Satu Korhonen

THE JOURNEYS OF BECOMING AND BEING AN INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEUR: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF THE "I" IN INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LAPPEENRANTAENSIS 922

Satu Korhonen

THE JOURNEYS OF BECOMING AND BEING AN INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEUR: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF THE "I" IN INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Science (Economics and Business Administration) to be presented with due permission for public examination and criticism in the Auditorium of the Student Union House at Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT, Lappeenranta, Finland on the 30th of October, 2020, at 2 pm.

Acta Universitatis
Lappeenrantaensis 922

Supervisors Professor Tanja Leppäaho
LUT School of Business and Management
Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT
Finland

PhD Igor Laine
LUT School of Business and Management
Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT
Finland

Reviewers Professor Nicole Coviello
Lazaridis School of Business and Economics
Wilfrid Laurier University
Canada

Professor Ulla Hytti
Turku School of Economics
University of Turku
Finland

Opponents Professor Nicole Coviello
Lazaridis School of Business and Economics
Wilfrid Laurier University
Canada

Professor Ulla Hytti
Turku School of Economics
University of Turku
Finland

ISBN 978-952-335-557-6
ISBN 978-952-335-558-3 (PDF)
ISSN-L 1456-4491
ISSN 1456-4491

Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT
LUT University Press 2020

Abstract

Satu Korhonen
The Journeys of Becoming and Being an International Entrepreneur: A Narrative Inquiry of the "I" in International Entrepreneurship
Lappeenranta 2020
182 pages
Acta Universitatis Lappeenrantaensis 922
Diss. Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT
ISBN 978-952-335-557-6, ISBN 978-952-335-558-3 (PDF), ISSN-L 1456-4491, ISSN 1456-4491

This doctoral study was conducted as an inquiry of the *international entrepreneur* in order to balance off the domination of firm-level studies and limited discussion of the individual as the initial driver in the international entrepreneurship phenomenon (IE). Two research questions guide the study: *'How do individuals make sense of themselves as becoming and being international entrepreneurs?'* and *'How to theorise of individuals becoming and being international entrepreneurs through a narrative approach?'*. With a processual view of the phenomenon, this study embraces IE as a *journey* and approaches histories and sense-making of individuals through *narrative inquiry*, paying attention to the different efforts by which entrepreneurs (and researchers) contextualize—and constitute—the personal-level IE journeys. The qualitative dataset consists of interviews and historical data. Data analysis builds on 'hermeneutic reasoning', suggesting that meanings and implications of journeys individuals have undertaken can be better grasped *after* they have unfolded in time. The findings in the four publications construct the contribution of this article-based dissertation. Publications I, II and III embrace narrative sense-making as meaning structure to past actions and lived events and illuminate how the international entrepreneurial 'self' as an actor and agent in retrospect manifests individuals as the 'autobiographical authors' in regard to *developmental*, *transitional* and *generational* experiences and their meanings in becoming and being an international entrepreneur. They provide evidence of how the founders' sense-making and identity work feed into the behavioural orientations and 'bounded and boundaryless' career journeys of becoming and being *international*. Publications I, III and IV are novel attempts to address empirically the social historic process in which IE is embedded and its significance for the individual. When analysed against the (inter)generational backdrop of individuals' actions and life-events, we may trace how international entrepreneurs are the protagonists of their own generations and leaving a legacy to the next.

Keywords: international entrepreneurship, international entrepreneur, narrative inquiry, history, experience, sense-making

Acknowledgements

Writing these acknowledgements turned out to be a wonderful, yet one of the most vulnerable tasks in preparing this book. Vulnerable, because my feelings of gratitude towards the ones that have contributed to my PhD journey go beyond the reach of my words—and I'm afraid of coming short with them. However, I took up the challenge and tried.

First, I want to thank all the professors and senior scholars that have contributed to my current understanding of my research field, methodology and the academic career in general. I couldn't possibly be more honored and grateful for having the esteemed Professor **Nicole Coviello** and Professor **Ulla Hytti** as the reviewers of my study and opponents in my public defence. The comments you made in order to develop the manuscript towards its final state didn't only give me confidence to finally let go of it, but to also carry on with my development as a narrative researcher. Your research has played a big inspirational role in how this study unfolded already from the beginning and again now in doing the final touches for this book. Without Coviello's commentary article in *Journal of International Business Studies* in 2015 and Hytti's own dissertation from 2003, and all the work that followed, the angle of this dissertation would be so different. Thank you!

I want to thank you, Professor **Tanja Leppäaho**, my committed supervisor, for seeing the researcher potential in me already during my master's studies. Since then, all the opportunities and creative solutions, inspiration and excitement for research that emerged in our frequent discussions have truly elevated the potential contribution of this research as well as my identity as an academic. Not only did you provide intellectual guidance for my work and its substance, but also facilitate comprehensive insight in becoming a researcher with all the "off-topic" chats whenever needed. Thank you, Tanja, from the bottom of my heart. I admire your charitable heart and ability to spearhead and carry on with what is meaningful through and beyond challenging times. Thank you, **Igor Laine** for being a role model in doing research and lecturing with both a sharp mind and a warm heart. I am grateful for all your encouraging feedback towards the end of this research process.

Thank you, Professor **Martin Hannibal**, for persistently making me look at my work with boldness and appreciating it myself. I am so happy you came along during the McGill conference in Galway, Ireland. Since that short walk into the pub and your question regarding what I would like to become through my research, I have had an important (and fun!) cross-border colleagueship and friendship with you. It has been a special source of encouragement in terms of reaching new heights as a scholar and a person. Thank you, Martin, not only for your truly observant approach to research but also the people around you—including me.

Professors **Rolv Amdam** and **Sarah Jack**. I think I have been so very lucky with co-authors. The wonderfully comprehensive and constructive—yet not easy—feedback that I've received from you while writing together have been contributing firmly into my growth as a qualitative researcher. Doing a historical study would've been a long haul without you two. It has been such a privilege to work with you and I look forward to minting the paper we have in progress.

Thank you, **Lasse Torkkeli**, for your continuous support and words of encouragement for us PhD students at LBM, and not least for the personal heads-up emails of relevant articles and opportunities. Professor **Sami Saarenketo**, having you as the guitar-playing Dean and leader at LBM somehow seems to ground the whole business department with a relaxed, down-to-earth atmosphere. Thank you, Professor **Juha Väätänen**, for your leadership in our IBE team and having always something positive to say! Professor **Kirsimarja Blomqvist**, I thank you for encouraging me to look beyond the defence date, to enlarge my territory, and take steps further into interdisciplinary research collaboration while supporting me on my way of finding my personal passions and boundaries as a scholar. Though being a more far-away face in Spain, I want to thank you, Professor **Alex Rialp,** for your "godfatherly" presence in my PhD journey and the encouragement I have received from you over and over. I also want to thank **Mari Suoranta** and **Teppo Sintonen** at the University of Jyväskylä for their encouraging feedback at the earlier stages of my doctoral research in 2016 and 2017.

At this point I want to acknowledge the big support I've received from several foundations and other parties involved in this dissertation in the form of research grants and other resources. I thank the **Foundation of Economic Education**, the **Finnish Cultural Foundation**, **Marcus Wallenberg Foundation**, **Yksityisyrittäjäin Säätiö** and **Research Foundation of Lappeenranta University of Technology** for making this thesis and the development of my (international) research networks possible in practice. Thank you, **Tiina Rajala** at the central archives of A. Ahlström in Noormarkku, for the time I got to spend studying the archives and hearing details about the history of Ahlström from you. Thank you also, **Petri** and **Eva** at LBM offices, for always knowing what to do when I was lost with any paperwork, travel plan or any other practicality!

The friends and fellow doctoral students I've had the honor to either work, talk, laugh or cry with—or all of these things—are numerous. **Jaakko** and **Teemu**: I have made this PhD journey more or less together with you. Teemu, you've gone ahead and given me heads up of what's coming. Jaakko, you started off a year later, but like a boss wrap up around the same time as me. I have been so glad having you two by my side on this path and I thank you for all the peer support you have given me along the way. I wish you two all the best in life! I'm beyond lucky to have met you at Tommi's karonkka, **Argyro**. Since then, how wonderfully effortless and flowing discussions we've had not only about methodology but much more of our own "becoming" in academia. Our friendship and colleagueship mean so much to me. **Agnes**, having you as a dear friend and as a colleague is a source of pure joy, which has also brought a lot of compassionate presence into my own being – sometimes that means the confusion and self-doubt in becoming a researcher. Thank you for all the laughs while cutting a bunch of onions! Thank you, **Hannes**, **Maria**, **Tommi**: sharing the offices and lunch breaks with you at LUT triggered more personal and professional growth in me than you'll ever know. I was lucky to have you guys as mirrors in the daily life of a doctoral student and that of just a normal person. **Natalie**,

Ulrik, **Ela** and **Jakob** in Denmark: thank you for making Odense feel like a place I can always come back to with a feeling of returning home. SDU would've not been such a wonderful "remote office", if it wasn't for you guys.

Thank you my 'Soul Sisters'—**Maija**, **Riikka**, **Henna-Mari** and **Ulpukka**. If I ever want to do some retrospective analysis of the emotional dimensions of doing my PhD, my go-to data source will be our WhatsApp-group discussions. What a sisterhood to be splitting the worry and sharing the joy in life with. **Essi, Hanna, Suvi** (and the many other dear friends near and far), who have cheered me on during this process: thank you for the kind of love and friendship that both gently supported and broke the academic bubble I think I easily fell into. **Henry**, thank you for coming into my life at the very end of this PhD narrative and bursting that bubble for good. Little did I know where the road would curve when I started the journey in September 2016. Even less do I know now of what's ahead. However, I hope for adventure, unbeaten paths and untold stories together with you all.

Mom and **Dad**. Beyond words am I grateful for your unconditional love and the support you've given me in all my aspirations in life. I think this thesis and the overall PhD journey would have not unfolded as openly "personal" as they did, if it wasn't for your example of embracing every life endeavour so wholeheartedly. I would say this work reflects you both in me. I love you. (Äiti ja isä. En kykene sanoin kuvailemaan sitä, miten kiitollinen olen siitä ehdottomasta rakkaudesta ja tuesta, jota olen saanut teiltä osakseni kaikissa elämäni pyrkimyksissä. En usko, että matkani tohtoriksi ja tämä väitöskirja näyttäytyisi yhtä avoimesti "henkilökohtaisina" ilman esimerkkiänne antautua kaikkeen elämään niin kokosydämisesti. Tässä työssäni heijastutte te minussa. Rakastan teitä.) **Kalle**, thank you for helping me remain grounded with your solid brotherly care for me as your sister and through your exemplary parenthood to your beautiful girls. I never want to underestimate the meaning of your patience with me whenever I've been struggling to make sense of things from algebra in my teens to corrupted word-documents of my article manuscripts. Pure love is what I have for you. **Fiora** and **Lyria**, you have definitely been auntie Satu's little and big reminders of life being most importantly about dancing, running barefoot, doing cartwheels and jumping on trampolines—and to give hugs and kisses obviously! I love you!

At last, my humble and heartfelt thank you goes to **all the entrepreneurs** I had the honour to meet and talk with in the interviews and elsewhere during this research process. By letting me hear your personal stories of becoming what you are, you have guided me towards finding and understanding my own narrative identity anew. And that is something, I tell you.

With a slight hesitation of this being enough, I agree with myself that it is a good time to let go of the manuscript and send it for printing and publication.

On a beautiful afternoon of September 2020 in Lappeenranta, Finland.

Satu Korhonen

To all the founders and storytellers

Contents

List of publications

This dissertation is based on the following papers. The rights have been granted by publishers to include the papers in dissertation.

I. Korhonen, S., & Leppäaho, T. (2019). Well-trodden highways and roads less traveled: Entrepreneurial-oriented behavior and identity construction in international entrepreneurship narratives. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 17(3), 355–388. DOI: 10.1007/s10843-019-00246-3

II. Korhonen, S., & Hannibal, M. (2018). Boundarylessness and Boundaries in International Entrepreneurship Identity Work. *Proceedings 44th European International Business Academy Conference*, Poznań, Poland.

III. Korhonen, S. (2019). Founders, generations and the evolving dialogue of international entrepreneurship. *Proceedings 45th European International Business Academy Conference*, Leeds, United Kingdom.

IV. Korhonen, S., Leppäaho, T., Amdam, R. & Jack, S. (Forthcoming in 2021). The "Unwritten Will" in Interpersonal Network Ties: Founder Legacy and International Networking of Family Firms in History. *Palgrave Handbook on Family Firm Internationalization*. Accepted for publication, Palgrave Macmillan.

Authors' contribution

Paper I: I was the principal author and investigator of this journal article. Professor Leppäaho contributed to the paper by guiding and supporting the ideation and design stages of the study. Then again at the journal review and revision process, she was more heavily involved in crystalizing the theoretical contribution, rewriting parts and finalizing the article manuscript.

Paper II: I was the principal investigator and author of this conference paper. Along the earlier stages of the iterative analysis and writing process, Professor Hannibal contributed by bringing his expertise and insight on identity work and other relevant areas of research. Now, having gone beyond the conference paper version and revising the manuscript for an entrepreneurship journal, our work has become more equally shared effort in rewriting all the parts in the manuscript.

Paper III: I was the principal author and investigator of this study.

Paper IV: As the leading author, I was in charge of putting together the first drafts and final manuscript of the paper, which unfolded as several rounds of revisions among us four authors. At the initial stages of the historical study, I conducted the data collection and analysis together with Leppäaho. This was followed by inviting Professor Amdam and Professor Jack to the writing process of the study in order to allow their insights as experts of their fields to advance the theoretical and methodological rigor of the study.

List of Abbreviations

BA	bachelor's degree
BG	born globals
CEO	chief executive officer
ELKA	Suomen elinkeinoelämän keskusarkisto (Central Archives for Finnish Business Records)
EU	European Union
FDI	foreign direct investment
FF	family firm
FT50	50 Journals used in Financial Times Research Rank
FSC	free-standing company
IB	international business
IE	international entrepreneurship
INV	international new venture
MNE	multinational enterprises
MSc	master's degree
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
R&D	research and development
SME	small and medium sized enterprises

1 Introduction

'Following the light of the sun, we left the Old World.' —Christopher Columbus

Entrepreneurship, as a term, stems from the French word 'entrependre'—'undertaking' (Carlen, 2016). In general, it reflects the dialogic of self and project (Bruyat & Julien, 2001) and a human ability to plot *'new order, new and often better ways of doing things'* (Anderson et al., 2012, p. 960). Said to constitute the backbone of most economies (The World Bank, 2020), entrepreneurship is among the essential drivers of both economic and social well-being at the society level, and remains high on the policy agenda of many countries (OECD, 2019). At the same time, internationalization of the endeavours of entrepreneurs matters in terms of global and national economic development, in connection to the competitiveness and growth of the focal firms and overall mobility of the global workforce (OECD, 2017).

To date, governments have been actively promoting internationalization efforts of firms (European Commission, 2011) with varying degrees of success (Haddoud et al., 2017; Lederman et al., 2010). While internationalization processes perhaps did not touch upon the larger portion of previous generations of entrepreneurs, or all industries, in the current digital information age, one cannot escape the influence of globally arching development and disruptive innovations (Coviello et al., 2017; Ojala et al., 2018). Nowadays, entrepreneurship can no longer be considered purely domestic in respect of the globalizing economy, where a seemingly 'borderless' world of business and rapid growth of regional free-trade areas provide firms with a landscape of international market opportunities from inception (Zucchella et al., 2018).

In general, internationalization is regarded as an important pathway to growth for new ventures, where the initial entrance into foreign markets is often influenced by environmental and organizational conditions (Coviello et al., 2017; Vahlne & Johanson, 2017), altering a firm's organizational structure (Eriksson et al., 1997) and strategic outlook (McDougall, 1989). Especially for new ventures without established networks, a sound resource base or relevant experience, the crossing of domestic borders in one way or another is inherently an uncertain and complex transitioning process to take on and a considerable burden in terms of learning new capabilities (Coviello & Munro, 1997; Prashantham & Floyd, 2019). There is an in-built tension as *'internationalization increases the odds of growing rapidly and lowers the odds of survival for new ventures'* (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019, p. 513). The transitional state of 'becoming international' is presumably a source of vulnerability—a challenge and an opportunity—not only for new ventures and the economies they are embedded in but also for the individuals involved, who experience a context of uncertainty and state of change. Therefore, the founder-entrepreneurs who lead their new ventures into journeys of unknown futures must not be forgotten, if we aim to enhance the small business contribution in the 'new world of work' and vice versa (OECD, 2017, p. 16). In light of the current discourse on internationalizing small ventures, entrepreneurs are central in their role driving not only firm-level performance, but also societally, enacting regional and country-level development and competitiveness at our current historical juncture (OECD, 2019).

In the big picture, globalization challenges ventures as organizations to be agile in keeping pace with acquiring new identities and capabilities and facing the continuous uncertainty and change in their border-crossing operations. However, we need to also acknowledge how the international entrepreneurs leading these ventures embrace, make sense of and learn the complex context of their internationalizing work. From a working life and career contingency perspective (Burton et al., 2016; Ibarra & Obodaru, 2016), the entrepreneurial careers of the founders of ventures embedded in immediate internationalization processes appear increasingly precarious—not least because of the fast-paced digitizing world of business (Coviello et al., 2017; Nambisan, 2017). Like any other individual challenged by the micro- or macro-level changes in their living and working environments, these entrepreneurial individuals are also challenged to (re)construct their professional selves and behaviour in and between various venturing contexts (Erichsen, 2011) that are increasingly international and temporary in nature (Ibarra & Obodaru, 2016). This reflects also how in Western societies at least, the understandings of career and working life are becoming more and more 'boundary-less' (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Baruch & Reis, 2016; Bjerregaard, 2014), serving unlimited opportunities as well as new kinds of challenges and pressures for the current and future working generations to acquire and overcome. Both an international and a so-called entrepreneurial orientation (Covin & Miller, 2014) or 'mindset' (Lundmark et al., 2017) are required in order to navigate the contemporary uncertain, fast-paced, and very much 'remote' context of contemporary working life (Domenico et al., 2014).

