expectation to appear modest.

"Some say that it is easy to do business with your old mates but when you take into consideration…the Finnish mentality as in the unending resource that is to say envy, it is not necessarily easy. It is too bad that envy becomes a factor at some point and might become a disadvantage."(3)

Veijo has had a lot of employees that have been with him since the beginning and who he feels to have a more of a friendship-like relationship with rather than employer-employee one. To him this means that his is not a faceless company. This attitude seems to have also contributed to some of the employees setting up their own companies and becoming entrepreneurs on their own right. Veijo has supported this by having given them business and referrals. A very strong part of his entrepreneurial identity is that of a promoter of corporate entrepreneurship.

"Even though somebody leaves here and sets up their own business, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are competing partners in co-operation, I've used that expression. We can do things together, it is more of a strength…"(4)

The system of values that Veijo sees as his own are based mostly on integrity and honesty. This has had to be the foundation of how he has treated his stakeholders. In addition to this he takes pride in the fact, that he has always kept his promise, no matter what. The meaning of networks is of essence in this industry but Veijo views them only through the industrial and professional lens, social networking to him plays no part in the business operations at all. He knows a lot of other entrepreneurs and family business entrepreneurs but does not attach himself to them through a social network, their role is important as seen as that of offering peer support, not so much as posing opportunities to do business.

"…and on the other hand the entrepreneur is so alone with those decisions, but discussing with one's colleagues and getting to talk about the same things, this is when one gets support for one's thoughts and might get direct answers, it's very important…and then one makes friends that one can go talk to and there is mutual understanding, no language barrier and it really is …important."(5)

Veijo sees time off as very important and a prerequisite for entrepreneurs' well-being. This is suggestive of the culturally embedded significance given to the quality of life the substance of which differs from one culture to another (see the chapter on cross-cultural research). He has worked hard and is now looking to enjoy retirement with his wife while wanting to pass his approach to free time on to the next generation.

"In the beginning I took a week, maybe two of vacation in a summer, but now for the past ten years I've taken maybe…unfortunately not all entrepreneurs can take four weeks but what I've done is I've taken at least a two week period, which is the minimum requirement for a person to recover, and then taken shorter periods on top…in a way that maybe in practice not quite the full amount of time but close to it and later then…and this is what I have tried to pass on in the succession process…I 've told Mika that understand and remember to take your vacations, so that you don't burn yourself out."(6)

6.14.2 Mika A.'s account

Even though Mika has never felt any pressure on the part of his father to come back to his home town to run the family business, he has known the interest that dad has had for one of his children to continue the business. This may have guided the construction of Mika's identity toward family business entrepreneurship. Mika acknowledges that the situation in which he entered the family firm is completely different from the one in which dad founded the company, hence the self-perceived difference in his entrepreneurial identity as well which he seems to view specifically from the next generation perspective. Dad has been able to do everything himself in practice whereas Mika comes in very well educated but with less of a pragmatic stance. This is a source of great respect for dad on Mika's part because dad has built everything from the ground up, literally. This know-how in Mika's view has extended itself to the financial area as well, drawing further respect from Mika. These issues can be seen as reflective of those weaknesses that Mika perceives in himself, being a member of the younger generation in a family business. All the boys, Mika and his two brothers have more or less grown up in the business and chosen to get their education in engineering which is closely connected to the family business industry. Loyalty to the family and its business can also be interpreted to have guided Mika's choices; in a social group such as family, its members are expected to remain loyal to one another (Lumpkin et al. 2008, 132).

Mika's developmental path to family business entrepreneurship took him first away from the business and after he finished his studies he worked elsewhere for several years. His initial thought had been not to come back but the years spent working for others lead toward a sort of a process of maturation which made him view the family business differently. It became a viable option for him and his family. Their stakeholders have viewed the continued family ownership as a strong signal of continuity which in turn has reflected well on their business. The meaning of networks to Mika is very similar to how his dad sees them; mostly as a source of peer support, no conscious networking to benefit the business is going on. On the other hand their company is a business to business kind of a company so the nature of networking is different anyway.

> *"I have come here to continue this business, it's not going to be shut down or sold off but it continues here with an aim of development and growth. I would think that it is...a clear meaning to the customer that it is a kind of a promise of continuity and they can rely on that more, than if it had been sold off, it takes quite a few years to see how they're gonna run it and what they're gonna do and all that so to some extent I believe it has been a relief to the customer."(1)*

> *"On the other hand there is a feeling of boredom; I don't want to see this anymore or that's how it felt in my 20's' but after you tread the world for a period of time your thought patterns may change and it doesn't seem like such a bad solution after all, it feels better and better all the time...but it still is a big change because it is so much easier to work for someone else, it is like two different worlds, even though you have responsibilities working for someone else as well and you have people working under you and all that but still, it's other people's money, other people's euros and it makes a big difference."(2)*

Now that he is running the business, he feels the pressures of the economic situation particularly hard. He knows many of his employees really well, he has worked with them in his youth, and now that decisions about furloughs and such need to be made, it is especially hard due to the friendship-like relationship his has with them. The business requires tough decisions and those have to be made in order to keep the business going. This is suggestive of the long-term-orientation of family businesses'. On the other hand Mika is convinced that their employees see the business having added value in being a family business rather than a big publicly quoted one.

> *"It is my purpose for us to work here for the long haul, the company has been up and running for 25 years, it is not my intention to kill it during the first five years."(3)*

Responsible ownership is a salient part of Mika's entrepreneurial identity. He feels responsible and accountable and reflects that through his thoughts on his employees' families in the recessionary economic situation that was current at the time of the interview.

> *"There are 37 families out there, obviously not all of them reliant just on one salary but we have some of those families as well. I've thought that it is quite a subdivision, 37 houses but I can't think about it too much, sometimes I can't help letting it enter my mind in the middle of the night."(4)*

The industry that the Alms operate in is such that it requires continuous big investments to be made and this has influenced the entrepreneurial identity of the Alm men, both father and son. It appears to have such significant meaning to them that it is constantly present in their accounts and even more so in Mika's accounts. This can be interpreted as being salient especially in the younger generation's identity in this industry because the responsibilities weigh so heavily on them and they face the economic demands more than the older generations that are seasoned and weathered to endure the burden of these requirements better. Mika seems to perceive the propensity for risk taking as being the definitive element in his entrepreneurial identity specifically from the perspective of this industry. To not take substantial financial risks in this industry would mean to not succeed. However, risks in this subcontracting industry are often beyond their own control because if their customers' factories are closed down, Mika has no control over that and all they can do is try and service their customer as well as possible to help the customer do well.

> *"You have to have a certain kind of boldness and craziness and an ability to take risks in this, and all those investments, and other, no matter how hard we calculate to see if they are sensible, we cannot necessarily justify them so a certain ability to take risks is needed. And then in this industry we don't always have work ready for our machines if we don't invest. We might sense a certain need but…at the end of the day we don't have any contracts at the ready so that when we invest we could immediately say we have filled one shift with orders…we never have that situation, in our kind of subcontracting…we don't have the kinds of contracts against which invest safely as many big corporations do."(5)*

Mika has seen his dad's attitude in promoting responsible ownership and corporate entrepreneurship and reflects on that with certain pride. This approach seems to have had an influence on Mika's entrepreneurial identity in that he views this positively and as something to foster. He is practicing his own kind of entrepreneurial mentoring by taking in trainees from local vocational schools where the youngsters get to know the industry and what working life is like. Eventually some of those youngsters may end up working for Mika. He is not looking for specific skills but the right kind of attitude that would suit his organization's intrapreneurial identity.

> *"It can be said to Veijo's merit that a couple of our ex-employees have been successful, they have started their own businesses and done relatively well…in fact there are three companies in Kajaani who are run by our ex-employees and it's really good…they have been brave and the first guy to leave who worked for Veijo…we have had an open system and support, and we have given them business, for the first couple of years we've supported them in a way that they have gotten some of our business so it has been safer for them to go do it, they have not had to jump right in to the market place to sell themselves but they have gotten a safe start up and we've given them some work and then they have had to look for it themselves…nowadays it can be said that Veijo has in the 90's…yes, he has acted as some kind of an business godfather…that has to be said to Veijo's merit."(6)*

Mika relies on what he perceives to be traditional Finnish family values in his attempt to instill entrepreneurial spirit in his own child, very much like his parents had done when they brought Mika and his brothers up. Everything is based on honesty, keeping one's word and communicating openly. His son is only five years old so the thought of succession is something that is not current but as family business owners often feel; he would find the thought of seeing his son in the family company charming but only if this was something that the son himself wanted. Dad's legacy is something that he is obligated to guard. This entails raising the children as responsible people, not taking anything for granted and in the culture of respect for hard work. He has worked in his family's business all of his summer vacations as a young man. This, he says, has been his own choice, though, indicating that his parents have been able to instill the desire to work for his own money in him.

The one regret that he has, looking back on his life as a child and into the future as a father, is the sacrifice of time spent away from home that entrepreneurs have to make. In the Finnish cultural realm that appears to give substance to Mika's thoughts on what the purpose of entrepreneurial venturing is to a great extent; gaining time as the end result of successful business operations. Profit making is obviously the goal but the reward gained through profit making is time. Mika takes time off to vacation regularly; at least three weeks in the summer and one in the winter. The meaning of money for Mika's entrepreneurial identity is that of it being a tool to run the business successfully and eventually get something out of it for himself but it does not appear to have intrinsic value as such.

> *"I am interested in profit all the time…but this is the case in all areas of entrepreneurship, if managers are not interested in profits it's not going to go well but there is also that goal, and I have that goal that when I'm older, that I could jump out of this rat race a little bit earlier, I*

don't want to be here until I'm 63...my target is not to be here that long, to be able to retire earlier or maybe not retire but the purpose of this for me is to have enough [money] left not to have to work here until I'm 63...as long as we can operate sustainably so that we wouldn't have to worry about the next month or next few months but to have a feeling of continuity and be able to focus on development, we don't have to reap unearthly profits. It is enough that we can in the long run...sometimes we have a bad year, sometimes positive years... to keep it on the positive side. There has to be a limit to greediness...Even though I say I would like to get out a little bit earlier, ok, it's healthy that if I am the entrepreneur here for 30 years, that I want some kind of reward for it but it doesn't have to be anything outrageous, I just need to make a secure living and live a normal life, that's enough for me."(7)

Mika's perception of the business culture in Kainuu differentiates it from that of Ostrobothnian indicating that despite Finland being seen as a fairly homogeneous area culturally there are some self-perceived regional differences in culture. Interestingly enough Ostrobothnia was the very region in Finland from where the largest numbers of people migrated to the US toward the end of 19th and early 20th century. Mika's account on culture is suggestive of the same kind of self-perceived cultural valuations in the Finnish and American culture that can be found in this study looked upon through the cross-cultural lens; a strong sense of self-efficacy in American and Finnish Ostrobothnian entrepreneuring and modesty in the Kainuu and Finnish entrepreneuring in general. The latter resonates strongly with the Finnish system of values as well as with the Lutheran work ethic.

"Clearly entrepreneurship is different in Kainuu than it is for example in Ostrobothnia, because in my opinion people there dare to show...here [in Kainuu] the preference is on modesty, we talk very little about what we do or boast about our actions, it is modest hard work here whereas in Ostrobothnia they are more like 'we can do this' and it is their strength that they think they can do whatever they want. Here our strength is modesty and being humble."(8)

Mika constructs his entrepreneurial identity through responsible ownership and feeling accountable to dad for the legacy that is the family business. To Mika time has intrinsic value in that being able to retire possibly earlier than he could otherwise is the reward to be gained through entrepreneurship. An essential part of his entrepreneurial identification is built through the industry that they operate in in which heavy investments and risk taking are a prerequisite for success.

6.15 Arto, Mika and Mikko Okkonen of Imagon Ltd.

Imagon produces illuminated advertising. They are headquartered in Kajaani, Finland where their product development unit is located. They also have a service and sales network covering Finland and Sweden with several installation and production partners elsewhere in the other Nordic countries as well as in central Europe and the Baltic countries. They now have 90 employees in Finland and 8 in Sweden and they are one of the biggest producers of illuminated advertising in Northern Europe.

Arto founded the company in 1988. The company has undergone a partial succession with Arto remaining the main owner with 60% ownership and sitting on the board of directors and his oldest son Mika now being the managing director while his younger son Mikko is still in business school. Mika owns 19% and Mikko 10% of the company while the rest is owned by a non-family member and technical service manager Juha Heikkinen. The company is very growth oriented and has an eye on internationalization for which they strive actively.

When I contacted Arto asking him to participate in my research he immediately suggested that I interview not only Mika but Mikko as well. This was indicative of Arto's proactive entrepreneurial attitude toward all things connected to entrepreneurship and his business and it also felt as if this was one more way for him to involve his younger son in the goings on of the family business. This instance reminded me of my earlier encounter with Joe Farr in Monroe, Louisiana, who immediately offered me an opportunity to not only interview him and his son but his father as well.

The interview guide that I used with the Okkonens was different than what I used with the other family business entrepreneurs in that it also included elements of the STEP-interview guide. The STEP Project stands for Successful Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Practices "Empowering families to build their entrepreneurial legacy" (http://www3.babson.edu/eship/step/). I incorporated my own research themes into the same interview with the STEP themes and combined the two research objectives into one. The STEP research report was later written up and submitted to the STEP Project archives making Imagon and the entrepreneurial family Okkonen one of the STEP cases.

The STEP Project is based at Babson College, Ma. and the project website describes it in the following way; "Founded by Dr. Timothy Habbershon in 2005, the STEP Project is a global applied research initiative that explores the entrepreneurial process within business families and generates solutions that have immediate application for family leaders. Families are the dominant form of business organization worldwide – they play a leading role in the social and economic wealth creation of communities and countries. To achieve continued growth and continuity, they must pass on the entrepreneurial mindsets and capabilities that enable them to create new streams of wealth across many generations – not just pass a business from one generation to the next. We refer to this practice as transgenerational entrepreneurship.". My own research objectives are in line with the STEP mission.

Arto is a 52-year-old father of two and the founder of Imagon Ltd. Originally he was educated as an electrician but has over the years acquired more and more education ; he has an eMBA and has taken numerous courses ranging from self-development to corporate governance, he is a self-proclaimed 'education addict'. Lately Arto has ventured into local politics which has meant him having left the operational leadership of his company to others focusing his energies more on board work in the company and his position as the chairman of the city government and member of the provincial council of Kainuu. Arto is very eager for the company to grow and internationalize, he sees that this is the natural way to go because that is the way their customers have taken, that is to say go abroad. Arto sees this situation as one of an exciting challenge.

Arto's older son Mika is a 33-year-old father of one and a graduate of a business school. He is the managing director of Imagon at the moment who, ever since his childhood, has worked in all kinds of various jobs over the years in his dad's company first during his summer vacations and then later in different positions in management before becoming the managing director. During his years in the business school he started up an information technology company with his friends in which he first worked as the financial manager and later as the managing director. Mika views that time in his life as a great learning experience; *"But it was a very educational time, I mean it is....I familiarized myself with the laws of scarcity during that time, one learns to be frugal when one cannot pay oneself any salary for two months. It was an incredibly educational time....I was the managing director there for a year and then left, I quit, I didn't have any place to go to but I knew that I work hard and will find a job plus I had great grades from the business school"*(1).

Arto's younger son Mikko is a 21-year-old electrician but currently enrolled as a business school student. Mikko was born on the same year as his dad founded his company so Imagon has always been a salient part of Mikko's life. He has had a natural interest in the company's product development and originally did get an electrician's training which has been useful for him in the company where he has worked different jobs through all of his summer and other vacations. However, his interest in the company affairs has expanded into the business operational side, hence his business studies.

6.15.1 Arto's account

Being a business owner was not something that Arto had always dreamed of. His work identity was firmly rooted in his profession of being an electrician, with a desire to innovate and a skill for reflexiveness and self-assessment, both of which are important skills to have at the very early stages of business founding (Hoang & Gimeno 2010, 42). The turning point of his entrepreneurial life was when he left a secure and well paid job in a paper mill to start afresh as a business owner. When he did found his company, his dream was not for it to become a family business. As Hoy and Sharma (2010, 10) point out; "not all ventures are launched with an eye toward perpetuity". Now he is a very successful business owner and his company is managed by his son and his younger son is likely to be heading it one day as well. Both have ownership of the family firm and hence feel a great deal of commitment to it and its future. The company is a member of the Finnish Family Firms Association. Arto's entrepreneurial identity seems to have developed from an intrapreneur's working for others to an entrepreneur's onto a family business entrepreneur's. In order to realize what must have been his wished-for-identity in the beginning of his entrepreneurial career, he has educated himself further and further becoming the self-proclaimed 'education addict' being driven by his desire for freedom and autonomy. It appears that the role of education for him has been one of having offered reinforcement to those entrepreneurial qualities that he has perceived in himself thereby strengthening his belief in the decisions he has made in his life. Education has also been important for Arto in him having developed a strong self-esteem and the ability to listen to feedback. The continuous education and receptiveness to learning in all contexts can be interpreted to have an essential role for Arto's entrepreneurial identification. Huovinen and Tihula (2008, 155) say that "efficient entrepreneurs are often exceptionally good learners who learn from almost all their experiences, for example, by working with their customers, suppliers and competitors".

It was clear to Arto that he would aim for growth right from the beginning after having founded his company. At the onset the company was profiled as northern Finnish but soon the goal changed to being a national company. Now their goal is to be a global company eventually. A certain amount of aggressiveness appears to have defined Arto's entrepreneurial identity from its inception. However, Kajaani is Arto's hometown which he feels an emotional connection to so the headquarters have remained there. In addition to feeling loyalty to his home province, Arto also sees advantages in being located in Kajaani in that since competition is scarce in this industry there, his workers are committed to working for Imagon and this in turn creates benefits in added and accumulating human, social and psychological capital.

> *"One time in the 90's I said that if I were in Helsinki, I could not get a meeting with the mayor by calling him directly or sending him a text message saying hey, let's have a meeting, when can you come take a sauna, it is not possible there. It is possible here. In Kainuu many people are committed to the companies they work for due to many industries having little competition and on the other hand Kainuu people are such that when they start something, they commit. This has insured the growth of know-how capital in companies."*(1)

Arto gave up the managing director's position at the turn of the century and hired an external manager whose tenure proved to be challenging for the company in that a lot of resources were spent on product development but the creativity and innovativeness were lacking and the leadership culture was not conducive for the development of the company; eventually he left with a spin-off company. This time in the company's life cycle was one of deep crisis and this is when Arto's son Mika came to take the helm. That for Arto signified the change from being a business owner to being a family business owner and the future outlook changed into one with long-term transgenerational wealth creation. He has also strived to create an organizational culture that fosters innovativeness and intrapreneurship; technological innovation is a prerequisite for success in his industry. The promotion of intrapreneurship or corporate entrepreneurship has in fact led to some people becoming entrepreneurs themselves; Arto has supported those ventures in giving them business and the benefit of his contacts. Arto has also acted locally as a mentor in a non-profit organization for would-be-entrepreneurs which has been a part of him giving back to his community.

As far as Arto's entrepreneurial attributes go, being a visionary relying on his own intuition is maybe the most salient of those. He has developed his skills of self-reflection over the years and has started to see himself as more of a visionary than an operative leader. Kisfalvi (2002, 514) says that "by becoming more aware of the subjective elements that underlie their business intuitions, they can more insightfully evaluate their introspection or self-awareness, the desire to embark on such a journey must come from within the individual him/herself". Arto seems to have allowed himself the freedom of recognizing his essentialist qualities and the development of those with the thought of delegating power with respect to merit elsewhere to the benefit of his business and family. His identity seems to be very future-oriented and he constantly seeks new things, new projects. Somehow he seems to view himself as somewhat reckless as well indicating certain fearlessness at the face of risk taking. To balance this off, his company has a board with external members in it, to keep him grounded and to offer an outsider's view. He also wants to avoid a lock up of seeing only the family's viewpoint. Good governance is something that Arto feels passionate about, that he has studied and keeps contemplating a lot. Arto has understood that as the family business and the family itself move forward in parallel life cycles thus becoming more complex the governance mechanisms become increasingly important (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 7).

> *"I am a 'gazer into the crystal ball', I see things as complete in the future, I don't necessarily know how to get there, I don't see that path, so I'm more of a visionary , starter of things, connector of things, but in no way the one to take things to their completion. …being a visionary is one thing so that through that comes the courage to go do those things instead of thinking about them too much and calculating…new things interest me immensely…I give space to people, I trust, I believe that they are capable of taking care of their tasks better than I am and then….connector of things, starter of new things…those are my strengths as an entrepreneur… All of this, as a whole, that we have perceived as family business operations and a strong commitment to it…and on the other hand we don't want to lock ourselves up in utilizing our close circle, we dare to bring in external know-how to fortify that which we feel is not our forte "(2)*

Having realized, through self-reflection, that one of his most important qualities as an entrepreneur is that of being a visionary has liberated him in a sense to reorganize the leadership in his company and grant himself the position of doing what he is best at doing and also allowing him to satisfy his thirst of doing various different things, like being involved in other business ventures and lately in local politics. His approach to being engaged in multiple entrepreneurial ventures positions him as a portfolio entrepreneur which in this research setting is indicative of a boundary-crossing entrepreneurial identity in that this is typical in the American culture and less typical in the Finnish culture.

> *"When I understood that I am a visionary, starter of things but not the one to complete them, not an operative leader…I can't even remember when this was…but this insight that I was able to have through self-knowledge, it guided me and probably caused me to strive to get away from the everyday operative leadership and do things at which I am at my best, that I*

> *know best and that I enjoy doing. As I'm sure you have noticed by now, I have to have many things going on at the same time…I have to have wildcards, I enjoy those."(3)*

Arto's approach to networking also resembles his Louisianan colleagues' approach. This does not mean to purport that Finns do not have networks, or networking skills or that they don't appreciate them, I mean to suggest that the actual meaning attached to social and/or business networks is different to Finns than it is to Americans who appear to attempt to create wider and wider networks of contact constantly utilizing every avenue for it, like school, church, hobbies, philanthropy, to name a few. Finns seem to separate their social activities more from their business activities and thus do not consider it important to use every opportunity, regardless of the context to promote business goals. Arto's approach somehow seems to be suggestive more of blurring of boundaries in that to him networks of all kind seem to represent business opportunities, at least at some level and he appears to be very proactive in building his networks. This networking can alternatively be interpreted as representing his desire to socialize, be visible, make an impact, an example of which is his recently launched political career. In any case, as a result of his networks he has accumulated idiosyncratic knowledge about local conditions and internal processes; Royer et al. (2008, 18) say that "one crucial face of experiential knowledge in family businesses lies in exploiting the specific business networks that often form one essential pillar of successful business activities". Arto's networks can be interpreted as him being very active in multiple areas of life; the networks extend from him having connections with banks and other entrepreneurs to political circles and sports; he is the chairman of the chamber of commerce, the vice-chairman of the board of the chamber of commerce of Oulu, a member of numerous positions of trust in the both the business as well as political world, he has coached alpine skiing, he rides motorcycles as a hobby for 15 to 30 000 kilometers a year meeting a lot of people through that, he is a member of the Rotaries and so on.

Arto's accounts reflect a high degree of confidence that he appears to have in himself and his accomplishments. He tells me, for example, that in 2006 he received an award for being the most positive person in Kainuu. He continued on to say that this was a purely subjective estimation and not based on any doctor's estimation. In his manner that reflects of fairly high degree of self-efficacy, typical to entrepreneurial people, he appears to be presenting himself as less than modest which is not something that is well taken in the cultural realm of Kainuu or Finland, for that matter. However, Arto is skillful in counterbalancing this by practicing self-deprecating humor which is typical in the Finnish culture that otherwise holds modesty in high value.

Arto's wife plays an important part in his entrepreneurial ventures in offering him unconditional support on the one hand but also acting as a balancing factor, very much the same way as the external board members do. Her entrepreneurial attributes seem complementary with Arto's as well while having a value system very similar to Arto's of regarding family and hard work to be of high value. Sometimes his wife also takes on the role of communicator when father and his sons feel they cannot get their point across, mother then filters the message in a way that everybody listens.

> *"My wife and I are different personalities, she has her feet on the ground more than I do, she is an everyday realist while I'm more of an idealist. She's always wanting to know when I am going to grow up and I say hopefully never, I hope I always stay this wild."* (4)

The differences in the entrepreneurial identities that Arto seems to see between him and his son Mika are also ones that complement each other, thus creating transgenerational synergy for their company. Whereas Arto visions the future in the great scheme of things without paying attention to processes and details, Mika is the one who takes things to their completion. Arto appears to have a great deal of trust in his son and allows Mika to run the business and lead it in his own way. This does not mean, however, that the two interact in continuous harmony but have tough discussions and arguments at times because dad just has such a strong feeling or intuition of the outcome of an idea that he has but has a hard time justifying his point of view. However, given the quality of communication that both the father and son promote, the visions get communicated which is a skill that entrepreneurial leaders need (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 119). Their views differ on strategy and decision making but being the main owner Arto sticks to his guns. According to Kisfalvi (2002, 514) the influential position of the entrepreneur, such as Arto's, causes his subjective interpretations of strategic realities to have great effect on the company's choices. However, Arto is a firm believer of keeping the channels of communication open and promotes a highly communicative organizational culture as well. According to Schein (1987, 179) the basis of shared understanding which allows the organization members to recognize specific feelings, experience and action as common and their own a shared communicative system has to have been established. Utilizing this shared understanding Arto believes in dialogue, questioning things and bringing ideas forward. A strong part of Arto's entrepreneurial identification is his belief in intuition and future-oriented thinking. Arto seems to be confident that in time Mika is headed to the same direction as he is entrepreneurially in that he has already started seeing innovativeness and a more of a risk taker in Mika.

Arto's yearning for discussions and communications has also taken a more formal substance in his desire to define the future of the family business through setting up a family council-type of a forum to discuss important issues such as family ownership strategy. This is suggestive of a will to transfer the reflexiveness of Arto as an individual to his family business.

> *"Sometimes it feels that we need to talk more but don't have the time always so this is why we need to stop in the midst of everyday hurry and reserve time and space for discussions on these issues freely without having to write up minutes…and on the other hand to raise this younger generation into family business entrepreneurship…"* (5)

Being the visionary and future oriented person that he is, Arto has already started to see a potential intragenerational succession process in the works. He is bringing his younger son Mikko up into entrepreneurship as well. It was probably this thought that motivated Arto to immediately offer me the opportunity to interview his younger son as well. Mikko is still at school but dad is already pondering the possibility of Mikko following in his brother's footsteps. This he sees as part of the future of the family business in that once he steps aside completely, maybe Mika is going to want to assume the chairmanship of the board and Mikko the position of managing director. This would be quite convenient given the age difference between the brothers; Mikko is eleven years Mika's junior; Arto can be seen as an entrepreneurial leader who is "equipped with an appreciation of the phases of human life cycles" and can "proactively plan the adoption and modification structures and policies that become enablers of effective governance of their firms" (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 31).

Given my earlier argument of interpreting Arto as culturally boundary crossing in his having a portfolio of ventures and presenting himself in a less modest way than is usual, it needs to be pointed out that he is very much embedded in his own cultural environment, too. Despite the fact that he works long hours and is engaged in numerous activities keeping him away from home, his temporal orientation does very much suggest of a Finnish cultural perception of what success and free time entail. The concept of time and free time is different in the two cultures under study here. Keeping in mind how Shepherd and Haynie (2009a) see the entrepreneur's identity as having to have elements of satisfying the need for belonging and the need for being distinctive, I argue that Arto's need for entrepreneurial distinctiveness is so strong that it extends itself to how he spends his free time.

Finns travel a lot and traveling abroad is considered to be something of value. The further you go, the more distinct you are in your traveling thus symbolizing you as unordinary. Arto's entrepreneurial distinctiveness can be seen through his account of his approach to spending his free time and vacationing, it can also be interpreted as being descriptive of his entrepreneurial identity in all of its distinctiveness. It is symbolic of the 'reckless' but controlled attitude with which he approaches both life and business.

> *"Let's just say that if I go on vacation, I have to go far away. My wife works even harder than I do and I remember the first time we went abroad, years ago, we went to Mallorca [Spain], spent a week there, and noticed it was too short of a time…and we've traveled to the Canary Islands because…Puerto Rico means sunshine for sure and we both like the sun so we've traveled there because of that and we went to Phuket, Thailand…motorcycling is one thing, work doesn't enter one's mind then…I like to ride these 'iron ass rides with my friend Eero, this means 1000 miles or 1609 kilometers minimum in a twenty-four-hour period…the longest ride we did was three days and 5200 kilometers and usually in the spring…at the end of May, or in June, or a week before Mother's day we take the ladies and drive up to the Arctic circle, eat sautéed reindeer and drive back, it is 12 hours and 850 kilometers. Then at the end of May, beginning of June we jump on our bikes and drive to Skibotn, Norway and take a swim in the Arctic Ocean and drive back. That's 1750 kilometers and 20 hours, approximately. I think I've done about 17 iron ass rides and in 2006 we flew to Chicago, rented Harleys and drove down Route 66 with the ladies for two weeks, across America and in*

2007 it occurred to us to go have a cup of coffee in Tirana, Albania. We drove for two weeks, 12 hours a day, 7800 kilometers...went to Helsinki, then Travemünde and then drove through Germany, visited Belgium and France and Italy and had a cup of coffee in Monaco and then drove back to Italy and then went to Tirana, had a cup of coffee and ate a little and the drove back and the ladies sat in the back and now, come Midsummer, we are going to fly to Los Angeles, rent Harleys again and drive up Highway one."(6)

Arto's entrepreneurial identity is constructed of him having perceived himself as a visionary relying on his entrepreneurial intuitions. His entrepreneurial identification has taken a developmental route from working for someone else, to founding his own business to identifying with family business entrepreneurship. His two sons and their present and future roles in the family business are essential for Arto's wished-for-identity regarding the future. He appears to have a very strong need to be distinct yet able to satisfy his need for belonging through his familial contacts and numerous social activities.

6.15.2 Mika O.'s account

Mika was not enthused about going to school at all and found it difficult to get motivated there. It was during his military service (Finland's defense is based on universal male conscription), that he found leadership qualities in himself that felt so strong at the time that he even considered continuing on to cadet school and having a career in the military. However, having obviously inherited the skills of self-reflection from his dad, he realized he would not like the strictly regulated and controlled military profession. Instead he did odd jobs like welding in his dad's company before starting his studies in a business school. It was there that he found his calling, that being numbers, accounting and money. The company that he founded with his friends from school, however, turned out to be a source of frustration and not enough motivation for him. Mika appears to have a low tolerance for monotony. Eventually he ended up in his dad's company and has advanced to the position of managing director.

One of the defining moments for Mika regarding the family's business and his life was when he decided to join the Finnish Family Firms Association thereby making his commitment to transgenerational wealth creation visible and immediately rendering the business operations as something more than just business and more like a legacy to be perpetuated. Mika has one daughter, through whom he reflects on the future, who is still very young but who will probably be found in the not too distant future cutting grass on the company premises, this reflecting the socialization into entrepreneurship that goes on in entrepreneurial families. It is also suggestive of a culture bound issue in the cross-cultural context of this research; Mika's culture does not differentiate so much between men's and women's work but in today's Finland the prospects are more gender neutral. As far as the future goes, Mika feels like many of his colleagues the family business owners that to see his child in the company one day would be great but only if that were truly something she wanted. The other defining moment in Mika's life was when he was made the managing director, it made him grow up in an instant and made him assume a whole new kind of responsibility; he realized it was up to him whether the workers in the company have work to do or not.

Mika became the managing director at a time of crisis within the company. The previous managing director, not a family member, had left with a spin-off company. It was during this external directors time that Imagon was driven into a downward spiral product development draining it of all resources. When Mika was offered the position of managing director he wanted that to be based on merit and not on kinship so he had in depth conversations with the external members of the board to ensure that they would indeed find him competent for the job. This reflects Mika's thoughts on the perils of family entrepreneurship as well in which the downside can be the failures due to nepotism. Mika's development into the leadership position that he is in now can be interpreted as a developmental story of a young man into leadership and family business ownership who thrives in times of crisis. Now that the company is stable again, he needs to find future challenges to keep him motivated because as said before, his intolerance for monotony might be a risk to him continuing in the family business operations.

> *"We turned this thing around in two years and now we face new challenges…we have gotten the fires put out…burning problems solved and the organization working, so that I don't have to be attached to this all the time now, the challenge now is to…if one goes to fix something that is not broken, it is even more difficult than when we had the bad crisis, because back then we had nothing to lose, anything that we did took us forward…."(2)*

Mika reflects on the entrepreneurial differences between himself and his dad through the same kinds of perception that his dad did. The Okkonen men share the desire for self-reflection and practice that continuously. Mika sees himself as more stable and his dad as an entrepreneurial 'wild child', very much the same way Arto perceived them as well. Mika is able to see the total picture well and has a long-term-oriented outlook on the future but he is not as skillful yet in networking, the importance of which he fully realizes but is in the developing stages of his own networks. Just as his dad thought, Mika feels that he is more risk-averse than dad. Mika's thoughts on these differences also reflect the life-cycles of the company from start-up to later times. He has grown and developed as a man and what he saw earlier as complete opposite qualities of father and son rendering them as totally incompatible to work in the same company, he now sees as complementing attributes that respond to different needs of the company at different times. Mika's mom's role in her son's and husband's entrepreneurial operations has not been insignificant even though she does not work in the company. She has acted as a sounding board and unconditional support for both while acting as the mediator and communicator when needed, in order to keep up the channels of communication between father and sons. Mika's own leadership identity is built on being able to transform and change according to the changing environment being sensitive to changes. This is not unlike his father's entrepreneurial identity. Both father and son see hard work as a value that has always dominated their value system, both have learned it at home.

> *"At the end of the 90's I told my dad and others, as a joke, that I will never work here because I've seen what it takes to be an entrepreneur and how hard he had to commit to this, I thought it does not make any sense and jokingly said that two Okkonens do not fit under one roof, one is enough in this company but …I then started seeing myself that things can be done in many ways, they can be done like he did and maybe a company like this requires a crazy one like that who is involved in everything for the company to be born and maybe a more analytical person such as myself could not get it started up…that's how I see it, given that we are so different…somehow the company is successful in different phases and all companies need different leaders in different phases."(3)*

Unlike is often recommended in the family business literature, Mika does not see any reason to set up a family council type forum for the Okkonens. He sees a traditional Finnish way of conducting building projects at the family's summer house as the appropriate and natural way of communicating outside of the daily operations of the business. This is indicative of the cultural context in which the Okkonens exist; summer cottages, saunas, and building things together are a traditional way to communicate for Finnish men.

> *"We don't have to develop anything else other than to have something to do together and then it's easy to talk and one such thing for example is our summer house, next summer we need to start building a new sauna there or do some changes to the existing one so that it could be used better during the winter time. If we do that in the summer, that's the best for us all because it is not natural for us to sit down and start to deliberate…dad is not necessarily the kind of a man to come to us and say boys, let's talk but when you give him a hammer and saw and start building, we can talk about anything."(4)*

Fate worse than anything else in Mika's perception would be to be the successor in a family business just to please one's dad leading to a very reluctant and recalcitrant owner-manager whose only reason of being would be to respond to someone else's expectations. He seems to have avoided that trap genuinely but only through having distanced and distinguished himself from his dad who has been a formidable and influential figure in the company. This has been facilitated by dad's venturing elsewhere into his numerous other endeavors as well as Mika's experiences in his own company set up with friends. He remains strong in his determination to do things his own way. This is suggestive of the younger generation members of both being allowed to develop in their own direction as well as having an obligation to develop their own distinctive identity.

> *"Of course parents will have their expectations for their children...but at some point they have to …I think it would be good to find one's own way before becoming the successor because then it…if one has not made the break, it can be pretty challenging…like our situation would be bad if there were no clear boundaries because now the situation is that dad is involved in all kind of things elsewhere and this is possible only because we have drawn that boundary. I do things differently than he does and some of it he accepts but not all but I still do it and he understands…in that respect it is good but had we not made that break we might have gone to the wrong direction had he started to give me directions …I could not really be the managing director, I'd just be a puppet and this is clearly a problem in some family businesses."(5)*

At the time of the interview the most salient part of Mika's overall identity seems to be that of the leader's identification. He spends a lot of time reflecting on that indicating that the present tense of identities' temporal orientation is the most noticeable in his identity structure. By emphasizing the prominence of his leader's identity he seems to differentiate between the role of leader and entrepreneur and does his reflecting through the previous. He appears to have spent a considerable amount of thought on what constitutes good leadership and what that entails in regards to him and has come up with firm leadership principles suggestive of his own kind of leadership versus his dad's or the previous managing director's. He has been able to separate that which is the essence of leadership from that which is not and is attempting to act upon that. In practice this has meant setting clear goals as to what has to be the aim of delegating the tasks. His phone has rung less as opposed to earlier times during which, as he now sees it in retrospect, leading the company was a one-man-show. He takes the phone ringing less as a sign that his leadership style has taken and his staff take more responsibility, do their jobs, and come to him only when they really need to.

> *"If one thinks about the fact that we have about a hundred people here, it will not work if the managing director has to stir the everyday routines and put in the longest hours doing that, he will not have time to guide others while doing that. Time will run out. In the beginning I did that, I worked long hours but then I started to think that hell, this doesn't make any sense because there are a hundred people here and I am one hell of a bad leader if I can't make others act and do those things. Nobody else will do that but myself."(6)*

Mika's leadership style is based on drawing clear boundaries between free time and time at work. He is insistent upon being able to be the kind of a managing director who emanates his own kind of leadership culture in which time is a valuable resource not only to be harnessed for business but for family and leisure as well. This seems to symbolize a balance in life for Mika worth striving for. This could be interpreted as having risen out his own experiences of having had a father who was absent a lot or having seen his dad work so hard that the company may have seemed more like a burden than a joy. His dad has never known how to say no therefore Mika is determined to learn how to say no. As he was made the managing director, he immediately made the decision to take his vacations in full; four weeks in the summer and one in the winter. He gives salience to his parental identity through his consumption of time. In any case Mika is determined to be successful in his own way by delegating as much as possible to be able to concentrate on what is important in his opinion.

> *"It means that I draw a line where I cannot be reached from five to nine…I have my phone with me on silent or call waiting but I will not answer it except if someone calls three times and sends a text message saying it's urgent. I started teaching this value, maybe unconsciously …that one has to have free time and working life and that nobody is so important that they have be accessible all the time…they can't be. I started teaching this to the members of my management team and everybody…you don't have to be accessible all the time, a position in the management team does not mean that you have to work 24 hours a day. It means that you work 8 hours but do quality work, do the right things. This is how we have started to shape this leadership culture and the culture of doing in general…ok, I say from five to nine but after my daughter goes to bed, the phone rings but a lot less now."(7)*

Having felt that the company's organizational culture took a turn for the worse during the tenure of the previous managing director to the extent that people started taking sick leaves a lot more, Mika has wanted to cultivate a different kind of atmosphere that fosters openness and innovativeness with tolerance for failure. Entrepreneurial firms "cultivate a culture that tolerates change and failure so as to embed the entrepreneurial spirit in both the family and its enterprise" (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 14). Mika's strength as a leader appears to be his skills for listening and the influence of that is reciprocal in that he goes to talk to a variety of people within the organization constantly to hear their ideas and thoughts emanating a kind of an organizational group-oriented culture in which "the belief is that only through joint effort can the best solutions be identified and tested. The resulting trust and sharing of sensitive data and innovative ideas across functional boundaries encourages entrepreneurship" (Zahra et al. 2004, 365). It is as if he is building a kind of a collective leadership identity which also serves his need for belonging. He trusts his people enough to dare to delegate. In other respects he admires the kind of family like culture that his dad cultivates in their company, the symbol of which can be interpreted to be the company's 20th anniversary party for the staff which was held at Arto's home and where 160 people ended up celebrating.

> *"I think it has spread widely in our company that there are really many people here to bounce ideas off of, I find it to be a richness because this is not a one-man-show in which I just sit here and think that this would be a cool thing but rather for me it's like I talk with others and get information from many different people, from different perspectives and then those combine to good things that can be taken forward, this is what I have observed."(8)*

As a family business owner Mika has a long-term-oriented perspective into the future. He, just like his dad, has started thinking about the family company's future in terms of a potential intragenerational succession in which his brother Mikko would be at the helm of the operative leadership as he himself would sit on the sidelines heading the board. This plan is feasible and takes into consideration Mika's own entrepreneurial ambitions that do not tolerate monotonous action for very long. Entrepreneurial leaders make considerable efforts to ensure that a capable successor is in the wings to take his place in a timely manner (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 136). Mika believes in positions based on merit and competence rather than kinship relations so he wants to make sure that his brother finishes his education, learns English well enough to be able to handle international deals, which is what they are doing increasingly more. This is suggestive of entrepreneurial families being promoters of education.

> *"I have set certain goals for him, he needs to graduate, otherwise he has no place here and I'd like to see him work elsewhere for a few years because he has been where I was, always involved in this and come and gone as he pleased and learned a relatively free culture of work, so it would be great if he experienced a stricter culture of work, at least he'd learn to appreciate this freedom."(9)*

Internationalizing is increasingly the goal for Imagon and they do more and more business abroad already. Mika has set the goal for Imagon to be the best in the world one day reflecting his own need for constant challenges in order to avoid stagnation. It also seems to take on a self-fulfilling prophecy-like tone.

> *"I once said that there is no obstacle for us to one day be the best in the world in this industry…we have thought about that and I have said, why is that not a goal?"(10)*

Currently Mika's leader's identification seems to be more salient than the entrepreneurial one. He identifies very strongly as being a family business owner but is focused on solidifying and leaving his own imprint in the leadership culture and organizational culture of Imagon, their family's company. He has an outlook onto the future that has designated his younger brother as the next successor while he visions himself in other entrepreneurial ventures while heading the board of Imagon. Mika's entrepreneurial identity appears to be complementary with his father's and both allow each other space and freedom to realize their identities.

6.15.3 Mikko's account

Mikko and the family business are the same age. Mikko's father decided to leave his job at the paper mill to start his own business when his wife was expecting Mikko. Mikko identifies strongly with the business through feeling that he was born into it. This is reflected by him constantly using the first person plural 'we' all through his interview in reference to the collective social identity he presents as a member of this business owning family. He has had to compete with the successful enterprise to get attention and his father's and brother's shadow may have made it challenging to him to establish his own identity (Miller et al. 2003, 524). He remembers having earned the money for his first flashlight by having shredded paper in his dad's office thus having been socialized into entrepreneurship and earning his own money from early on. He also appears to have a very intrapreneurial streak in him as a result of his entrepreneurial upbringing.

> *"Everything that I do, whether it's working for someone else, I want to do it as cost efficiently as possible…as if it were my own money, even though it might not be, it starts like if I notice something that can be done at a lower cost…basic things…some people have the attitude that they don't care because it's not their money. All that matters to me…it must have developed from childhood; it has been a strong characteristic of mine."(1)*

First Mikko got himself a vocational education and became an electrician. He has a natural interest to the kind of products their company produces, hence the vocational training. However, this seems to have not satisfied his ambitions completely, and given his other interests entrepreneurship and money, he now is a business student while working in the family's company during his vacations. Product development is his passion, which is reflected in his vocational background as well and he is enthusiastic about innovating and has benefited from transgenerational learning. Innovation in this context according to Hoy and Sharma (2010, 11) means "the generation or introduction of novel processes or products as a consequence of interactions between family members of one or more generations". Ownership in the company is something that he thrives on, it signifies trust that dad has in him. Entrepreneurially Mikko sees himself to be similar to his dad; he is a 'doer', like dad. He appears to have great respect for his dad and his brother and presents himself in a humble and modest way in regards to his position; he is just starting out.

> *"It is a certain kind of show of trust from dad, after having accomplished all this and...and maybe he wants to bind us, me and my brother to this company, I appreciate this company very much."(2)*

As much as Mikko sees himself as similar to his dad, he feels that dad may be too involved in all the other activities that go on outside the business. Mikko feels that if he were dad, he would concentrate on the essential things. This is indicative of Mikko not seeing dad's activities as useful networking which appears to be a feature typical to the Finnish business culture, regardless of him saying that networks are valuable. Ostensibly the importance of networks is recognized but the approach to networking seems to be different than in the American business culture where every opportunity is often seized to create networks of contacts and no contact is seen as unimportant. It would seem that networking is more of an individual trait in the Finnish business culture because despite of their father's extensive networking Mikko and Mika have not been socialized into that part of entrepreneurial action.

Mikko's wished-for-identity seems to be geared into finding his own path in the working world in much the same way as his brother did. His thoughts are identical with his brother's on positions needing to be based on merit rather than on kinship, which he sees to be the potential downside of family business operations. The thought of being an owner and very likely having a future in the family's company is constantly present in his accounts of his life but he seems to want to advance at his own pace making his own decisions. He is very keen on the idea of working abroad for a period of time and utilizing this experience for the benefit of the company which is very strongly geared toward internationalizing. The Okkonen men appear to be what Hoy and Sharma (2010, 47) refer to as enterprising families in that they "are committed to recognizing opportunities that will enhance both the business's and the family's human, intellectual, and financial capital and will carry these legacies from one generation to the next".

Mikko has a great deal of respect not only for his dad but his brother as well whose role as the renewer of their company's organizational culture has been significant in Mikko's eyes. A driving force for his entrepreneurial identity seems to be the desire to develop the company in co-operation with his brother. They share their view on professing to care about their employees' well-being and both appear to be committed to keeping the company's culture very family like. This attitude is reflected in Zahra et al. (2008, 1039) saying that "a culture of commitment to the business on the part of the family also contributes to a strong organizational identity around which the family firm and its employees can build an enduring relationship". Mikko seems to want to foster the intrapreneurial attitude that is a strong part of his own entrepreneurial identity, in the company as well reflecting his dad's approach to fostering corporate entrepreneurship. Mika has opened the lines of communication and Mikko's own role has been that of a communicator to an extent in that he has worked in all departments in the company doing all kinds of jobs except management work and has attempted to keep his ears open so that all pertinent information could be brought to the management from the installation and production level. Mikko's account reflects the approach to tolerance for failure on the one hand and his own on-going process of growth into owner-management through the reflections of identifying himself as a responsible member of the organization with a mission to constantly improve and act as a medium of communication.

> *"When he [Mika] became the managing director a couple of years ago the air here freshened a lot. The atmosphere is really good here now...and we'd like to hear from the practical side...we want the feedback so that we know what we're doing wrong. That's why I've done so many jobs, I've integrated into the different teams and I'm pretty quick to come back with the information. Now I just go and talk to the boys and girls there...how are things going...I've said tell me straight, you never have to be afraid of saying that someone failed, on the contrary, say it so we can fix it."(3)*

The defining issue in Mikko's life in the context of the family's business seems to have been the parallel life-cycles of the company and himself. As was mentioned before, Mikko and the company were born at the same time which to a child has meant a loss in regards to time spent with dad. This account also reflects the importance of the spouse to an entrepreneur's life in that parental roles may not be in balance time wise, somebody has to take care of the home front. In regards to the child's identity the parent being absent has some ramifications that follow into his life and take a form of a loss. This appears to be present in his identity construction in a poignant way indicating the resonance of the past tense as a temporal dimension to identity structures. The past can be carried in the identities in the present and it can reach into the wished-for-identities of the future.

> *"If I think about losses, it would concern my childhood, I did not really have...like father and son time, I never had it. That's a pretty bitter loss. It seems that somebody always suffers. This is what comes to mind first...my dad and my brother always used to say that I'm mama's boy and I was, officially, I was always with my mother...it's a shame but we can't change that."(4)*

Mikko's entrepreneurial identity construction has been ongoing and parallel with their family business's life cycles. His life has been defined by his father having been absent a lot during his childhood so his mother's presence has been crucial to him as a child. It is possible that to Mikko, while for sure possessing a strong entrepreneurial identification, the family business is also a venue to increase the parent-child interaction (Aldrich & Cliff 2003, 588-589). Mikko perceives himself very similar to his dad whose entrepreneurial role model has had a strong influence on Mikko. The future dimension of his entrepreneurial identity is geared toward taking the family business operations global.

6.16 Kari, Jari and their jewelry business

Before I go on to introduce Kari and his son Jari and their business, I have to underline here that I have changed their names and try and divulge as little factual information about them as possible in order to be able to present them and their accounts as anonymously as possible. I am doing this not because they wanted me to but because I feel I have to. They did not have any problem with being presented by their actual names or the company name, on the contrary, but as a matter of fact seemed completely indifferent to whether they appear in this dissertation report or not. It certainly appeared to be of no consequence whatsoever to them whether their names appear in it or not. Now in retrospect I feel the only reason that I got to interview them at all was resilience of my part, I called them enough times never having been told no, so they said yes, most likely out of common courtesy.

The ethical guidelines for research of the University of Jyväskylä indicate that for many a respondent being a part of a research project can be a positive experience and for some even useful. However, the guidelines go on to say, sometimes participation in a research project may be detrimental to the respondents. This can mean a lot of things but in this case I thought it would mean tarnished reputation for my respondents that could have an adverse effect on their business operations. Therefore the researcher has to always give priority to the interests and the benefit of respondents rather than her own research project.

What had attracted me to them as potential respondents was a newspaper article that I had spotted around the beginning of 2008. The paper ran a story about a family business about to go to the third generation with long traditions and the family's name in the company name signifying continuance within the family and family entrepreneurship. This to me sounded a lot like transgenerational entrepreneurship so I contacted them. As said before, I had to call them several times before we agreed on an interview time that was suited to everyone.

Kari is a 55-year-old owner of a family business in the jewelry industry about to be transferred to the third generation. The company is very well known and liked in the local area and has built their customer base over 50 years of operations. Kari's parents founded the company in 1950's, after his father died the company was left to his mom and himself and the two continued to run it until her death in 1980's. Kari feels that he chose this industry because of the family's business and since he had never known anything else he had no choice. Working in his parents company has just been "a substitute for working for someone else" (Hoy & Sharma 2010, xiv). At the time of the interviews he is looking to retire. Since his son is not completely ready and still unsure if he even will take over the business, the responsibility for the daily operations of the business is left to Kari's wife.

Jari is 31-year-old designated successor of his family's jewelry business. He has dropped out of the professional training in this industry and is reluctant to go back to school because it would take at least a year to finish. He feels he knows the ropes of the trade and therefore sees no need to educate himself any further. By the time of the interviews Jari has worked in the business for about four or five years and before that every now and then during holidays. For Jari the family business serves the role of sustaining his consumer needs (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 47) rather than being a legacy to be perpetuated. This is why he is unsure of what turn his future will take.

6.16.1 Kari's account

Kari needs to decide what to do with the business. However, he is not sure if his son can handle the job and so is undecided as to how things will turn out. Familiness in this company is a questionable resource or at least something not to be taken for granted, or as Moores (2009, 174) says, "although familiness has evolved to be synonymous with family business, it is questionable whether all firms do possess familiness resources". The sale of the company is as viable an option as his son taking over. The ownership of his business has become commodified (Zellweger & Astrachan 2008, 357). He does feel some degree of hope of the business staying in the family but quite clearly it really is of not too much consequence whether it does or not. He appears to feel some kind of sense of respect of the business having been founded by his parents and it may have been a factor in him having kept the business.