Entrepreneurs as career actors (Garcia-Lorenzo et al., 2018; Gross & Geiger, 2017) are required to make sense of their ways of 'being' in conjunction with one social context to another (Thomas et al., 2005), which often demands one to continuously (re)configure intrinsic skills, prior experience and knowledge, and relationships (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). In recognition of the increasing 'mobility' of individual entrepreneurs and their globalizing outlook of careers no matter the organizational form or context (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006), there is a pressing practical need for more tangible understanding of international entrepreneurship career narratives and embedded identity work—the process of becoming—in order to recognize, address and support them in the midst of the transformative and contingent outlook of global business.

1.1 Identified shortcomings in international entrepreneurship literature

Scholarly interest and theorizing on the early internationalizing firms and their founders have accumulated scientific inquiry for about three decades now (Zucchella et al., 2018). As a rather young domain still, **international entrepreneurship (IE)** research has sparked an active and growing interdisciplinary research community exploring entrepreneurial actors crossing national borders (Coviello et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2011;

Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). As a field of inquiry, IE reflects the *'growing awareness of the diversity of entrepreneurial activity across an increasingly globally integrated economy'* (Coviello et al., 2011, p. 625).

The research field was initially sparked by early case studies of entrepreneurs leading their new ventures into early internationalization in the more recent wave of global economy (McDougall, 1989; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994), where the observed dynamism of the phenomenon challenged the former theories of business internationalization (e.g., Johanson & Vahlne, 1977). At present, the IE phenomenon is usually referred to as the *'discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities—across national borders—to create future goods and services'* (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a, p. 540), a behaviour and opportunity-focused definition, which indicates towards both the organization and the individual entrepreneurs as the focal actors. At the firm level, the internationalization phase of leaving (or losing) familiar conditions—that is, the cultural, institutional, and social structures of the home market—translate to a new venture's transition to new foreign markets and epitomize the vulnerability of becoming an international venture (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019; Zahra, 2005). Throughout the development of the IE domain of research and definitions of the phenomenon (Zucchella et al., 2018), the individual founder-entrepreneurs —usually called the international entrepreneurs—have been largely recognized as the initial key (en)actors in the dynamic internationalization of the firm and its networks (Coviello, 2015). However, since the inception of the field, the meta-level discourse of IE as a theoretical concept and field of inquiry has been dominated by firm-level studies emphasising causal relationships securing or deterring organizational development and performance (Jones et al., 2011).

In this doctoral research, in order to contribute to the imbalance between firm-level and individual level research (Coviello & Jones, 2004), I set out to study the international entrepreneurs, their experiences, sense-making and context of 'becoming'. I approach IE as a border-crossing "journey"—a contextual process of emergence of social structures and integration of novel information (i.e., networks, organizations, institutions) over time and across national borders in which there may not be clearly defined 'beginnings' nor 'ends' (McMullen & Dimov, 2013)—and, hence, set off by defining IE differently from the prevalent definition by Oviatt and McDougall (2005a). By combining Welch, Nummela and Liesch's (2016) and Welch and Luostarinen's (1988) definitions of internationalization in conjunction with the perspective of entrepreneurship as a journey (McMullen & Dimov, 2013; Van de Ven et al., 1999), I define and approach IE as *a socially constructed journey that weaves together individual, organizational, and contextual dimensions in relation to increasing international involvement*.

Shortcoming 1: International entrepreneurs and their 'presence' in IE literature

Current literature posits that in the small border-crossing new ventures, it is the pivotal role of the founder-entrepreneurs and their ways of recognizing, evaluating, and exploiting international opportunities that drive the organizational process (Bolzani & Foo, 2018; Coviello, 2015). As such, the founder-entrepreneur has remained at the core of explaining the IE phenomenon (Coviello, 2015) at *'the nexus of internationalization and entrepreneurship'* processes (Jones et al., 2011, p. 632).

In a broader sense, the inquiry has set out on a quest to understand *'by whom and with what effects'* international opportunities are acted upon (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005b, p. 7). Inherent to the dominant international business (IB) and entrepreneurship literature, the consideration of the 'who?' question in IE literature often discusses *'individuals who found firms, who make them grow over time in international markets through processes of exploration and exploitation of opportunities'* (Zucchella et al., 2018). Here, international entrepreneurs are seen and defined as those *'individuals carrying out entrepreneurial actions across borders'* (Andersson, 2015, p. 71) and they are suggested to be more influenced in their different ways of thinking (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Milanov & Maissenhälter, 2015) in comparison to their domestic counterparts. In accordance with business and entrepreneurship literature in general (Kano & Verbeke, 2015), IE research holds that these individuals embody certain characteristics, visions, or traits and, based on their experiential background, make decisions with certain rationales (e.g., Jones & Casulli, 2014) and influence firm-level outcomes such as strategies and relative performance in international markets in one way or the other (Coviello et al., 2017).

However, understanding IE as an entrepreneurial act (e.g., Covin & Miller, 2014)—a behavioural composition of multiple moderating and mediating factors (Oviatt and McDougall, 2005b)—has, on the whole, been largely based on observations and analysis of firm-level characteristics and internationalization processes, patterns and pace (Joardar & Wu, 2011; Jones et al., 2011; McDougall-Covin et al., 2014). In this process, the individual is treated as an 'antecedent' in the causal modelling of the phenomenon (Madsen & Servais, 1997; Nummela, Saarenketo, & Puumalainen, 2004). Current modelling of different antecedents to and boundary conditions of the internationalization of new ventures, including the individuals' influence (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a), has been conducted in order to make sense of the organizational capabilities and opportunities in overcoming the liabilities of foreignness, smallness and/or newness in the foreign market and strategic activities (e.g., Mainela et al., 2014; Reuber et al., 2018; Zahra, 2005).

Furthermore, prior literature, with its prevalent interest in competitive advantage and performance indicators of firms, has been studying the ventures from the time of inception and along the early and some later stages of the firms' internationalization processes (Coombs et al., 2009; Peiris et al., 2012; Turcan & Juho, 2014). On this note, studies in the field more or less investigating the factors influencing *'a priori market entry decisions pertaining to cross-border opportunities'* (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019, p. 522) assume founders and their experience, cognitions and competencies as antecedents to the firm-level behaviour (Milanov & Maissenhälter, 2015; Zahra et al., 2005) and outcomes without much work to open up the 'history' of these antecedents. In this vein, internationalization research has treated individuals largely as static 'beings' and more or less rational, strategic entities (Ruzzier et al., 2007), or for their 'automatized' perceptions of opportunities and decision-making logic (Milanov & Maissenhälter, 2015; Perks & Hughes, 2008).

Accordingly, one may well become more curious as to the individual-level and social foundations of international entrepreneurial firms (Coviello et al., 2017; Hannibal, 2017; Hannibal et al., 2016), that is, the cognitive processes preceding and underlying internationalization, which then become manifested at the level of the organization (Jones & Casulli, 2014). In this doctoral study, I set out to remedy the dearth of studies examining international entrepreneurs (Coviello, 2015; Jones et al., 2011), with the assumption that prior to and when embarking on the internationalization journey of their ventures, it is important for these individuals to mind their initial contextual and cognitive groundings to become and be international. In part, my views follow the notions in the recent study of Prashantham and Floyd (2019), who elevate the entrepreneurs' sense-making of situations and scaffolding leading into learning processes and, eventually, capabilities into the foreground in understanding IE as a dynamic and social transitioning process. Other literature has also called for more processual understanding of the entrepreneur-level experience prior and simultaneous to the internationalization of new ventures (Fletcher, 2004). In this vein, the extant literature calls for alternative approaches to understand more of *'the entrepreneur's attempt to construct meaning to his/her plans and ideas together with other actors'* (Rasmussen et al., 2001, p. 80) and gives way to discuss and explore IE as a 'becoming' journey, embedding the *'intent to internationalize and the realization of a stable internationalized state'* (Prashantham and Floyd, 2019). Though Prashantham and Floyd (2019) also remain rather static in their perception of the founder's profile as a precursor for firm-level behaviour in discussing their personality attributes as predictive antecedents for certain organizational capabilities, with their novel conceptual article, they still emphasize the need to study the sense-making of founders in the transition process of 'becoming international'.

Shortcoming 2 – 'Becoming international' as a journey and sense-making of experience

Simultaneously with the recognized need to know more of the international entrepreneur's role as a sense-maker in IE (Coviello, 2015) and their 'ways of thinking' having influence in the internationalization behaviour of firms (Acedo & Jones, 2007; Jones & Casulli, 2014), there is a recognized shortage of research on understanding qualitatively the ways these people make sense of their experiences (Jones & Casulli, 2014), that is, give meaning to their *personal histories* (McGaughey, 2007) in relation to their present and future (Weick et al., 2005). In this dissertation, sense-making refers to the (transformative) cognitive activity of a person pertaining to past, present, and future experiences (Weick, 1995) which both constitutes and is produced by narration. In this vein, for example, interviews exist as opportunities for *'(re)constructing narratives in different ways, evolving different perspectives on the past, leading to different understandings of the present, with implications for the future'* (Birch & Miller, 2000, p. 93).

Experience—embodying human existence in the material, the organic and the meaning realms (Polkinghorne, 1988)—is a social *'construction that results from the interaction of cognitive organizing processes with cues emanating from external perceptual senses, internal bodily sensations, and cognitive memories'* (Polkinghorne, 1991, p. 135). Deriving from this, the experience of IE is socially constructed and means different things to different people. In consideration of IE initially being an entrepreneur-driven process, scholars have noted the relatively small number of studies that have genuinely explored the founders' and their past experience (Andersson, 2015; Ghannad & Andersson, 2012; McGaughey, 2007). Simultaneously, scholars have remained rather presumptive when it comes to the origins as well as the nature and meaning (as an effect) of the past experiences of individuals becoming and being international entrepreneurs, in explaining the cognitive and firm-level consequences of these peoples' international experience (Ruzzier et al., 2007). While individual entrepreneurs naturally undertake various kinds of personal journeys of 'becoming international' prior to or alongside their business venture, IE literature keeps treating this prior experience largely as a quantifiable entity and resource for firm-level processes (e.g., Ganotakis & Love, 2012), without a deeper interest to see what meaning it has been given by the individual themselves.

Some research has begun to recognize the need to understand the socially constructed journeys founders undertake in conjunction with internationalization, plotting their identity construction and socialization processes into new networks (Gertsen & Søderberg, 2011; Hannibal, 2017; Rasmussen et al., 2001) that are meaningful in terms of understanding IE as a transformative process and phenomenon in a more nuanced way. However, reviews and subsequent research findings over the years continue to call for more diverse empirical studies and alternative analyses of the individual and their contextual human experience of becoming and being an international entrepreneur (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Nummela & Welch, 2006; Seymour, 2006). Therefore, if we do not know where these individuals are coming from and understand how they make sense of their own personal journeys, how can we begin to interpret their actions and agency in the present state and, not to say, understand the anticipated course of their future trajectories?

Shortcoming 3 – The (hi)story of 'becoming and being' an international entrepreneur

Specific *'historical conditions under which entrepreneurs, as individual actors and in communities, operate and pursue change'* are bounded by various institutional, discursive, cultural and practical dimensions (Nayak & Maclean, 2013, p. 45; Busenitz & Lau, 1996). Therefore, in this study, I will posit that the focal IE journeys ought to be better understood with reference to time and context as social historic processes (Hurmerinta-Peltomäki, 2003). When regarding sense-making of individual-level experience as central to understanding both cognition and behaviour in IE literature in a more holistic way (Seymour, 2006), we need to mind the historically contextual embeddedness and generational location for the individuals' 'becoming and being' process.

Contextualization *'entails linking observations to a set of relevant facts, events, or points of view that make possible research and theory that form part of a larger whole'* (Rousseau & Fried, 2001, p. 1) and asserts that the surrounding world as well as one's 'internal world' is interpreted based on the content and structures of past knowledge (Krueger, 2007). In regard to the personal history of the international entrepreneur, the changing historical time context ought to be—but rarely is—accounted as an integral part of analyses of internationalization of new ventures or their founders (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019). In addition to the above shortcomings in individual-level IE literature, there is a dearth of studies in which the role of the individual and their interpersonal relations as the core 'microfoundations' of organizational processes and the evolving historical context defining macro-level features of the world economy and work are both embraced, when investigating the IE phenomenon (Coviello et al., 2017).

Whereas the emergence of IE as a research domain is relatively recent in comparison to many other concepts and research domains in organizational and management studies, as a phenomenon it is not (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019). Throughout the history of humankind, we may identify venturing endeavours of individuals journeying across continents as international and entrepreneurial in their very essence (Etemad, 2019), having an effect on their social world (Battilana, 2006; Carlen, 2016). Based on the history of entrepreneurship, we can see how entrepreneurial individuals undertaking their personal endeavours have enacted their context of venturing over time (Baker & Welter, 2018), while both individuals' and firms' activities evolve simultaneously with and within the historical context in which they are embedded (Cantwell et al., 2010; see also Bucheli & Salvaj, 2018).

From reading prior research, we can note that the more recent technological developments enabling the increase in speed of internationalization (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a), increase in the mobility of knowledge and labour (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994) as well as the emergence of completely new markets (Reuber & Fischer, 2011; Ojala et al., 2018) do not account for the preceding historical contexts, enabling more contextually sensitive theorizing beyond the one we are experiencing now. Consequent to the rather stagnated view of the IE phenomenon solely through the post-World War wave of globalization and onwards (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019), studies of early and rapidly internationalizing new ventures and their founders are known for the (pre)conditions and characteristics of the increasingly knowledge-based economy context as the enabling, mediating and moderating forces explaining IE (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Fillis, 2007; Jones et al., 2011; Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a).

Whether or not (critically) conscious of one's own location in a historic time period and societal context or generally aware of one's 'being' embedded in one's generation—the age-based cohorts sharing a common location in the social historic process (Mannheim, 1952)—current and coming generations (i.e., entrepreneurs, CEOs, policy makers, educators) will presumably keep trying to *'fit into existing traditions and social patterns and, in doing so, bringing about social change'* (Joshi et al., 2011, p. 180). Not only do so-called practitioners of IE need to become aware of their own generation-related assumptions and world-views influencing their international venturing and intentions, but arguably also we, as a community of IE scholars, ought to account for the sociological underpinnings of entrepreneurship (Thornton, 1999) as a point of further reflexivity into our work and interpretations of the IE phenomenon. Therefore, in addition to the shortage of accounting for the overall historical context, I have decided to pay more heed to the interpretations of international entrepreneurs representing and enacting different generations (Liu et al., 2019), which is a particularly timely shortcoming in our understanding and theorizing of the individuals engaged in IE (Coviello, 2015; Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Liu et al., 2019).

1.2 The aim and purpose of the study

Primarily, my aim with this doctoral study was to understand—to understand more and better, if not exhaustively—who are the international entrepreneurs we talk about in IE literature and how they have become who they are. The theoretical objectives of this study stem from the limited understanding of IE at the individual level. The primary objective of this doctoral thesis was *to advance our understanding of the founders of early internationalized ventures by exploring their journeys of becoming and being international entrepreneurs.* Consequently, while studying and analysing the personal journeys of individuals through a narrative approach, the secondary objective of this study became *to advance the understanding of the narrative sense-making of both international entrepreneurs as practitioners and us as researchers of international entrepreneurs in studying the IE phenomenon as a socially constructed process.*

1.2.1 Research questions

The research problem generated from the shortcomings of current IE literature is that of how individuals become international entrepreneurs. Instead of the so-called 'wrong question' of 'who is the international entrepreneur?' (cf. Gartner, 1988) still lurking over the current theorization of international entrepreneurs assuming a certain intrinsic international entrepreneurial orientation and discussing the individual in relation to the present or future time context, I have come to pose two abiding research questions that guide this dissertation:

> *'How do individuals make sense of themselves as becoming and being international entrepreneurs?'*
>
> *'How to theorise of individuals becoming and being international entrepreneurs through a narrative approach*?'

The first research question was eventually formulated based on certain sub-questions that were aimed to tap into the past experiences, especially international ones, of individual founders, such as 'what kind of life-events or phases have become meaningful for the individual during their journey of becoming an international entrepreneur?' and 'through what kind of circumstances and/or transitional career phases have they come to know themselves as *international* and/or as entrepreneurs?'

The second question evolved throughout the research process as I became sensitised to the kind of meta and collective discourses I could identify in the extant IE literature (see further in section 1.2.2). Contemplation on the first question posited a need for increasing reflexivity in my own assumptive thought premises and therefore led me to reflect more on 'what is IE for an individual?', 'what makes an entrepreneur an *international* entrepreneur?', 'what are the conceptual and methodological underpinnings in IE research in general and at the individual level?'

1.2.2 **Positioning of the research**

In order to guide the reader deeper into the main questions addressed by this doctoral study, I provide Figure 1 below as an explication of the position of this study more or less at the intersection of IB and entrepreneurship literature. By dividing IE literature into two levels of discourse in our current theoretical knowledge of the IE phenomenon—the meta and collective level—I further position this study at the collective level discourse, where the main interest has been in exploring and defining the international entrepreneur in one way or another. Whereas the meta-level discourse refers to the overall dominant views (i.e., theoretical frames) and onto-epistemological underpinnings (i.e. research philosophies) in the extant literature of the phenomenon, the collective-level discourse represents a more focused 'community' of IE scholars in search for insight into *'by whom and with what effects'* (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005b, p. 7) entrepreneurial actions across borders come about (Andersson, 2015). These two levels will be further elaborated in Chapter 2, along with the discussion of the conceptual framework of this study.

Extant literature regards both entrepreneurship (Baker & Welter, 2018; Moroz & Hindle, 2012) and internationalization (Hurmerinta et al., 2016; Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014) as temporal phenomena, inherently complex and dynamic in nature. With the suggestion of the more recent entrepreneurship literature (McMullen & Dimov, 2013; Selden & Fletcher, 2015), I also assume the processual nature of the phenomenon (Mohr, 1982; Steyaert, 2007; Van de Ven & Engleman, 2004). As this doctoral study operates at the collective level discourse of IE, it goes further into the underexplored areas of IE as a 'journey' and the personal level 'becoming and being' processes of international entrepreneurs. By taking a 'journey' as a conceptual point of departure for my study, I appreciate IE as a human-led, socially constructed temporal and dynamic process, which becomes *'manifested by events and outcomes in relation to time'* (Jones & Coviello, 2005, p. 299).

In consideration of the multiplicity of alternative frameworks and interdisciplinary approaches to analysis of IE (Nummela & Welch, 2006; Seymour, 2006) and further contextualization of the phenomenon in respect of the historical time context, my study sets out to gain new insight into the socially embedded and subjective sense-making of experience of the individual (Fletcher, 2004; Fletcher, 2006). Accordingly, I further explore and discuss the individuals' journeys and the process of becoming and being an international entrepreneur through a *'narrative'* lens.

In alignment with the above, the design of this study brings further understanding and insight into the meaning and implications of these journeys that individuals have undertaken *after* they have unfolded in time (McMullen & Dimov, 2013). As embodiments of *'sequence[s] of events or activities that describe how particular things change over time'* (McMullen & Dimov, 2013, p. 1482; Van de Ven, 2007), individuals' journeys in the four publications are made sense of through a 'narrative lens'. Accordingly, I have looked into and interpreted the events and episodes intertwined in a journey with means of hermeneutic reasoning constituting a narrative (Polkinghorne, 1988), which means to cast light over the meaning of the whole journey by reading into the particular role of events and episodes that have unfolded along the way. Furthermore, I hold that sense-making is sensible only retrospectively, since *'how can we know what we are seeing until we see what it was?'* (Weick et al., 2005, p. 412). Only in hindsight are we able to grasp the meaning of certain curves and turns along the way in respect of the whole journey. Narrative, indicating us towards a kind of a recognizable 'plot' socially constructed around experience and events, brings together and contextualizes i.e., individuals' behaviour and related goals, causes and chance within the temporal unity of a whole action (Ricoeur, 1984). Along with the narratives of them, journeys encompass various kinds of beginnings and endings. However, for most parts, journeys become meaningful and constitutive of the events and episodes 'between' these beginnings and endings. Hence, they are anything but linear, simple and comprehensible in nature when they actually occur and become the material for sense-making. There, betwixt and between the 'becoming' process, we may still find meaningfulness in the liminal episodes and experiences that mark the forward-moving and transformative transitions in the journey as a whole.

Furthermore, by taking a longitudinal perspective in applying historical methodology to study of individuals' journeys through archival data, we may capture more of the longitudinal "storyline" of internationalization of a venture in conjunction with the historically and socially embedded process of becoming an international entrepreneur. In alignment with a constructivist 'worldview' (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Karp, 2006), I consider that the essence and source of the IE phenomenon is relational, *in and between individuals,* rather than in any abstract markets. Accordingly, I emphasize the socially constructed nature of international opportunities (Mainela et al., 2014) instead of simply presuming their existence 'out there' for the entrepreneurial individuals to seek and find (Packard, 2017). Therefore, the opportunities in the world for individuals to become international entrepreneurs are socially constructed and ongoing processes rather than a recognition or discovery of a niche in market disequilibrium and exploitation of it by the most alert or attentive individuals (Seymour, 2006). In other words, this study posits that the founders' social context (i.e. social ties) and their personal relatedness to it contribute to their 'becoming' narrative as a whole, and as such, informs us of what the journey could be about as a social historic process.

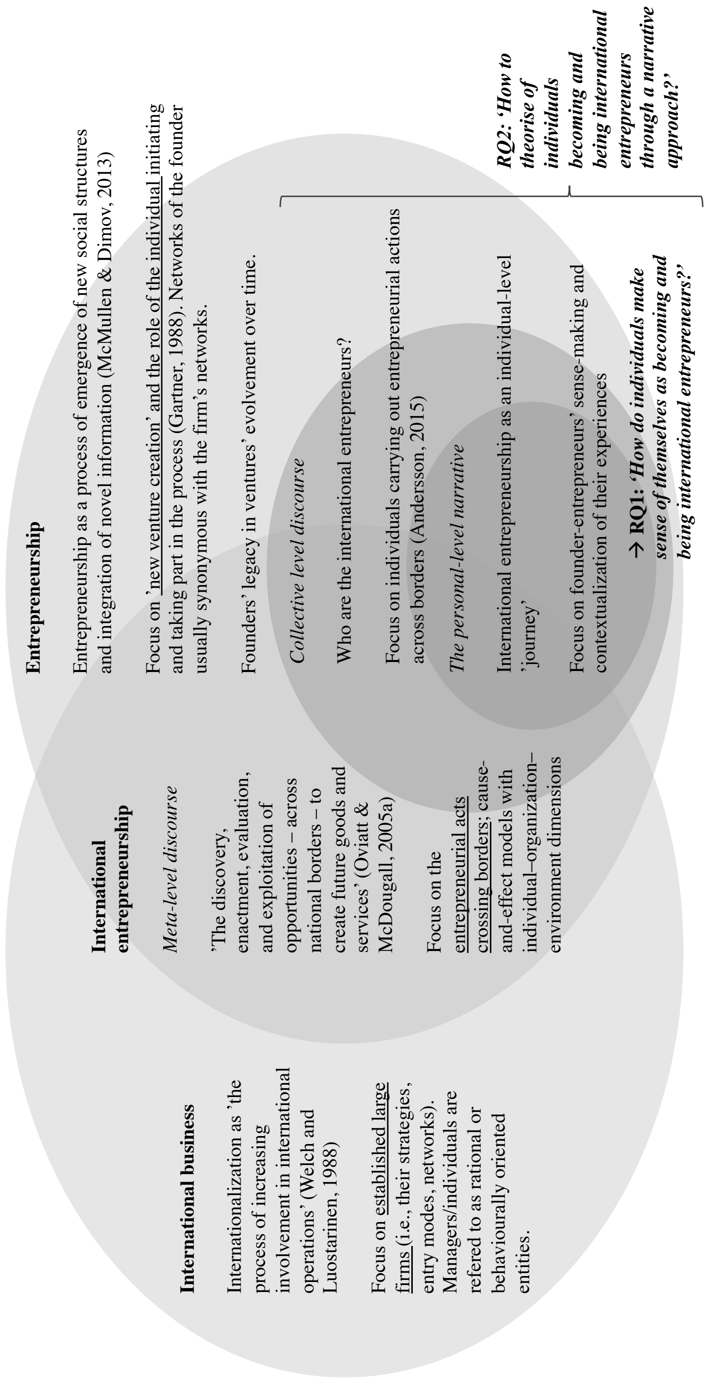


Figure 1. IE at the nexus of IB and entrepreneurship literature: The two levels of discourse of IE and the personal-level narrative of the IE journey

At the end, this dissertation is an attempt to both broaden and deepen our theoretical and methodological discourse regarding international entrepreneurs in the research field and in practice (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Gray & Farminer, 2014). Having said that and before stepping further into the story of my dissertation as a scholarly piece of research, I clarify that I am approaching the IE phenomenon with interpretivist narrative eyes (Garud et al., 2014). Therefore, I suggest that my research serves as a complementary philosophical turn to the more positivist underpinnings preferred and advocated in IE research at large (Nummela & Welch, 2006), being inherent to business disciplines overall (Meyer, 2009).

1.3 Contribution to research and original features

The contribution of this dissertation stems from and lies at the intersection of the interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches applied in the studies. To complement our understanding of the complexity of IE in general (Etemad, 2018) and its processual nature intertwining events and actions manifesting at the individual, firm and environment level (Jones et al., 2011; Welch et al., 2016), I have chosen to explore the contextual lives and experiences of individuals key to the emergence of early internationalizing firms—the founder-entrepreneurs. All four publications making up this doctoral dissertation address the overall contextual emergence of IE as a journey at the individual-level; each of them addresses their own main research questions. In Table 1 below, I provide a brief overview of the publication-specific objectives together with their research questions, analytical approaches and main findings.

Table 1. Summary of the four publications

	Publication I	**Publication II**	**Publication III**	**Publication IV**
Title	*Well-trodden highways and roads less travelled: Entrepreneurial-oriented behaviour and identity construction in international entrepreneurship narratives*	*Boundarylessness and boundaries in international entrepreneurship identity work*	*Founders, generations and the evolving dialogue of international entrepreneurship*	*The 'unwritten will' in interpersonal network ties: Founder legacy and international networking of family firms in history*

Research question(s)	How founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures make sense of their life experiences and construct their identities relative to their behaviour as international entrepreneurs?	How is the meaning of international entrepreneurship as a career journey constructed through an individual's identity work?	How do (potential and current) founders of early and rapidly internationalized ventures representing different generations reflect on the motivations and meaning of international entrepreneurship?	1) Looking back in history, how did founders' interpersonal ties for internationalization emerge, evolve (and transition) to the next generation?' 2) 'How did the social legacy of the founder become manifested in the succeeding generation's networking?'
Objective	To investigate sense-making and contextual identity constructions of founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures in conjunction with meaningful developmental experiences. Framing IE as a developmental journey.	To explore the founder-CEOs experiences of 'becoming and being' an international entrepreneur with a specific interest in discussing their identity work in theorizing on IE and to provide an empirical basis for navigating the contemporary career outlook for international entrepreneurs. Framing IE as a transitional journey.	To explore different generations of individuals engaged in international entrepreneurship and the historically contextual embeddedness of their perceptions of the IE phenomenon. Framing IE as a generational journey.	To explore the interpersonal network ties for the internationalization of family firms by focusing on how such ties emerged and evolved in the transitional incumbent–successor context of international networking prior to our modern world international business context. Framing IE as an intergenerational journey.
Method	Qualitative approach; principles of narrative inquiry; structure and meaning of narrative sense-making.	Qualitative approach; hermeneutic view of triggering experiences and their horizontal and vertical time dimension.	Qualitative approach; focus on generational context and content; content and categorical analysis of narrative in and across data.	Qualitative longitudinal historical case study; 'biographical data'; content and categorical analysis of narrative in historical cases.
Data	Life-narrative interviews with 19 founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures; secondary data such as websites, newspaper and magazine interviews.	Life-narrative interviews with 13 founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures; secondary data such as websites, newspaper and magazine interviews.	Life-narrative interviews with 19 founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures and narrative texts of 33 Master's students in an entrepreneurship/ international business degree program.	Two historical case firms, Ahlström and Serlachius, currently known as Ahlström and Metsä Group. Public and private archival data; secondary sources such as history books and memoirs.

Main findings	In this study, the individuals' narratives of becoming and being international entrepreneurs illuminate their identity constructions as 'scripts' – the Pioneer, Native, Diplomat, Gambler, and/or Eclectic script – for their IE behaviour. The founder's *developmental experiences* feed into and frame their behaviour in relation to their cultural context, generational context, and social context, and the emotional aspects underpinning their journeys to being international.	In this study, international entrepreneurs' 'identity work' is illustrative of the psychological and physical "boundarylessness" of IE as a career journey and the transitional experiences embedded in it. Two temporal dimensions in the narratives – horizontal sequence and vertical layers of time – indicate 'cycles' of founders' sense-making of 'becoming'. The cycles of the becoming international 'self' manifest in the different roles, mental orientations and "(psycho)social spaces" in different transitions from a domestic working context to an international one.	In this study, the narratives of historical content and context of "doing IE" elevate individuals' interpretations of the globalizing (and digitalizing) working context of their own and others' age-cohorts. Motivations for and meaning of IE in generations seem to link through chronologically unfolding 'transmission' and cyclical 'dialogue' between different age-cohorts of international entrepreneurs, e.g. showing a shift from IE being a pioneering type of bilateral journey and internationalisation of "lonely riders" to being a collective and multilateral phenomenon of networks.	In this study, we show how the interpersonal ties of the founder-generation become a mechanism for forming a 'international networking legacy' in a firm's border-crossing networks. This also manifest how the founder's socially embedded ties become the 'initial endorsement' of a family firm's internationalizing network behaviour in the international networking of the next generation.
Theoretical contributions	Contributes to individual-level IE literature by exploring behaviour through the narrative scripts of 'becoming and being' an international entrepreneur. Complements IE theorizing of the individual founder-entrepreneurs by discussing the developmental experiences and identity constructions in the process of internationalizing ventures.	Contributes to IE literature by examining the individual-level process of 'becoming international' through the lens of 'identity work'. Reveals the 'boundaryless' composition of IE as a career journey embedding transitional experiences of going from local to global.	Contributes to IE literature by exploring the generational context of and its meaning for individuals becoming and being international entrepreneurs. By exploring generational content in narrative sense-making, this study complements the view of international entrepreneurs having agency as historically and socially embedded actors.	Contributes to literature of IE as a social historic individual level process by looking into a narrative of becoming an international entrepreneur in a historically different time and with a longitudinal approach. Complements studies of interpersonal networks of founders and their meaning in internationalizing the venture by exploring their evolvement from first to the next generation.

In addition, Figure 2 below presents an integrative frame of how the publications and their specific research questions relate to each other in answering the main research questions I address in this dissertation. Moreover, it shows how IE can be seen through the individual-level developmental, transitional, (inter)generational journeys of individuals. This particular figure will be returned to with more detail in Chapter 4 in order to gather together the main findings of the Publications I–IV. As a consequence of my empirical explorations of IE through these four kinds of journeys using a narrative approach, the study discusses and contributes several individual-level concepts and constructs that are significant yet so far implicit and underexplored in our theorization of IE at both the micro- and macro-level.

Overall, I shed light in this study on things that are perhaps often taken for granted by being implicitly embedded in our current research and understanding of IE at the founder-level: the contextual, transitional and developmental nature of prior and ongoing life-experiences, and the socially constructed meaning of individuals becoming international entrepreneurs. Firstly, I provide a closer look at the international entrepreneur—their (internationalization) experiences and their role in making sense of IE as a personal-level narrative and resembling an internationalizing career journey (Adam et al., 2018), where their embedded identity work can be interpreted as providing an important vehicle in the process of constructing a so-called 'global mindset' and orientation of behaviour (Nummela et al., 2004). In addition, I suggest the construction of biographical narratives as one way for better historical contextualization of IE processes (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019). Such approaches ought to become much more meaningful in our discussions of IE as a social historic journey at the individual and organizational level, not to mention the sociological underpinnings (Thornton, 1999; Watson, 2013) of IE as a generational journey.

The ontological, epistemological and methodological commitments of this dissertation are found in the constructivist paradigm and treat 'narrative' as one of the operations of the 'realm of meaning' when generating and analysing data (Polkinghorne, 1988). Accordingly, the qualitative data of the study consists of both interview and literary data (i.e., archival data), and the understanding of them builds on both hermeneutic and interpretivist historical approaches. While I do not claim this study to be fully process research, for example, by applying a longitudinal design following its research subjects over time or the like, the conducted doctoral study does not fall into the category of cross-sectional research either. As narrative research, this study borrows concepts and constructs that are processual in nature with the underlying attempt being to bridge theoretical discourse between the two 'extremes' of the spectrum—static treatment of the IE phenomenon (Coviello & Jones, 2004) versus full-on process research (Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014). In a way, the actual outcome of this dissertation—the constellation of the publications and their findings—is 'longitudinal'. The study as a whole introduces and contextualizes the IE phenomenon as a historically unfolding journey which has its 'beginnings' much before our current globalized economy and has inevitably nothing but artificial 'ends' as it evolves and gains new meanings in and over the past generations as a journey in both theory and practice.