> *"Of course if somebody were to buy this, I would sell immediately."(1)*

Kari appears to view entrepreneurship through hard work only. He does not perceive any entrepreneurial attributes in himself, to him the business just meant hard work for a couple of decades, and now he wants out and is effectively retiring at the age of 55. He has worked in the business since his youth but seems to view his past in a resigned manner, as if he had had no choice in the matter. His approach to the potential growth of the company is one of dread; it just might get out of control so definitely growth is not something to strive for.

> *"No, no, it might get out of control."(2)*

As an entrepreneur Kari sees himself as being similar to his dad, who was honest and never lied. He thinks his son, Jari, on the other hand, is on the lazy side and not willing to rise to the situation at hand, of coming and taking responsibility. He comes and goes as he pleases which is possible only because his mother, Kari's wife, fills in for him because someone has to. Her role for the business is of essence and both father and son use that to their own benefit. The only thing that Kari insists on is that he gets to travel abroad with his wife for a week in the spring and a week in the fall so then he demands that his son handle the business.

A downside of being an entrepreneur in Kari's mind seems to be connected to a culturally embedded feature in our society that is envy. Kari feels that other entrepreneurs in his field have been envious of him so this suggests that he has not seen the network of his peers as anything to rely on. On the other hand he reflects a lack of proactiveness or entrepreneurial aggressiveness in relation to his competition. To him the answer to the competitive situation would be for two other businesses in town to disappear rather than competing with them in the market place. In regards to network creation in his social environment, he reverts back to his earlier feeling of dislike of being envied. Envy might just become too big of a factor if he were to start purposely to create networks. He definitely does not attach any business value to them.

> *"...one might get a customer through those [networks] but I think they are a source of envy."(3)*

6.16.2 Jari's account

Jari's demeanor seems somehow callous all through the interview. His demeanor in fact seems to be suggestive of his attitude toward the family business as well. It feels painfully clear from the beginning of the interview that Jari is at a loss in regards to his true identity. Erikson (1980/1994, 139-140) seems to describe Jari in saying that "the loss of sense of identity is expressed in a scornful and snobbish hostility toward the roles offered as proper and desirable by one's family or immediate community. Any aspect of the required role or all parts can become the main focus of the young person's acid disdain". He has shown a lack of desire and commitment to run the business all through his life and did not even finish the vocational education, or any other education, for it. He only went to that school because he had to, not because he wanted to. Often entrepreneurial individuals are keen on educating themselves. Ownership seems to have no value either. Royer et al. (2008) say that "one potential problem is that an inside-family successor may not possess the capabilities, competences, and talent to manage the firm adequately". This seems to be the case in this family firm. Jari is reluctant to continue his family's business.

> *"I have not had many options, I've been in this since I was a kid...it's somehow the familiar and safe choice."(1)*

Jari's views his environment in much the same way as his dad; it appears that there is something very wrong in the town and area in respect to their business, thus Jari feels justified in his lack of ambition. If only the business were located somewhere else or if only a couple of their competitors had the sense to shut their business down. This would make things easier on Jari and possibly entice him more to continue the family business. Risk taking is something that is abhorrent to him. It is as if in Jari's mind the long history of the family business entitles them to their market share without any effort on their part.

> *"This place is terrible as hell…there are too many of us here, in this industry in this town…there are too many of us, but somehow, our own customers keep us afloat...it's just that how do I have the courage to do this [continue the business] when it does need a lot of finances even though…it is now owned by my parents but anyway...there are a lot of risks. I don't know…where this situation is going to go, it would be easier to work for someone else. All you have to do is make sure that you get paid."(2)*

Jari does not perceive himself as very entrepreneurial. Working in their family's business is just like being a victim of his circumstances but it takes care of his basic needs; "guided by the present time perspective consumers of family businesses are focused on using the business to support their current consumption needs" (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 57). Entrepreneurship has no intrinsic value to him because Jari has no problem working for someone else, he just doesn't seem to know what he really wants. His wished-for-identity appears to be nonexistent; it is as if he is drifting. He in fact seems totally detached from any social identification. Having the family name and having lent his face to the potential intra-family succession seems to be a part of a camouflage entrepreneurial identity rather than a true layer of his identity.

> *"Well, I have to be an entrepreneur because I have no education to do anything else, I've seen this since I was a kid, don't know to go anywhere else."(3)*

If the individual does not know who he is, what he belongs to or what his goals are, it can be assumed that he has not been able to recognize or make visible his idiosyncratic nature which is a situation that calls for identity work (Eteläpelto 2007, 93).

Mazzei (2009, 48) says that "in our zeal to 'capture voices' and make meaning, or to make easy sense, we often seek that voice which we can easily name, categorize, and respond to – the one that is tame and friendly. We seek that familiar voice that does not cause trouble and that is easily translatable. We seek a voice that maps onto our ways of knowing, understanding, and interpreting. A more productive practice, however, would be to seek the voice that escapes our easy classification and that does not make easy sense – the voice in the crack." Kari and Jari's voices did not make easy sense nor were they easily categorized. However, I came to see their value through reflection later on.

When I started the interviews of Kari and Jari, and this feeling was overwhelming at the onset of both interviews, I realized the extent of the naivety with which I had presumably approached all of my interviewees before as well. My naivety was completely based on the assumption that a well-known third generation family business with a good name and long history would exude all things entrepreneurial and this expectation had most definitely colored my approach to my interviewees. I experienced what at first felt like total lack of rapport, like I was just a frustrating intruder in to that day's activities. Then I realized that it wasn't so much a question of lack of rapport between myself and them but a lack of rapport between my research question and them; the subject of entrepreneurship just failed to resonate with them. The interview situations offered no passionate self-reflective accounts or feelings of frustrations or conflict in the family business either; as Murakami (2003, 245) points out; "all sorts of things can trigger problems and cause interactional disasters, for instance, lack of appropriate responses and digression from topic." The previous rather than the latter was the case here. Entrepreneurship in a family business was as meaningless a subject for conversation as any other mundane topic that fails to even raise anyone's curiosity, let alone give rise to lengthy discussions. I kept failing at empathizing for the empathy simply was not there. It had been taken over by a tremendous feeling of frustration due to not being able, despite my repeated attempts, to impose my own view of the world and preconceptions about family business upon them.

Obviously my approach had also been saturated by my value system in which entrepreneurial characteristics and things like being proud of one's family and the family's business rank high. Regardless of the fact that I believe all research to be value laden, it felt like a total failure to see it so clearly in my attitude and during my research interviews, no less. As it turned out, Kari and Jari did not concede to having any entrepreneurial attributes whatsoever nor did the family's business mean anything other than a way to make a living. Both the father and son appeared to construct their identities completely without any entrepreneurial identification at all. It was because of how I felt they would seem and appear in a negative light in the eyes of a potential customer or their peers that I decided I would practice my researcher's ethical judgment and introduce them anonymously, as patronizing as that might sound. My own astonishment at their attitude was somewhat surprising of course given the point of origin of this research which was that the research question did not presuppose an entrepreneurial identification in theory at all. At the time of the interviews I felt that I had failed miserably because I was unable to force them to perceive to having entrepreneurial attributes in them. It took quite a lot of reflecting on the events of the interview to be able to admit that because obviously my role is not to force anyone into anything. On second thought it showed clearly how the researcher is indeed an instrument of the research and the only way to attain trustworthiness is through reflection.

What struck me as very interesting was that the two people in my group of respondents that did not seem to have nor perceive to have any kind of entrepreneurial identity were in fact father and son. This is indicative of the emphasis on the meaning and influence of family to the development of entrepreneurial attributes, commitment, and identification. This influence of the family is usually discussed from a very positive perspective where the previous family business experiences might carry positive relevance to the identity of individuals in the family business context in that they are more likely to continue and get satisfaction out of their respective family businesses. Hoy and Sharma (2010, 66), though, do point out that the family's influence on entrepreneurial aspirations can be negative as well. Obviously it is impossible to state that it is because of the father's attitude that the son has turned out not to feel any pride or commitment to the business, let alone any transgenerational aspirations, this is just one interpretation of the situation.

7 CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

To begin the discussion on the conclusions, contributions and implications of this research report, I will reflect back on the methodological premise of my study. Later in this chapter I will reflect on my interpretations firstly by revisiting my research questions giving condensed answers to them briefly, to recap the essence of the research and the resultant interpretations. After that I will make a note of entrepreneurial identities as generational constructions reflecting on the empirical materials that I have presented previously before moving on to the cultural implications drawn out of them. The section on culture will involve the discussion on those themes that emerged as culturally bound and relevant to the entrepreneurial identities from my empirical materials. Toward the end of this chapter I will reflect on my interpretations as a whole and discuss the contributions and implications of this study. To conclude the chapter, as well as the dissertation report, I will discuss the evaluation of my research and give suggestions for future research.

Researchers differ on if and how they separate the categorization, analysis, and interpretation of empirical materials; the more hermeneutically oriented do not draw distinct lines between those because it is not considered necessary or even possible (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 136). Therefore my materials are interpreted as producing emergent themes that are culturally bound as well as presenting building blocks for the constructions of entrepreneurial identities in the family business context, keeping in mind the purpose of generating a fuller understanding of the content and processes relating to entrepreneurial identities. The issues relevant to and contents of the identity building processes include values, life defining moments, possible conflict, tolerance for envy, self-perceived entrepreneurial attributes, approach to transgenerational wealth creation, generational position within the family and the business, roles (as those of a parent, a child, a sibling, an owner, a manager, a successor, a spouse), gender, profession and culture. The identity building processes include reflecting on the future as indications of wished-for-identities, parenting, socialization into entrepreneurship, role modeling, transference of ownership through succession (giving up their position for the older generation and assuming the successor's position for the younger generation), transmitting entrepreneurial spirit through values, networking, creating organizational culture and growing into leadership and ownership. The contents and processes related to identity building and constructions are intertwined and reflect the temporal essence of identity constructions as having a past, present and future. Given the social constructionist approach to identity construction, I, as the researcher, have to be aware of the interactional context of my respondents and myself which renders the interpretations of the entrepreneurial identity structures in this study as having been created in the interactive situation of the research interview. This is reflected in the interpretations of the empirical materials (Rapley 2001, 303) as showing them context and situation specific, yet at the same time unique to each individual and their interpretations of their own experiences during their lifetime (Eteläpelto 2007, 140).

The result of the interpretations is not the condensation of the verbal data produced but rather the expansion of it (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 137) because merely using interview materials as extracts and quotes as a window on social realities means that they have no value as evidence of the phenomenon we are studying unless they are interpreted through "assumptions and contextual knowledge and argument" (Wengraf 2001, 1).

7.1 Reflections on interpretations

To start off these reflections on my interpretations I will go back to my original research questions. My main research question was: "How do family business entrepreneurs construe their entrepreneurial identities?". The additional research questions were: "What kinds of issues are related to the construction of family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identities?" and "What kind of similarities and/or differences, if any, regarding the entrepreneurial identity construction, emerge from the two different business cultures of Louisiana, USA and Finland?". As mentioned in chapter 1.2., entrepreneurial identities in this thesis are to be interpreted as process *and* content oriented, therefore the aim of the thesis is to add to the understanding of entrepreneurial identities in the family business context through interpretations of both the contents and processes relating to identities and identity constructions.

My approach to the phenomenon under study was interpretive and interdisciplinary utilizing the principles of hermeneutics in which theories on identity, family business, and cross-cultural research formed my pre-understanding which then was developed and transformed in oscillation with my empirical materials. Those were acquired through research interviews that took place with family business members representing two different generations in two different business cultures. The analysis of the empirical materials was done through interpretive analysis resulting in interpretations of the entrepreneurial identity constructions of my respondents. These interpretations need to be seen as social constructions rendered in intersubjective interaction between me and my respondents. They are culturally, socially and historically situated constructions.

To give condensed responses to my research questions, I will briefly go over the interpretations through both the themes that were incorporated into my interview guide as well as the novel emergent themes that emanated from the empirical materials through interpretations. These will get discussed further in detail in the next sections.

Family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identity constructions are as heterogeneous as are the businesses and families themselves. The entrepreneurial identification is a part of the entrepreneurs' overall identity construction and varies in substance and salience. Some entrepreneurs do not profess to have an entrepreneurial identification at all. In many instances family business entrepreneur's entrepreneurial identity is a hybrid consisting of many different elements, such as their familial identity, parental identity, cultural identity, professional identity, and gender identity, all of which might be active concurrently (as shown in figure 3) rather than being compartmentalized as separate identifications and activated situation specifically as entrepreneurs, in non-family context, oscillate between micro-identities as presented by Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 325). Hybrid identity structure may yield synergies for the different parts of the hybrid system and it is constructed at the interface of business and family as opposed to non-family business entrepreneurs to whom the family dimension might not be as salient in connection with the entrepreneurial identity (c.f. Hytti 2003). It appears that for family business entrepreneurs their spouses have a specific part in forming and supporting their entrepreneurial identities and given the transgenerational aspect of the family business institution, the generational differences play a role in how the entrepreneurial identities differ and change.

Often the changes in the entrepreneurial identity go through parallel changes with the family's business' life cycles. For the older generation, while their thoughts on future include a strong desire for the business to continue in the family, their parental identity is often also salient in that they want their offspring to continue in the business only if this is what they themselves want. Concerning the past oriented part of their identity structures the older generation family business members express regret of not having been with their families enough which is indicative of their entrepreneurial identifications as having been more salient than their parental identities. For the younger generation, as a part of their entrepreneurial identity, they seem to perceive freedom and space to find their own way of leadership and operating the business of the utmost importance. The circumstances for the younger generation as they enter the business are also usually different because the business is already there and running and the younger generation members have been socialized into entrepreneurship from early on. Family values can be seen as forming the entrepreneurial identities to a great extent and they often are transferred to business operations becoming definitive for organizational identities as well.

The positive influences on entrepreneurial identity constructions in the family business context seem to emanate from the entrepreneurs having been socialized into entrepreneurship early on which is in line with previous research on family businesses (c.f. Carr & Sequeira 2007; Naldi et al. 2007). The family values enhance the entrepreneurial identity building and often can be seen as part of the family business organizational identities as well. Entrepreneurial parents serve as role models for the younger generation through their value systems and generational learning. In one family in this study this kind of phenomenon was seen in a reverse way in which the lack of entrepreneurial identification was evident in both generations which may be suggestive of the values and attitudes of the older generation in a negative sense as having been transmitted to the younger generation, that being one possible interpretation. The negative influences also seem to stem from misguided expectations toward the younger generation in which the real wished-for-identities get undermined and the continuance of the business is privileged over those. Also the discrepancy between the different identifications such as the parental one or professional one may turn out to be a source of negative influences. The conflicting expectations time-wise regarding the salience of the entrepreneurial and parental identifications may be perceived as negative influences.

Given the cross-cultural stance taken in this study, the themes that emerged from the interpretations of empirical materials from two different cultures were time and money as values, tolerance for envy, the meaning of networking for entrepreneurial identities, the meaning of promotion of corporate entrepreneurship and portfolio entrepreneurship for entrepreneurial identities as well as the differences and similarities in the overall value systems in the two cultures under study. The respondents' self-perceived value systems seemed very similar on the surface but differed in some aspects on the substance given to those values. Honesty, integrity, and hard work were given great value in both cultures as was family as a value which was indicative of the familial dimension of the business as being emphasized in the particular context of family business of this study. The respondents were also similar in their approach to transgenerational wealth creation which was seen as desirable and worth striving for, reflecting the value given to family in business and also being indicative of the wished-for-identities of the respondents. Professional identity as emphasizing one's own industry in the identity talk was very similar in both cultures' accounts being suggestive of one's professional background of being crucial for entrepreneurial identities.

The two different cultural interpretations differed on the value given to time, which was intrinsic to Finns and money, which was intrinsic to the Louisianans. Networking and portfolio entrepreneurship seemed to constitute a very significant part of the Louisianan entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identity whereas the promotion of corporate entrepreneurship seemed to be essential to the Finns' entrepreneurial identity. Culturally situated ways of expressing oneself seemed to support a high level of self-efficacy and self-enhancing identification more for the Louisianans than the Finns whom expressed themselves more through modesty which has a high value in the Finnish culture. The Finnish entrepreneurs also have to have developed a tolerance for envy as a part of their entrepreneurial identity because envy as perceived by them is prevalent as a social phenomenon. Two of the respondents seemed to have an identity structure which was labeled as being boundary crossing in that elements more typical to the other culture than their own could be detected in their self-perceived entrepreneurial attributes.

The socially constructed identity structures were interpreted as having a temporal essence. The past orientation of entrepreneurial identities presented itself through life defining moments which included finding a spouse, having children, decisions about education and entering the family business. The present orientation included elements of self-perceived entrepreneurial attributes, also found in the scholarly literature such as being able to seek and seize opportunities (e.g. Ireland et al. 2003, 963-966; Shane & Venkataraman 2000, 218-219, Shepherd et al. 2009, 3), being an innovator and risk bearer (Shepherd & Haynie 2009a, 323), possessing networking skills (Royer et al. 2008, 18) and skills of self-targeted reflection (Hoang & Gimeo 2010, 42), being ambitious and an agent of change, decisive and competitive. A cultural dimension was to be seen in the present temporal orientation of the entrepreneurial identification in that the Louisianans seemed to promote portfolio entrepreneurship whereas the Finns seemed to be promoters of corporate entrepreneurship. An indicator of the wished-for-identities as part of the respondents' future oriented identities was the wish for transgenerational business operations that seemed to be superimposed on the entrepreneurial identifications in both cultures.

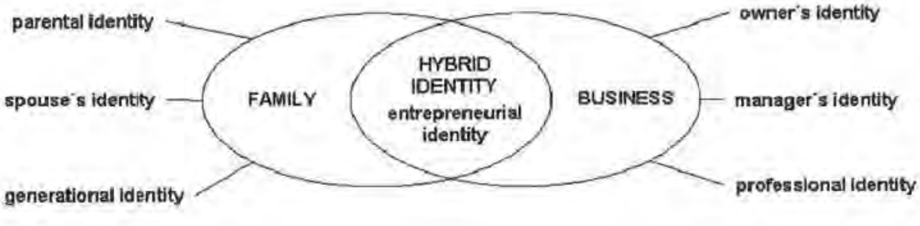

FIGURE 3 Entrepreneurial identity as part of the hybrid identity

7.2 Entrepreneurial identities as generational constructions

"The young individual must learn to be most himself where he means most to others, those others, to be sure, who have come to mean most to him." (Erikson 1980/1994, 110)

It is of the essence that while the younger generation members of the business families need to find their own way of running the family's business, the older generation has to find a suitable way of easing out of the business. The influence of the generational shadow can increase conflict (Davis & Harveston 1999, 311) and smother the entrepreneurial spirit in the younger generation. However, once the succession has been completed or is in the process of being done harmoniously and with enough freedom the meaning of ownership as a legacy to be perpetuated increases (Zellweger & Astrachan 2008, 355) which seems to be the case for Tom, for example, in that he has been able to start stepping aside while remaining as Kate's support allowing her to tap into his resources, also of the social and human kind thus having given a deeper meaning to the business ownership. Mutual respect seems to facilitate the creation of space that both the incumbent and the successor need in their respective phases of life and the business's life cycle.

For David and Arto both the founder's role seems to have been of significant importance in regards to how they perceive their entrepreneurial identification, being the founder of their own companies seems to have been very motivating for them (Hoang & Gimeno 2010, 44). Hall et al. (2001, 193) contend that often the founder entrepreneurs lose their entrepreneurial capabilities after the business has been successfully founded. This has definitely not been the case for David or Arto who keep being very active and very capable entrepreneurially and who are constantly alert and on the lookout for opportunities.

In this study the members of the older generation, in particular, expressed as their sincerest wish and thought that regardless of the fact that they were pleased to see the business continue in the family, they only wanted this state of affairs if it was truly what their children wanted, were passionate about and happy with. This wish indicates their parental identities being active and salient in the thought process that concerns the future of both their family and the business. Once the younger generation member has indeed chosen to work in the family business and accepted the successor role, the older generation member can turn the wish of wanting to see the child make good of his/her own wished-for identity into the parent allowing the child to find his/her own way of running the business, having ample space and freedom to do so. This is how Mika O. feels Arto has behaved; Mika has been able to create his own kind of leadership culture and do things his own way while maintaining the unconditional support of his dad's, despite the occasional disagreement. This definite expectation for the perpetuation may then direct the behavior of the older generation toward the younger one in a way that the next generation starts behaving in a way that will meet those expectations.

A thought of transgenerational wealth creation seems to be a salient part of the older generation's entrepreneurial identity construction. This thought is often born as the child is born into the family (Hoy & Sharma 2010, 66). According to Matti, the K-retailer, he would not have been so eager to run his business had he not had a successor coming up in the wings; the motivation to run a successful business to him came, to a great extent, from the thought of his son taking over one day, and hopefully his grandsons in the more distant future. Another feature that has developed into a part of the entrepreneurial identity is having to stay alert to those things that signal who is ready and able to continue the family business, keeping in mind once again the multiplicity of the identity structure of being a parent and the business man at the same time. This may also be a source of conflicting emotions as the business owner may have more than just one child or the children might not be willing to join the family firm. In any case, as Ibrahim et al. (2001, 2459) say, succession processes need to be initiated very early on in the offspring's life and this is indeed what happens within the identity constructions of the older generation often; they start visualizing the future of the company through their children early on, thereby initiating an identity process to that end.

7.3 Successor's entrepreneurial identity

"What you have inherited, you must earn to possess" (Goethe, as cited in Grote 2003, 113).

As Royer et al. (2008, 16) say, the intentions and perspectives of the younger generation affect the succession process in family businesses. This was evident in my respondents' accounts as well. For the entrepreneurial identity in the family business context to develop the intentions to continue in the family's enterprise have to be based on individual aspirations and not entirely on the expectations of the older generation. The quality of the interpersonal relationships within the family influence all the business processes in these firms (Royer et al. 2008, 16). How these interpersonal relationships work and how communicative channels are found and used is somewhat culture bound. Successful family businesses often seek common forums such as family councils to maintain communication. In my study the Finnish respondents, all of whom were men, liked to practice an age old Finnish tradition of bringing the family men together for a building project at the family's summer house indicating that rather than establish a formal family meeting, informal situations facilitate the flow of communication in which both the family and business affairs get discussed. The younger generation seemed to prefer this as a way of communicating.

Having grown up in a business family and having witnessed their parents' entrepreneurial ventures constitute the basis on which the younger generation builds their entrepreneurial identity. Carr and Sequiera (2007, 1092) point to this phenomenon by saying that "early exposure to entrepreneurship and experience in the family business will affect the family member's attitude and intentions toward entrepreneurial action". This appeared to be the case for my respondents as well. Tom, for example, went into the funeral business with his brother following in his dad's footsteps having seen him in that industry on the one hand but also having seen the opportunities to be more successful in it than his father had been. His daughter Kate then followed him, both the father and daughter had been educated first in a totally different field but the call of the family industry was so strong that they responded to the opportunities there.

The wished-for-identity that I use here as a concept to describe the future orientation of identities, is something that is not only self-directed but can be something that is reflected on others, i.e. the older generation can reflect their own wished-for-identities of having an in-family successor for their business transmitting this wish upon their children therefore making it a part of the younger generation's identity structure guiding their future plans. An individual's entrepreneurial identification can be enhanced by his/her family identity (Shepherd & Haynie 2009, 330) and this is realized specifically in the succession planning process. Hall (1996, 4) says that "identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being" which is a statement that is congruent with the wished-for-identity being realized in succession in the family business context. However, a very significant part of the successor's entrepreneurial identity appears to be a need to be distinct, not just in the market place and the competitive environment as an entrepreneur but generationally distinct in relation to the older generation. As Hall (1996, 4) continues; "identities are constructed through, not outside, difference". Most of the younger generation respondents in this study expressed specific thoughts of wanting to do business in their own way, in a different way from the older generation's ways, but with respect to their parents' accomplishments. Each generation of leadership in a family business needs to make their mark (Mitchell, Hart, Valcea & Townsend 2009, 1213) as Mika O. has done in creating his own kind of leadership culture which supports his leader's identification in balance with his other identifications. As the family value system is of essence during the years of growing up it is through this system that the entrepreneurial spirit is transmitted as well. Therefore the core values of the family are an intrinsic part of the younger generation's entrepreneurial identity. As the values are transmitted between generations, so is the historical perspective of the family business as well (Jameson 2007, 207) emphasizing also the cultural realm in which they operate. According to Birley (2002, 5) the decisions regarding the transfer of managerial responsibilities, equity and ownership can be predefined by culture. It was the historical perspective in addition to culture that was the defining factor in R.D.'s decision and desire to see his business operations continued specifically by his son and not daughters, indicating a gender bias typical to his generation and somewhat to his culture.

Graafsma (1994, 44) says that care should be practiced in keeping in mind that identities are not always something that are desired. Entrepreneurial identity is such a construct as well. It can be forced and insincere, forcing the individual to lead a life of discontentment and one of being unable to realize one's true wished-for-identity. This appears to have been the case for Kari and Jari, the father and son to whom their family business was nothing more but a place to work because that was what was expected as a norm and a place to draw a sufficient income from. They were seemingly indifferent to what their own ambitions and wished-for-identities were. They had given up on "the more compelling alternatives of life" (Hall 2003, 21). Identity work as a conscious 'thinking tool' to avoid such situations could offer a solution through consultancy to business owners like Kari and Jari. Identity work can also alleviate conflicts and negative feelings such as sibling rivalry and envy in family businesses (see chapter 7.5 for more on identity work as a thinking tool).

For both the older and younger generation the key to a satisfying identity structure in as much void of conflicting emotional demands as possible appears to be the combination of social and personal identity which in the context of family business acts as a hybrid identity to be constructed at the interface of the family and business. This hybrid structure allows them to keep their familial identities as well as business and entrepreneurial identities active simultaneously thus creating a balance. This balance also serves their identity needs of belonging and being distinctive (c.f. Shepherd & Haynie 2009a).