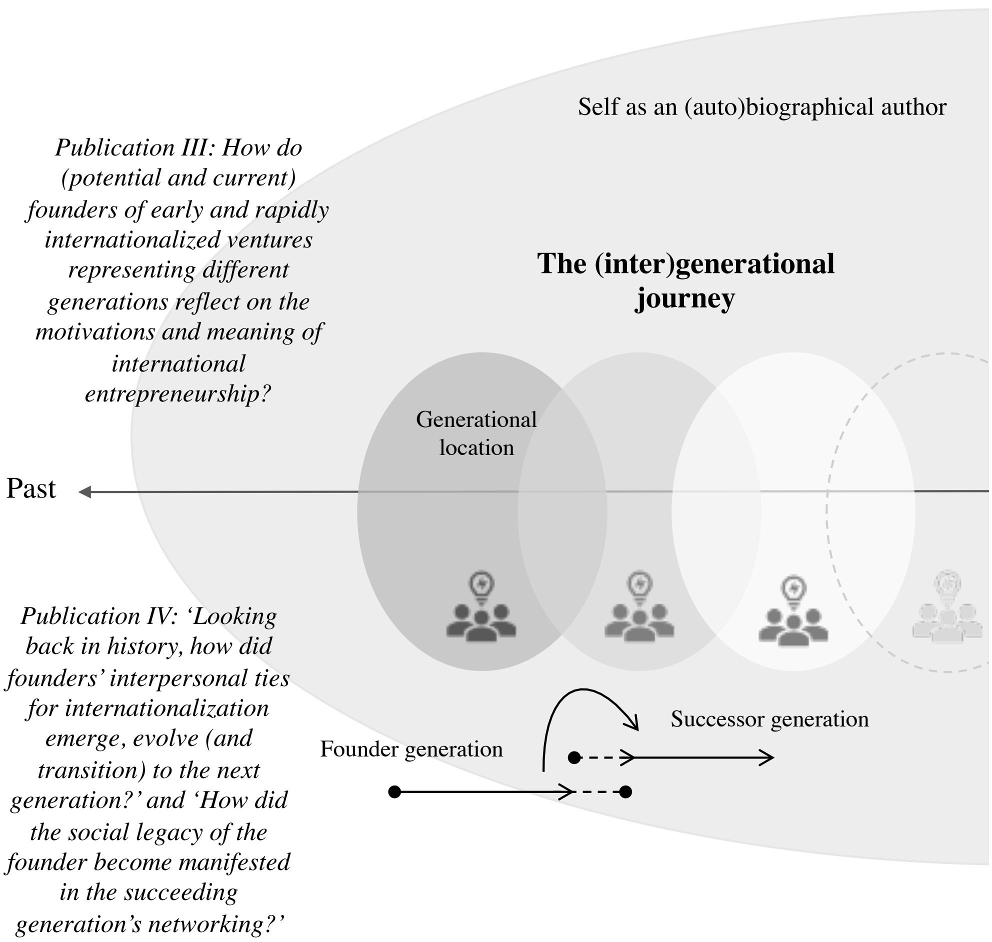
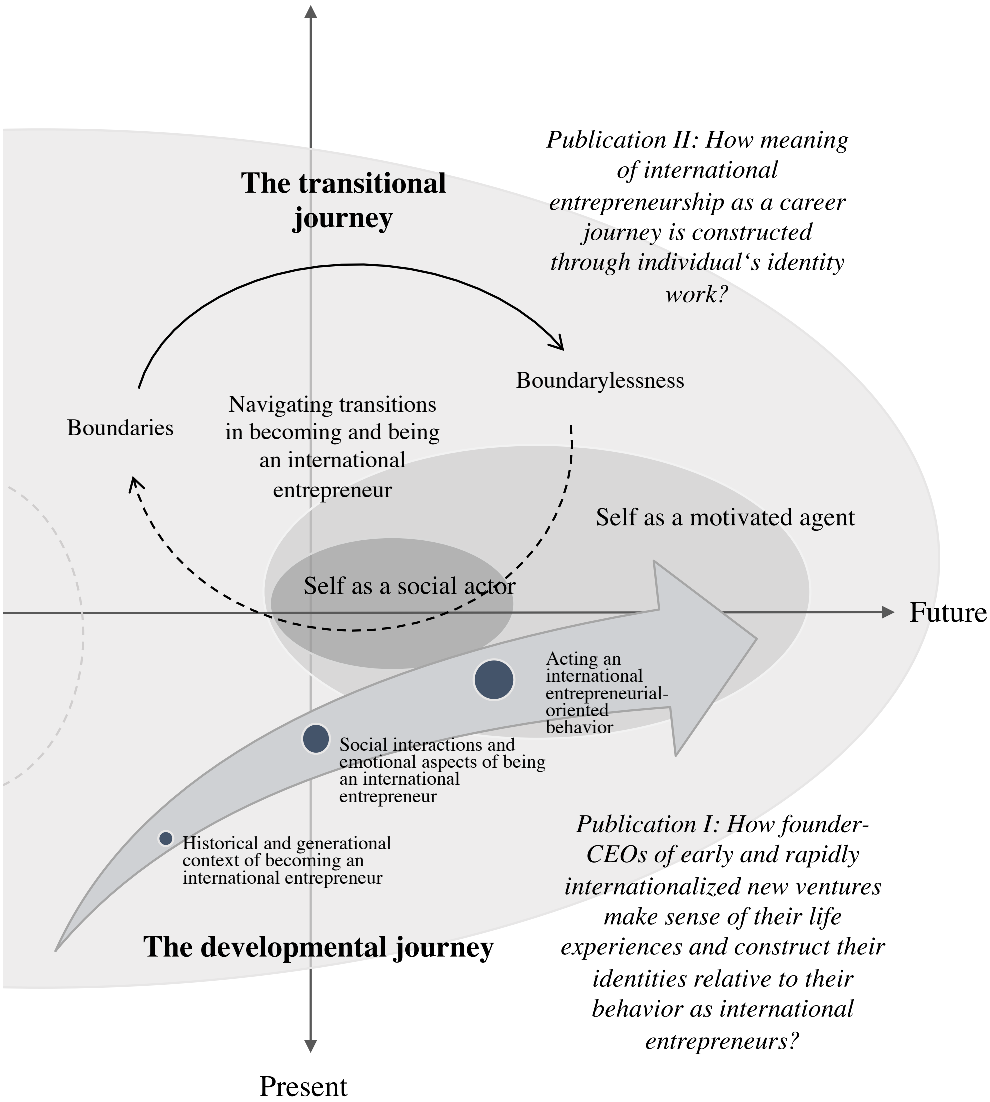


Figure 2. An integrative frame of IE as an individual-level journey


The transitional journey
Publication II: How meaning of international entrepreneurship as a career journey is constructed through individual's identity work?
Boundarylessness
Boundaries
Navigating transitions in becoming and being an international entrepreneur
Self as a motivated agent
Self as a social actor
Future
Acting an international entrepreneurial-oriented behavior
Social interactions and emotional aspects of being an international entrepreneur
Historical and generational context of becoming an international entrepreneur
Publication I: How founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures make sense of their life experiences and construct their identities relative to their behavior as international entrepreneurs?
The developmental journey
Present

1.3.1 Contextual underpinnings of the research setting

Making sense of individual entrepreneurs requires understanding how they make sense of themselves and their conduct in their context (Dodd, 2002; Hytti, 2010). The country context in terms of 'who, what, when, where, and why' and the substantive content in this present doctoral study in a nutshell stems from the accounts and documents telling of international entrepreneurs *originating from Finland*. The majority of the narrative material analysed for this dissertation encompasses the lives of individuals, who have led business ventures outward, that is, across the borders of Finland and to various foreign markets in order to actualize both personal career and organization-specific aspirations with their organizations. Hence, the initiation of sales and business operations in the ventures of the entrepreneurs in this doctoral study has been conducted in other European countries and beyond, both in more traditional sense of incremental or organic internationalization (i.e., exports, acquisition) as well as in a more dynamic manner as in through networks or digitalization. However, since the interest and objectives of this study lay in the individual-level journeys and narratives of becoming and being an international entrepreneur, and focusing on times in the individuals' lives prior to the venture itself, the firm-level contextualization and operations (e.g., industry context, entry modes) of the ventures are not in the core of this study as such. This surely leaves certain kinds of questions unanswered yet offers interesting subject matter for further research. That being said, it is important to note something of the context in which the focal individuals' histories have unfolded.

As a country with a history, Finland is perhaps rather unique. Regarded as a relatively remote country, one third of its territory is within the Arctic Circle, posing severe climate, limited natural resources, as well as a policy of neutrality and neighbourliness with Russia. At large, the historical backdrop of Finland provides an interesting time context for studying the IE phenomenon in conjunction with the country becoming an independent welfare country during 1800s and 1900s (Edwards & Elger, 2014). In early 1800s, Finland was still one of the poorest places in the world and like any other country of that time, conjuncture changes of the country were largely due to the fluctuation of yields in farming. Towards the end of the 1800s, being an autonomous state under the Russian realm, Finland could have ended up as a developing nation of today (Kokkinen, 2012). The country's industrialization started later than that of its Western counterparts (Möttönen, 2017; Poropudas, 2015). From the mid-1800s onwards, the emergence of the forest and saw ventures (also Ahlström and Serlachius in this study), together with the internationalization of the forestry industry, became crucial elements in the rapid internationally arching industrial development of Finland (Hjerppe, 1989; Kirby, 2006; Lamberg et al., 2012; Singleton & Upton, 1998).

Wars, international economic crisis and difficulties in the economy of central export destination countries evolved into a challenging landscape for doing business domestically and internationally at the turn of the 20th century (Hjerppe, 2010). When the first World War (1914–1918) broke, exports and trade from Finland with the Western countries were significantly challenged, battlefronts shutting down important export and import connections of Finland, that is, the United Kingdom (UK) (Singleton & Upton, 1998). Simultaneously with the occurrence of WWI, the economy of neighbouring Russia and important trade relations escalated into chaos. The peak of the crisis in relationship dynamics was in 1917 and soon, during the same year, Finland was declared independent. In 1918, the livelihood of two-thirds of the Finnish population still came from farming, making it a society largely based on agriculture (Singleton & Upton, 1998).

In its economic development to this day, Finland has benefitted greatly from its interactions with Western Europe (Kokkinen, 2012). Overall, the mutually advantageous interaction with countries that were ahead in their development, that is, foreign direct investments of large multinationals, and simultaneous investing into schooling enabled a continuous implementation of new technology in Finland as a country that was in a very disadvantageous position up to the turn of the 20th century (Kokkinen, 2012). A breakthrough in the nation's economic growth was evident in 1961, when Finland joined the EFTA and large foreign firms, for example, from Germany, UK and Sweden became interested in establishing their subsidiaries in Finland (Kokkinen, 2012). By discussing the growth in the society's intangible human capital and its meaning in the country's economic development together with its tangible resources, Kokkinen (2012) has described the time in Finland's economic history to be similar to what we have witnessed with the direct investments into and technological dissemination in China more recently, when coming to the 21st century. This has on its part developed the small, remote country of Finland towards the growth of service business, taking consideration the relatively highly educated population.

Finland is a small open economy (Haapala, 2009). The number and meaning of the micro- and small-sized companies in Finland have increased after the second World War, and nowadays, Finland can be called an 'entrepreneur society' (Möttönen, 2017). The foundations of entrepreneurship in the society in the early 20th century and well-organized civic society grounding the current welfare state, go back to ideological and political movements in the 19th century (Grahn, 2014; Haapala, 2009; Kirby, 2006; Sajasalo, 2002). The strong willingness to have its own language and position as a country has been connected to the growth in entrepreneurial endeavours in Finland, while also foreign business men, being German, Norwegian and Swedish entrepreneurs, migrated to Finland during the 1800s (Möttönen, 2017). In addition, the legacy of the Finnish patriarchs and the social development at the turn of the century and early 1900s, the renowned education and social system of the country have provided strong and equal groundings for education and a safe working life for the population since entering the 20th century (Meinander, 2011; Mikkilä, 2016).

The above provides a backdrop for interpreting the 'work mentality' of the Finnish folk and subsequent generations of society—the age-based cohorts sharing a common location in the social historic process (Pilcher, 1994). In general, Finnish society has been perceived as rather 'stable' and 'homogenous' (Haapala, 2009). In terms of its 'cultural identity' and mentality towards work, Finland working life is said to be equal, rather informal and punctual, where being honest, taking initiative and responsibility is expected (infoFinland, 2020). However, literature also indicates a somewhat melancholic, or negative, ‘cultural narrative’ as the prevalent discourse in the Finnish society, which casts a more pessimistic perception of the future (Järvensivu et al., 2014). In respect of changes in working life conditions during the 20th century, it is worth mentioning that whereas the years after 1960s and again in 1980s were times of economic growth and wellbeing, in 1990s, Finland experienced a recession. The societally stressful situation 1990s affected especially entrepreneurs and their families across the country, unemployment rate being above 33 percent (Järvensivu et al., 2014; Meinander, 2011). Some research on generations in the Finnish working life divide between the ‘welfare generation’ (born in 1965–1972) and the ‘recession generation’ (born in 1973–1979) due to the shared experiences in the 1990s. Then again, the recession generation and the so-called Millennials (born in) share the experiences of not remembering the work life and its ‘rules’ prior to the recession, whereas older generations, being ‘Baby Boomers’ born in mid-1940s – mid 1960s (depending on the study), share the experiences of the ‘old ways’ of work (Järvensivu et al., 2014).

Moreover, I acknowledge that the generations of the 20th century (representative in my interview data) experienced a “zeitgeist” different from each other (Järvensivu et al., 2014). In brief, those born closer to the historical time after the World Wars as well as the country’s civil wars have entered their international and/or entrepreneurial working careers with a different backdrop of challenges and opportunities than those born after the 1960s or later. In other words, the historical time in which the current international entrepreneurs have lived their early careers embeds different groundings of becoming an (international) entrepreneur. Hence, by being aware of Finland’s historical background and context of ‘internationalization’, I also acknowledge the sociological underpinnings such as the generational locations of the research participants. The generational location of an individual has its meaning in narrating of IE as a phenomenon, including my own. Therefore, I hold that the so-called ‘cultural stock of narratives’ (e.g., Hänninen, 1999) from which data generation (i.e. oral interviews, documents and other literary data) and writing up analysis are conducted serves as a dynamic backdrop for interpretation of events, actions and experience. This also means that there are ‘boundaries’ as well as boundless opportunities for both the researched and the researcher interpreting historically unfolding events in the narrative sense. Whereas this doctoral study does not apply exact linguistics in its analysis, it is important to note that sense-making of past, present and future stems from a person’s semantic resources to produce and interpret literary data as much as one’s personal abilities to construct narrative ‘artefacts’ that are understandable to a listener or a reader. In the end, I hope this dissertation provides means to find a space of shared and inclusive understanding over the contextual journey of becoming and being an international entrepreneur for both practitioners and IE scholars.

1.4 Structure of the book

The structure of this book is as follows. First, I will introduce the theoretical framework of the study as a whole by going over the ‘narrative journey’ of IE research and how it firmly prompts us to look deeper into the story of the individual international entrepreneur. Secondly, I will introduce my methodology will help you to navigate the narrative approach I chose to analyse the 'becoming' of an international entrepreneur. Then, a summary of the Publications making up this doctoral study and the concluding discussion will set out to answer the research questions and fulfil the objectives of this study.

2 Conceptual framework

'Reading makes a full man, meditation a profound man, discourse a clear man.'
—Benjamin Franklin

This chapter is a journey through the conceptual framing of this doctoral dissertation. In general, as a conceptual framework it provides an introduction to the scholarly discourse of IE as a phenomenon found at the intersection of internationalization and entrepreneurship processes (Jones et al., 2011). Due to the subject matter this dissertation deals with, the discussion of prior literature weighs more on the entrepreneurship discourse. Moreover, as a result of the insight and findings along the research process of the past four years, the core focus of this theoretical chapter began to lend and integrate concepts and constructs from the narrative streams of research in psychology, as well as sociology and history, in order to make sense of the individual-level 'journeys' of becoming and being an international entrepreneur. My approach to IE with a narrative perspective applies not only to the phenomena and the methodology with which I study, but also to the evolvement of the research context and temporal scholarly discourse of IE in general.

With the following framework, I first set off with the *meta-level discourse of the IE phenomenon* found at the intersection of mainstream entrepreneurship and international business literature. With the meta-level discourse, I mean the predominant conceptualizations of the creation of new ventures and their early and/or rapid internationalization based on research in "high prestige" management journals (Wood, 2020). Accordingly, I explicate the overall granular picture of what could be considered as top-tier IE literature, which has paved the "highway" of the individual–firm–environment-level findings of the IE phenomenon following a cause-and-effect rationale (see Figure 3). Then, in section 2.2., I will continue into what I consider as a more *collective-level discourse* of the IE phenomenon. The section makes sense of what informs us about the current 'developmental state' of the individual-level IE literature discussing 'who is the international entrepreneur?' This latter section introduces research findings deviant from the mainstream literature, the so-called lower tier journals, which bring more voices to the dialogue regarding the individual in IE literature. In section 2.3., I will go even further down "the road less travelled" as I set out to discuss the less acknowledged yet profound dimension of the IE phenomenon as a process—*the personal-level narrative of IE as a journey.*

2.1 State-of-the-art in IE research–The meta-level discourse

Coming to the end of the 1980s, scholars had observed internationalization of new ventures that was inadequately explained by existing disciplines (McDougall, 1989; Ray, 1989), not least by the extant international business theories (Coviello et al., 2011; Wright & Ricks, 1994). Researchers were professing how the technological revolution and increasing globalization were defining *'a new competitive landscape for businesses'* (Hitt et al., 1998), and as a phenomenon, early and rapidly internationalizing new ventures were falling outside their scope and level of analysis (Merton, 1973).

On many occasions, the year 1989 has been suggested as the beginning of the scholarly *'process of differentiation, mobilization and legitimacy building'* (Coviello et al., 2011, p. 625) and therefore also the inception of the theoretical discourse of IE as a field. By the time the novel scholarly journey of IE research had begun, 'internationalization' was known as *'the process of increasing involvement in international operations'* of organizations (Welch & Luostarinen, 1988, p. 36), and 'entrepreneurship' as the process of new venture creation (Gartner, 1988). There, at the intersection of the two disciplines, McDougall introduced the process of *'development of international new ventures or start-ups that, from their inception, engage in international business, thus viewing their operating domain as international from the initial stages of the firm's operation'* (McDougall, 1989, p. 387). A number of other scholars set out to explore and map out the faster pace and different patterns of internationalization of these new ventures (e.g., Coviello & Munro, 1997; Jolly et al., 1992) and challenge the extant IB theories (McDougall et al., 1994). While experiencing the latest forms of globalization, i.e., the effects the World Wide Web and budding digitalization of business at the turn of the 21st century (Ojala et al., 2018), the definition of IE had already gone through a number of revisions in order to better capture the nature of the phenomenon.

The current—or at least most used—definition of IE is from 2005, when the IE phenomenon was defined by Oviatt and McDougall (2005a, p. 540) as *'the discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities—across national borders—to create future goods and services'*, which builds on Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) opportunity-focused definition of entrepreneurship with the addition of enactment of opportunities based on Weick (1995). Moreover, in an attempt to coin the inherent complexity and evolving nature of the phenomenon as well as the multidisciplinary nature of the research field (Coviello, 2006; Mathews & Zander, 2007; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), IE literature has been engaging with an *'evolutionary and potentially discontinuous process determined by innovation, and influenced by environmental change and human volition, action and decision'* (Jones & Coviello, 2005, p. 300).

During the last three decades of IE research, the field has evolved into a conceptually and empirically diverse domain of research (Fernhaber & Prashantham, 2015; Zucchella et al., 2018), which at the same time has produced a rather fragmented body of literature that is hard to grasp in its totality (Coombs et al., 2009; Keupp & Gassmann, 2009). Despite its temporally short scholarly journey so far, IE research has come relatively far in its interpretations and accumulative knowledge of the early and often rapidly internationalizing ventures and their founders (Zucchella et al., 2018). The *meta-level discourse* of IE has been developing into a vibrant domain of its own, however, largely around the inherent shared beliefs from higher ranked journals in the mainstream disciplines of international business (Knight & Cavusgil, 1996; Welch & Luostarinen, 1988) and entrepreneurship literature (Gartner, 1988; Gartner, 1985). Findings owing to the top-tier status of certain journals have then ordered, explained and produced the abstraction and knowledge of reality (Somers, 1994) in IE literature and how the phenomenon has been defined and studied (Seymour, 2006). The studies describing and explaining the IE phenomenon range from individual entrepreneurial actors with certain characteristics (i.e., personality, orientations) and mental models (Covin & Miller, 2014; Acedo & Florin, 2006; Zahra et al., 2005) to contextualizing the IE phenomenon as embedded in different firm- and environment-level conditions (Sadeghi et al., 2019; Volchek et al., 2013). The dominant focus of studies has been on the firm, which has created an amalgam of research of the opportunity-based profile of the entrepreneur and their internationalizing new ventures along with scrutinizing their strategies, networks and capabilities to enter and survive in foreign markets (Prashantham & Dhanaraj, 2010; Prashantham & Floyd, 2012).