7.4 Themes emerging from cultures

The two business cultures in which my respondents operate their businesses are similar and different (cf. Eriksen 2004, 14 on the anthropological call for cross-cultural research to look for not only differences but similarities between different cultural groups). The big cultural boundaries (Huntington 1993) that have to do with Western world views are blurred and similarities exist but as culture gets dissected more, cultural differences start to appear and those can be seen as relevant to the construction of entrepreneurial identities as well. The US is a cultural realm of heterogeneity whereas Finland is perceived as more homogeneous. The Louisianan business owners do not profess to have great confidence in government but appear to see themselves as more reliant on themselves as being at the helm of their destinies. Finland, on the other hand, can be perceived as a high trust country which is characterized by "ethnic homogeneity, Protestant religious tradition, good government, wealth (GDP per capita) and income equality" (Realo, Allik & Greenfield 2008, 458). This difference may be suggestive of the difference in the substance of values that the respondents have assumed as their own, although on the surface the value systems appear to be very similar.

In the following I will discuss the themes that emerged from my empirical materials as having been relevant to the construction of entrepreneurial identities in the family business and as being culturally embedded. These themes are certain recurrent features related to entrepreneurial identities in particular that came up during the interviews (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 173). They are the result of interpretations yielded from the hermeneutic shifts between the transcribed interviews and theories, between the pre-understanding and transformed understanding in which I have relied on not only explicit knowledge but "implicit and tacit" (Hansen 2006, 1055) knowledge through which I was able to label patterns of recurrent themes, especially through the cultural lens utilized, as being novel in the business cultural context. The themes were explored within and across the respondents (Sandelowski & Barroso 2003, 912). In cross-cultural research the implicit and tacit knowledge is often embedded in the researcher's cultural competence which allows for reflexive thought on what might constitute differences and/or similarities between cultural environments.

According to Thorne (2008, 155) "despite the rhetoric that you might read in some research reports, findings never "emerge" from that data on their own, and if they are to be worth something in the end, they always come about because a human mind has engaged strategically and constructively in the business of active analysis". This in fact purports to say that the themes presented here were thus not a priori constructions or conceptualizations but indeed reached through interpretive analysis and they need to be looked at as case and context specific (cf. Vaara et al. 2003, 446). The source of these emergent themes is my hermeneutic intuition, very much in the way referred to by Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009, 91) as being achieved not by "laborious pondering, but rather at a stroke, whereby patterns in complex wholes are illuminated by a kind of mental flashlight, giving an immediate and complete overview". This also refers to the hermeneutical circle in which parts are seen through the whole and vice versa so the emergent themes are seen in light of the entire entrepreneurial identifications and those through these emergent themes for according to Gadamer (2004, 29) the prerequisite for correct understanding is the compatibility of single matters with the whole.

7.4.1 Time and money as values

Loosely defined leisure time or free time refers to that part of any individual's time that is not directly related to working or responsibilities of work and it generally denotes freedom and possibility to self-reflect, to fulfill oneself, and to relax (Vehmas 2010, 84). My respondents appeared to differ along the cultural boundaries in how they viewed and evaluated time. In both cultures entrepreneurs are perceived both by themselves as well as by others as working hard and spending a lot of their time at work thus having blurred boundaries between work and free time. However, temporal orientation differentiates individuals from one another (Moustafa Leonard 2008, 47) and it clearly differentiates cultural realms as well.

Time did not seem to have any intrinsic value as such for my Louisianan respondents; time to them seemed to mean money, which in fact did have intrinsic value for them. They did not see free time as an end result of having made money but instead used as much time as possible to make money. To many of them no amount of money is sufficient to qualify as 'enough' money but moneymaking itself is the action to be pursued. This temporal orientation of 'time is money' is an essential part of the Louisianan family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identity. Another way to interpret this could be through the connotation Finns give to money as being something inappropriate to talk about. Koiranen's (2002, 183) study of the value systems of old Finnish family businesses points to the previous; "Finnish respondents regard good economic return as a business goal but do not want to underscore it as an (end-state) value. Bearing in mind the Finnish cultural tradition of values, context, and the way of thinking (e.g. emphasis on humbleness and modesty, fear of envy, protestant ethic based on Lutheranism, high taxation etc.) most Finns, and especially Finnish family business owners, have learned to be more reserved than outspoken when the discussion turns to income, profits or wealth".

My Finnish respondents did not seem to view money as an end result but a tool with which to gain free time which can be seen as a symbol of success and the result of hard work. Commitment to work in the Finnish society does not necessarily mean longer than average working day but has more to do with reaching the goals and possessing a high work ethic in general (Vehmas 2010, 88) which is also typical to the Protestant work ethic that is deeply embedded in the Finnish culture. Socialization processes create our values and temporal orientation and in some cultures time is not money (Moustafa Leonard 2008, 480).

The Finns appeared to want to use the time that they had earned through successful venturing to traveling and spending time with family. However, they seem to deal with work related matters on a regular basis during free time and travels as well with the help of laptop computers and cell phones and not all see this mixing of free time and work as negative. To Finns traveling abroad signifies interest for foreign countries and cultures as well as language skills and education but traveling abroad can also be a way of escapism for some entrepreneurs (Vehmas 2010, 95-108).

Arto's travels can be interpreted to be a part of his way of realizing his entrepreneurial identity and his profound need of distinctiveness that extends to his free time as well. He travels a lot but in a way that seems to seek a different outlet than any group travel does. Arto likes to travel further and do exotic things during his travels such as his 'iron ass' rides. According to Vehmas (2010, 111) the attitude of those who seek to express their status through the choice of travel destination is such toward travel destinations such as the Mediterranean resorts that they are seen as common 'been there, done that'- destinations available to all whereas traveling further can be seen as producing distinction and symbolic capital. Foreign travels appeared to have no substance for the Louisianan entrepreneurs, they did not appear to be especially interested in traveling abroad, nor did they seem to see any specific value in traveling per se. Time appeared to be of importance for Finns also in establishing clear lines between work and family time, especially for the younger generation for whom the parental identity was salient for a good deal of the time. In general both cultural groups and especially the older generation expressed regret at having spent too little time with their children as they were growing up. As the time-based conflict between the entrepreneurial and parent identities (Shepherd & Haynie 2009a, 326) has followed them through all of their entrepreneurial careers it can be seen as being a part of their entrepreneurial identities as well.

7.4.2 Networking; it's not what you know, it's who you know

The Finnish family business owners of this study, while recognizing the value of networks for business goals, have not in general engaged in the kind of conscious networking efforts in which all areas of society are the playing field. To my Finnish respondents the value of networks seems to be at its most essential in offering peer support through professional contacts generating support for the particular identity claim (Deaux & Martin 2003, 102) of being an entrepreneur in their specific industry. In this way the networks that they have and utilize seem to serve their feeling of belonging (c.f. Shepherd & Haynie 2009a) and also serve a role to satisfy the individual's social identity needs to an extent. As Josselson (1994, 98) says; "to be embedded within a social network is to belong, to feel included, to share characteristics, to be the same as, to give up some individuality in the service of interconnection". Deaux and Martin (2003, 107) suggest that these networks could also be a site for negotiation of identities allowing individuals to either reject or support a certain identity. This indicates that identity work can also take place through networking. For Mika Okkonen, joining the Finnish Family Firms Association seems to have indicated a firmer identity as a family business owner than earlier and satisfied in part his need for belonging (c.f. Shepherd & Haynie 2009a).

To my Louisianan family business owners, on the other hand, no contact or opportunity to make contacts was insignificant; according to Wiklund and Shepherd (2008, 706) "economic behavior, such as entrepreneurial activity, is embedded in networks of interpersonal relationships, which form the basis of a person's social capital". It appears to be typical for the Louisianan entrepreneurs to harness all possible venues for networking such as church, their children's school, philanthropic organizations, hobbies and sports into gaining business contacts thereby also practicing role flexibility in performing business related tasks during non-business hours (Sundaramurthy & Kreiner 2008, 417). As Hoy and Sharma (2010, 132) say; "a key to acquiring social capital is not just in being known, but also having a positive reputation". While Rae (2004, 498) argues that entrepreneurs are selective in developing networks choosing certain groups of influence over others, it appears that my Louisianan respondents see value in utilizing all possible social opportunities offered by all of their networks. Pearson et al. (2008, 957) argue that the meaning of these networks is one of a potential advantage; "As a result of established patterns of interactions and involvement, families likely possess an abundance of internal network ties that are appropriable to the family firm. In contrast, individuals employed in nonfamily firms often bring few, if any, preexisting network ties to the workplace. Family firms, then, may have an advantage over nonfamily firms in the creation of structural social capital due to existing and familiar network ties". My Louisianan respondents appear to also draw on the benefits of being a member of a local network of family business entrepreneurs. They yield not only business benefits but the kind of peer support from this network that their Finnish colleagues seem to draw from their professional circle.

When entrepreneurs aspire to be a part of a network they often take actions that will eventually allow them to belong to that network (Deaux & Martin 2003, 102) thus also being reflective of their wished-for-identities. The second generation of the Louisianan family businesses reflect the way in which networking is transmitted from the older generation down to the next, very much as a part of fostering and transmitting entrepreneurial spirit transgenerationally. Understanding the importance of these networks and the mechanisms of how they are transferred is essential for success of family firms (Steier 2001, 262) in the Louisianan business culture. This allows the younger generation to draw on the resources of the older generation. By nature networks in general are dependent on individuals and therefore not very lasting social structures (Eriksen 2004, 111). The skill of networking, the resources gained through them and the transferring on of these networks appear to be an essential part of the Louisianan family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identity.

7.4.3 Portfolio entrepreneurs and promoters of corporate entrepreneurship

All of the Louisianan family business owners in this study have a constellation of business ventures branding them in this research as portfolio entrepreneurs. Westhead, Ucbasaran and Wright (2005, 73) define portfolio entrepreneurs as "individuals who currently have minority or majority ownership stakes in two or more independent businesses that are either new, purchased and/or inherited". This can be likened to the concept of habitual entrepreneur in that "habitual entrepreneurs are most often described as persons who have experience owning at least two different firms whether temporally (serial entrepreneurship) or simultaneously (portfolio entrepreneurship)" (Huovinen & Tihula 2008, 152). Within my Finnish group of respondents Arto is the only entrepreneur that can be branded a portfolio entrepreneur with a few simultaneously going business ventures. Matti Perälä has several locations for his business but they all are a part of the same company.

It appears that as far as the entrepreneurial identity goes, the way the Louisianan family business and portfolio entrepreneurs construct their identities is that to them their core business with which they identify the most is the heart of their venturing and the other ventures might represent completely different industries. The core business know-how and the business operations are the most salient part of their entrepreneurial identities seemingly yielding the most amount of entrepreneurial satisfaction to them as well. However, being involved in several other business ventures simultaneously appears to be not only a natural but essential part of their entrepreneurial identification. They are not ones to have all their eggs in one basket. According to Huovinen and Tihula (2008, 153) the company founding and closing experiences may provide them with more learning opportunities. The Louisianan respondents in this study also appeared to show a lack of fear for failure and saw the possibility for failure as a natural part of venturing indicating a high level of optimism. According to Hoy and Sharma (2010, 102) previous research shows that "not only do such individuals nurture their entrepreneurial skills through all stages of life, but they are alert to the opportunities in their environment and able to find market information that helps exploit opportunities". It appears that this way of venturing is transgenerational by nature for these respondents; the model for portfolio entrepreneurship seems to get transferred from one generation to the next very much the same way as networking skills and entrepreneurial spirit in general. Wiklund and Shepherd (2008, 707) point to the connection between networking and portfolio entrepreneurship by saying that "although business networks are likely to influence chances of involvement in portfolio entrepreneurship, they should provide a similar value to both modes of organizing activity".

If portfolio entrepreneurship was a theme relevant to entrepreneurial identity constructing that emerged from the Louisianan interviews, then another kind of theme emerged from the Finnish interviews and that was a strong promotion of corporate entrepreneurship especially among the older generation of my Finnish respondents. This has been a part of the organizational culture for all others except for Kari and Jari's company. Just like portfolio entrepreneurship as a model of behavior is transmitted down the generations, it seems that promotion of corporate entrepreneurship acts in much the same way. The younger generation members of my Finnish respondents seem to be very cognizant of this feature in the older generation and appear to have adopted it as part of their firm's organizational identity.

A part of this phenomenon in the Finnish family firms has not only been fostering a very intrapreneurial atmosphere within the company but also supporting the initial stages of the new enterprises that the former employees have started. The previous has taken place through a supportive approach toward innovativeness and creativity, with a tolerance for failure. The latter has taken place through concrete measures of the family business entrepreneur having given the new entrepreneurs access to his social and human resources, having given him business and access to his stakeholders. Shepherd et al. (2009, 3) comment on these kind of processes by saying that "the psychological processes of an individual bounded within an organization influence culture, and organizational culture influences the psychological processes of that organizational member". For the Okkonens, Alms and Peräläs this has meant that the reciprocity of the entrepreneurial process has resulted in the birth of new ventures outside the family firm. The employees in these family businesses have been proactive in their intrapreneurial attitudes causing the organizational culture to foster that further, eventually having elicited an entrepreneurial initiative out of the employees that has resulted in business startups. Through this process they have become to be recognized as entrepreneurs (Rae 2004, 496) getting to realize their own entrepreneurial identities in practice.

7.4.4 Expressing the confident and the modest self

The way in which the entrepreneurial self and identity is expressed is very much culture bound and dependent on what kind of ways of self-expression are held in high esteem in any one culture. What signifies a good person varies from culture to culture. Different cultures have different ideas of what good life is and "prescribe different routes to self-worth" (Lehman et al. 2004, 699). Self-discourses and practices vary cross-culturally (Chandler 2000, 226). People grow up as members of their own cultures and societies and therefore carry their cultural heritage with them (Keltikangas-Järvinen 2000, 16), the meaning of which is substantial to identities. The use of the personal pronoun 'we' seems to be of utmost importance to the expression of national identities (De Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak 1999, 163) and it is also used in the family business discourse by my respondents in what I interpret to be an indicator of the collective social identity as a family business member. How the self as an entrepreneur is talked about gets different tones in Finland as it does in Louisiana. This underlines also the limitations of this study from the cross-cultural point of view; Louisianan accounts are treated as such, as regional, and not representative of national level cultures. According to Zahra et al. (2004, 364) regional cultures exert unique influences on family business processes.

The Louisianan way of expression of the self highlights the confident self whereas the Finn finds ways to express himself in modest ways, so as not to appear arrogant. However, as Thomsen et al. (2007, 446) argue; Americans interact automatically in a more modest way with friends and family than with strangers with whom they have the tendency to self-enhance. Keltikangas-Järvinen (2000, 303) compares the two ways of expressing oneself in saying that the optimism and faith in the future that to an American are the characteristics of a successful citizen, are in the Finnish discourse considered almost unrealistic. The American, on the other hand, is bound to interpret the Finnish way of expression as pessimism, distrust, and reservedness which are categorically considered as bad characteristics in a person and cannot understand how they could be considered as discretionary and realistic behavior in some cultures. The development of entrepreneurial competencies is also culture-specific because certain achievements are highly valued in one culture whereas in another they might receive little attention (Helfrich 1999, 141). An example in my empirical materials of this could be that Brian Cohn wants to work even longer hours than his dad because he feels he cannot do any less than dad which is honorable in his culture whereas Mika Okkonen in Finland, while certainly working hard, wants to emphasize his own kind of leadership style in which his parental identity gets salience through time spent focused on family because that is appreciated and considered important in his culture. To take this assumption a step further and to extend it into the family business culture in general regardless of the business culture in which they operate it can be said that if entrepreneurial action and perpetuation of the family's business operations are regarded as a highly appreciated achievement, this then is more likely to become a part of the successor's identity construction.

The Louisianan respondents appear to have a very high level of self-efficacy as part of not only their entrepreneurial identity but their overall identity structure as well. According to Bandura (1997, 3) "perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments." This personal efficacy guides their lives and entrepreneurial action and according to Boyd and Vozikis (1994, 66) is an important explanatory variable in determining the strength of entrepreneurial intentions and the likelihood of them resulting in entrepreneurial actions. However, minute amounts of self-efficacy expressed in the entrepreneurial discourse do not necessary mean that the skills and will is not there, or that the level of self-efficacy is low, because the use of language is culturally situated. Self-efficacy may impact the founding of a business, propensity for risk taking and succeeding in entrepreneurial ventures (Mitchell & Shepherd 2010, 144) in any culture but the expression of it might be different. Those entrepreneurs, that in the Finnish entrepreneurial discourse express a higher level of self-efficacy than what is culturally appropriate have to counterbalance that with a little self-deprecating humor, as Arto does.

Boyd and Vozikis (1994, 67) differentiate between self-efficacy and locus of control by saying that "locus of control is a generalized construct that covers a variety of situations, while self-efficacy is task- and situation specific". The entrepreneur then can be seen to tackle individual entrepreneurial challenges with a high degree of self-efficacy in the American discourse in which the self is presented in a very confident manner. The portfolio entrepreneurs that they are in this study can approach different ventures with a high belief in themselves as to what they can do in each different industry in different economic circumstances for "perceived self-efficacy is not a measure of skills one has but a belief about what one can do under different sets of conditions with whatever skills one possesses" (Bandura 1997, 37). For entrepreneurs to gain a resilient sense of self-efficacy they have had to have gone through obstacles and difficulties to develop perseverance in the face of adversity and once they have a high sense of self-efficacy they engage in visualizing success scenarios that guide their performance (Boyd & Vozikis 1994, 67) which could be a factor in the Louisianans engaging in portfolio entrepreneurship in various different industries whereas Finns appear to tend to stick to the one industry that is familiar to them.

In any case it is worth mentioning that factual generalizations cannot be drawn from nor are they the goal in this discussion of my interpretations but rather to contribute to the understanding of family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial identities as culturally embedded. As Smith et al. (2006, 102) say; "the distal environment, the institutions of society, our personal upbringing and our immediate interpersonal and social contexts all contribute to the creation of recognizably different profiles of citizens within a nation" pointing to the heterogeneity of any population, really; the same goes for any family business and its members, regardless of the culture.

7.4.5 Business cultural similarities and differences

To go back to the anthropological stance (c.f. Eriksen 2005, 13-14), the aim in cross-cultural research should not be limited to observing differences between cultures but similarities as well. The family business entrepreneurial identities are unique in much the same ways as family businesses are unique rather than forming a homogeneous group but do appear to have similar features in them across cultures. The system of values in the two cultures studied here point to both differences and similarities. Values are deeply personal but socially patterned and essential for identities (Hitlin 2003, 119) and it is through values that individuals express their ideal identities as well; how they want to be perceived by others. The empirical materials in this study suggest that the two strongest values that family business entrepreneurs seem to have in both cultures are also the strongest similarities for the two; that is to say the value given to family and the value given to honesty. Those two take precedence in both cultural value systems over anything else.

Honesty and integrity as self-perceived values seem to be essential for entrepreneurs in both the cultures in this study. This is suggestive of the ideal of a good and moral person whose value system extends itself to the family business operations as well. Hand in hand with this, in both cultures, goes the value given to hard work, a very important aspect of entrepreneurial identities.

The meaning of family in both cultures is evident for the entrepreneurial identifications in the family business context in several ways; family business owners reflect on the future of their businesses through the familial lens in that an essential part of their entrepreneurial identities is the wish for the business to continue in the family. In everyday business operations they have to keep multiple different identities active at the interface of family and business thereby making use of the hybrid identities that allow them to do so. The entrepreneurs from both cultures seem to also share in the importance given to spouses in entrepreneurial venturing, their role and meaning as a human resource is of utmost importance (see e.g. Poza & Messer 2001, 25). However, it appears to be more typical for Finnish spouses to be involved in the actual business operations whereas in Louisiana the spouse if often in the background supporting the business in other ways. This is indicative of the larger cultural and social difference pertaining to the role of women in society at large. Stay-at-home moms are very much appreciated and valued socially in the States whereas in Finland women appear to draw their worth from their professional careers and little value is given to stay-at-home moms. In both cultures the spouse's parental role is of essence in balancing the demands of parenting and business. Aldrich and Cliff (2003, 586) explain how spouses might end up working for the family venture: "it is also possible that spousal pairs exert reciprocal positive influences on one another, increasing the likelihood that both will become involved in a new venture" and this type of a situation seemed to be very much the case for my Finnish respondents.

The empirical materials of this study indicate that the Finnish family business entrepreneurs have to have developed a certain level of tolerance for envy to be able to strive for success. They know to expect that from their social environment and express it as being part of being an entrepreneur. The role of envy does not appear to play too big of a role for the Louisianan entrepreneurs. Obviously this is not to say that their business and social environment is free of envy, it just does not surface in connection of entrepreneurial identities the way it does in Finland. Keltikangas-Järvinen (2000, 159) does argue though that envy is not necessarily a negative feature in the Finnish culture but may have positive ramifications in acting as a performance motivator.

Money is looked upon differently in the two cultures. To the Louisianans money seems to have intrinsic value and seemingly the purpose of portfolio entrepreneurship is to make more money, add wealth. The Finns do not appear to regard money as an end in itself but the means to an end. Finns seem to give intrinsic value to time, both in the sense of free time and time related to an individual's other identifications, such as parental identity.

Cultures are not entities with clear and strict boundaries. The same can be said of cultural identities. Therefore it cannot be assumed that individuals can be positioned firmly within one cultural realm alone but may in fact show features of other cultures as well. This turned out to be my view on two individual entrepreneurs, Brandon and Arto, in this study as well; therefore I have come to call them the border-crossing entrepreneurs. To give a word of explanation; this does not mean that that they don't fit their own cultural realms at all, on the contrary, they very much do, but they also exhibit cultural attributes that also could place them in the other culture under study here.

In Brandon's case, he represents the third generation in a family business, attesting to having many entrepreneurial attributes and appears to have the kind of a hybrid identity structure that is typical in the family business context. He fits in his cultural background in his attitude toward entrepreneurial ventures; he has several going on at the same time and is ambitious in going forward. However, his main purpose in life, even in the context of business, appears to be a good parent and thus making more and more money appears not to be the main goal of his business operations but providing for his family. His attitude toward time is similar to the Finns' in that he wants to spend as much time with his family as possible. His tone in expressing himself is reminiscent of the Finnish value placed on modesty and humbleness.

Arto is a portfolio entrepreneur who is constantly on the lookout for new opportunities and in his approach to entrepreneurial ventures reminiscent of his Louisianan colleagues. His approach to networking is very much like the Louisianans' in that he has an extremely wide network of contacts in all areas of his life varying from his industry to sports, hobbies, and politics. He sees value in these networks not only as peer support as most of his Finnish colleagues seem to do but also as opportunities to develop his businesses.

It felt as though my own cultural background as a Finn enabled me to see and isolate issues that I thought were culture specific when I first interviewed the Louisianans. Those would have been issues that struck me as being a little 'foreign' on the one hand and not being typical to my own pre-understanding of the Finnish family business culture on the other. Based on the cultural pre-understanding that I had of the American South, they also felt familiar as being typical to that culture from my perspective, again as a Finn, looking in from the outside, so to speak. It was a result of these insights gained during the Louisianans' interviews that I was then able to incorporate these issues seen as novel emergent themes into my interview guide with the Finnish interviewees.

The emergent themes as being the temporal dimension or orientation as in 'time is money' for the Americans or the value of free time or being able to better separate free time from work time for the Finns, and the meaning of networking, entrepreneurs as promoters of corporate entrepreneurship theme are not new in themselves but can easily be traced back to the extant theoretical literature on entrepreneurs. However, they are novel in the cross-cultural context that this study takes place in and assume implications for the entrepreneurial identity as a culturally embedded construction, purporting to say that different cultures have different influences on entrepreneurial identifications, i.e. in the Louisianan business cultures it appears to be customary for the entrepreneurs to develop their entrepreneurial identity toward portfolio entrepreneurship and in Finland it appears to be common for family business entrepreneurs to be promoters of corporate entrepreneurship.

The hybrid identity that the entrepreneurs in the family business context in these two cultures seemed to have developed appear to be synergistic in nature in that they seem to yield not only resources to be utilized but also psychological well-being through good and functional transgenerational relationships. Identity synergy manifests itself when "one identity enhances the outcomes of another identity (Shepherd & Haynie 2009a, 327) increasing the value the value of the system's parts (Habbershon et al. 2003, 456). Often the familial relationships seem to be a source of creative energy for the entrepreneurial identities. Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 330) allude to the potential synergies of a hybrid identity structure in the family business context that can also be seen through marital relationships having become stronger through the family business operations. This seemed to be the case very much for several of the respondents in this study, i.e. Matti's account involved a lot of reflecting on him and his wife as co-entrepreneurial couple as did his son's. In general the respect and the value of a good relationship seemed to be of essence.

Children in entrepreneurial families construct their entrepreneurial identities through a socialization process and are likely to have a more positive outlook on that if they perceive their parents supporting that (Carr & Sequeira 2007, 1093). The transgenerational aspirations of family businesses are visible in the wished-for-identities as part of the business family members' identity structures, both on the personal level as well as the collective and social level;

they reflect the hope for the next generation to continue the business. These reach beyond the currently held identities in being aspirational (Kreiner, Hollensbe & Sheep 2006, 1329). Families are dynamic social units the changes in which are reflected in the family's businesses.

Most of the respondents in this study did not appear to have a conscious family business entrepreneur's entrepreneurial identity but tended to construct their entrepreneurial identities through their professional or occupational identities, regardless of what other ventures they may have had going on. They became more conscious of operating in the family business context through my positioning them as such in my interviews, which can be seen as identity work. Individuals can skillfully appropriate the concepts that allow them to negotiate their own particular worlds (Cohen & Musson 2000, 44).

Finally, to highlight the previous interpretations of entrepreneurial identities emanating from the cross-cultural family business context I will recap the answers to my research problem by contemplating the aim of this study before moving on to discuss the contributions and implications of it. The main aim of this thesis was to contribute to the understanding of entrepreneurial identity construction (content and process oriented) in the family business and cross-cultural context through the main research question of how do family business members construe their entrepreneurial identities. The media through which knowledge about the entrepreneurial identity structures was acquired were the research interviews in which the respondents construed their identities in their expressions which then got analyzed interpretively into interpretations of their entrepreneurial identities. The interpretations yielded in this study contribute to the added understanding of these identity structures by presenting them as being constructed at the interface of the family and business. Since these structures are active concurrently across the different domains of family, business, and ownership, they are interpreted as hybrid identities indicating a mix of different identifications from those domains thereby contributing to the extended understanding of the phenomenon of identity. Further understanding is created by showing them as generationally, temporally, and culturally embedded entities which, to answer the additional questions pertaining to what issues are related to these constructs and if cross-cultural similarities and differences can be seen emerging from those constructs, show these entrepreneurial identity constructs as multifaceted and dynamic, all of which was discussed in the earlier sections. The study also responds to its aim by showing that not all family business owners construe their identities as including an entrepreneurial identification at all.

7.5 Theoretical contributions

In line with Hall (2003, 297) one potential contribution of research that I would like to aim at as well would be to produce "trustworthy, thought-evoking suggestions". It is to that end that I see value in this research for the following reasons; I suggest that it offers contributions for the added and expanded understanding of family businesses and entrepreneurial identities through a cross-cultural lens thus enhancing the extant theories of those. Next I will discuss these contributions which theory wise are intertwined and illustrate how they generate added understanding to the theories in question and in the cross-cultural context.

According to Reay (2009, 1269) identity makes a particularly relevant concept for family businesses due to the close connection of family and business yet applications of identity theories in the field are very rare. This thesis contributes to the family business theories as adding to the understanding of entrepreneurial identities in the family business context specifically and through the dimension of culture. Hytti (2003) studied non-family business entrepreneurs' narrative identity constructions and found that their other identities co-existed with their entrepreneurial identities; in my study given the family business context, I interpreted the different identifications of the family business entrepreneurs as forming a hybrid identity structure, the different parts of which being able to be active concurrently which in my interpretations is indicative of being the main difference to non-family business entrepreneurs. The hybrid identity structure highlights the impact of the combination of family and business to the overall identity and the impact of family on the entrepreneurial identity structures of family business entrepreneurs. The aforementioned difference is in line with Shepherd and Haynie's (2009a) contention of the negative consequences caused by entrepreneurs' identities' need for distinctiveness on one hand and the need for belonging on the other in the sense that in order to negotiate that conflict of identities the family business entrepreneurs in this study seem to have created a balance between the different identifications of the hybrid which can also yield synergy for one another through the hybrid structure rather than be a constant source of conflict. However, the source of regret for my respondents seems to have been the loss of salience of their parental identity which they have had to negotiate away and which they seem to have also regained through working together in their family's business with their offspring suggesting of them having actively negotiated their different identities through their hybrid identity constructs.

The concept of the hybrid identity differs from the concept of super-ordinate identity (Shepherd & Haynie 2009a) or meta-identity for managing multiple identities developed by Shepherd and Haynie (2009b) in the sense that the family business entrepreneurs seem to be able to keep the different identifications active and in balance concurrently rather than compartmentalize them with the help of the meta-identity, as suggested by Shepherd and Haynie (2009b). Their concept is geared toward solving identity conflict whereas the hybrid identity structure can also be viewed from a positively oriented perspective as in producing synergies for the different parts of the identity constellation. Based on the previous, I argue that the main theoretical contribution of this thesis to the family business theories is the development of the concept of the hybrid identity which can yield added understanding to how identities and identity work are dealt with in the future family business research.

Additionally, the thesis also highlights the family business identifications as generational and cultural entities, which theories and related research need to pay heed to rather than looking at family business entrepreneurs' identities as a homogeneous entity.

Shepherd and Haynie (2009a, 323) define the qualities of entrepreneurial identities as consisting of the individual entrepreneur as being an innovator, risk bearer, action oriented, facilitator, and communicator. However, what this thesis adds to the previous is placing those and other possible traits or identity building processes within a cultural realm in which they might assume a different substance and meaning in different business cultures. If the business cultural and societal norm is to attach prestige to entrepreneurial ends such as new business start-ups and portfolio entrepreneurship in one culture (as seems to be the case for my Louisianan respondents) or promotion of intrapreneurial organizational culture and promotion of corporate entrepreneurship in another (as seems to be the case for my Finnish respondents) then the substance to the entrepreneurial qualities listed by Shepherd and Haynie may take on a different meaning depending on the culture in which they are observed. This then generates an extended understanding of the cultural influences on family businesses. Drakopoulou Dodd (2002, 520) touches upon this issue by questioning who entrepreneurs think they are and what they see to be the purpose of entrepreneurship and suggests that by uncovering a north American model of entrepreneurship more cultural comparisons could take place later allowing us to get new perspectives of entrepreneurial identities. I argue that cross-cultural research contributes to that end as well as family business studies specifically in a setting such as in this thesis, by acknowledging the cultural dimension in all aspects of research.

Given the unique transgenerational aspect of family businesses, the thesis shows that entrepreneurial identities in this context change and develop constantly along with the organizational identity of the family firm thereby presenting entrepreneurial identities as generational constructs as well. Different generations, even in the same cultural surroundings can have very different psychological experiences (Renshon & Duckitt 2000, 9) which need to be taken into account in the family business studies.

As far as the theory of entrepreneurship is concerned, the contributions are intertwined with the family business context of this research. The thesis illustrates the concept of identity in particular as a complex and dynamic entity to be in as much context dependent as the phenomenon of entrepreneurship itself thereby offering outlooks to theory that widen the understanding of entrepreneurship as a culturally embedded research object. This thesis suggests, as my previous contention on its contribution to family business theories as well, that theorizing of entrepreneurship needs to take into account cultural aspects as a basic premise. This theoretical contribution extends itself to the concept of the entrepreneurial identity as well regardless of the context in which it is studied urging future research to pay attention to the cultural implications forever present.

Next I will move on to the contribution of this thesis to theories of identity. The practical implications regarding the development of identity work in the context of family business will be explained later.

As was mentioned before in the section regarding the theories of identity which indeed are multiple and vary from the study of the personal to the social in myriad different fields, implying the significance of the concept itself for the understanding of the human being and society, and therefore the family business entrepreneur as well, the need to study identities seems to have been born out of the need to study and explore identities in a multitheoretical environment (see Rautio & Saastamoinen 2006) in order to continuously add to the understanding of it on one hand and bring out that concept to various fields of study on the other in order to be able to theorize on other phenomena through the concept of identity. This thesis offers added understanding of yet another concept of identity, which is to the entrepreneurial identity but specifically in a context, that is to say the family business, in which it has not been studied before. The interpretations of the entrepreneurial identities in this piece of work elaborate on the familial dynamics of being of essence to how identities in this context are construed, in addition to the cultural implications brought by the cross-cultural stance. Therefore the interpretations offer a novel concept of identity to complement the previously studied, such as work identity (Eteläpelto et al. 2007), entrepreneurial identity in the non-family business context (Hytti 2003) and managerial identity (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003).

As the interpretations of entrepreneurial identities in this thesis illustrate, one of the most important issues to identity building is that of values and value systems which are culturally embedded. They shape the development of personality and motivate family business entrepreneurs in any given society or business cultural environment to engage in action which may not be evident in another society (Mueller & Thomas 2000, 51). My thesis underlines the culturally bound nature of value systems in showing, for example, that to the Louisianan family firm entrepreneurs money is an intrinsic value whereas for the Finns it is time. Portfolio entrepreneurship is seen as a preferable way of acting entrepreneurially in Louisiana whereas in Finland this seems to have no specific significance but rather the promotion of intrapreneurship hereby showing how these modes of entrepreneurial action are indeed not that evident to those who engage in business elsewhere. My respondents' entrepreneurial identities seem to have been so well integrated in their respective business cultures that they may have become unaware of them (Josselson 1994, 93). García-Álvarez and López-Sintas (2001, 209) found that entrepreneurs are not a homogeneous group and can have different hierarchies of values but did not explore the meaning of culture to those values that can be seen in this thesis, prompting future research on entrepreneurial identities to pay attention to cultures, be they national, regional or subcultural.

The methodological contribution offered by this research lies in the cross-cultural interpretive approach taken to the context of family business which can be seen as having opened a new dimension into the study of identities in family business. Cross-cultural context imposes a whole new and complex level on a research setting. As is suggested by this thesis, seeing entrepreneurship as a phenomenon deeply embedded in different cultural realms, be they national, regional, or subcultural, emphasizes and highlights the need to bring at least a minimal amount of cultural considerations into the methodological choices used to study both identities as well as family businesses in order to reach trustworthy interpretations. It also highlights the need to see different levels of culture as being pertinent to the research setting rather than researchers rendering their interpretations on one limited level, such as the civilization level (Huntington 1993) or the national one (Hofstede 1980, 2001) thus equating culture with wide frameworks of beliefs and values or nation states. The thesis also shows a need for a certain level of intercultural competence (Wilkins 2007; Molinsky et al. 2005; Jokikokko 2005) in conducting cross-cultural research of family businesses for researchers to be able to render trustworthy interpretations of the phenomena they study. It indicates that the way of enacting the entrepreneurial self (Rae 2000) varies from culture to culture thereby showing entrepreneurial discourses as culturally diverse not to be interpreted as monolithic. The meaning of the concept of 'family' alone is different from culture to culture (Aldrich & Cliff 2003) and those differences appear not on just civilizational level but on national level and maybe even on some subcultural level as well highlighting the importance of cultural considerations for research settings. The way Americans in general, or the Southerners within the US and so on, understand family may be very different from the way the Nordic people view it. Given the cross-cultural lens utilized in the analysis of entrepreneurial identities, this study indicates a strong need to understand that entrepreneurship education and consultancy should be seen as culturally bound and contextualized indicating the importance of taking cultural aspects into account and being culturally aware in research and teaching rather than taking dominant theories as a given and regarding them culture neutral (see Bird et al. 2002 on their contention on most of the family business research being based on samples and theorizing from the USA thus not taking cultural variety into account). The ramifications of the previous for identity research in family businesses within central Europe, to give an example, are significant if looked upon from a monolithic point of view which would not view culture, tradition or history as pertinent thereby placing entrepreneurial identities of, for example, the French and Hungarian in the same context not taking into account the economic history of transition economies (Ireland, Tihanyi & Webb 2008, 107) or free market economies. According to Hytti (2003, 18) entrepreneurs negotiate their entrepreneurial identities in order to present themselves as good entrepreneurs; however, as I contend, what constitutes a good entrepreneur is context dependent, as seen in my thesis and this needs to be taken into consideration when conducting research in entrepreneurship and family businesses.

The novel themes that emerged out of my empirical materials as culture bound building blocks of entrepreneurial identities seem to be indicative of the contingency model (Littunen 2000, 296) of the entrepreneur according to which the personal characteristics needed for entrepreneurship are contextually and situationally embedded and formed in the interplay between the entrepreneur and his/her environment which varies from countries and regions to another, hence the differences in self-perceived entrepreneurial attributes between different cultures as well. This supports the need to incorporate cultural awareness into the study of the entrepreneur.

7.6 Practical implications

Identity research can also be valuable to family business consulting as a thinking tool through conscious identity work. In this research the respondents were interpreted as having engaged in identity work along with me during our discussions and to many of them reflexiveness and self-awareness seem to be essential constituents of not only their entrepreneurial identities but their overall identities. I suggest that these interpretations are indicative of the pragmatic contributions of identity research and identity work for family business consultancy as explained next.

According to Watson (2009, 257) identity work "involves the mutually constitutive processes whereby people strive to shape a relatively coherent and distinctive notion of personal self-identity and strive to shape the various social identities that emerge in relationship to others in the various milieux in which they live their lives". This refers to identity work being reflexive in nature and taking place interaction, such as the kind taking place between a consultant and his/her client. It is intersubjective therefore signifying mutuality which in fact means that the consultant is as much part of the identity work as the client is (c.f. Watson 2008). Identity work needs to be grounded in self-doubt and openness (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003, 1165) and take into account both the personal as well as the social aspects of identity (Watson 2009, 252) allowing the family business members to reflect on their present and future identities as individuals, business owners, family members, managers, and members of their business community, among others. If the business-owning family members are unsure of their position in the organization, their future, or their identities, they cannot focus on the pertinent issues facing them or their businesses (Schein 1987, 39) and it is in situations of crises and incidents during the business's life cycle that are most prone to conflict, i.e. succession that conscious identity work becomes most apparent (Watson 2009, 257). According to Thomas (22002, 324) challenges to continued ownership need to be expected. Hoy and Sharma (2010, 8) say that "given the large number of firms that are to undergo leadership transitions around the world within the next two decades, the low level of preparation to successfully overcome this critical juncture, and succession challenges being ranked as the number one concern of family business owners, attention to succession issues is appropriate". According to Ibrahim et al. (2001) only few studies focus on the younger generation related to their involvement in the family business and I argue that identity work based on the kind of identity research accomplished in this study could have an important role in filling that gap for mapping out the future of all parties concerned in the succession process, also the family firm's.

The offspring and their role, whether it is something that is desired or a source of conflicting feelings could be dealt with easier through identity work incorporated into family business consulting. It could facilitate explicating the position of both the older and younger generation as far as their wished-for-identities are concerned because as Watson (2009, 268, emphases in the original) points out; identity work "both in its internal and external aspects, can be as much about people defining *who they are not* as about identifying *who they are*". I argue that it is important for both the older and the younger generations that the solutions reached through identity work make it possible for everyone to continue on their own terms, since the choices made are the product of the relational web in which the entrepreneurial identities get constructed (Josselson 1994, 84-85). Present in these encounters within one's relational web are the past as well as the future so identity work can be "a mélange of different identity projects co-present within the self but distinct and potentially conflicting" (Beech 2008, 52). Identity management and identity work in the family business context take place at the interface of family and business on multiple fronts. Zellweger and Astrachan (2008, 354) point out that family business owners cannot switch families or organizations easily at a time of conflict of various kinds due to the identity overlap of the owner, family and firm, for which identity work could be an aid. Identity work in general is helpful for solving conflict in this context and it can also be helpful in creating a "therapeutic alliance" (Kaye & Hamilton 2004, 153) between the family business consultant and the client through helping the consultant as well in engaging with the family business system through identity work.

Identity work can also serve those families in business to which the business represents a burden more than a passion. It can turn out to be the voice of the business in a situation in which the owner retains minimal interest in the development of the business and perceives to have no entrepreneurial ambition, such as was the case with Kari and Jari in this research. Identity work as a tool might be beneficial for those two in helping to map out their ideas of the future which would focus on their true wished-for-identities and could introduce alternatives not only for them but for the business. Sometimes the sale of the business is not only a viable option but it might be the best option.

Kisfalvi (2002, 514-515) talks about how as a group, entrepreneurs have a tendency to be more action-oriented and less introspective and this combined with the success that they have had thus far is preventing them from seeing any need for change, therefore "those working closely with them can have an important role to play in making entrepreneurs aware of the potential dangers of their subjectivity and the need for change…the challenge for entrepreneurs' close collaborators is thus to develop approaches that can penetrate this resistance". I argue that identity work as a thinking tool for consultancy could be beneficial in promoting this kind of self-reflection through dialogue. The interpretations yielded through research interviews in this study can contribute to practitioners' understanding of what identity work is and how it can be accomplished through communication in a consulting situation as presented in the next section discussing identity work in practice.

7.7 Identity work in practice

Family business stakeholders are often required to make significant, life-changing decisions (Vago 2004, 71) regarding the future of the family's business as well as the future of the business family members and the extent of identity work needed is related to the extent of the change in question (Eteläpelto 2007, 93). Reflexive research, such as interpretive identity research, can encourage the dialogue not only between researchers and practitioners (Numagami 1998, 12) but create a 'thinking tool' through identity work for family business consultants as well. As mentioned before, identity work is reciprocal in the consulting situation (Watson 2009) thereby allowing the consultant to approach his/her client not as an outsider but rather a participant, without presenting him/herself as someone who identifies a problem and fixes it by giving solutions to pre-existing conflicts or trouble.

Next I will present an example of identity work in practice. Since I view my interviews as having constituted identity work in the context of research, I will present two scenarios here from my research setting for how identity work could be used as a thinking tool in family business consultancy. These two different scenarios include citations from my respondents to illustrate and exemplify how identity work can take place or how it could be useful for family businesses. These instances are to be taken as brief examples of the identity work process and their purpose is not to describe the process in its entirety.

It is my contention based on my interpretations of the entrepreneurial identities of Arto and his sons Mika and Mikko that they have in fact engaged in identity work for a long time, albeit not consciously calling it that and continue to do so during my interviews. Arto has passed on his keen sense of self-targeted reflection and skills of self-assessment (Hoang & Gimeo 2010, 42) to his sons who also engage in reflexionary thinking in their interviews. Arto has also been eager to seek external consultancy all during his entrepreneurial career making him a credible client in this imaginary example.

Kari and Jari's approach toward entrepreneurial action and their self-perceived lack of entrepreneurial attributes and ambition are evident in my interpretations of their identities. They also seem to express wished-for-identities that can be interpreted as non-existent or lacking direction which is mirrored in their thoughts about the future of their business. As argued before, I believe that they would benefit from identity work as well so the quotes presented below by them are examples of those accounts that would be revealing for the consultant in creating ways and strategies to assist them. Both businesses are in a situation in which the succession process has started, at least on some level, so I will use that as the imaginary reason for their need for consultancy. I will not go into the potential consulting solutions in this example due to the limitations of the research since the purpose is merely to suggest a pragmatic model for identity work.

The basis for the identity work process that I propose for the family business consultancy is similar to my research interview guide, hence my using my existing interviews to exemplify this practical model. It involves the probing of identities as temporal constructs, handling the past, present and future issues not only on the individual level but on the organizations level as well indicating hopes and wishes for the business and family members both. These issues can also be beneficial for situations of conflict within family business.

The past orientation of the identity is dealt with by asking about personal histories which also allows for the dialogue to extend itself to the history of the family's business as well as life-defining moments. The present is dealt with questions pertaining to 'being' as opposed to 'becoming', the individual's position in the company, self-perceived leadership and entrepreneurial skills and general information of the business, family relationships, self-perceived generational differences between the family members, possible conflict, value systems, where each family member is in relation to their careers and position in the company. The future is dealt with through questions handling the processes of 'becoming' as opposed to 'being' reflecting the wished-for-identities of the individuals and through that the future of the family's business. Obviously these issues act only as a guide allowing for other issues to surface should they be discovered to be more pertinent to the situation. They key to identity work is prompting the client to become aware of and start reflecting on the previously mentioned issues and more specifically, taking the context into account, conducting identity work from the standpoint of the hybrid identity structure, as put forward in this thesis.

The following quote shows how Arto reflects on the past of his company in recounting the defining moment during which his identity seems to have changed from that of an entrepreneur to that of a family business entrepreneur. It strongly involves having seen his son in a different light and having seen him as competent and therefore changing the course of the company's future in the sense that the sale of the company is no longer the only and definitive option after Arto's leadership era but rather transgenerational wealth creation through family business operations. The relevance of this to the consultancy process in the context of succession consulting could be to make the owner aware of what led him to see his business as something to continue and a vehicle for transgenerational business operations.

"Well, it was really around the time my eldest son came here to work as a project manager, then he became the head of the installation organization here in Finland and I noticed that he may stay here…so in 2006 I finally got to thinking that yes, we will keep this company as a family business. I had thought before that I need to prepare it for sale that would take place around 2010. But then I noticed that the next generation is interested, even though my eldest son did say that this company does not need two Okkonens, it did seem though, that we got along here under the same roof, and this changed my thinking completely. We intend to continue as a family business, we'll see how many generations…I intend to celebrate my 100th birthday in my present home and by then my son will have been retired and the new generation will be on its way." Arto (1)

The following quote illustrates how Arto has started pondering on the future of his sons in conjunction with that of his company's. He is clearly visualizing an intragenerational succession process toward which he may, consciously or unconsciously, start guiding the company and his sons, again keeping in mind his aim of transgenerational wealth creation. In the context of succession through the wished-for organizational identity this can be seen as a valuable result of identity work.

"I think that my eldest son…or the eldest and the younger son have an age difference of eleven years so it could be good…when the older starts to get tired of the operative leadership that the younger one will have had time to grow into that position that he could take. We don't know his qualities and know-how yet or whether he will have the abilities then at the time, but this is one scenario."Arto (2)

Arto's son Mika reflects on the differences between himself and his dad in the following. This shows his thoughts on each generation serving the organization in its different phases in their own way. Mika sees their different qualities as complementary and expressing some frustration at the thought of being a start-up entrepreneur, he feels that his qualities as more of an analytic person serve the later stages of the business' life cycle better indicating strong skills of self-assessment. This can be seen as valuable insight for the consultancy process in mapping out the strengths and weaknesses of family members during the succession process.

"I really am more of an organizer and analyzer and think… like I have seen dad waste money in many places, having gone into things like 'this sounds great'…I'm very different in that, but that just is the difference, it could well be that I would not start a company up from zero because it cannot be analyzed in any way, you just have to start it up, you have this idea and then you keep changing it and in about ten years you'll find that great idea."Mika (3)

Mika's thinking is already very future oriented thus reflecting a strong wished-for identity toward which he will act. He is aware of his strengths and wants to satisfy his need for challenge, yet at the same time visualizing the future of Imagon. This quote exemplifies the part of identity work that is future oriented.

"…well, if you think like…be the chairman of the board and run this and…maybe try and make use of my own know-how in other companies and the goal is to get my own finances in order within ten years so that I would have the opportunity to invest a little…to get involved in other companies, invest a little money and fix them and through that….something new…I don't know what I will think in seven years but…the idea in that is that there are always companies that are in crisis and when a company is in crisis it is very cheap and I think that I have just this ability in crisis….I have a lot of skills in situations of crisis that…I kind of do

> *well mentally in a crisis situation and then…I have a pretty good feel of things and I've thought that after I get this [Imagon] going well I could be the chairman of the board here and maybe look around for companies…if a company is in crisis where a big change is needed and such…then I could see if I would invest some money there and fix it, if I can..but I just have the feeling that I have something to give and this could lead to dealing with multiple companies, it's kind of an exciting vision, I don't know how it'll go but it could be the thing…" Mika (4)*

The strategic goal of the Okkonen men is for their company to internationalize as much as possible. Mika's younger brother Mikko has thought about this goal which was discussed during the research interview. However, the subject has not come up in the discussions between the two brothers and Mika is positively surprised to hear about this as it comes up during his interview as well. Mika's and Mikko's comments could be seen as issues not talked about regarding the business, and in many instances issues regarding the individual family members as well, that could be brought forward in conscious identity work in consultancy.

> *"Really? I have not really talked that much about it [internationalizing] with him…not that much…that's quite interesting, we have never discussed strategy, we have talked a lot about operations, but I've never talked about…maybe he has talked about it with dad, but we sure have not talked about it that much."Mika (5)*

Mikko's account on this issue shows that he has indeed thought about internationalizing and identifies strongly with the family's business and the company's goal; this can also be seen in his frequent use of the first person plural indicating a strong collective identity. This quote can also be seen as being reflective of his wished-for identity which could be useful information during the consultancy process.

> *"We are internationalizing all the time, little by little on our way to Europe. How we are going to do it and all that, don't ask me, I won't tell. That's where we are going and will go."Mikko (6)*

Kari's family business is in a different situation altogether in regards to identity work, the business as well as the succession process itself. Identities and the business seem to be drifting with no definite direction. Kari, who is retired from the everyday operations but remains in the background as owner seems to be at a loss regarding the leadership of the business and his own position and appears anxious to avoid confrontation which might in fact be fruitful for all parties concerned. This might prompt the identity work through consultancy to assist in finding ways for more solid identifications as leaders and the future of the business. These insights might be helpful for a consultant to map the present situation of the family members and prompt them to ponder on not only their own wished-for-identities as future oriented but find ways to solve the future of the business as well.

> *"It's like the managers are the son, the wife and me so that sometimes it's like 'It's going to get done like this' but then sometimes I have to give in because I can't say directly that this is how it is, I have two others against me immediately…in family business you can never get rid of…it's true…there are as many managers as there are family members, at least I have noticed this and that's fine, I've given in if the issue has been taken care of and that's fine." Kari (7)*

Jari seems to be in a similar situation identity wise as his dad. His thoughts on his future are dominated by indifference, indecisiveness, and complete detachment from the business, at least in the emotional sense. He does not see the future of the business as being contingent on his own actions or performance in any way. Identity wise this would require extensive work as reflection and finding direction. Right now he is just settling to making a living which might not be the best situation for the future of the company.

> *"Well, I...I'd like to work in this [business] but I'll see where it goes so that...especially now during this so called recession so if...it's fine by me to earn a living out of it but one can't expect too much out of it unless a miracle happens, I don't know, let's see, but I ...I really don't care...of course I'd like to continue it because I do know something about the industry" Jari (8)*

Identity work can be undertaken in constructing leadership identities as well. For Mika of Imagon it has been of essence to find his own way to lead the company and he has reflected on that constantly, partly also to differentiate himself from his dad's leadership. Understanding the generational differences is of essence in family business consultancy identity work. Engaging in identity work with the client the consultant can raise self-awareness as to what motivates the client as an owner or manager, how decisions are made, how their behavior influences the company and those around them, why they are in business, what their goals are, how they lead, how they monitor their behavior, how they allocate strategic resources, what their visions are for the company and for the family so that both systems do well. Pondering on the wished-for personal, social, and organizational identities can turn into self-fulfilling prophecies yielding synergies for all stakeholders and all parties concerned.