Consistent with the firm-level focus in mainstream management literature, majority of IE studies have been designed to investigate the phenomenon from the inception or after the establishment of a new venture as a legal entity, and less in terms of the 'prior-to' the emergence of these ventures (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019). In these terms, the interest has been in the time span of (and speed of) internationalizing a new firm's activities (e.g., Prashantham & Young, 2011). While entrepreneurship inherently considers the role of the individual in initiating and taking part in the process (Gartner, 1988), the focus in IE has been on the venturing process—or the entrepreneurial act(s) as a precursor to organizational-level behaviour. What is then perhaps most evident as a conditioning state of (mind in) the IE field stems from its ontological and epistemological attraction to economics and overall to the natural scientific philosophy and pursuit for causal theories (Seymour, 2006). Inherent and aligned with the so-called functionalist research philosophies and claims of objectivism in most entrepreneurship (Packard, 2017) and internationalization studies (Nummela & Welch, 2006; Welch et al., 2011), the majority of research in IE has staged the focal processes through causal relationships and the verification or falsification of theory-based hypotheses (Seymour, 2006).

2.1.1 Environment-, firm- and individual-level findings of IE

In this section, before going into the individual-level IE literature in more detail, I will first explore the state of the field in terms of what can be considered as the high prestige literature of the research field (Wood, 2020). At the same time, I cast light over what makes up some of the core assumptions in IE literature—the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of studying the phenomenon.

For the purposes of building the conceptual framework of this dissertation, I conducted a thorough review of the benchmarking IE literature in order to provide a proper view of the findings to which most of the current knowledge of IE submits. Based on my review, Figure 3 below gives an overview of the research domain and the emergence of the IE phenomenon in terms of the top tier journals in discussing the intersection of IB and entrepreneurship phenomena. Accordingly, I selected the articles from the top 50 business journals in the Financial Time's research rank (so-called FT50), which is often regarded as one of today's go-to rankings of business research literature (namely *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Academy of Management Journal* and *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*). The articles were published during the last three decades (1989–2019). It could be said that the accumulated conceptual and empirical knowledge of IE in the filtered 37 articles indicate towards the constitution of the 'grand narrative' of the phenomenon so far.

Figure **3** may be regarded as a simplification of the conceptual 'trends' in the field, based on observing the main findings and suggestions in the seminal studies. The listed findings manifest both firm- and individual-level conceptualizations of IE together with the enabling or disabling environmental conditions for IE to emerge. The thematic categorization of the studies was created post hoc following the initial reading of a body of 44 seminal articles. This was done by thematic content analysis and cross-article analysis of the sampled literature. After collecting and sorting the studies, I placed them into categories (some appear in several) based on their findings, set out as 'higher-level' explanations (the individual, firm, environment-level) and 'lower-level' explanations (intra- and interpersonal, endo- and exogenous, global market, industry and institution) for IE. The higher-level categorization of findings is based on the explanatory micro- and macro-level factors found in IE literature (Jones & Coviello, 2005). At the 'lower' level, I distinguished the individual-level findings based on their emphasis on either intrapersonal or interpersonal observations relative to internationalization, the firm-level findings as either endogenous and exogenous observations relative to the international venture and its behaviour, and the environment-level findings into either global market, industry or institutional environment observations relative to the IE phenomenon. The categories and embedded references in this summarising figure should by no means be treated as the 'boundaries' of the extant body of IE research, but as a comprehensive organization of what can be regarded as the seminal literature aiming to legitimize a field of research among the highly ranked business journals (Wood, 2020). In addition, it is here worth stating that while such external rankings as FT50 are advocated both among the practitioners as well as in the publication discourse of business schools like my own, we need to pay more heed to the type of papers and contributions preferred by these high-ranking journals. One of the critical points is that the findings of these "benchmarking" journals that publish IE research give us a very limited view of what becoming or being an international entrepreneur is in different societal or historical contexts, i.e., the Finland or the Nordics.

Next, I will go through the main literature on the firm and environment dimensions of IE as it sets the tone for the meta-level discourse around IE as a phenomenon and a research field. The discussion evolves but is not limited to the articles in the below figure. Then, in accordance with the scope of this doctoral dissertation, I devote the latter part of the conceptual framework of this dissertation (Section 2.2 onwards) to discussing the individual-level research in IE—the collective-level discourse on 'who is the international entrepreneur'.

Level	Sub-level	Study-specific findings of factors and conditions explaining the IE phenomenon	Study reference
Environment-level findings	**Global market**	*Technological development* is an enabling factor speeding internationalization	(Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a)
		Mobility of knowledge create foreign location advantages for new ventures	(Oviatt & McDougall, 1994)
		Decreasing of protectionist policies and *geographically protected market niches* made international markets available	(McDougall & Oviatt, 2000)
		Market's size and potential influence firm's internationalization behaviour	(Jones & Coviello, 2005)
		Competition is a motivating factor speeding internationalization	(Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a)
		Size of the home market influence the decision to internationalize from inception	(Fan & Phan, 2007)
		Internet enabled markets demand new kinds of organizational capabilities/resources	(Reuber & Fischer, 2011)
	Institution	*Country-level institutional differences* contribute differently to levels and types of entrepreneurship	(Busenitz et al., 2000)
		Regulatory, political, and technological institutions affect resource-mobilization of the international entrepreneurial firm	(Desa, 2012)
		States recognize opportunities in their environment, as well as craft the institutions required to capitalize on these opportunities	(Nasra & Dacin, 2010)
		National culture has an influence on the propensity for entrepreneurial firms to cooperate with other firms	(Steensma et al., 2000)
		Geographic, psychic and linguistic distance constrain tie-based opportunities	(Ellis, 2011)
		Community and collective opportunity beliefs guide IE as the shared objects of activity	(Mainela et al., 2018)
	Industry	Industry structure profiles of INVs are distinguished from domestic ones	(McDougall, 1989)
		Industry context influence the international patterns	(Andersson, 2004)
		Industry structure variables individually and jointly influence the likelihood of new venture internationalization	(Fernhaber et al., 2007)
		Industry clustering in geographic location has a curvilinear relationship with new venture internationalization	(Fernhaber et al., 2008)
	Exogenous	Collaboration provides advantages and disadvantages; optimal in relation to performance only under right circumstances	(Shrader, 2001)
		Network relationships (strength, size, density) moderate the forces influencing the speed of internationalization	(Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a)
		Networks provide market access, financing, distribution channels, referrals and a pool of contacts for both internal and external development. Ties either social or economic, strong or weak.	(Coviello, 2006)
		Networks as means of effectuation in the IE process	(Sarasvathy et al., 2014)

		Network embeddedness (e.g., regional clusters and national research-alliance) affects probability of internationalization.	(Al-Laham & Souitaris, 2008)
		International diversity and mode of entry positively related to new venture performance	(Zahra et al., 2000)
Firm-level findings		Trade-offs between different risk factors enable management of strategic international risks	(Shrader et al., 2000)
		Organizational formation; having organic vs mechanistic firm structure impacts entrepreneurial internationalization behaviour	(Jones & Coviello, 2005)
		Internalization of some transactions and alternative transaction governance structures distinguish INVs from older firms	(Oviatt & McDougall, 1994)
		Governance mechanisms; skilled at employing alternative ones enable firms to exploit their unique and valuable resources	(Autio, 2005)
		Unique resources differentiate the sustainable INVs from the short-lived ones	(Oviatt & McDougall, 1994)
		Resources (tangible, intangible) influence firm's internationalization behaviour	(Jones & Coviello, 2005)
	Endogenous	Dynamic capabilities with strategy generate and sustain superior enterprise performance in fast-moving global environments	(Al-Aali & Teece, 2014)
		Entrepreneurial orientation as an antecedent for internationalization behaviour	(Jones & Coviello, 2005)
		Innovative activity at firm-level serves as the construction of opportunity	(Reuber et al., 2018)
		Knowledge intensity of a firm predicted growth in total and in international sales	(Autio et al., 2000)
		R&D intensity moderated the relationship between collaboration and performance of INVs in foreign markets	(Shrader, 2001)
		Technological learning (breadth, depth, speed) generates competitive advantage	(Zahra et al., 2000)
		Organizational learning (content, speed) determine post-entry internationalization speed	(Prashantham & Young, 2011)
		Organizational learning and knowledge acquisition styles contribute to phenomenon/outcomes of early internationalization	(De Clercq et al., 2012)
		Strategy profiles of INVs are distinguished from those of domestic new ventures	(McDougall, 1989)
		Business models characteristics make immediate foreign sales possible	(Jean François Hennart, 2014)
		Production capacity influence decisions to internationalize from inception	(Fan & Phan, 2007)
		Capability formation is collectively affected by founders and individual employees	(Autio et al., 2011)
		Social capital has leading role (vs. moderator) in learning processes of INVs	(Prashantham & Floyd, 2012)
	Interpersonal	CEOs social network diversity and interaction enhance foreign market knowledge	(Musteen et al., 2014)
		Social ties; entrepreneurs' idiosyncratic connections both promote and inhibit international exchange	(Ellis, 2011)
		Change agents; entrepreneurs as catalysts and agents of social change	(Zahra et al., 2014)

		Philosophic views; entrepreneur as the driving influence of the firm structure and behaviour	(Jones & Coviello, 2005)
Individual-level findings		Perception and interpretation by the entrepreneurial actor mediates the speed of internationalization	(Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a)
		Identity, perception; moving away from cultural differences; intersubjectivity emerging from common human experience as a unit of analysis	(Sarasvathy et al., 2014)
		Intention, attitude, logic, reasoning and identity central to the firm's internationalization behaviour	(Coviello, 2015)
		Cultural cognitive scripts explain some variance in venture creation decisions	(Mitchell et al., 2000)
	Intrapersonal	Cognitive logics; heuristics and analogical reasoning delineate the logic of experience application in internationalization	(Jones & Casulli, 2014)
		Cognitive activity and opportunity recognition; decisions about foreign markets involve intuitive and analytical decision making	(Reuber et al., 2018)
		Human capital influence firm's internationalization behaviour	(Jones & Coviello, 2005)
		Experience and vision drive international commitment decisions	(Autio, 2005)
		Knowledge-intensity and know-how moderating the forces influencing the speed of internationalization	(Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a)

Figure 3. Overview of the levels of findings of factors and conditions explaining the IE phenomenon

Environment-level studies—Findings regarding the global market, industry and institution in IE literature

The environment-level studies and findings regarding the macro-context of international new ventures have contributed to the views on how the global(izing) market (e.g., Fan & Phan, 2007), industry (Fernhaber et al., 2007) and institutional conditions (e.g., Busenitz et al., 2000) influence entrepreneurship as well as ventures seeking to internationalize from inception.

While reading the IE literature, I noted that the studies have as their backdrop the most recent and current global market conditions, which emerged after the Second World War. In general, the inception of research on the IE phenomenon has been dominantly contextualized in a historical time period when (international) business began to be increasingly embedded in the new wave of globalization from the mid-1900s onwards (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019). Among other things, it was a time characterized by rapid developments in transportation and communication technologies (Hitt et al., 1998). Consequently, theorizing on the IE phenomenon often begins in recognition of how mobility of knowledge, labour as well as tangible goods suddenly created foreign location advantages for new ventures after the mid-1900s (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). Furthermore, the decrease in protectionist policies and geographically protected market niches made international markets accessible and available (McDougall & Oviatt, 2000). More recent research on internet-enabled markets (Reuber & Fischer, 2011) and contextualization of IE in the digit(al)izing economy (Coviello et al., 2017) has begun to ask for a broader scope of literature to encompass new kinds of (organizational) capabilities, resources and opportunities (Ojala et al., 2018).

At the inception of the research field, the industry context (i.e., profile of the industry structure, clustering in a geographic location) of the 'international new venture' type of firm (INV) was initially distinguished from its domestic counterparts (McDougall, 1989), which were later on highlighted as influential to a firm's internationalization patterns (Andersson, 2004; Fernhaber et al., 2008; Fernhaber et al., 2007). The domestic and international market size have inevitably strong influences on firms' intentions and decisions to internationalize from inception, and on subsequent behaviour (Fan & Phan, 2007; Jones & Coviello, 2005), while competition serves as a motivating factor for the firms in terms of setting the pace for their internationalization (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a).

Overall, regulatory, political, and technological institutions have their effect on the resource-mobilization of international entrepreneurial firms (Desa, 2012). A decade into IE research, country-level institutional differences were added to the conditions contributing differently to levels and types of entrepreneurship (Busenitz et al., 2000). In thinking of national culture, this influences entrepreneurial firms' propensity to cooperate with other firms internationally (Steensma et al., 2000). From a rather different point of view, countries' states may also serve as entities recognizing entrepreneurial opportunities in their environment and begin to craft the very institutions required to capitalize on these opportunities (Nasra & Dacin, 2010), making them institutional level international entrepreneurial actors and agents in the phenomenon.

Firm-level studies—Findings regarding the exogenous and endogenous conditions in IE literature

In the manner of IB literature of the last decades, the dominant IE literature is built around inquiry of the organization (Jones et al., 2011). After McDougall's article in 1989 comparing domestic versus international new ventures, Oviatt and McDougall (1994) and Knight and Cavusgil (1996) with their original papers on the INV and 'born global' (BG) type of firms, respectively, suggested their newer definitions to describe and grasp the empirically interesting phenomenon of 'early internationalization' of new ventures (Verbeke & Ciravegna, 2018). As a result, Oviatt and McDougall (1994) described IE as encompassing a business organization that '*from inception, seeks to derive significant competitive advantage from the use of resources and the sale of outputs in multiple countries'*, from which it was later broadened into *'a combination of innovative, proactive and risk-seeking behaviour that crosses national borders and is intended to create value in organizations'* (McDougall & Oviatt, 2000, p. 903) in keeping with strategic management literature on entrepreneurship (e.g., Miller, 1983). In 2002, Zahra and George (2002, p. 262) developed another behaviour-oriented definition, where the phenomenon was seen as *'the process of creatively discovering and exploiting opportunities that lie outside a firm's domestic markets in the pursuit of competitive advantage'*. This opened up a stream of inquiry to also encompass more established organizations and their ‘entrepreneurial internationalization’ (Coviello et al., 2011). In relation to this, some studies discuss IE in conjunction with the concept of corporate entrepreneurship (Zahra, 2003).

To better explain, predict and model relationships of how early internationalizing new ventures face the liabilities of newness and foreignness, and survive while growing, recent literature has been observing more exogenous conditions such as the firms and their networks (Schwens et al., 2018). The observations of the exogenous ‘factors’ and conditions could be perceived to be at more or less immediate disposal of the focal firm, which largely highlights the significance of networks of firms and their role in the internationalization behaviour of a new venture. In theory, networks have been argued to provide market access, financing, distribution channels, and referrals for both internal and external development, where the extending pool of contacts—network ties—are defined as either social or economic, strong or weak (Coviello, 2006). Furthermore, Sarasvathy et al. (2014) provide that networks serve as means of ‘effectuation’ in the internationalization processes. While the strength, size, and density of networks may moderate other forces and therefore influence the speed of the firm’s internationalization (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a), the embeddedness of networks, that is, regional clustering and national research-alliances, has been said to have an effect on the actual probability of internationalization (Al-Laham & Souitaris, 2008). While geographic, psychic and linguistic distance between firms are found to constrain their tie-based opportunities (Ellis, 2011), it is said that certain community and collective opportunity beliefs as the shared objects of activity are means of guiding IE processes (Mainela et al., 2018). Overall, research on networks and collaboration between firms are seen for both their advantages and disadvantages in firm operations: they are optimal in relation to performance only under the right circumstances (Shrader, 2001).

In studies of the IE phenomenon as an *‘organization behaviour that extends across national borders and is entrepreneurial’* (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a, p. 538), there are several observations of the dynamic processes and conditions that are observed more endogenously—from within—the focal firms. These studies largely describe the IE phenomenon through firm-level antecedents (i.e., firm size and age, strategic orientation) in order to explain, predict and/or design certain internationalizing behaviour (i.e., patterns and pace) and verify or falsify outcomes (i.e., performance) relative to the organizations’ behaviour. From inception of the field, the more endogenous observations such as strategy profiles of early internationalizing new ventures were distinguished from those of their domestic counterparts (McDougall, 1989). In 1994, the unique resources at hand for the sustainable (or surviving) INVs were the central differentiating factors from their short-lived counterparts (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). Early on, the mode of entry and international diversity of the firm was positively related to new venture performance (Zahra et al., 2000), and trade-offs between different risk factors in relation to managing strategic international risks (Shrader et al., 2000). In general, resources, either tangible and intangible, or production capacity (Fan & Phan, 2007) have been seen for their influence on a firm’s internationalization decisions and behaviour (Jones & Coviello, 2005). To date, dynamic capabilities more or less related to firm strategy are seen as generating and sustaining superior performance in fast-moving global environments (Al-Aali & Teece, 2014). Also, governance mechanisms, and skills in employing alternative ones to avoid internationalizing all resources required for foreign market activity have been suggested to enable the exploitation of unique and valuable firm resources in terms of internationalization (Autio, 2005). Internationalization of certain transactions as well as alternative transaction governance structures were initially suggested to distinguish these early internationalizing types of firms from older, more established ones (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). Moreover, the knowledge intensity of a firm has been seen as a predicting factor for growth in total and in international sales (Autio et al., 2000), whereas R&D intensity of a firm becomes regarded a moderating factor in between collaboration and performance of INVs in foreign markets (Shrader, 2001). More endogenous innovative activities serve as the means of constructing (future) opportunities internationally (Reuber et al., 2018), while a certain technological learning capability may have been seen before as generating competitive advantage (Zahra et al., 2000). Organizational learning and knowledge acquisition styles seem to contribute to the overall outcomes of early internationalization (De Clercq et al., 2012) and, depending on the content and speed of that organizational learning, may determine post-entry internationalization speed (Prashantham & Young, 2011).

The "granular" main literature on the IE phenomenon builds up the 'theory' of IE and encompasses a range of findings at different levels of analysis in order to explain 'when', 'where', 'how' and 'why' IE emerges at the firm level (Jones & Coviello, 2005), in which the 'entrepreneurial orientation' of the internationalizing venture has remained as a common antecedent for observations of IE. While the geographic discussion in IE holds conventions from IB—the formation and exploitation of opportunities is observed to happen across national borders (Zucchella et al., 2018), the entry into international markets is framed inherently as an entrepreneurial act, which links to the entrepreneurial behaviour construct that aims to manifest what it means to be 'entrepreneurial' (Krueger, 2007; Miller, 2011). The majority of IE studies align with the stream of research that examines border-crossing as the entrepreneurial behaviour of a *firm* (Jones et al., 2011; Verbeke & Ciravegna, 2018). Due to the understandable rejection of the fully 'agent-centric' view of entrepreneurial actions (Garud et al., 2014) to be relative to an individual's traits (Kirzner, 1973; Schumpeter, 1934), IE research has remained intact with the firm level observations of early internationalization such as organizational prerequisites, conditions, strategic international orientations (González-Pernía & Peña-Legazkue, 2015) and/or (cap)abilities to engage in certain behaviour (Covin & Wales, 2012; Zahra et al., 2013).

Individual-level studies—Findings regarding the intrapersonal and interpersonal premises of IE literature

About a decade after McDougall's initial definition of IE, the evolving landscape for international business started to accentuate the individual-level cognitive (Mitchell et al., 2000; Jones & Casulli, 2014; Reuber et al., 2018) and behavioural underpinnings of the phenomenon (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a; Coviello, 2015; Liu et al., 2019). The early work of Oviatt and McDougall (1994), Knight and Cavusgil (1996) and Madsen and Servais (1997) had built up the baseline for IE literature, where the extant literature holds now the *'thinking of entrepreneurial actors themselves'* as one of the key driving forces in the international new venture creation process (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a, p. 541).

The latter half of the 20th century brought development and improvements in transportation and communication technologies that also increased international competition on behalf of small and new ventures. This simultaneously drew attention to the role of the individual entrepreneurs—their personal characteristics and knowledge (Jones & Coviello, 2005; Autio, 2005; Sarasvathy et al., 2014), and interpersonal network relationships (Ellis, 2011; Prashantham & Floyd, 2012; Musteen et al., 2014)—in the acceleration of the early and rapid facilitation of internationalization of their small firms (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a). As in entrepreneurship literature, IE scholars have largely remained intact with the initial views that small firms can be perceived very much as the extension of the individuals in charge (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Alongside several years of a primary focus on the strategic orientation of international ventures and their relative growth and performance measures, scholars have continued to call for attention on the very individuals (Rasmussen et al., 2001; Coviello, 2015; Andersson, 2015) in their social context (Autio et al., 2011; Sarasvathy et al., 2014) in carrying out entrepreneurial actions across borders.

In the next section, I approach the individual-level IE literature in more detail. The first part will elaborate on the findings in the light of the current opportunity-focused definition by Oviatt and McDougall (2005a), after which I turn the attention on IE as a human-initiated 'journey'. With the taken view I suggest an approach to IE as a more socially constructed storyline of that journey towards an international organization, which weaves together the individual and contextual dimensions of the phenomenon.

2.2 Studying the international entrepreneur–A collective-level discourse

This section makes more explicit how the present doctoral study aims to take the theoretical discourse of IE forward. In Figure 4 below I outline the rest of this chapter in terms of the individual-level—firm-level frame adapted from Andersson* (2015, p. 79). In relation, one may return to Figure 1 on page 30 to follow up on how this particular section positions in the current *collective-level* discourse of international entrepreneurs—'who are the international entrepreneurs?' With the collective-level discourse, I mean to explicate how certain perceptions of the individual international entrepreneur have become to be somewhat 'shared meanings' (Boyce, 1995) in IE literature, largely developed around the firm-level discourse discussed above.

With the aim to explore and describe the current 'developmental state' in studying *the international entrepreneurs* and as a way towards a more in-depth inquiry, I have borrowed the *Actor–Agent–Author* framework of McAdams (McAdams, 2013)—a tripartite canvas for the psychological understanding of 'self' in developmental psychology. With the use of McAdams' framework, I reflect on the current perceptions, concepts and constructs related to the individual international entrepreneur in the extant IE literature (see Figure 5 on page 58). By first framing the current understanding of these individuals as 'social actors' and 'motivated agents', I provide an overview of how the collective discourse of IE researchers have been co-producing the content of 'self' of the individual international entrepreneurs. This then guides us to see how the current framing of the individual in IE largely based on the meta-level discourse and assumptions has so far missed the complementary and a more dialogic view of the international entrepreneurs as 'autobiographical authors' in the process.

As a fundamental concept in psychological theory, the 'self' holds a central position in psychoanalytic and humanistic theories (Polkinghorne, 1991; e.g. Kohut, 1977). Previously identified with *'the type of conceptual structure used to understand substances or agents'* (Polkinghorne, 1991, p. 135), the concept of self has been referred to as a rather static "thing" or substance of a 'mental self' indicating a discovery of an innate 'I' (Polkinghorne, 1988). Deviant from such traditions, I refer to the concept of 'self' as *'a reflexive arrangement of the subjective "I" and the constructed "Me," evolving and expanding over the human life course'* (McAdams, 2013, p. 371). One's own and the 'other's' understandings, responses, attitudes and/or expectations towards that 'me' mould the understanding of one's 'self'. As a social dialogic process, one's sense of 'self' is therefore subject to change as those internal and external responses change (James, 1860/1950). With this view, I align with 'identities' being expressions of the 'self' in relation to others—a process that is both the outcome of, and the input to, dialogue (Beech, 2008, p. 52). For example, an "entrepreneurial identity" becomes expressed in how individuals make sense of their 'selves' as entrepreneurs in their own social contexts of living (Down & Reveley, 2004), but does not rule out other expressions and understandings of one's identity (Beech, 2008). Therefore, with a dialogic view of the understanding of the 'self', different narratives of 'me' can coexist and, as such, produce no final conclusion, i.e., a fixed identity, at the end, but a more inclusive view of the different meanings of one's self.

In acknowledgement of the different routes to meaning construction of an international entrepreneurial 'self', I have chosen the McAdams' framework for its integrative—or dialogic—nature. With the integrative nature I mean that the actor–agent–author dimensions of the framework reflect the coexistence of different approaches to making sense of 'self' (i.e. identities) rather than the aim of finding one approach to the 'self' as having primacy over other approaches. Furthermore, in envisioning the international entrepreneurial 'self' as 'a developing I–Me configuration' (McAdams, 2013), dimensions of international entrepreneurs as social actors and motivated agents coexist and intertwine in this study of the individuals' IE journeys and the international entrepreneurs as autobiographical authors.

By reading McAdams' framework in the light of identity research, the dimensions of the 'self' as a 'social actor' and 'motivated agent' reflect social identity theory and identity theory (Stets & Bruke, 2000), whereas the 'autobiographical author' dimension reflects narrative identity theory (McAdams & McLean, 2013). In brief, research regarding social identity theory looks into the formation of an identity through processes of "self-categorization", i.e. *'a person's knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group'* (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225). Similarly, identity theory stresses the identity formation process as "identification", i.e., with a social role or behaviour, where it is the incorporation of meanings and expectations associated with a role and its performance (Stets & Burke, 2000).

While studies of the individual entrepreneur through the lenses of social identity theory (e.g. Shepherd & Haynie, 2009; Obschonka et al., 2012; Sieger et al., 2016) and identity theory (e.g. Hoang & Gimeno, 2010; Obshonka et al., 2015; Mathias & Williams, 2018), have been following the trend in management studies in general (Alvesson et al., 2008), studies taking an interpretivist narrative identity perspective are also emerging (e.g. Down & Warren, 2008; Jones et al., 2008; Hamilton, 2014; Mathias, Williams & Smith, 2015; Phillips et al., 2013). Complementary to the more positivist onto-epistemological groundings of the other two approaches, the theorizing of narrative identity is about looking into the temporally unfolding (re)construction of personal events into a historical unity (Polkinghorne, 1988)—a narrative configuration of 'who I am' as an entrepreneur. Hence, it looks into *'how people convey to themselves and to others who they are now, how they came to be, and where they think their lives may be going in the future'* (McAdams & McLean, 2013, p. 233). In this study, theorizing of narrative identity and the dimension of the 'autobiographical author' in IE (in more detail from page 67 onwards) becomes a complementary dimension to the extant range of conceptions and findings of entrepreneurial and international "identities".

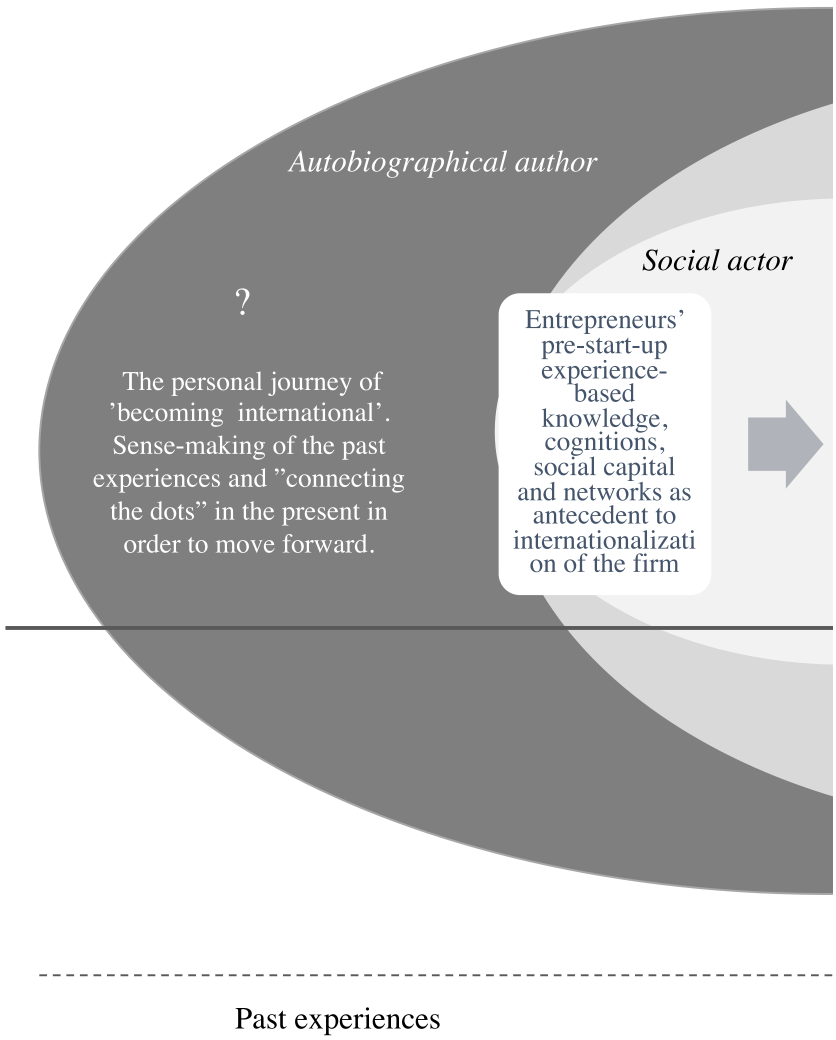
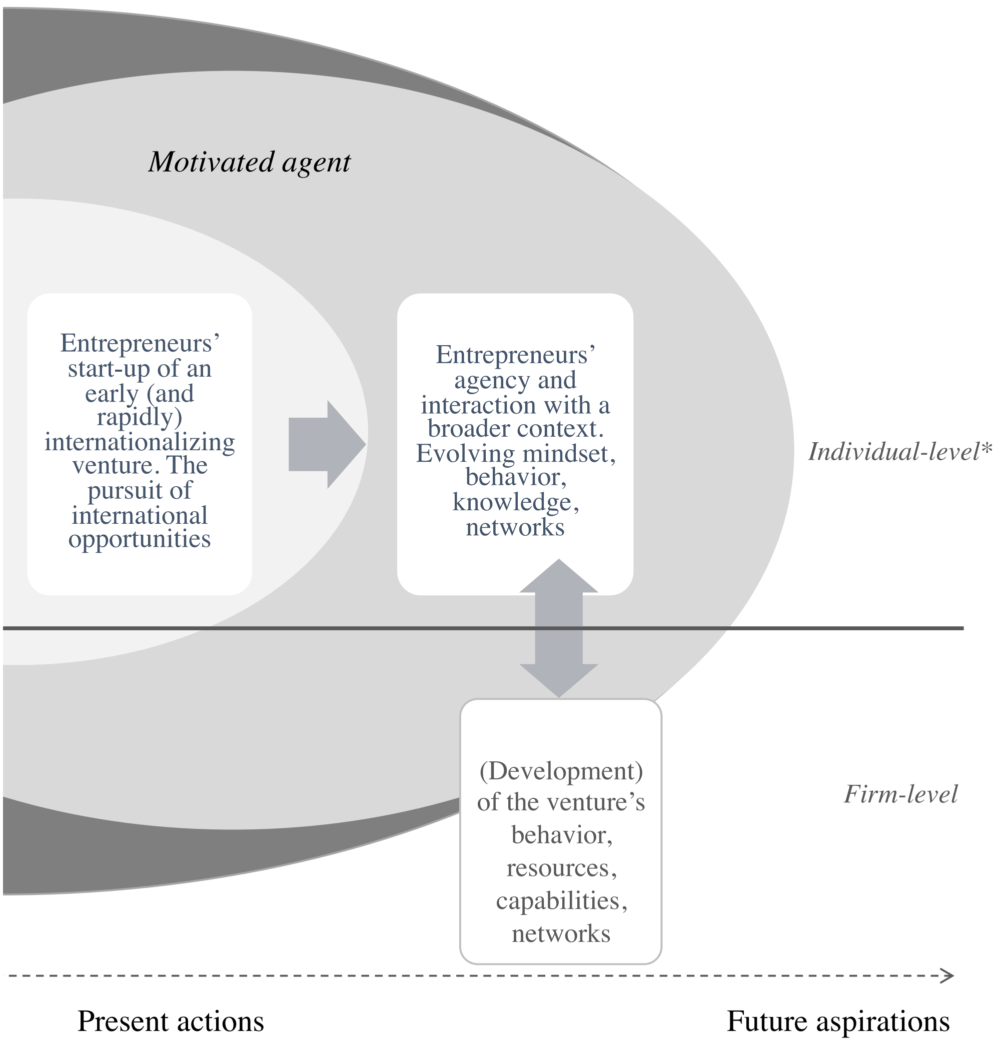


Figure 4. Current 'developmental state' of individual-level IE literature*: Are we missing the author?


Motivated agent
Entrepreneurs' start-up of an early (and rapidly) internationalizing venture. The pursuit of international opportunities
Entrepreneurs' agency and interaction with a broader context. Evolving mindset, behavior, knowledge, networks
Individual-level*
(Development) of the venture's behavior, resources, capabilities, networks
Firm-level
Present actions
Future aspirations

2.2.1 International entrepreneurs as social actors

In the current dominant definition of IE, the key evolving process is usually said to be the discovery, enactment, evaluation and exploitation of international opportunities (Zucchella et al., 2018). In a broader sense, we may posit the extant individual-level IE studies to have been on a quest to understand *'by whom and with what effects'* international entrepreneurial opportunities are acted upon (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005b, p. 7). While the 'whom' above could refer to both individuals and the organizations, I will now focus on the initial key actors in IE—the international entrepreneurs (Coviello & Tanev, 2017). Based on current knowledge, the process as the inception of IE deals with individuals—the entrepreneurs and their interpersonal relations—who pursue international opportunities (Zucchella et al., 2018; Zucchella et al., 2007) and lead the organizations they establish into early internationalization. The more or less opportunity-centred IE research follows literature on *behaviours* for creating new business, entering new markets and launching new ventures (Mainela et al., 2014). Such emphasis highlights the time *after* the discovery of the opportunity or creation of a new venture around an international opportunity (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019).

The founder-entrepreneurs' individual characteristics, such as personality and behavioural orientations (Gupta & Fernandez, 2009; Lussier & Pfeifer, 2000; Ruzzier et al., 2007), as well as their mindsets, 'egos, preferences and hubris' have been found to be influential 'antecedents' (Zahra et al., 2005, p. 131) in the early internationalization of new ventures. Differentiation of founders of early internationalizing ventures from their counterparts who stay domestic, has so far pointed to the characteristics and competencies they possess (e.g., Joardar & Wu, 2011). In essence, the individuals' tendencies and certain combinations of personal attributes, competences and social environment are seen as driving the individual to engage in international activity—manifested in international entrepreneurial behaviour—at founding and early stages of venturing (Covin & Miller, 2014). By virtue, founders of early internationalizing ventures are perceived as persons with an initial international entrepreneurial orientation (Covin & Miller 2014) and, in a rather positivist manner, IE research has followed up with and still builds on traditional theories of the entrepreneur (e.g., Kirzner 1997; Schumpeter 1934).

However, *'who is the entrepreneur?'* has been found to be a problematic and unsatisfactory question (Gartner, 1988) and the interest in entrepreneurship literature in general prevails in the roles individuals play (Mathias & Williams, 2018) as well as in the relative behaviour enabling organizations to come into existence (Jenks, 1950; Van de Ven, 1980). Also, in IE literature, studies have tried to move on to examine differences in behaviour and decision-making processes of international entrepreneurs in comparison to their domestic counterparts or managers in larger organizations, rather than focusing on individual differences. Relative to the quest of understanding the strategic orientation of a firm, literature holds that the strategic decisions regarding opportunities and internationalization at the firm-level are fundamentally *human-made*. Hence, IE has been so far investigated through two intrinsically related streams prevalent in entrepreneurship research: the individual cognitive characteristics and mechanisms, and behavioural characteristics and mechanisms (Liu et al., 2019; McDougall-Covin et al., 2014).