7.8 Evaluating the research

No research is perfect and therefore this research report starts to wind down by my evaluating critically the work I have done here. It is my hope that this will also represent my reflections on the learning that has happened on my part. As a point of origin for the evaluation of the research, though, I have to emphasize that given the interpretive approach that I have, the traditional concepts of quantitative methods for the evaluation have to be rejected. This research has to be seen as a subjective effort, not even attempting to claim objectivity but this being value-laden by nature does not detract from its scientific character (Jackson 2006, 278) as long as the reflexivity and trustworthiness are there. I am cognizant of the subjectivity in this research. Finlay (2002, 541) urges researchers with qualitative approaches to come clean about mistakes they may have made during research thus committing themselves to reflexivity in the course of methodological evaluation and it is my sincere attempt here to do so.

What is inherent in the interpretive approach is its approach to language; it does not reflect reality, therefore it cannot be a neutral medium for the transporting of facts. Therefore as a starting point I have had to accept that both the accounts that I have heard as well as my own renderings of entrepreneurial identifications based on those accounts cannot be presented as facts or truths nor can they be generalized; they are social constructions. I have had to accept that my interpretations will remain incomplete and I also have to leave room for alternative interpretations. I recognize the limitations to universal knowledge (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea 2006, 211) and it is "not that our understanding is poor, rather, it is that social realities are so extraordinarily rich" (Alvesson & Kärreman 2000, 147).

It can be suggested that one way of gaining validity for my interpretations could have been for me to go back to my respondents with my interpretations to have them judge the correctness of them. However, this was not an option for me. Firstly, validity cannot be seen as relevant to the evaluation of any piece of research that deals with social constructions produced in intersubjective interaction. Secondly, the assumption in identity research is that identities are transforming by nature so it can be assumed that the salience of each identification varies and the interview can only be seen as anchored in that particular time they take place in. The accounts are represented in written form in the transcriptions which could have been read by the respondents but for simply practical reasons they may have had difficulty in remembering what prompted them to express themselves in a certain manner at a certain time. Furthermore, it would not have to do with the legitimacy of the transcriptions but my interpretations of the respondents' entrepreneurial identities; as such they take a highly subjective form embedded in my subjective pre-understanding, based on the theoretical framework that I have, therefore them interpreting my interpretations would not have served the purpose of validating my interpretations as correct. What this entails in regards to the trustworthiness as a research evaluative objective of my interpretations is to go back to the original research objective which was to contribute to the understanding of entrepreneurial identities in a cross-cultural context, not to create generalizable results.

In my decision not to go back to my respondents to have them read the final versions of my interpretations, I concur with the same decision made by Sten (2006, 208); "If the business family members were to read the final version of this report, they would to some extent identify diverging opinions. However, the major research process would then be over, and it would not have an influence on the final product….there is the danger that interpretations of the empirical material are not totally in line with what the business family members sought to express with their comments. Still, the transcriptions are there, and the interpretations are results of combining analysis of every business family member interview with the level of personal preunderstanding of the researcher. In that respect, it is unlikely that an individual business family member would make exactly the same interpretation of the results as the researcher. In such a situation, the decision to allow the business family members to read the material during the process would only make the research process longer, and perhaps also start processes within the business family that could endanger the role of the researcher.". In the same vein I have to emphasize my approach to the premise of the this research; the phenomenon under study is interpreted initially through my pre-understanding which is always subjective and idiosyncratic, based on the choices made concerning the theories that form the basis of the research. My respondents cannot be asked to enter that same frame of reference, lest they come to be put in the researcher's position and role.

According to Thorne (2008, 156) a problem in the interpretive research is that the researcher comes to "premature closure" thereby assuming too quickly that the interrelations that she thinks are due to the elements under study, which in my case could be for example culture, are definitive. I think this is something that is a strong possibility in my research as well. I may have wanted to attach meaning to issues that I have thought were culture related or maybe specifically contextually related to family businesses in my haste to follow my first instinctual feeling. I also may have presumed to have had a higher level of cultural competency than I actually had in those interactional situations that were foreign to me. It needs to be pointed out as well that concepts can have different significance of meaning in different contexts (Hunter et al. 2002, 390). It is my sincere hope that most of these previously mentioned issues have been dealt with self-reflection and repeated reading of both the empirical material as well as theories.

One instance where I know I failed took place during my interviews with Kari and Jari, as reflected already before in the analysis section. The feeling of failure at the time had to do with not being able to elicit dialogue of the two but it was only later that I realized that the real failure on my part had to do with not understanding the meaning of their reticence on the subject under study. It took a lot of reflecting on my part to see this. Mazzei (2009, 50) urges us to "remain cautious of the temptation to echo one's own voice in the silent data" and this was my point of failure. I did not want to hear the silence speak volumes, as I should have. The silence, in fact, screamed of completely non-existent entrepreneurial identification and completely non-existent feeling of a family legacy to be perpetuated, it appeared to speak of boredom, privilege, and consumerism. My values got the best of me at the time, I did not remain objective or respective, I made the grave error of making a value judgment. I did not see their accounts as being of equal value with the other accounts. My wanting to use my voice in their stead revealed the world of my values, at once, right there, and my voice did not come from an objective place, it came from a forceful place of wanting to romanticize the third generation family business carrying the family name that everybody is familiar with in that province. I should have asked "questions not just in response to an answer voiced, but to ask questions of a withheld response, a non-response, or a masked response" (Mazzei 2009, 54). And to think that my initial research question was not supposed to presume an entrepreneurial identity structure! According to Hall (2003, 69) ethics has to be a criterion for evaluation of research. It was to this end that I used my judgment and chose to present Kari's and Jari's accounts as anonymous or under presumed names.

I may have been less than accurate in presenting my respondents' voice in this report. By this I mean that I may have followed my own line of thinking in reaching interpretations without producing enough empirical closeness through quotations, even though it certainly has been my attempt to include as many as possible. Ellingson (2009, 13) urges researchers to incorporate the respondents' perspective into the analysis in a way that honors those perspectives. It was that point exactly which turned out to be the biggest challenge to trustworthiness in my presenting my empirical materials. At times I had to make a compromise as to what is shown here and what remains behind due to ethical considerations which took precedence in that situation. All in all I found my respondents to be very sincere and open in their accounts. However, I need to be aware of the interactional situation in which they negotiated these identity constructions; it cannot be likened to an everyday communicative situation with a friend and the analysis of those dialogues are subject to my own cultural preconceptions (Drakopoulou Dodd 2002, 524).

As mentioned earlier, traditional criteria for the evaluation of interpretive research are not relevant but need to be substituted with ways that are congruent with the "underlying assumptions and means of conduction" (Hall 2003, 67) of the chosen approach. Building on Hall (2003, 67-73) and Polsa (2007) I will next discuss the evaluation from the point of view that I find to be congruent with this interpretive study by using concepts of analytical generalizing, reflexivity seen as an ongoing effort all through the research reporting, richness in points, literary styling, multiple voicing and cross-cultural equivalence.

In generalizing analytically findings from a case are linked to theory (Hall 2003, 70). This has been my attempt all through the research process in that rather than presenting novel themes as emerging from my empirical materials on their own in a passive account, I have attempted to view the themes through repeated reading the of the empirical materials through their linkages with theories thence using my judgment as the researcher to judge what a theme actually is as in representing some level of patterned meaning in the empirical materials (Braun & Clarke 2006, 80-82). This procedure has ended up in my bringing forth the novel cross-cultural themes pertinent to the entrepreneurial identity structures. In addition to that it has allowed me to bring forth the building blocks of entrepreneurial identities, some of which in fact can already be found in extant literature, as being the self-perceived entrepreneurial attributes of my respondents.

Reflexivity has been an ongoing goal for me during this research process due to my seeing it being at very core of the interpretive approach. While I profess to having made the greatest effort to be reflexive at each and every turn of the writing of this report I have to also take into account of possibly having been blinded my own bias regarding my value system in that I may not have been able to interpret all the accounts reflexively. However, I recognize the importance and value of reflexivity to interpretive approaches and claim to have practiced it as to best of my ability.

Given the transgenerational nature of family businesses and given the cross-cultural stance of the research, the richness in points and multiple voicing in this research come through the representation of accounts of different generations in two different business cultures. However, this richness and multiplicity could have benefited from even more accounts as in my having included more business families and other cultural groups as well or having taken into account my respondents' subcultural backgrounds even more. In my effort to utilize the cross-cultural lens, my aim has not been to measure etic variables (Polsa 2007, 14) but to take an emic stance the purpose of which is not to transfer findings from one culture to another but to create added understanding of the phenomenon under focus through the cultural thematic.

In regards to literary styling I chose to give my reporting an active voice as discussed earlier in the methodology part. This adds to the trustworthiness and transparency of the reporting in that it allows me to stay clear from distancing myself of my research in a false attempt to create an air of objectivity which cannot be a goal in socially constructed science. To add to this attempt I have kept the style of writing personal, in order to make not only the gathering of the empirical materials and analysis of those transparent but as importantly all the reasons behind the impetus for the research as well as the different steps taken along the way.

Polsa (2007) has introduced an overview of equivalences of cross-cultural research which are traditionally seen in the evaluation of quantitative research as transferred onto the qualitative field. She has discussed their applicability in qualitative research and I have applied them to my own research setting in the following. They are conceptual equivalence, functional equivalence, sample equivalence, contextual equivalence, and response equivalence. The concept of researcher equivalence does not apply in my case given that I have conducted this research alone. Regarding the comparability and transferability of findings, Polsa (2007, 4) points out that the goal of the research may not be the transferability of the findings but the comparability of those with established knowledge and potentially adding to that with new insights or broad views on new concepts. This is in line with my research aim which has been to contribute to the understanding of entrepreneurial identities in the family business context in a cross-cultural setting and not so much the head-on comparison of two different cultures. I do not claim transferability of my interpretive findings.

Conceptual equivalence refers to the concepts possessing similar connotations across cultures, not in a way that the concept under study would have the same meaning in different cultures but that it may have different aspects and dimensions. According to Polsa (2007, 5) the disparities of concepts might turn out to be an interesting finding in themselves. I interpreted this to be the case with my interpretations of my respondents' value systems and the meaning and substance of the individual values the entrepreneurs perceived as part of their value systems. On the surface level the value systems seem very similar in drawing from honesty, hard work and family as values but on a deeper level time spent at work and time spent with family, for example, seemed to be indicative of the different value given to time in different culture. The main concepts of my dissertation research have to do with those of family business, the adjective 'entrepreneurial', identity, transgenerational wealth creation, business culture (local, regional, national). That is not to say that those concepts as such were all used in the interview structure but that those issues were probed with thematic questions related to those concepts. Given the two cultures that the interviews took place with them being firmly grounded in the Western world and tradition both having long traditions of family business entrepreneurship, I maintain that conceptual equivalence in a qualitative contextual sense exists and therefore is applicable.

Functional equivalence has several definitions according to Polsa (2007, 5); she uses this term in reference to comparing the goals of similar behavior. This is applicable in my study because I interpret the goals of economic behavior in the two different family business cultures to be equivalent in regards to aiming at transgenerational wealth creation on the one hand and preserving the family's legacy and well-being on the other.

Sample equivalence; the determining factor of sampling in this research has been the research approach (c.f. Polsa 2007, 6). Snowballing formed the basis of it for it provided an efficient tool in finding family businesses which would fulfill the concept as it was defined in my research as having the transgenerational dimension present and members of two different generations available for interviewing. The field in which they operate or what their turnover is was of no relevance to my research question. They all are either small or mid-size companies fulfilling the previously mentioned prerequisites.

Contextual equivalence refers to "a cognitive and sometimes even an emotional process that a respondent goes through while responding to questions" (Polsa 2007, 7). Verbal context forms an important part of the contextual equivalence as does the location where the interviews were conducted. As far as the experiential context goes, all respondents were members of a family business therefore assumed to share a business cultural background in as far as the form of enterprise goes. All interviews were conducted at the business offices of the respondents because researchers need "to find locations that in the two cultures to be compared are equally placed on the scale of appropriateness" (Polsa 2007, 7). Verbal context poses a challenge to my research in two ways; firstly in that one group of my respondents spoke a language foreign to me therefore that in and of itself can cause problems in situ and later during the transcription process which is a crucial phase of the interpretive analysis and secondly in that social conventions relating to the role of small talk, for example, are different in the two cultures under study. I argue that I command a fairly sufficient level of cultural competence which is required to overcome the problems related to the verbal context of the research, however I need to stay reflective and aware of this potential problem in order to overcome it as much as possible and keep it transparent all through reporting.

Another important issue, that could possibly have created a situation of inequivalence, was the economic recession that appeared to be more severe and advanced in the US than Finland at the time of the interviews having ramifications for the entrepreneurial identity construction as well, particularly its present temporal orientation. However, I argue that since identities get constructed over a lifetime taking into account the temporal essence of identities, this does not pose an equivalence problem but merely emphasizes identities as being historically, socially and culturally situated. In the empirical materials the economic situation came up with questions pertaining to the respondents' local business cultures, not with questions pertaining to how they saw themselves as family members or entrepreneurs.

Response equivalence deals with the manners of respondents when they answer questions (Polsa 2007, 9). All but one research interview in this study were conducted in face-to-face situations. It is fair to say that communicative situations differ a lot between the two cultures under study here. The Finns have a lot more tolerance for pauses and less talk than the Americans. Americans are used to constant communicative flow and have low tolerance for quiet moments and require affirmation. It is useful for foreigners to be fairly well versed in the American small-talk-culture in order to be able to establish good rapport which in turn is a part of being culturally competent. The differences between the communicative cultures of Finland the US South should be further investigated for the purpose of response equivalence.

Suggestions for future research

To conclude my dissertation research report, I will briefly discuss some research topics that could contribute to the fields of identity, entrepreneurship and family business research, from a perspective that has not been studied much thus far, that being that of culture and subcultures. These thoughts have emanated from this dissertation process as having had a cultural lens. In suggesting these topics I concur with Hytti's (2003, 291) call for studies that aim at producing multifaceted accounts that the entrepreneurs themselves give substance to rather than researchers trying to fit them and their accounts into pre-existing categories. This could mean further expanding on the identity work involved in the interpretive approach to family businesses from different dimensions, such as the gendered one or the generational one. Taking into account the cross-cultural stance that I have used, I would also suggest that the field of family business could greatly benefit from qualitative and interpretive studies conducted in even more versatile a manner crossing the boundaries of civilizations as defined by Huntingon (1993, see also chapter 5.4 of this report) evoking more in-depth discussion on the contextual and culturally bounded nature of entrepreneurship which would mean viewing extant theories as having to be seen that way as well. This could also mean drawing further from the interdisciplinary essence of the field of entrepreneurship utilizing for example social psychology and intercultural theories. Furthermore, the previous has a bearing on suggestions for future research on how entrepreneurship is taught keeping the cultural dimension in mind; rather than relying on dominant theories void of the cultural context, new research could look into ways of enforcing entrepreneurship education as context and culture bound. In practice that could mean looking into how entrepreneurship is taught in different countries and cultures and eventually developing ways to enhance localized understanding of entrepreneurship education.

Some specific areas of interest that I find intriguing and important would be female family business entrepreneurs' identity constructs and entrepreneurial identity constructions in transition or emerging economies. Ireland et al. (2008, 107) define emerging economies as "countries experiencing rapid economic development that is stimulated by transitioning institutional policies favoring and supporting private enterprise". It would be very interesting to conduct research on the entrepreneurial identity constructions in those economies given that the historical and societal events have not allowed for the socialization into entrepreneurship in business owning families in the way the Western economies' circumstances have. However, the role of entrepreneurship in general can be seen as essential to the successful transition from socialism to capitalism (Ireland et al. 2008, 108).

When I looked for and chose my respondents initially, I did not view my group of respondents from a gendered point of view, neither did I analyze my empirical materials as gendered accounts either. I did not purposely seek male respondents but as it turned out, only one of my respondents was a woman. This fact of the matter started to emerge as significant to me during my research process. Not in the sense of having to go out and find female family business entrepreneurs for this study to satisfy a gender equality point of view but in the sense of having to ask myself why I had not considered that as something worth pondering on originally. If I find cultural aspects of entrepreneurial identity in the family business context worthwhile studying then one of the questions needs to be what is the meaning and substance that I or researchers in general attach to gendered entrepreneurial identities. The role of spouses in this study in which all but one of them were women was significant to identity constructions of the family business entrepreneurs and this begs the question of what kind of role spouses would play in female family business entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial construction. Given my argument of family business entrepreneurs having a hybrid identity structure which allows them to tap into their different identifications, such as the parental and manager's or owner's identity concurrently, it would be very interesting indeed to study how women perceived these different identities and how they negotiate the sometimes conflicting demands of those. I find the female entrepreneurial identities in the family business context to be a very promising research opportunity.

Into the forest stillness

I'm like a foolish elk
that sees its reflection in the water
and thinks it's drowned.

Or what does it think?
Maybe it sees another elk there.

But it doesn't make much difference.
I've got to become what I am
not what I think I am
or would like to be;
nor what you are (or the other one);

this becoming of mine is a slow undressing:
leaving the clothes of individuality
on the shore of commonality and swimming,

I've always got to swim across, always toward the other shore;
I once saw my anonymous shadow
climb up a precipice
and disappear into the forest stillness, never to return.

Eeva-Liisa Manner (translated by Emily Jeremiah)

YHTEENVETO

Yrittäjämäisen identiteetin rakentuminen perheyrityskontekstissa, kulttuurienvälinen tutkimus

Tässä kulttuurienvälisessä tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan yrittäjämäisen identiteetin rakenteita perheyrityskontekstissa. Tutkimus on luonteeltaan monitieteinen - se nojaa ja tuottaa uutta tietoa identiteetti-, yrittäjyys- ja perheyrittäjyysteorioihin. Tutkimuksen tarkoitus on lisätä ymmärrystä siitä, miten perheyrittäjät rakentavat yrittäjämäistä identiteettiään.

Tutkimuksen metodologia perustuu tulkinnalliseen lähestymistapaan ja hyödyntää hermeneutiikan perusperiaatteita. Sen empiirinen materiaali kerättiin tutkimushaastatteluilla kahdessa eri yrityskulttuurissa. Haastateltavat edustivat perheyrittäjyyden kahta eri sukupolvea, yhteensä kymmenen perheyrittäjää Louisianassa, Yhdysvalloissa ja yhdeksän Suomessa.

Empiirinen materiaali analysoitiin tulkinnallisesti kulttuurienvälistä vertailua käyttäen, mikä tuotti tulkintoja yrittäjämäisestä identiteetistä perheyrityskontekstissa. Nämä identiteettirakenteet ovat temporaalisia ja kulttuurisidonnaisia. Kahden eri haastateltavien ryhmän arvomaailmat näyttävät jotakuinkin samanlaisilta: ne rakentuvat rehellisyyteen, kovaan työhön ja perhearvoihin. Louisianalaiset yrittäjät näyttävät rakentavan yrittäjämäisen identiteettinsä portfolioyrittäjyyteen, rahaan arvona sekä verkostoitumistaitoihin, mitä ilmaistaan voimakkaassa itseluottamuksessa. Suomalaiset yrittäjät taas näyttävät rakentavan omansa yrityskummiuteen, kateuden sietokykyyn ja aikaan arvona, mitä ilmaistaan vaatimattoman itsekuvan kautta. Jotkin perheyrittäjät eivät näytä rakentaneen yrittäjämäistä identiteettiä ollenkaan.

Tämä tutkimus näyttää, että identiteettityötä voidaan käyttää arvokkaana ajattelun työkaluna perheyrittäjyyskonsultaatiossa.

Avainsanat: identiteetti, yrittäjyys, perheyrittäjyys, kulttuuri

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Appendix 1.

TUTKIMUKSEEN OSALLISTUJAN SUOSTUMUSLOMAKE

Väitöskirja tutkimuksen nimi: Construction of the Entrepreneurial Identity in the Family Business Context, a Cross-Cultural Study (Yrittäjämäisen identiteetin rakentuminen perheyrityskontekstissa, kulttuurien välinen tutkimus)

Väitöskirjatyön ohjaaja: Professori Juha Kansikas, Jyväskylän yliopiston taloustieteiden laitos, puh. 014-260 3166, sähköposti kansikas@econ.jyu.fi

Anne Laakkonen on apurahatutkija Jyväskylän yliopistossa. Hän tekee väitöskirjatutkimusta Jyväskylän yliopiston taloustieteiden laitokselle. Tutkimusta tehdään yrittäjyyden ja tarkemmin perheyrittäjyyden aineeseen. Yksi osa tutkimustyöstä koostuu perheyrittäjien yksilöhaastatteluista, joissa he puhuvat omista kokemuksistaan perheyrityksen jäseninä.

On tärkeää, että vain sellaiset henkilöt osallistuvat tutkimukseen haastateltavina, jotka näin haluavat tehdä vapaaehtoisesti. Tämä varmistetaan pyytämällä teitä allekirjoittamaan tämä suostumuslomake. Teidän tulee myöskin olla tietoinen siitä, että teidän ei tarvitse vastata niihin kysymyksiin, joihin ette mahdollisesti halua vastata tai että voitte halutessanne keskeyttää haastattelun. Voitte halutessanne esiintyä nimettöminä haastattelussa.

Haastattelu tullaan nauhoittamaan digitaalisesti. Haastattelujen sisältö tullaan analysoimaan ja se raportoidaan väitöskirjassa, joka tullaan julkaisemaan. Haastatteluja voidaan käyttää myös muissa akateemisissa julkaisuissa kuten esimerkiksi tieteellisissä artikkeleissa. Nämä työt voivat sisältää sitaatteja joistain haastatteluista, myös teidän haastattelustanne.

Vahvistan osallistuvani tähän tutkimukseen haastateltavana ja lupaan, että haastatteluani voidaan käyttää yllä mainitulla tavalla.

Paikka ja aika:

Allekirjoitus:

Appendix 2.

Consent Form for Research Interviews

Title of the Project: 'Construction of the Entrepreneurial Identity in the Family Business Context, A Cross-Cultural Study'
Supervisor: Professor Juha Kansikas, The University of Jyväskylä, School of Business and Economics, tel. +358-14-260 3166, email: kansikas@econ.jyu.fi

Anne Laakkonen is a Ph.D. student at the University of Jyväskylä School of Business and Economics. She is doing dissertation research in the field of entrepreneurship and family business. One element of this work involves individual interviews asking informants to discuss their own experiences of being family business members.

It is understood by the researcher that you are willing to be interviewed by her. It is important that only people who want to do so participate in this study. This is made sure by asking you to sign this form to confirm that you have freely agreed to be interviewed. You should also be aware that you do not need to answer any particular question and that you may stop the interview at any time. If you so wish, your interview can be conducted anonymously.

The interview will be digitally recorded. The contents of the interviews will be analysed and written up during the course of the research. The findings will be published in the doctoral dissertation and they may also be used in published works, such as academic journal articles. This written work may include quotations from some of the interviews, including yours.

I confirm I have freely agreed to be interviewed for this project and that the recorded interview may be used as described above.

Signed: ....

Appendix 3.

Interview by email:

CONSTRUCTION OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL IDENTITY IN THE FAMILY BUSINESS CONTEXT, A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY

The following questions are open questions by nature, meaning that you can answer them in any way you feel is the best. The length and depth and the content of the answers are completely decided by you.

To begin with I will ask for some factual information:

-your age, education and position in the company

These are the actual questions, which can be considered as themes as well. This means that should you so wish, you can just write one long narrative regarding the themes of the questions or answer them one by one.

Tell me about the history of the company (when founded, by whom, information on ownership/leadership, and also about your own professional history).

Would you describe yourself as entrepreneurial?

What are the main attributes that you think make you entrepreneurial?

If you do not see yourself as entrepreneurial, what attributes are you lacking?

How have your family relationships influenced your entrepreneurial qualities?

Do you see yourself as similar or different to your parent/child as an entrepreneur, is so, how?

How do you think family ownership and management have influenced your business? Do you see it as a competitive advantage, resource or constraint, if so, then how?

What are your thoughts on continuity, succession within the family, transgenerational business?

How is it possible to maintain the entrepreneurial spirit within the owner-family in your opinion?

What kinds of things or forces have affected your family and your business?

Have you ever felt the business and the family to have been in conflict with one another?

What are the kinds of changes you have experienced during your life as a family business entrepreneur that have had a special influence on you?

How do you see the future of the business?

Describe your family's core values. Can they be seen in the family business operations?

How would you describe the local/regional/national business culture that you operate in? How has that influenced the development of your business?

Appendix 4

Interview extracts in Finnish

Matti's account

1) "meistä tuli hirveän hyvä yrittäjäpari"

2) "Minusta kaikkein tärkein on, että siihen alaan, mitä ihminen tekee...se peruslähtökohta on, että siihen pitää olla innostus, siitä pitää tykätä ja sitten siihen liittyy...minusta kun tykkää hommasta, niin...onko se nyt rumasti sanottu, mutta siihen kuuluu kunnianhimo hyvin läheisesti, että jos lähtee yrittäjäksi niin yrittäjällä pitää olla kunnianhimoo, muuten siinä ei onnistu, se on minusta se lähtökohta."

3) "...sittenhän siinä kävi niin, että kun minä olin nuori kauppias, niin mut sitten huomattiin Keskossa ja minut valittiin sitten näihin luottamustoimiin niin...ja nuorisojaostoon ja sitten piirin puheenjohtajaksi ja sitten piirin edustajaksi...Keskon hallintoneuvostoon...mä olin niissä hommissa parikymmentä vuotta, oikeestaan viiskymppiseksi asti...kun on monia, monia vuosia ollut tuossa, niin monet, kahdet kesäkokouksetkin pidettiin Jyväskylässä minun aikanani, minä olin siinä hyvin voimakkaasti mukana ja täytyy tässä yhteydessä vielä saman tien jatkaa, että poika on perinyt sitten saman roolin ja on vaan päässy paljon pidemmälle kuin minä. Minä en koskaan ollut valtakunnallinen puheenjohtaja, mutta Jussi on ollut jo valtakunnallinen puheenjohtaja."