Cognition, in its broad sense, can refer to *'all the processes by which sensory input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered, and used'* (Neisser, 1967, p. 4). As in studies of entrepreneurs(hip), individuals' cognitive structures and characteristics (e.g., Busenitz & Barney, 1997), incorporating personality differences (e.g., Zhao & Seibert, 2006) as well as attitudes and beliefs (e.g., Krueger, 2000) and internalized values (e.g., Ardichvili & Gasparishvili, 2003) have determined an international entrepreneurial individual also in IE literature (e.g., Chandra, Styles, Wilkinson, 2009; Jones & Casulli, 2014; Acedo & Florin, 2006; Reuber & Fischer, 1997). Approaches to cognitive modelling of IE derive from research on a wide range of factors that preceded, for example, 'entrepreneurial cognitions', that is, cultural-, social-, personal-level variables, where the relationship cognitions and their antecedents have been conceptualized with highly generalized models (Lim et al., 2010).

To date, both cognition and consequent behavioural orientations of the key individuals have become established theoretically and accepted practically as the key mechanisms driving the cross-border endeavours of the ventures, opportunity recognition processes (Milanov & Maissenhälter, 2015; Zahra et al., 2005) and serving as precedents to performance and success of internationalization of a new venture (De Clercq et al., 2005; Jones & Coviello, 2005; Knight & Liesch, 2016). The seminal IE models suggest that knowledge-intensity and know-how serve as moderating factors between other forces influencing the internationalization speed of a firm (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a). In studies examining connections between (entrepreneurial) cognition and international opportunities, individuals' opportunity recognition patterns have suggested that, for example, decisions about foreign markets involve both intuitive and analytical processes and decision-making (Reuber et al., 2018). While certain cultural cognitive scripts have explained variance in venture creation decisions (Mitchell et al., 2000), the highly accepted notion is that the managers' 'global mindset', indicating one's awareness of cultural diversity and abilities to handle it, have served as important indicators for the international behaviour of their firms (Nummela et al., 2004; Torkkeli et al., 2018).

Furthermore, recognition of the individual entrepreneurs' actions in and reactions to their surrounding environment, that is, social and cultural context, has proved either a constraining dimension or a more dynamic environment for their actions. In this sense, social capital has been found to hold a leading role (vs. moderating role) in learning processes of international new ventures (Prashantham & Floyd, 2012), while capability formation is suggested to be collectively affected by founders and individual employees (Autio et al., 2011). Scholars have found the social network diversity and interaction to be central in enhancing foreign market knowledge from individual to firm level (Musteen et al., 2014), where social ties—the entrepreneurs' idiosyncratic connections in their social networks—may both promote and inhibit further international exchange (Ellis, 2011).

Authorship of a ’becoming and being’ journey

- (International) experiences and (hi)stories
    - Sense-making; subjective reasoning of events, actions, behavior
    - Critical incidents, transitions
- The ‘protagonists’ of the IE narrative; identity construction
- Past – present – future orientation; historical contextualization of a phenomenon/process

→ A processual and hermeneutic view; constructivist discourse

Human agency and enactment of context; uncertainty

- Intentions, goals and visions; motivations, values, hopes, fears
- The ‘evaluation’, and ‘exploitation’ of opportunities
    - Exploration, creation and commitment to (international) opportunities and venture
- Future-orientation; organizational and career trajectory planning; prioritizing investment for future opportunities

→ A cause-and-effect and processual view; positivist and constructivist discourse

Act(ion)s and react(ion)s; context-bound actors

- Cognitive and behavioural views of the individual
    - Static characteristics, attributes, categorization: personalities, traits (i.e. risk-taker, proactive) social role/reputation
    - Categorization built on observation of (social) performances
- The ‘discovery’ and ‘enactment’ of opportunities
- Present-orientation; alertness, cognitive biases; identification of (international) opportunities

→ A cross-sectional and cause-and-effect view; positivistic discourse

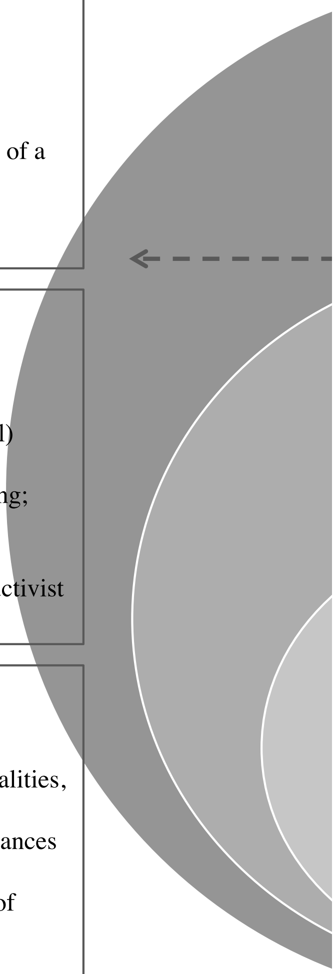
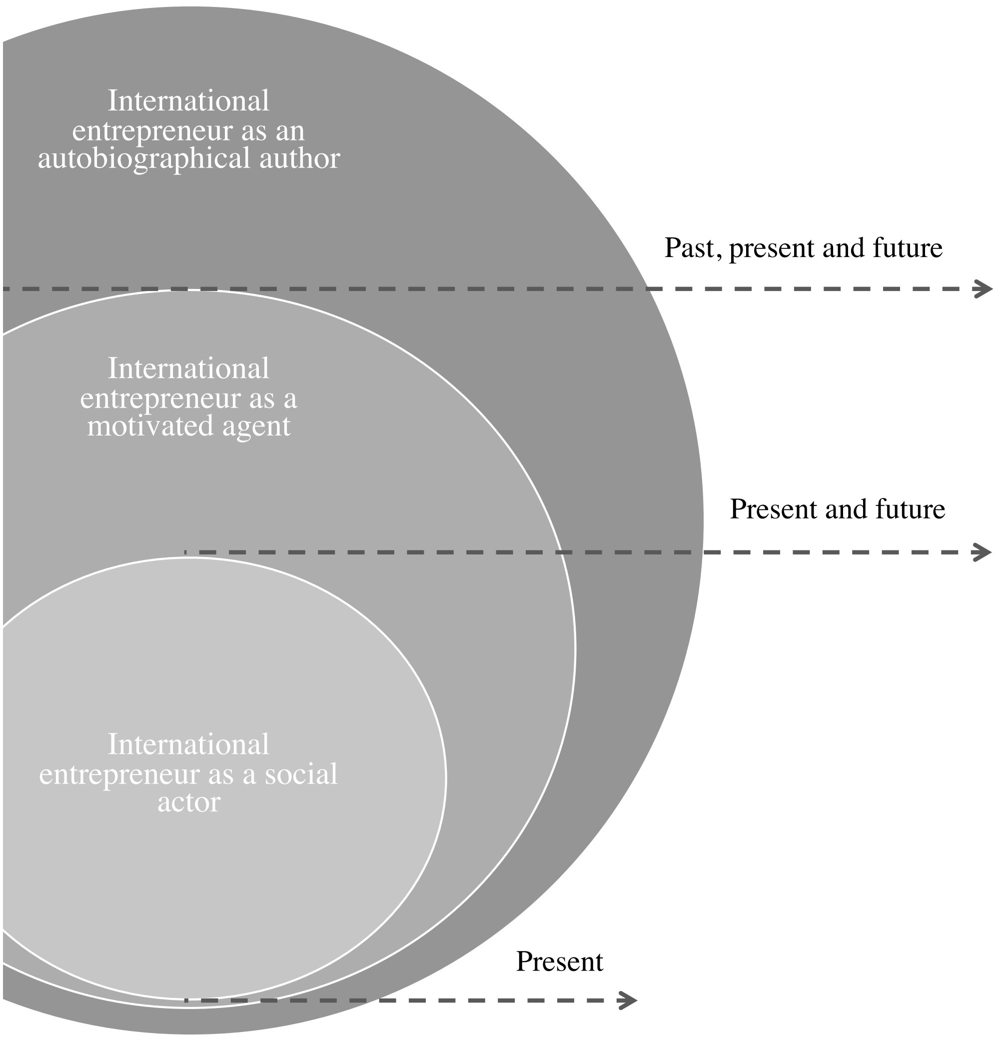


Figure 5. The individual-level IE literature in integration with the Actor–Agent–Author framework of the psychological ‘self’ by McAdams (2013)


International entrepreneur as an autobiographical author
Past, present and future
International entrepreneur as a motivated agent
Present and future
International entrepreneur as a social actor
Present

Inherent to prior entrepreneurship research (Stewart et al., 1999) and the quantitative treatment of the individual's cognitive and behavioural attributes, the tendency in IE literature is to present and discuss international entrepreneurs for their more or less static profile. Despite the aim to retreat from perceiving certain traits or personality as a precursor to or advantageous for being an international entrepreneur, current dominant firm-level IE literature seems to have remained intact to cross-sectional exploration of ventures and views of their managers, for example based on their scores on innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking behaviour (e.g., Covin & Wales, 2012; Lumpkin et al., 2009; Miller, 2011) and/or alertness, intentions and effect in identifying or evaluating international opportunities (Acedo & Florin, 2006; Acedo & Jones, 2007; De Clercq et al., 2012). Accordingly, individual-level IE studies have been prone to approach the topic through 'functionalist lenses' and factors (Packard, 2017), which have explained entrepreneurs(hip) via causally deterministic individual-level differences, such as an individual's cognitive activity (Reuber et al., 2018), risk perceptions or higher tolerance for ambiguity (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019).

If viewed through the tripartite frame of McAdams, it seems that the meta-level discourse, the dominance of variance-based studies and cause-and-effect modelling of IE, guides the interpretation of the actions of the focal individuals based on *'how they should or should not act'* in particular situations and contexts (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012, p. 66). In respect of the current understanding of the evolving and expanding 'sense of selfhood' as an individual human being in developmental psychology, individuals begin their lives as *social actors*. This construction of the 'self', emerging in early childhood, encompasses the self-ascribed traits, skills and social roles that result in and from repeated performances on one's expanding social stage of life (Goffman, 1959). In this stage of development, performance norms—though often implicit and taken for granted in one's cultural context—are imperative but may also become behavioural constraints and require a degree of self-regulation in order to avoid disapproved acts (McAdams, 2013).

By reflecting this social actor dimension with the identity research approaches in entrepreneurship literature, recent entrepreneurship studies from a career perspective have framed the notion of "entrepreneur" as an occupation (e.g. Burton et al., 2016; Shantz et al., 2018). According to this approach, the occupational identity of being an entrepreneur is a central component of *'who the individuals engaged in it [are], and what their status or legitimacy [is] in the eyes of others'* (Shantz et al., 2018, p. 481). In this view, identity constructions are shaped by institutions and become the kind of social prescriptions or "occupational templates" for how individuals should appropriately enact the role of an entrepreneur (Shantz et al., 2018).

At this level, also IE literature stresses the cognitive and behavioural profile, roles, skills and capabilities of the international entrepreneurial individual in a rather present-oriented timeframe, that is, cross-sectional studies limiting the international entrepreneur as a context-restrained actor adapting to a prescribed identity. The context of the individuals' actions and behaviour are either controlled or implicit, or presented as static performative settings of certain kinds of entrepreneurial behaviour (risk-taking, proactiveness). Such studies could be characterized for underlining the performative and restrictive norms across the international and cultural settings of the firm (i.e., psychic distance) into which certain social roles of individuals fit or do not fit, and the applicability of (cultural) reputation in and across international networks. These studies highlight international entrepreneurial 'performance norms' and the individuals' bounded behaviour and cognition because of one's educational and experiential background and/or perceptions of international opportunities (the 'possible futures') such as cognitive biases and different decision-making logics.

2.2.2 International entrepreneurs as motivated agents

In application of the framework of McAdams (2013) in Figure 5, this section describes the developmental state of the individual level IE literature—both intra- and interpersonal levels—where the international entrepreneurial 'self' as a social actor becomes layered over by the 'self as a motivated agent'. In the psychological development of an individual, middle to late childhood is a time of exploration and commitment to future time through life projects, which become featured by personal goals, values, motives as much as hopes and fears in making choices and moving forward in life (McAdams, 2013). It is also a time of developing the groundwork for one's self-esteem, while still aligning with certain cultural scripts in order to strive for appropriate goals.

In essence, entrepreneurial thinking and relative actions are motivated by an individual's underlying intentions (Krueger, 2007) as well as social and contextual processes in conjunction with international opportunities (Mainela et al., 2014), and aligning one's entrepreneurial role as a change agent (McMullen & Dimov, 2013). Therefore, IE can also be seen as a contextually and socially motivated choice, intertwined with and informed by a desired course of action, of which entrepreneurship studies have become more and more interested in, and the actions and events that it instigates (Packard, 2017). If based solely on causal determinism, our views and conclusions regarding the international entrepreneurs would potentially be misleading and ignore the individuals' personal goals and aspirations (e.g., Cardon et al., 2009) in determining their own thinking and behaviour (Packard, 2017). In embracing this, international entrepreneurs are not necessarily different than non-entrepreneurs—by trait, personality or cognition—but their personal goals and expectations determine entrepreneurial action as *'the best course of action toward achieving those ends'*—a choice that reaches towards the future of an individual's subjective well-being (Packard, 2017, p. 538)

In order to overcome assumptive prerequisites and fixed views of founders of internationalizing new ventures, IE studies of the individual have evolved beyond treating individual international entrepreneurs solely based on their traits, personalities or their cognitive attributes and social 'performance' determining international entrepreneurial 'actorship'. This becomes apparent, for example, when perceived in connection to the wider structures and institutional contexts of their venturing; recent discussion has come to perceive entrepreneurs for their agency as catalysts of social change (Zahra et al., 2014). Some, following more processual approaches to IE as a social phenomenon, have gone beyond a clear-cut or linear project of internationalization of a firm with assumption of certain preconditions and antecedent factors (e.g., Mainela et al., 2014; Seymour, 2006), and embraced more systemic views of the process as directed by purpose or 'intentionality' of human agency (Packard, 2017). In this study, human agency refers broadly to the individuals' *'ability to intentionally pursue interest and to have some effect on the social world'* (Battilana, 2006, p. 657; see also Scott, 2001).

An entrepreneurs' philosophic views, perceptions and interpretations of situations are suggested as mediating factors in relation to the (speed of) the firm's internationalization (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a), while individual level agentic concepts such as self-efficacy, learning, intentions as well as identity are reckoned with studies of the firm's initial internationalization orientation (Coviello, 2015). In consideration of a more present–future oriented outlook of the individual-level and 'antecedents' explaining and/or predicting IE behaviour of ventures, studies have been addressing the underlying motivations, visions and goals driving the international entrepreneurial venture forward despite the apparent risks and uncertainty of the process they engage in (Autio, 2005; Jones & Coviello, 2005). Accordingly, international entrepreneurs in the extant literature could also be seen as agents embodying various different means and motives in enacting international opportunities (Mainela et al., 2014). It seems that through the combination of static variance-based and processual views of individual-level configurations of resources both internal and external to the individual (Bolzani & Foo, 2018; Cahen et al., 2016), and the dynamics of learning through team and firm-level processes (e.g., Kauppinen & Juho, 2012), scholars have come to pay more heed to the future-oriented and future-informed international entrepreneurial agency in the context of evaluating and exploiting opportunities across national borders (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a). In this vein, scholars are interested in the entrepreneurs' different dynamic means to internationalize (Sarasvathy et al., 2014) and cope with situations of present and future uncertainty (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019). Accordingly, individuals have been found to possess certain distinct competences in comparison to their domestic peers, such as a strong learning capability and an institutional bridging capability (Zucchella et al., 2018). Relatedly, self-efficacy has been argued to play a role in understanding how and why firms are found and internationalized (Farashah, 2015; Hannibal et al., 2016).

Further layering of the international entrepreneurial 'self' in IE literature with such sense of motivated human agency presents a more constructivist view and effectual understanding of the individuals' forward-looking behaviour (Sarasvathy et al., 2014). This view has called further attention to the founders' socially constructed reasoning of experience (Hannibal et al., 2016; Jones & Casulli, 2014; Rasmussen et al., 2001) that cannot be treated as mere collections of (controllable) variables or quantifiable entities, or beyond lived life (Seymour, 2006). In connection to the dynamic social context of IE (Evers & O'Gorman, 2011), scholars have suggested a move away from the differences—that is, static attributes—between entrepreneurs (Sarasvathy et al., 2014) and towards a more integrative view of the individuals, their identities and perceptions, to find intersubjectivity, a 'common human experience', as a unit of analysis in the context of IE. Some appropriate approaches have inspired researchers to explore international opportunities also as ongoing social processes and beyond the individual and the firm (Mainela et al., 2018).

According to the above review of individual-level IE literature, studies of international entrepreneurs and how they configure their prior (international) knowledge and other personal means (Ellis, 2011; Musteen et al., 2014) have aimed to understand and/or explain a priori early internationalization and integral evolution of new ventures at the firm level (Sarasvathy, 2008; Sarasvathy et al., 2014). In this respect, cognitions—that is, heuristics and analogical reasoning—delineate the logic of experience application in internationalization goals (Jones & Casulli, 2014), while both the history and future visions of the founding entrepreneur are projected to a firm's international commitment decisions (Autio, 2005). However, what I have termed as the collective-level discourse of IE—the international entrepreneur and their embedding in the IE phenomenon—has somehow remained rather one or two dimensional (i.e., present or present-future orientated) in exploring the IE journey, emphasizing a priori opportunity identification or foreign entry and the effect individuals as social actors or motivated agents from there onwards. In search for causal effects and theoretical models of IE, researchers have preferred research designs of positivist methodologies and data assuming objectivity (Nummela & Welch, 2006) in which there is not so much room for the amalgam of meanings and subjective interpretations of their pasts and the unfolding present in relation to events and occurrences in the IE journeys individuals have taken.

In the next section, taking a view of the 'self' as a narrative or story, rather than as a measurable "thing" or substance, I cast more light onto the historical and contextual dimension of human existence and selfhood of international entrepreneurs. Accordingly, in section 2.3. I will continue elaborating on the actor–agent–author framework by discussing the *author* dimension of Figure 5 in conjunction with the largely unrealized potential and contextualization of the 'personal-level narrative' in studying the experience and sense-making of the process of 'becoming and being' an international entrepreneur. After discussing the actor and agent dimensions of the 'international entrepreneurial self', we may begin to become more acquainted with the *(auto)biographical authors* of the IE narrative—the personas, who become and are engaged in making sense of the overall IE journey at the individual level.