4) "...kyllä se voimavara on [perhe] ja varsinkin vaimo, se oli ihan korvaamaton voimavara, että kyllä kun meillä oli kahdet silmäparit näkemässä asioita ja kahdet aivot päällekkäin, niin kyllä en mä osaa kuvitella että mä yksin yrittäisin ja vaimo olis jossain muualla, kyllä me niin hitsaannuttiin siinä siihen ammattiin, että kun aamulla mentiin aamukahville niin monta kertaa huomattiin, että myö aateltiinkin ihan samaa asiaa, että ihan naurettiin sille kun toinen rupes puhumaan niin toisella oli ihan samat ajatukset että siinä kyllä kasvettiin hirveen hyvin yhteen ja sen työn mukana, se oli meille kyllä ihan perusominaisuus ja sitten mikä oli siinä vielä että se tahto mennä vähän yli että meiltä jäi lomat pitämättä ja sitten tehtiin seitentä päivää viikossa ja joka pyhäilta mentiin aina töihin ja...meillä oli kotiapulainen koko ajan ja asuttiin tässä, lapset asu yläkerrassa, ne on melkeen tehtykin tuolla kaupassa...työ ja harrastus oli siinä samassa..."

5) This extract is from Vuolle (2006, 95) as told by Matleena Hiltunen , Matti's daughter:

"Isälle kaupanpito ei ollut työtä, vaan tapa elää. Hän oli tiukka kasvattaja ja työhön liittyvien vastuutehtävien vuoksi aika paljon poissa kotoa. Vaikka vanhemmillamme ei ollut juuri aikaa keskittyä lasten harrastuksiin, isä kuitenkin kannusti meitä lapsia urheilemaan ja oli ylpeä saavutuksistamme. Hän oli innokas kauppias ja halusi, että Perälä ei ole vain "avoinna" vaan että Perälä "palvelee".

6) "...vuonna -70 syntyi Jussi ja heti kun poika saatiin jaloilleen, lähdettiin laajentamaan liikettä ja sitten valmistui uusi K-halli, ja sitten perustettiin rautakauppa...me toimittiin hyvin itsenäisesti, että molemmat oli johtajia, mutta sen verran kiinteesti kuitenkin, että meillä oli 35 vuotta toimistot sillä tavalla, että meillä oli aina näköyhteys, että se on niinku merkille pantavaa, että aina oli...että nukuttiin vierekkäin ja syötiin samassa pöydässä ja elettiin ihan yhdessä ja tehtiin hirveen kovasti töitä, että...minun emäntä, Paula, oli kova työntekijä ja ahkera."

7) "Jussi pääsi niinku suoremmin tähän suurempaan systeemiin kuin minä, mä jouduin lähtemään ihan ruohonjuuritasolta liikenteeseen, että siinä tietysti kasvaa, mutta kyllä mä niinku...paras oppi mullakin on täällä ollut että alushan mä tein kaikki ite, mulla ei ollut ketään miehiäkään töissä, mutta sitten että niin minä opin teettämään toisella ja minä opin olemaan johtaja niin siitä mä oon ollut tyytyväinen. Että kyllä minäkin olen siihen kasvanut että...mutta Jussi pääs suoraan tähän johtajan pallille."

8) "Minä en olis näin innokas ollutkaan pitämään tätä kauppaa näin pitkään, jos ei ois ollut jatkajaa, mutta perinteet velvoittaa...eikä tässä nyt oo muuta oikeen osannut tehdäkään kuin kauppaa, mä oon alottanut ihan 18-vuotiaana tämän yrittämisen...se on mulle kaikki kaikessa... se on ihan tuota...mä en osaa kuvitella ollenkaan semmosta tilannetta, että tätä ei jatkettaisi. Johan ne edesmenneet kääntyisi haudassa jos tämä homma ei olis näin. Mulla ei ole muuta näkemystäkään tässä asiassa kuin että se on ihan luonnostaan selvää että kyllä perhe perustettiin siinä hengessä, että yritys myös jatkaa ja luulen, että Jussikin ajattelee ihan samalla tavalla. Mutta maailma muuttuu kyllä, mutta kyllä mä oon sitä mieltä, että Jussinkin pojat on vielä kauppiaita. Ei se voi mennä niin, että ne ei olis kauppiaita, näin minä ajattelen...ne pääsee kohta kauppaan töihin muutaman vuoden päästä, mitä muuta ne vois olla?"

9) "Mulla on tästä lähtenyt toistakymmentä kauppiasta ja mä oon aina sanonut kuka onnistuu ja kuka ei ja mä oon ollut toistaiseksi oikeessa ja sillä tavalla. Ei kaikki ole yrittäjiä, sen mä olen huomannut. Siinä täytyy olla semmoinen tietty luja luonne mukana, joka yrittäjä on."

10) "Mulla oli kaks hyvää rouvaa tuolla ruokakaupassa, niin mä sanoin, että perustetaan yhtiö ja lähde sitten siihen vetäjäksi, että minä lähden hallituksen puheenjohtajaksi ja tehdään toisesta toimitusjohtaja ja toinen lähtee hallituksen jäseneksi."

11) "...minunhan piti päästä eläkkeelle, mutta se ei nyt oikein istu tähän meidän tämänhetkiseen kuvioon, minä jo anomuksen jätin suullisessa muodossa, niin Jussi sano, että ei tässä jouda eläkkeelle...kyllä se varmaan olis vaikeeta, koska minulla on vielä niin nämä langat käsissä ja olen vielä toimitusjohtajanakin. Nythän tässä kyllä tulee isoja muutoksia tehtäväksi, koska Kesko ei enää tee ketjusopimusta 65-vuotiaan kanssa, kun mä täytän nyt 65, me oltiin pojan kanssa justiin Kanarialla pari viikkoo sitten juhlimassa tätä kuuttaviitta."

Jussi's account

1) "Se varmaan...kyllähän nämä niinku kovat kohtalot, että siinä on ollut näitä menetyksiä...se isän sairastuminen oli ihan...sitten mulla on veli kuollut ja tasan kaks vuotta sitten tänä päivänä kuoli multa tyttö viikon ikäisenä, että se on...ja äitin kuolema ja nuo niin kyllähän ne varmaan on semmosia mitkä pysäyttää että onko tässä mitään järkee..."

2) "Mä väitän, että se kyllä lähtee kasvatuksesta aika pitkälle, en mä ole tiennyt muuta tavallaan olevan. Kyllä se varmaan tämä äidin ja isän esimerkki siinä miten ne sitä kauppaa piti ja...se on varmaan se suurin, että se yrittäjän veri sieltä niinku tulee...halu tehdä ite päätöksiä ja pystyy niihin vaikuttamaan, kyllä se varmaa siinä...suurin mun mielestä on vanhempien rooli varmaan, jotka ohjaa...ainakin mun kohdalla on ollut...kyllähän pitkäjänteistä tarvii olla ja täytyy kyllä tykätä siitä...ei voi lähtee yrittäjäksi silleen, että tehdään vuodessa tämä homma ja se on siinä...se kaupan perustaminen kestää kolme vuotta että sen saa johonkin malliin niin kyllä se vaan on pitkäjännitteisyys ja sitten yrittämisen halu pitää olla kova, että se niinku...varmaankin kilpailuvietti on yks semmonen että ei sitä niinku oikeesti voi tehdä rahan takia tätä hommaa, että jos pelkästään sen takia tekee niin silloin mun mielestä se ei ole kovin pitkäjänteistä...ja kunnianhimo, ei siitä mihinkään pääse."

3) "Minna on sitten tavallaan äidin saappaissa, että kävi hirmu hyvä tuuri silloin kun Minna löytyi niin äiti sitten sairastui ja kerkes opettaa Minnan tuohon ja se jatkui niinku siitä, että Minna otti äidin hommat ja sitten kun tämä yritys on kasvanut niin paljon niin tässä on ollut kaikille oma osansa...Perhe on tärkeä, onko se arvo, kai se on arvo. Perhe on tärkeä, perhettä tarvitaan ja yhdessä tehdään, se on vaan että se kuuluu tähän juttuun, en mä sitä oikein osaa muuten sanoa, että kyllä mä oisin tosi lirissä, jos ei Minnaa olis ja jos ei Mattia olis niin aivan järkyttävä"

4) "...eihän tuota...niin nämä kyläkauppiaat kehtaa vaihtaa edes autoo, jos ne vaihtaa niin se olis samanvärinen, ettei kyläläiset huomaa...isä ei ole koskaan pröystäillyt rahoillaan eikä sitä rahaa ole koskaan ollutkaan vaan se on aina mitä on tullut...niin se on laitettu ja Toivakkaakin on laajennettu 17 vai 20 kertaa sitä on laajennettu...aina kun sitä vähänkin tuli, niin sitten ostettiin uutta konetta tai muuta että kaikki ne niinku sinne lyötiin, että nyt on niinku ensim-

mäistä kertaa varmaan isälläkin että se pystyy etelänmatkalle lähtemään hyvällä omallatunnolla...kyllä sen perheyrittäjyyden...silloin jo sitä ei ruveta Audia vaihtamaan heti alle, että saadaan se firma hyvin voimaan niin kyllä se vahvuus on mutta paljonhan on tietysti esimerkkejä, että se heti ensimmäisen vuoden aikana vaihdetaan...se auto on mun mielestä hyvä vertauskuva."

Veijo's account

1) "...meikäläinenkin on maalta kotoisin, niin tietysti maanviljelyskin on...ja sitä ei ehkä sillä lailla ennen mielletty yritykseksi niin kuin se nykyisin mielletään, mutta kuitenkin maanviljelyskodissa asunut niin tietysti sehän on yrittämistä sinällään ja tietysti ehkä sitten on nähnyt paljon...suvussa on paljon yrityksiä, vaimon puolella on yrityksiä, melkeen kaikki, lankomiehet on melkeen kaikki yrittäjiä ja minä olen sieltä nuorimmasta päästä, niin on nähnyt sitä hommaa ja tavallaan sitäkin kautta kiinnostunut siitä, en tiedä onko sitten sekin, että ne sattuivat olemaan suhteellisen menestyneitä yrittäjiä ja...sitten päätettiin että minä...yhdessä että minä jatkan yrittäjänä ja tietysti sitten myöhemmin tässä vaimokin oli mukana sitten tuossa konttoritöitä tekemässä, hän on saman ikäinen ja jäi kans nyt eläkkeelle viime syksynä."

2) "Mä oon alusta lähtien ollut sitä mieltä ja mä oon sanonut aina kun on kysytty, että meillä on kaikki myytävänä, joka tarkoittaa myös sitä, että yrityskin on tarvittaessa myytävänä...että ei tämä nyt sillä tavalla elämää suurempi asia ole, että vaikka tästä ois luopunut ja myynyt vaikka vieraalle, että se on mulle henkilökohtaisesti antanut sen, mitä mä olen halunnut, mä olen sinä aikana leipäni saanut ja sitten kun jäin eläkkeelle, sillä hyvä. Mutta totta kai se tuntuu hyvältä, en mä sitä sano, onhan se mukava, että tämä homma jatkuu ja omassa perheessä."

3) "toisethan sanoo joskus, että helppohan se on vanhoille kavereille tehdä, mutta kyllä se kun ottaa huomioon nämä...suomalaisen mentaliteetin eli tämän loppumattoman luonnonvaran eli kateuden niin ei se aina välttämättä niin helppoa ole. Se on ikävä kun se näihin kuvioihin aina sekin kateus iskee jossain vaiheessa ja siinä vaiheessa se ehkä sitten on haitta."

4) "...ei se aina ole välttämättä kilpaileva yhteistyökumppani, mä olen käyttänyt sitä sanaa, että vaikka lähteekin ja perustaa yrityksen, niin voi tehdä yhdessäkin, ehkä se on enempi vahvuus."

5) "...ja sitten toisaalta yrittäjä on yksin niitten päätösten kanssa, mutta sitten kollegoitten kanssa keskustellessa monesti siinä kun samoista asioista puhuu, niin siinä saa vahvistusta omille ajatuksilleen ja saattaa saada ihan suoria vastauksia, mutta se on kyllä semmonen hyvinkin tärkeä kyllä...ja sitten muodostuu semmosia kavereita, joiden kanssa sitten käy aina juttelemassa ja siinä

sitten kun toinen ymmärtää mistä puhuu, niin siinä ei ole sitä kielimuuria ja kyllä se on ite asiassa...se on tärkeä."

6) "Sitten alussa nyt meni sitten meni siihen, että piti viikon, piti kaks kesässä lomaa, mutta sitten mä oon nyt varmaan pitänyt kymmenen vuotta että mä oon pitänyt sen...harva yrittäjä valitettavasti pystyy pitämään sitä neljää viikkoo, mutta oon pitänyt silleen, että vähintään sen kahden viikon jakson, joka nyt on semmonen vähimmäisvaatimus, että ihminen kerkee elpyä niin kuin yhtämittaista lomaa ja sitten pitänyt lyhempiä lomia päälle...sitten että käytännössä kuitenkin ei nyt ehkä ihan täysiä lomia ole pitänyt aina, mutta lähes täydet lomat ja myöhemmin sitten...ja tämänhän oon nyt yrittänyt sitten siirtää tässä sukupolvenvaihdoksessa...oon Mikallekin sanonut, että älyä ja muista pitää niitä lomia, et aja itseäsi piippuun."

Mika A.'s account

1) "Nyt tietysti kun minä olen tullut tähän niin se nyt on ainakin vahva signaali siitä jatkuvuudesta, että kyllä tässä on nyt tultu jatkamaan tätä hommaa, että tätä ei lopeteta eikä ajeta alas eikä sitä myydä muualle, vaan tämä jatkuu tässä ja päinvastoin pyritään kehittämään ja kasvattamaan. Niin uskoisin, että se on...selkeä merkitys asiakkaille että se on tavallaan lupaus jatkuvuudesta ja sen varaan hekin uskaltavat enempi luottaa, että jos se ois mennyt jonnekin muualle niin siinähän menee äkkiä monta vuotta katsellessa, että mitenkä tuo homma pyörii ja mitä ne aikoo tehdä ja kaikkee muuta semmosta, ehkä se on jossain määrin jopa helpotus asiakkaille ollut, uskoisin niin."

2) "Toisaalta siinä on vähän sitten sitä, että tulee vähän semmosta tylsistymistä, että ei ainakaan tätä halua nähdä enempää että ainakin silleen koki sen silloin kakskymppisenä, mutta kun aikansa taplaa tuolla maailmallakin niin ajatusmallit saattaa muuttua ja se ei sitten välttämättä niin huono ratkaisu tunnukaan olevan, että tuntuukin koko ajan paremmalta ja paremmalta vaihtoehdolta...mutta on se silti iso muutos koska on se kuitenkin niin paljon helpompaa olla palkollisena, se on kaksi eri maailmaa, se on kuitenkin sitten että vaikka palkollisenakin on vastuuta ja alaisia ja muuta mutta se on kuitenkin, se on toisten rahat, se on toisten eurot ja siinä on iso ero."

3) "Pitkällä aikajänteellä tässä on tarkoitus työskennellä, että yritys on ollut pystyssä 25 vuotta, ei oo tarkotus minun tappaa sitä tässä ensimmäisen viiden vuoden aikana"

4) "...siellä on 37 perhettä, tosin eihän kaikki tietenkään ole toisen palkan varassa, mutta on siellä semmosiakin perheitä, että joka tapauksessa...Sitä mä oon joskus miettinyt tuossa että jos tuota...se on melkoinen lähiö, jos ois 37 omakotitaloa...ei sitä liikaa pidä ruveta miettimään, kyllä ne aina joskus yöllä käypi mielessä väkisin."

5) "...kyllähän se semmonen tietty rohkeus ja hulluus ja riskinottokykyhän tässä on pakko olla, eihän nuo kaikki investoinnit ja muut vaikka niitä kuinka laskisit että onko ne järkeviä ja muuta, niin eihän me silti kaikkia aina välttämättä pystytä perustelemaan niillä, että kyllä se tiettyä riskinottokykyä vaatii ja sitten se, että eihän esim. tällä alalla niin eihän meillä ole niille koneille valmiiksi töitä, jos me ei investoida, siis välttämättä olemassa. Meillä on hajua, että tuon tyyppisestä on tarvetta ja että tuon tyyppiselle vois olla hommaa...kuitenkin viime kädessä ei meillä ole mitään valmiita sopimuksia eikä muuta että kun me ostetaan tai investoidaan niin meillä on siihen heti lyödä töitä yks vuoro täyteen...ei meillä ole ikinä semmosta, että kyllä tämä meidän tyyppisessä alihankinnassa...ei meillä ole semmosia sopimuksia mitä vastaan me pystytään turvallisin mielin investoimaan niinku monilla isoilla yrityksillä on."

6) "Veijon ansioksi voi sanoa sitä, että parikin entistä työntekijää on menestynyt, perustanut oman firman ja ne on menestyneet siinä ihan kohtalaisen hyvin eli tavallaan syntynyt semmosta tiettyä tekemistä...itse asiassa kolme yritystä Kajaanissa toimii, jotka on tavallaan meidän entisten työntekijöiden pyörittämiä, se on tosi hyvin...ne on ollu rohkeita ja se ensimmäinen mies, joka silloin lähti, silloin Veijolla on ollut siinä...ne on ollu avoimet systeemit ja on tukenut ja itse asiassa annettu työtä, siis ensimmäiset pari vuotta tuettu sillä tavalla, että ne on saanut tehdä meidän töitä ja on ollut turvattu lähteä siihen tekemiseen, että ei ole tarvinnut hypätä suoraan markkinoille myymään itseään vaan ne on saanut sen suht turvallisen startin siihen, että me on annettu niille jonkin verran töitä ja sitten ne on joutunu itse etsimään jatkuvasti lisää...ehkä nykyaikana voi sanoa, että Veijo on silloin aikoinaan 90-luvun...silloin...niin, toiminut siinä tilanteessa tietyn sorttisena yritysenkelinä."

7) "Kyllä sitä on koko ajan kiinnostunut siitä tuloksesta, kyllä se semmonen...mutta niinpä se on kaikessa yritystoiminnassa, jos johtajat ei ole kiinnostuneita siitä tuloksesta ja tekemisestä niin heikostipa siinä menee, mutta kyllä siinä tietysti on se tavoite ja kyllähän mulla on se tavote tässä yrittäjyydessä, että tästä jossain vaiheessa, kun ikää tulee riittävästi, niin tästä oravanpyörästä pystyis heittäytymään vähän aikasemmin pois, että en minä halua tässä oravanpyörässä pyöriä kuuskolmoseksi...mutta kyllä mulla se targetti on, että minä en tässä niin pitkään pyöri, että vähän aikaisemmin ois mahdollisuus sinne eläkkeellekin jäädä tai sitten ei eläkkeelle mutta sitten ollaan muuten, kyllä nyt sen verran on tarkotus, että yritys sais tuottaa, että tästä jäis mulle sen verran, että en tässä täysikäiseksi kuuskolmoseksi asti työsketele näissä hommissa...kun pystytään toimimaan vakaasti ja sillä tavalla, että saatais tämä semmoselle vakaalle pohjalle tämä tekeminen ja ettei tarvis jatkuvasti olla huolissaan siitä seuraavasta kuukaudesta tai muutamasta kuukaudesta etiäpäin, että ois semmosta jatkuvuutta tässä ja pystyis rauhassa keskittymään kehittämiseen tai johonkin muuhun niin ei tällä tarvi tehdä älytöntä tulosta. Se riittää kun pysty-

tään pitkässä juoksussa...välillä tulee tappiovuosia, välillä tulee positiivisia vuosia, mutta pystytään pitämään tämä positiivisella puolella...kyllähän ihmisten ahneudella pitäs olla joku raja...En minä nää esim. sitä vaikka mä sanoinkin, että minä haluan päästä tästä vähän aikaisemmin irti, okei, se on tervettä, että jos mä olen tässä yrittäjänä 30 vuotta niin kai mä nyt jonkun palkinnon siitä itselleni haluan, mutta ei mun tartte saada mitään siis posketonta, se että mulla on toimeentulo turvattu ja mä pystyn elämään normaalia elämää, mulle riittää se."

8) "...ihan selvästi kainuulainen yrittäjyys on erilaista kuin esim. pohjanmaalainen, koska kyllä minun mielestä sielä enemmän uskalletaan näyttää ja pitää olla...täällä taas mielummin sitten ollaan vaatimaton, että täällä hyvin vähän puhutaan niistä omista tekemisistä tai röyhistellään rintaa, että se on niinku semmosta vaatimatonta puurtamista, sitten taas Pohjanmaalla ollaan enemmän, että myöhän tehdään mutta heillä on vahvuus se, että nehän tekee...kokeevat tekevänsä mitä vaan ja se on taas heidän vahvuus. Täällä on jollain tavalla vahvuutena ehkä se tietty vaatimattomuus ja nöyryys."

Arto's account

1) "Minä joskus 90-luvulla sanoin, että jos minä oisin Helsingissä, niin kaupunginjohtajan kanssa tapaaminen ei onnistuisi sillä tavalla, että jos moä soittaa kilautan suoraan tai paan tekstiviestin kaupunginjohtajalle, että terve, ois palaverin paikka, että millonka tuut saunaan, niin se ei siellä onnistu. Täällä se onnistuu. Kainuussa on yleensä ihmiset sitoutuneet yrityksin ja töihin johtuen siitä, että ehkä monella toimialalla ei ole sitä kilpailua ja toisaalta kainuulainen ihminen on semmoinen, että mitä hän rupee tekemään, hän sitoutuu siihen. Elikkä sillä on varmistettu tässä osaamispääoman kasvaminen yrityksissä."

2) "Mä olen semmonen kristallipalloon kattoja, mä näen asioita valmiina tulevaisuudessa, mä en välttämättä tiedä miten sinne mennään, sitä polkua mä en näe, elikkä mä olen enempi visionääri, asioiden käynnistäjä, asioiden yhdistäjä, mutta mä en ole missään nimessä loppuun saattaja...visionäärisyys on yksi asia eli sitä kautta tulee se rohkeus, että uskaltaa lähteä tekemään niitä asioita kun ei rupea liian tarkkaan miettimään ja laskemaan...visionäärisyy, mä annan tilaa ihmisille, mä luotan, uskon, että he kykenevät hoitamaan tehtävänsä paremmin kuin minä, ja sitten...asioiden yhdistäjä, uusien asioiden käynnistäjä...siinä oikeastaan omat vahvuuteni yrittäjänä...Kaikki, tämä kokonaisuus, että se on perheyrityksenä mielletty ja vahvana sitoutumisena siihen ja toisaalta me ei niinku lukkiuduta siihen omaan lähipiirin hyödyntämiseen ja käyttöön, me uskalletaan ottaa talon ulkopuoleltakin osaamisia vahvistamaan sitä missä tunnemme, että me emme ole välttämättä ihan vahvoilla"

3) "Siinä vaiheessa, kun mä ymmärsin, että mä oon visionääri, asioiden käynnistäjä, mutta en ole loppuunsaattaja, en ole operatiivinen johtaja, en muis-

ta edes sitä ajankohtaa, että milloin, mutta sen oivalluksen kun itsetuntemuksen kautta pystyin tekemään, niin se ohjasi ja siinä varmaan tuli sitten, että mä varmaan niinku pyrin pääsemään siitä operatiivisesta arkijohtamisesta pois ja tekemään niitä asoita, missä mä olen vahvimmillani, mitä mä osaan, mistä mä nautin. Niinku varmaan oot huomannut, mulla täytyy olla hirveän paljon asioita menossa...pitää olla epävarmuustekijät, niistä mä nautin."

4) "Me ollaan vaimon kans erilaisia persoonia, hän on enempi semmonen jalat maassa kulkija, arkirealisti ja minä olen semmonen huuhattelija, niin hän aina kysyy minulta, että millonka minä kasvan aikuiseksi, minä että toivottavasti en ikinä, yhtä huimana pysyisin."

5) "Joskus tuntuu, että olis enempikin tarve keskustella, mutta ei aina kerkee, elikkä sen takia on tarve, että me pysähdytään siitä arkikiireestä, että me on varattu se tietty aika ja tilaa sille keskustella näistä asioita vapaasti ilman virallisia pöytäkirjoja...toisaalta sitten myöskin tähän perheyrittäjyyteen juuri tätä nuorta sukupolvea kasvattaa..."

6) "Sanotaan, että jos lomalomalle lähtee, niin mun pitää lähtee kauas pois. Vaimo on paljon työhullumpi vielä mitä minä ja mä muistan kun me lähettiin ensimmäisen kerran, siitä on vuosia aikaa, käytiin toistakymmentä vuotta sitten Mallorcalla, me oltiin viikko, huomattiin, että se on liian lyhyt aika ja sitten ja Kanarian saarilla on käyty ihan sen takia...Puerto Rico on aurinkovarma paikka ja kumpikin tykätään auringosta, on ihan sen takia käyty ja käytiin Phuketissakin...moottoripyöräily on kesällä yks semmonen, siellä ei työasiat tule mieleen...me tykätään Eeron kanssa ajaa tämmösiä rautaperseajoja eli tuhat mailia vuorokaudessa, eli 1609 kilometriä minimissään vuorokauden aikana...meillä on pisin reissu kolme vuorokautta ja ajettu 5200 kilometriä ja keväällä se on yleensä...me tuossa toukokuun loppupuolella, kesäkuun puolella, se on yleensä ensin, että viikko ennen äitienpäivää, me käydään...otetaan rouvat kyytiin ja käydään...ajetaan napapiirille, syödään siellä poronkäristykset ja tullaan takaisin, se on semmonen kahentoista tunnin reissu, 850 kilometriä. Sitten tuota toukokuun loppupuolella, kesäkuun alussa me hypätään pyörän selkään ja ajetaan tuonne Skibotteniin ja käydään Jäämeressä uimassa ja tullaan takasin. Se on 1750 kilometriä ja 20 tuntia suunnilleen. Mä oon ajanut muistaakseni 17 rautaperseajoa ite ja 2006 vuonna lennettiin tuonne Chicagoon, otettiin Harrikat sieltä ja ajettiin Route 66 rouvat kyydissä, siinä meni kaks viikkoo, Amerikan halki, ja 2007 pätkähti päihimme, että lähetäänpä käymää Tiranassa pullakahvilla. Me ajaa hurautimme kaks viikkoo 12 tuntia 7800 kilometriä, käytiin tuosta...Helsinkiin mentiin, sitten siitä Travemundeen ja lähettiin sieltä sitten saksan halki ja käytiin Belgiassa ja Ranskassa ja Italiaan ja Monacossa käytiin kans siinä mutkin, mennessä kahvilla ja sitten ajettiin Italiaan ja mentiin...ja mentiin sitten Tiranaan, siellä juotiin pullakahvit ja pikkusen syötiin ja tultiin sitten maita pitkin takasin ja vaimot istua napottaa kyydissä kiltisti ja nyt lähetään juhan-

nuspäivänä ja lennetään tuonne Los Angelesiin, otetaan taas Harrikat ja käydään highway ykkönen ajamassa kolme viikkoo."

Mika O.'s account

1) "Se oli älyttömän opettavaa aikaa...tosissaan siinä olin sen vuoden toimitusjohtajana ja sitten lähdin pois ja tosissaan irtisanoin itteni ja ei mulla ollut mitään paikkaa tiedossa mihin mä meen, mutta mä tiesin, että mä olen kova tekemään töitä, niin varmasti löydän ja hyvät paperit ammattikorkeesta."

2) "Kuitenkin että ihan kahdessa vuodessa saatiin suunta käännettyä ja nyt on sitten uusien haasteiden edessä...on saanut tämmöset tulipalot...polttavat ongelmat ratkottua ja organisaation jollain tapaa pelaamaan, ettei tarvitse olla koko ajan kiinni tässä hommassa, niin nyt on sitten haastava saada...niin sanotusti toimivaa pakettia kun rupee korjailemaan, niin se tuntuu jopa vaikeammalta kuin silloin alussa vaikka oli paha kriisi, koska tota niin silloin ei ollut mitään menetettävää, että kaikki mitä teki oli aina eteenpäin"

3) "Silloin 90-luvun loppupuolella sanoin isällekin ja muillekin tsoukkina, että en ikinä tuu tänne töihin, että kun on nähnyt se mitä se yrittäminen vaatii ja millä kauhealla sitoutumisella isä on painanut silloin aikanaan, niin on miettinyt, että eihän tässä oo mitään järkee ja vähän leikillään sanonut, että kahta okkosta ei saman katon alle mahdu, että yks riittää tälle talolle, mutta eipä sitä...sitä rupesi nakemään itekin, että noita asoita oi tehdä monella eri tavalla, että voi tehdä niinku hän on tehnyt ja ehkä se tämmönen yritys vaatii tommosen hullun hörhön, joka on kaikessa mukana, että se syntyy se yritys ja sitten taas tämmönen enemmän analyyttinen ihminen ja muuta ku ite, niin sitä ei välttämättä sitä alkustarttia sais käyntiin. Silleen mä oon ite kelannut, kun me ollaan niin erilaisia...jotenkin se vaan varmaan menestyy tälleen niinku eri jaksoissa ja kaikki yritykset tartee eri vaiheissa erilaisia johtajia."

4) "Meidän ei tarvitse kehittää mitään muuta kuin se, että meillä on vain jotain yhteistä tekemistä ja silloin on helppo keskustella ja yks semmonen on esim. tuo meidän mökki ja ens kesälle esim. niin pitäis ruveta saunaa rakentamaan tai muuttaa meidän saunaa vähän erilaiseksi, että sais sen paremmin talvikäyttöön. Jos me nyt kesällä tehdään se projekti, niin se on kaikkein parasta koska meille ei ole luontevaa se, että me istuttais alas ja ruvettais pohtimaan...että isä ei välttämättä ole semmonen, että se niinku osais olla meidän poikien kanssa niin, että jutellaanpa, se ei oo semmonen, mutta sitten kun lyödään vasara kouraan ja saha ja ruvetaan rakentamaan niin silloin voi puhua ihan mitä vaan."

5) "Totta kai vanhemmilla on tietyt odotukset lastensa suhteen ja ne on aina...mutta siinä on sitten se, että jossakin vaiheessa pitää tulla se...ja mun mie-

lestä ois hyvä kun se oma tie löytyis enne kuin lähtee jatkamaan, koska sitten se...jos et oo päässy irti, sitten se on aika haastava se tilanne...niinku meilläkin se ois tosi huono juttu jos ei ois selkeetä rajaa tullut koska tilannehan on se, että isä kulkee ihan täysin muualla kaikessa ja se onnistuu nyt koska se on tullut se ero. Minä teen eri tavalla kun se ja osan se hyväksyy, kaikkea ei mutta silti minä teen niin ja se ymmärtää sen, että...siinä mielessä se on hyvä, mutta se että jos ei olis tullut sitä irrottautumista niin sitten se saattais just mennäkin väärinpäin, jos se rupeis ohjaamaan ja siitä ei tulis semmosta...ei sais olla oikeesti toimitusjohtaja, ois vaan sitten niinku nukke, se on varmasti ongelma joissakin perheyrityksissä, sen näkee selkeästi."

6) "Jos kuitenkin ajatellaan näin, niin meitä on tälläkin hetkellä pikkusen vajaa sata ihmistä, niin eihän se homma pelaa jos toimitusjohtaja joutuu arkirutiineissa pyörimään kaikista pisimpää päivää ja muuta, niin ei kerkee muita ohjaamaan siinä. Aika loppuu kesken. Alkuun minäkin tietysti lähdin vähän mukaan, että minä tein hirveesti mutta sitten rupesi tulemaan ajatus, että ei helvetti, eihän tässä ole mitään järkee kun meitä on sata ihmista niin mähän olen helvetin huono johtaja, jos mä en saa niitä muita toimimaan ja tekemään niitä asoita. Ja sitä kukaan muu ei tee kuin minä itse. "

7) "Se on se, että mä oon sen rajan vetänyt silleen, että illalla viidestä yhdeksään, silloin mä en ole tavoitettavissa, että kyllä mulla puhelin on mukana äänettömällä tai koputuksella, mutta en mä vastaa siihen paitsi jos joku soittaa kolme kertaa ja laittaa tekstiviestin, että nyt on hätä. Mut mä rupesin opettamaaan sitä, ehkä tietämättäänkin, semmosta arvoa, että on olemassa...että pitää olla vapaa-aika ja työelämä ja sitten se, että kukaan ei ole niin tärkeä, että pitäis olla koko ajan tavoitettavissa, ei voi olla. Lähdin sillä opettamaan niinku johtoryhmän jäsenille ja kaikille, että sitä...että ei tartte olla tavoitettavissa koko ajan, että ei se johtoryhmän paikka tarkoita sitä, että pitää tehdä 24h töitä. Se tarkoittaa sitä, että tehdään 8 tuntia ja helkkarin laadukkaasti, tehdään oikeita asioita. Silleen on tämmöstä johtamiskulttuuria ja ylipäätään tekemisen kulttuuria lähdetty muokkaamaan erilaiseen suuntaan...no, okei, mä sanoin viidestä yhdeksään, sitten kun tyttö menee nukkumaan, niin sen jälkeen sitten aina puhelin soi, mutta sekin puoli on vähentynyt nyt todella paljon."

8) "Mun mielestä se on aika laajalle kuitenkin meidän firmassa aika monessa puolessa levinnyt, että on todella monta eri henkilöä, jonka kanssa pystyy pallottelemaan paljon näitä asioita, se on mun mielestä tosi kova rikkaus, koska eihän tämä mikään yhden miehen show ole, että minä täällä mietin ja että tämä ois kova juttu, vaan kyllä niinku mulla menee enemmän siihen, että keskustelee muitten kanssa ja sieltä tulee tieto, monelta eri henkilöltä, eri näkökulmasta ja sitten jotenkin vaan niistä sitten yhdistyy semmosia hyviä juttuja, mitä pystyy viemään eteenpäin, tämmösiä huomioita oon tehnyt."

9) "...niin mä oon pyrkinyt sille asettamaan tiettyjä tavoitteita, että koulusta pitää olla tutkinto, muuten ei ole asiaa tänne töihin ja mieluusti niin, että ainakin muutama vuosi kävis muualla töissä, koska hänelläkin on sama juttu kuin meikäläisellä, että aina ollut tässä mukana ja nähnyt näin ja on saanut mennä ja tulla vapaasti ja on oppinut tähän niinku vapaaseen työkulttuuriin, niin ois älyttömän hyvä, kun se kävis jossain semmosessa tiukan työkulttuurin firmassa, ainakin oppis arvostamaan tätä vapautta."

10) "oon mä kerran sanonutkin, että ei ole mitään estettä sille olemassa, että miks me ei joku päivä voitais olla maailman paras tämän alan yritys...me ollan sitä kelattu ja ihan just mä oon sanonut, että miks se ei oo tavote?"

Mikko's account

1) "...kaikki mitä teen, onpahan vaikka jonkun työnantajan leivissä, niin kuitenkin haluan tehdä silleen, että se on mahdollista mahdollisimman edukkaasti, niinku...että ne ois omia rahoja, vaikkei ne välttämättä olisikaan omia rahoja, että se lähtee niinku sillä tavalla heti jos huomaan jonkun asian, että tuon vois tehdä paljon halvemmalla...semmmosista perusjutuista... joillakin on taas sitten semmonen asenne, että eipä ne oo omia rahoja, en välitä. Mulle kaikki tommoset asiat on heti jo tärkeitä...se on varmaan kehittynyt tässä lapsuudesta lähtien se on ollut aika vahvana luonteenpiirteenä missä tahansa oikeestaan oon ja teenkin."

2) "Semmosta tietynlaista luottamusta isältä kuitenkin, kun hän on tämmösen työn tehnyt ja muuta...ja sitten niinku ehkä haluaa kuitenkin sitoa meitä, minua ja velipoikaa tähän yritykseen, eikä niinku millään muulla tavalla, erittäin paljon arvostan tätä yritystä."

3) "...kun hän tuli toimitusjohtajaksi pari vuotta takaperin, niin siitä lähtien mun mielestä ilma on raikastunut tosi paljon just tuolla akselilla. Siellä henki on älyttömän hyvä ja enemmänkin ehkä kaivattais meidän puolelta sitten just sitä...sitä käytännön juttua sieltä...Me haluttais aina se palaute, että me tiedetään tässä päässä, että me tehdään virhe. Senkin takia minä olen tehnyt niitä aika monia hommia, että minä olen sulautunut sinne ryhmiin ja minä olen aika nopea kertomaan suoraan. Ja nyt nykypäivänäkin aika paljon minä siellä käyn ihan muuten vaan kävelemässä ja jututtamassa poikia ja tyttöjä siellä...miten menee ja onko jotakin...sanokaa suoraan, ei siellä ikinä tartte pelätä, että joutuu sanomaan, että joku on epäonnistunut, päinvastoin, että mielummin sanotaan se, niin saadaan korjattua."

4) "Jos niinku menetyksiä mietitään, niinku semmonen lapsuusaika, niin mulla ei oikeen ehkä ole ollut semmosta...ja niinku semmosta isä-lapsi tekemistä, niin sitä ei oikeestaan oo ikinä ollut. Se on aika karvas tappio. Aina joku näkyy kärsivän. Semmonen tulee päällimmäisenä mieleen tässä. Niinku mulle

aina kuittailtiin...isä ja velipoika, että mä oon äidin poikia ja niin minä olinkin ihan virallisesti, että äidin kanssa minä olin aina tekemisissä...sitä on harmiteltu, vaan eipä sitä enää miksikään muuta."

Kari's account

1) "Tietysti jos joku ostais tämän niin möisin heti pois."

2) "Ei, ei, ei, se saattaa karata käsistä sitten."

3) "...vois saada jonkun asiakkaan sieltä, mutta sitten minä luulen, että siellä sitten tulee se kateus sieltä ja tämmönen että miten mä nyt osaisin sanoo sen..."

Jari's account

1) "...ei ole hirveenä vaihtoehtoja ollut ja siinä on pennusta asti ollut mukana...se on jotenkin tuttu ja turvallinen vaihtoehto."

2) "Helevetin huono paikka...meitä on liikaa, meidän alan yrittäjiä tässä kaupungissa...meitä on liikaa, mutta jollain lailla, se on se oma asiakaskunta, mikä pitää pystyssä tällä hetkellä...se on vaan semmonen, että miten sitä uskaltaa lähtee kun se kumminkin vaatii aika paljon rahallisesti vaikka se on...nyt on vanhempien omistuksessa mutta kuitenkin, että riskit on sillä lailla kovat. En tiedä, mihin se menee tämä tilanne, että helpompi ois olla vieraalla töissä. Ei tarvi muuta kuin tulla kattoo että palkka tulee."

3) "No, se on vähän pakko olla yrittäjä kun ei ole oikeen tuota koulutustakaan muuhun, sitä kun on nähnyt tuosta lapsesta asti, ei oikein osaa muuhun, muutakaan, näin sanottuna."

Identity work in practice

1) Niin tuota oikeastaan siinä vaiheessa kun vanhin poikani tuli tänne projektipäällikön tehtäviin, sitten rupesi vastaan tuosta asennusorganisaatiosta täällä Suomessa ja huomasin, että hän ehkä tulee jäämään tänne niin 2006 vuonna oikeastaan tuli se ajatus lopultakin siihen, että kyllä tää pidetään perheyrityksenä. Mä niinku mietin jo ennen sitä, että tästä pitää ruveta meikkaamaan semmonen myyntikuntoinen yritys, joka 2010 vuoden kieppeillä ehkä suunnilleen pistetään lihoiksi. Mutta sitten kun huomasin, että tosiaan jälkipolvikin on asiasta kiinnostunut, vaikka vanhempi poika sanoikin, että tämä firma ei kahta Okkosta kaipaa niin näytti, että me pärjätään täällä saman katon alla, niin siinä vaiheessa ajatus muuttui kerralla. Kyllä tässä on perheyrityksenä tarkoitus jatkaa eteenpäin, että katotaan miten monta sukupolvee...niinku mä aion

vielä tuolla nykyisessä asuinpaikassani viettää 100-vuotissynttäreitä niin meidän poitsukin on kerinny jo olla eläkkeellä silloin niin että se seuraava sukupolvi olisi jo tulossa."

2) "...mä aattelen, että vanhin poitsu tai heillä on ikäeroa vanhemman ja nuoremman välillä ykstoista vuotta niin siinä vois olla ihan hyvin, että kun alkaa tämä vanhin poika kypsyä tähän operatiiviseen johtamiseen niin tämä nuorempi vois keretä kasvaa sitten taas siihen tehtävään, että pystyis ottamaan...hänen ominaisuuksia ei nyt vielä tiedä ja osaamista ja onko sitten valmiudet sitten siinä vaiheessa, mutta iha noin yhtenä skenaariona."

3) "Kyllä mä olen enemmän niinku valmisteleva ja analysoija ja mietin silleen, että kun on nähnyt sen, että isäkin on hukannut rahaa moneen paikkaan, kun se on niinku lähtenyt just silleen, että kuulostaa hyvältä...mä oon hyvin erilainen siinä, mut siinä on just se ero, voi se olla, että mä en välttämättä perustais nollasta yritystä, koska sitä ei pysty analysoimaan mitenkään, se on vaan perustettava, mulla on tämmönen idea ja sitten sitä matkalla muutetaan koko ajan ja siinä 10 vuoden aikana se löytyy se kunnon idis sitten."

4) "...no, siis sillä tavalla jos miettii niin hallituksen puheenjohtajaksi sitä kautta niinku vetää tätä näin ja ehkä sillä tavalla, että omaa osaamista pyrkis hyödyntämään myös muissa yrityksissä ja tarkotus 10 vuoden aikana ...sais sillä tavalla niinku omat talousasiatkin järjestykseen, että ois mahdollisuus vähän sijoittaa, että lähtis sitä kautta niinku joihinkin yrityskeisseihin mukaan, että laittaa ite vähän rahaa ja laittaa vaan kuntoon niitä ja sitä kautta myös sitten semmosta uutta, että se on semmonen...en tiedä mitä mä ajattelen seitsemän vuoden päästä mutta...ja vähän semmonen ajatusmalli on siinä, että kun aina on yrityksiä, jotka on kriisitilanteessa ja näin ja silloin kun yritys on kriisitilanteessa, niin ne on silloin hyvin halpoja ja ite koen, että minulla on just tämmösen kriisitilanteen...kriisitilanteeseen minulla on paljon semmosia avuja, että minä vähän niinku pärjään niinku henkisesti ite kriisitilanteessa ja sitten semmonen niinku ...aika hyvä perstuntuma on moneen asiaan, niin oon siinä vähän miettinyt, että kun tämän sais hyvälle tolalle ja muuta, niin sitten vois olla tässä hallituksen puheenjohtajana, ehkä sitten katella siinä samalla, niinku vähän yrityksiä skannailla, että minkälaisia eri tilanteissa...jos joku yritys on kriisissä, jossa tarvittais isoa muutosta ja näin...niin sitten vois miettiä, että lähteekö sinne sijottaa rahaa ja pistämään sen puljun kuntoon ja jos siihen kykenee, mutta itellä on vaan semmonen fiilis, että on annettavaa ja siitä vois sitten syntyä semmosta uutta, niinku useamman yrityksen kanssa pelaamista, se on vähän semmonen jännä visio, ei tiedä miten menee, mutta se vois olla semmosta hommaa..."

5) "Ihan totta? En oo kovasti sen kanssa puhunut, ei oo kovasti puhuttu...aika mielenkiintoinen, ei ole ikinä ollut sen kanssa puhetta strategiasta, kyllä me on puhuttu paljon tästä tekemisestä mutta en oo ikinä varmasti puhunut

sen kanssa...ehkä se on sitten isän kanssa puhunut, mutta me ei olla kyllä hirveesti puhuttu"

6) "Koko ajan kansainvälistytään, pikku hiljaa pala palalta Eurooppaan mennään. Se, että miten me tehdään se ja muuta, niin älä kysy, en kerro. Sinne me ollaan menossa ja mennään."

7) "No, siinä on vähän että johtajia on poika, eukko ja minä että siinä aina joskus tulee semmosia että se tehdään just näin mutta sitten taas että pitää antaa periksi sitten että ei niinku ite pysty sanomaan suoraan että se on nyt näin, siellä on kaks heti vastassa...perheyrityksessä et pääse ikinä eroon ...ei siis tai...se on tosi...se on että niitä on johtajia niin monta kun on perheenjäsentä, ainakin minä oon huomannut ja ei mitään, minä olen antanut periksi jos se asia on kunnossa ja ei siinä mitään"

8) "No, miä...mä haluaisin olla tuossa että tehdä töitä, mutta mä nyt katon sen aikaa että mihin se menee että...varsinkin nyt kun on tämä muka taantuma että jos siinä on...kyllä se mulle passaa että mä siitä elantoni saan mutta ei siitä hirveetä voi oottaa, jos ei tapahdu ihmeitä, en tiedä, saa nähdä, mutta mä...mulle nyt oikeestaan on sitten ihan sama mitä...totta kai mä sitä haluaisin jatkaa kun mä tiedän tuosta alasta kuitenkin jotain"

Appendix 5

Rules of Governance for the Family Office:

"In order to provide oversight and governance for the Family Office, a Governing Board has been formed. Here follow the rules for the selection of the Governing Board Members and for their functioning as a Governing Board.

I. Definitions.

Family Member

A descendant of XXX and XXX.

Family Office Client.

Those descendants of XXX and XXX over the age of 21 who have entered into a business relationship with the Family Office with the approval of the Governing Board. Spouses of Family Office Clients shall be deemed to be Family Office Clients unless otherwise notified by the Family Member married to such spouse. All children of Family Office Clients under the age of 21 shall also be deemed to be Family Office Clients.

Family Office Structure.

All lineal descendants of XXX and XXX will be stakeholders in the office. The entity that actually carries out the Family Office functions at this time is not a corporation and the Family Office employees work for operating entities owned by the family.

Governing Board.

Those Family Members and spouses of Family Members selected under these rules to oversee the management of the Family Office. Each of the four branches of the family will be represented on the Governing Board. Non-family members can hold the proxy for any branch of the family if the adults are deceased or disabled.

Purpose.

The Governing Board shall be responsible for supervising the management of the affairs of the Family Office and defining its scope of operations and the scope of services it will render to Family Member Clients.

II. Selection of Governing Board Members

General Qualifications.

Each of the four branches of the family will have two representatives on the Board, appointed by the lineal descendent of the family.

To be a Board Member, one must be a descendant of XXX and XXX or the current spouse of a descendant, or be appointed by the lineal descendent to represent the family branch; all Board Members must be at least age 21 and under no legal disability.

Termination of status as a Family Office Client, by whatever means, also is termination as a Governing Board Member.

Family Governing Board Members.

Each of the four branches of the Family will appoint two representatives to the Governing Board. Family members must be 21 years of age to serve on the Board, but all family members over 13 years of age are encouraged to attend Board meetings to learn about the Family Office (except during Executive Sessions). Board positions for each of the first generation Board members expire at the death of the individual.

In the near future, each branch of the family will identify an advisor, trustee or guardian who would be asked to serve on their behalf, if the adult family members were disabled or deceased. The nominated advisor, holding the branch proxy for two votes, must be approved by other Governing Board Members.

Non-Family Board Members.

The CEO (or COO) of the Family Office shall serve as a non-voting member of the Governing Board and shall be the Secretary of the Governing Board.

At some point in the future, external advisors may be elected to the Governing Board by the eight existing Board Members.

Each Board Member shall execute a confidentiality document which reinforces the privacy of each household and the overall privacy goals of the family.

III. Voting.

Each Governing Board member will have one vote (a total of eight votes), with the first generation votes being retired at the death of each family member. Decisions will be reached by the majority vote (five of the eight votes), with tie votes being brought back for reconsideration. In all discussions, the family will try to reach consensus whenever possible.

Board Members are encouraged to attend all Board Meetings in person. If they cannot attend the meeting in person or by phone, they may delegate their vote by proxy to another Board Member. If any Board Member fails to delegate its proxy to another Board Member, that Board Member cannot vote at the meeting.

IV. Meetings.

The Governance Board shall have formal meetings at least four times a year at such times and places as the Board shall choose (in-person meetings). Every branch must be represented in person at least two of these formal meetings a year, and other Board meetings can be attended by conference call.

Other meetings may be held by conference call or other similar communications at such times as the Board shall choose.

Special meetings of the Governing Board may be called by or at the request of the Chairperson or any two Board Members. Choices as to the times and places of meetings, whether by phone or in person may be done by consensus by phone polling.

Board action may be taken without a meeting if all Board members consent in writing to such action.

All family members who are clients shall receive thirty day written notice of the place, date and time of formal meetings and email notice of phone meetings. Such notices may be waived. Meeting agendas shall be provided as early as possible and sent out by the family office staff.

Minutes shall be written for every Board meeting by the office executive. These minutes shall be used to inform family members who were not at the meeting and made available per request to other family members.

Meetings shall be open to all Family Office Clients age 13 or more unless the Board decides to the contrary with respect to any meeting or any portion thereof.

Board members will be reimbursed for the reasonable expenses of attending Board meetings. A Directors Fee Schedule will be developed.

V. Officers.

Chairperson.

The Chairperson of the Governing Board shall be rotated among branches for a two-year term of office. The Chairperson may not succeed himself/herself.

The Chairperson shall preside at all Board meetings, develop Board meeting agendas with the help of the Family Office and coordinate meeting times, places and dates. XXX will serve as the first Chairperson and will decide on the rotation sequence for selecting the next Chairperson.

Vice Chairperson.

The next rotating Chairperson of the Family Office shall be the Vice Chairperson of the Governance Board. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall perform the Chairperson's duties.

Secretary.

The Secretary shall keep a record of all proceedings of the Board in a book to be kept for that purpose; shall see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these rules of governance; shall be custodian of the corporate records and shall perform such other duties as from time-to-time may be assigned to him or her by the Chairperson or by the Board. Minutes of each Board meeting shall be mailed to all Board Members before the next meeting.

Committees.

The Chairperson or the Board may designate committees for various purposes and a majority of the members of each committee shall be Board Members. The Chairperson shall obtain Board approval of those appointees who are not Family Office Clients.

a. Investment Committee. Coordinates annual investment review. Assists in development of investment policy for each household, if needed, and identifies strategies that should be evaluated by the family.

b. Education Committee. Develops annual programs of education for all family members over 13 years of age. The Committee meets annually to discuss the educational needs of the family group.

c. Family office Performance/Compensation Committee. Evaluates performance of Family Office manager and conducts compensation analysis and review. Meets with the office executive annually to review progress and to set goals.

VI. Termination as Client.

Any Family Office Client may terminate his or her relationship with the Family Office as of the end of any month by giving 90 days prior written notice to the Secretary. Such termination notice shall be considered an immediate resignation from the Board if such person is a Board Member.

The Board may terminate any Family Office Client's relationship with the Family Office at the end of any month by giving 90 day prior written notice to such person. Any such termination shall require a two-thirds vote of the Board (abstentions shall not be included in the computation of the numerator). If the Family Office Client is a Board Member, he or she may not vote on the issue of his or her termination.

The termination of the Family Office relationship of a Family Office Client shall also terminate the relationship of his or her spouse and his or her children under the age of 21 unless otherwise agreed to by the Board.

VII. Changes in Rules of Governance.

These rules of governance may be changed by the Board by a majority vote.

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