2.3 (Hi)stories of becoming and being an international entrepreneur

> *'We come to know ourselves and to know about the world through the stories that we tell, and through the meanings that we construct from these self-defining narratives.'* —Singer, 2004

Cognitive structures and temporal behaviour (or performance) of international entrepreneurs as 'actors' or 'agents' are grounded in their personal past and ongoing experiences of the surrounding world (Krueger, 2007; Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012), and socially constructed understandings and assumptions of their cultural, historical context and affect (Karp, 2006). By taking distance to the above cause-and-effect and explanation-seeking stance prevalent in both firm- and individual-level IE literature, this section aims to broaden discussion on the narrative and journey perspective of becoming an international entrepreneur. In this section, I propose a more comprehensive past–present–future stance, where the underlying beliefs of the international entrepreneurial 'self' and scripts for cognition, behaviour and goal content (McAdams, 2006) are grounded in the individuals' narrative sense-making of their selves and connections of their *'actions, characters and plots with history and biography'* (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012, p. 66).

As outlined in Figure 4, studies on international entrepreneurs and their key role in the internationalizing new ventures have remained brief with the personal history of the founder (McGaughey, 2007), while still assuming and providing prior experience as the base for individuals' sense-making (Rasmussen et al., 2001; Weick, 1995). Accordingly, applicable knowledge and behaviour (Andersson, 2002; Hutchinson et al., 2007; Perks & Hughes, 2008) is taken as effective at the start-up of an early internationalizing venture (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994; Zucchella et al., 2018). Together with their conceptualization of internationalization as an entrepreneurial process of behaviour, Jones and Coviello (2005) point out the significance of the human capital of the entrepreneur and its influence on the internationalization process. Different kinds of business and education-related experiences, often categorized under human and/or social capital, learning and know-how, serve in the IE models as 'antecedents' having a certain degree of predicting power of internationalization—even more than that of a firm's age or size (Jones et al., 2011; see further Reuber & Fischer, 1997; Westhead et al., 2005). Moreover, prior experience, especially international exposure and acquisition of knowledge of foreign markets have frequently been researched in relation to new venture internationalization processes (McDougall et al., 2003; Reuber & Fischer, 1997). Human capital in terms of experience is found to have an effect on one's decision to become an exporter, where international experience in particular reduces negative perceptions towards the risks of cross-border operations (Ganotakis & Love, 2012).

Seminal IE scholars have suggested that international experience provides an individual with *'paradigm busting experiences of being thrust into another culture'* and triggers one into an experience of a widening *'sphere of potential border-crossing opportunities'* (McDougall et al., 2003, p. 62). Furthermore, different contexts of international experience (i.e., education, living abroad, internationally oriented work) are suggested to impact the mind of the founder (Jones & Casulli, 2014) and competencies to encounter different national markets (McDougall et al., 1994):

> *'A global mindset or international orientation comes with international experience, business- or education-wise. Staying abroad not only "opens" the mind and fosters knowledge of different institutional and cultural environments, it also helps to form social and business networks which can be used and built upon during internationalization'* (Zucchella et al., 2018, p. 99).

Overall, international experience is said to enhance creativity (Galinsky & Maddux, 2009), reduce intergroup bias (Tadmor et al., 2012), and have impact (positive) on opportunity recognition capabilities (Vandor & Franke, 2016). In her study of international entrepreneurs, McGaughey (2007) asserts that even 'objective' information is transformed into greatly personal knowledge as a result of the individual processing the same information through different 'cognitive filters'. These cognitive filters are based on unique personal histories (i.e., background, interests, experiences) and stresses further the importance of learning that history of entrepreneurs (Andersson, 2002; Ghannad & Andersson, 2012; McGaughey, 2007).

Mirrored in Figure 4, extant IE research seems to compress prior (international) experience as an antecedent to behaviour and as a resource (Jones & Coviello, 2005; Zucchella et al., 2018) *'rendered useful to the firm through the proclivity and capability of the individual toward particular processes of cognitive reasoning'* (Jones & Casulli, 2014, p. 46*).* Here, the 'functionalist' research interests prevalent in IE tend to treat the spectrum of experiential knowledge as more or less compressed factors explaining certain outcomes, and highlight the *'utility of personal experience to internationalizing firms, and its potential impact on internationalization dynamics and performance'* (Jones & Casulli, 2014, p. 46–47). Accordingly, more empirical studies, for example to examine the reasoning by comparison proclivity and capability of internationalizing entrepreneurs, has been called for as the reasoning and logic with which experience is applied by international entrepreneurs is yet to be fully understood (Jones & Casulli, 2014).

The more recent entrepreneurship literature with an increasing interest in the life history of individuals (e.g. Jayawarna et al., 2014; Mathias et al., 2015) leads the way in conducting more nuanced research on how and why international entrepreneurs perceive and enact the surrounding world of, for example, international entrepreneurial opportunities, the way they do (Krueger 2007). It is arguably the international entrepreneur's subjective sense-making of their past and present experience, international or not, having effect in the firm-level internationalization process and future trajectories (Andersson, 2000; Rasmussen et al., 2001), and as such remains as a central issue in the theoretical development of the field (Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Sarasvathy et al., 2014). Therefore, both past and ongoing experiences and relative sense-making of events of international entrepreneurs remain key in understanding not only individual behaviour but also the social, historical, and other contextual underpinnings of IE (Hurmerinta et al., 2016).

In entrepreneurship research, examinations of *'entrepreneurs' past, present, and future actions demonstrate not only* that *history matters but* how *history matters'* (Mathias et al., 2015, p. 25). As any individual human being, entrepreneurs are active participants—social actors and motivated agents—in the streams of their everyday experiences (Morris et al., 2012). As time goes by, international entrepreneurs' cognitions, assumptions and temporal behaviour and performance are grounded in and stem from their personal developmental history (Krueger, 2007). Furthermore, an individual's contextual 'entrepreneurial' actions and forward-looking agency are motivated by their underlying beliefs, intentions and attitudes (Krueger 2007), and the mental orientations in one's venturing behaviour develop through and become catalysed by the individual's sense-making of ongoing life experiences in relation to the past (Krueger, 2007; Sommer & Haug, 2011). Through their sense-making of past and present action and agency, the meaning of the 'psychological' history of the 'self' becomes catalysed and bounds the interpretation of their surrounding context and events (i.e. social, cultural, historical), as well as any emerging emotion (Karp, 2006), while informing of their visions of the future (Sommer & Haug, 2011).

To summarize the extant individual-level IE literature, scholars have so far discussed and set out to explain that IE as a phenomenon both requires as well as generates a variety of (international) experience, encompassing the intrinsic mindset, abilities and networks of the founders. However, we are very limited in explicating the (hi)stories constructing these supposed 'antecedents' (i.e., behavioural orientations, motivations, identities) when discussing the individual international entrepreneur as an actor and/or agent, and even more, the personal *meanings* of IE as a (longitudinal) journey. By appreciating the sense-making, heterogeneity and variety in authoring human experience, and highlighting its inherent diversity, emotionality and local context (Riessman, 1993, 2002), the last part of this theoretical chapter aims to bridge the conceptual framework of this study with the methodological approach I have chosen to understand more of IE as an individual level narrative.

2.3.1 International entrepreneurs as autobiographical authors

In line with life history, psychoanalysis and developmental theories having various traditions, forms and structures exemplifying narrative, social science scholars rediscovered the narrative nature of human beings in mid 1900s (Polkinghorne, 1988; Sandelowski, 1991) and regarded 'narrative' as the 'primary scheme by which human existence is rendered meaningful' (Polkinghorne, 1988); as an organizing principle of human action and experience (Bruner, 1986). In this study, I perceive human experience as the *'construction that results from the interaction of cognitive organizing processes with cues emanating from external perceptual senses, internal bodily sensations, and cognitive memories'* (Polkinghorne, 1991, p. 135) and approach the telling of past experiences of an international entrepreneur as situating the narrating self *'meaningfully in their culture, providing unity to their past, present, and anticipated future'* (Singer, 2004, p. 445).

In accordance with developmental psychology and life-history research, language, memory and the developing sense of 'self' are intertwined by essence (McAdams, 2008; McAdams, 2006) and seen as precursors for an individual's evolving process of *identity construction* (McAdams, 2008). In this thesis, this construction of identity refers to the manifold and context-specific narrative of the self in answering the question of 'who am I?' (Alvesson et al., 2008). Therefore, in accordance with Polkinghorne (1991) and McAdams (1999), I have explored the individuals' identity constructions in 'the internalized and evolving story that results from a person's selective appropriation of past, present and future' selves (McAdams, 1999, p. 486).

Making sense of developmental experiences

Early life experiences in particular are said to be central to the development of individuals' cognitive structures and behavioural 'scripts' (Gioia & Manz, 1985), actualizing the 'deep beliefs' that influence one's understanding and development and adaptation to social roles (McAdams, 2013) and one's motivated, future-oriented human agency (Bandura, 2006). Then, when a person again encounters a situation where he or she must learn to change, it inevitably leaves an imprint on one's life story (Erichsen, 2011).

By the time an individual reaches adolescence and emerging adulthood, one's sense of 'self' as an actor and agent have become layered by the self-as-storyteller—an *autobiographical author*—who *'works to formulate a meaningful narrative for life'* (McAdams, 2013, p. 273). In this vein, a 'narrative identity' perspective embraces the 'self' as an author of the self and a lifespan developmental perspective on personality (Singer, 2004) in embedding the self as an actor and agent in an ongoing life-story (McAdams, 2013). Such perspective acknowledges that *'biological and cognitive changes, role demands of particular life stages, historical and cohort influences all conspire to make any individual's narrative a fluid and evolving work in progress'* (Singer, 2004, p. 445).

Relatedly, the universally recognized needs for human beings to build up and maintain a positive sense of self together with the experience of continuity and significance, distinctiveness, belongingness and efficiency, work as internal motives for (re)constructing identities (Vignoles et al., 2006). Continuity of personal identities reside in *'the experiential continuity of one's life course'* (Bandura, 2006, p. 170) and, in the midst of life changes, becomes preserved by memories which give temporal coherence to life (McAdams, 2006). Moreover, *'through their goals, aspirations, social commitments, and action plans, people project themselves into the future and shape the courses their lives take'* (Bandura, 2006, p. 170).

In a way, entrepreneurship is *"primarily 'a direction in life, an existential endeavour [...] a processual phenomenon always challenging its contextual boundaries thereby thriving on chance and serendipity'"* (Campbell, 2011, p. 39, original quote in Johannisson, 2002). In alignment with constructivist approaches in entrepreneurship (Duening & Metzger, 2017; Hytti, 2005; Williams & Nadin, 2013), the view of entrepreneurship as a 'becoming' process (Steyaert, 1997; Steyaert & Katz, 2004; van Burg & Romme, 2014) grants promise to the contextual understanding of individuals and their experiences as developmental also in IE literature (Fletcher, 2004). Approaching cognitions as developmental processes of making sense of personal experience of the surrounding world (i.e., the evolution of mental representations and constructs) (Grégoire et al., 2011) serve as the groundwork for entrepreneurial thinking and behaviour as well (Krueger, 2007). If making sense of a variety of experiences of the individual entrepreneurs in a range of contexts across time (Carsrud & Johnson, 1989; Hisrich et al., 2007; Sarasvathy, 2001; Shane et al., 2003), we simultaneously set out to make sense of IE as a journey (McMullen & Dimov, 2013) crossing borders of a multitude of social and cultural circumstances (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019; Seymour, 2006) and the embedded developmental nature of those experiences (McAdams & McLean, 2013).

The developmental perspective of individuals in this doctoral study also elevates the notion of the historically unfolding *founder legacy*, which means the kind of 'inheritance' the founder-entrepreneurs consciously or unconsciously leave behind and how they are remembered when no longer working in the focal business (Baker & Wiseman, 1998). Relatedly, Smith (2014) refers to the "storied identities" of the founder-generations that in time become open to the offspring to either build upon and/or restructure for the honour of the first generation. When viewed as an individual-level construct and as related to people's 'life projects', founder legacy and/or the storied identities of them can be traced back through psychology and literature on psychosocial development of the individual and the life stages of 'generativity' (i.e., how to 'make life count' through one's work career) during one's adult life (Erikson, 1963; Waterman, 2002, see also an integrative discussion in Hammond et al., 2016). Such a life stage is featured by one's desire to make a positive contribution to others in the future, whereas stagnation at this stage would lead to a lack of interest in leaving anything to subsequent generations (Hammond et al., 2016). In this dissertation, the notion of founder legacy as the kind of storied identity of the founder-generation serve as an analytic anchor for studying the socially constructed "bridging mechanisms" between generations (Smith, 2014).

Making sense of transitional experiences

In regard to the context of contextual and social contingencies in becoming and being an international entrepreneur, for example, in conjunction with one's emerging and evolving 'founder identity' (e.g., Hoang & Gimeno, 2010; Obschonka et al., 2012), studies have indicated the importance of studying more in-depth the individual-level experiences that pose 'transformative' circumstances to the entrepreneurs as transitional experiences embed different motivating triggers in search of new *'possible futures and states of being'* (Garcia-Lorenzo et al., 2018, p. 377). In this sense, transitional experiences encompass the individual's passages from one state or place to another.

In their recent conceptual study, Prashantham and Floyd characterized IE as a transition encompassing experiences of liminality, the psychological conditions that are *'experienced [...] when one is no longer in the original state but hasn't quite reached the new one phase'* (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019, p. 513). In its original terms, liminality has been described as 'the betwixt-and-between period' that actors experience when making a social transition (Turner, 1969; van Gennep, 1909). Like a firm going through a transitional state of internationalization (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019), the founder—as a social actor and motivated agent—is also assumedly 'in transition', when leaving an old, familiar state of being (i.e. local, domestic) and over a certain period of time, or after a series of events, has transitioned through liminal states of 'becoming international'.

In our globalized world, *'contemporary individuals pass a long string of widely divergent social worlds'* where, at any single moment of their life, they inhabit simultaneously several of them (Sarup, 1998, p. 11; Erichsen, 2011). When the boundaries and rules of our social worlds change, our social interactions must also change, requiring a transformation of personal self-understanding and biography (Erichsen, 2011). In light of international career literature and globalizing careers, individuals, who either end up having or take own initiative to launch internationally oriented careers need to learn and acquire new capabilities to face the challenges their career context poses to the content and clarity of their sense of self (Adam et al., 2018; Dickmann & Harris, 2005). For example, times of extended international assignments, such as expatriation, are found to be accompanied by self-reflection and identity work due to the focal individuals becoming more or less cut off from the *'identity-regulating discourses of their home company'* (Kohonen 2008, p. 327; Erichsen 2011). Whereas prior studies have suggested that often times the kind of transitional experiences of shift in one's social context are typically a source of *decreasing* clarity of one's self-concept (Light & Visser, 2013), referring to the extent to which someone's understanding of himself or herself is *'clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent, and temporally stable'* (Campbell et al., 1996, p. 141), recent findings show that *international* experience as a form of transitional experience (i.e., moving into and living in a foreign country) would actually result in an increase – more clarity – in the sense of who one is (Adam et al., 2018).

The contemporary conceptualization of 'careers', as an alternative to the traditional employer-governed construction, views it as a dynamic construct relative to time and space (Baruch & Reis, 2016), and to large extent, IE at the individual-level could be seen as equal to or as a part of one's career journey (e.g., Hannibal, 2017). Furthermore, in consideration of 'career' as *'the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time'* (Arthur et al., 1989, p. 8), the sense-making of one's IE journey could be framed as one's unfolding career narrative. This would complement the view of the creation of a new venture or opportunity identification as a defining 'destination' of an entrepreneurial process (Burton et al., 2016) or as the 'beginning point' of an IE journey.

By approaching (international) entrepreneurship as a career journey, embedding work and life stages and/or transient states of being, we may explore inter alia the various cross-roads and trails in which different career-related experiences shape entrepreneurial activity, and the ways in which entrepreneurial activity may shape those career experiences (Burton et al., 2016). In this vein, previous business and work life as experience, education, as well as the surrounding social and cultural context in general are either important reference points and sources of meaning of one's entrepreneurial career journey or, on the contrary, becoming less meaningful in the process of identifying 'who I am as an entrepreneur' (Karhunen et al., 2017; Leitch & Harrison, 2016).

In general, understanding the evolving nature of identity construction is recognized as being essential in relation to the changing boundaries of contemporary careers (LaPointe, 2010). Recent IE literature has acknowledged the importance of accounting for the identity constructions of international entrepreneurs (Coviello, 2015; Sarasvathy et al., 2014) together with its evolving and contextual nature, that is, when acting ‘the part’, or role (Hannibal, 2017), in order to facilitate inclusion in an ascribed community (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). The assumed pace and nature of changes in relation to the early internationalizing working context and business venturing of international entrepreneurs, require them as focal career actors to continuously make sense of who they are and what skills, knowledge, and relationships at their disposal in order to respond to the context-related changes and demands (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006).

This perspective resembles Ibarra’s (1999) seminal work on ‘identity work’, which has focused on how possible ‘selves’ are selected and rejected during career transitions, introducing the process of constructing a (professional) identity in career narratives (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Ibarra et al., 2010). The process of identity work is said to relate to a three-fold internally evolving sense-making task of adaptation, entailing the observation of role models, experiments with provisional selves and evaluation of results according to internal standards and external feedback (Ibarra, 1999). In more general terms, identity work refers to the formation, reparation, maintenance, strengthening, and/or revising the sense of coherence and distinctiveness of one’s identity in and between context (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003). In addition to management and organizational literature, more recent entrepreneurship research has contributed to the different contexts and meanings of identity work (Leitch & Harrison, 2016). For example, Karhunen et al. (2017) have pointed out the identity work of science-based entrepreneurs and their ‘boundary work’ between being a scientist and an entrepreneur. Moreover, findings of Phillips et al. (2013) elaborate on how identity work of entrepreneurs underpin strategic homophily and shared identity narratives between individuals, which potentially lead to the development of trusting relationships.

In general, conceptualization of entrepreneurship and IE as a career journey serves as a point of departure to explore the individual-level identity work as dialogic route to meaning construction of the self (Beech, 2008) in ‘becoming an international entrepreneur’, i.e. maintaining particular narratives of one’s ‘self’ (Watson 2009). Moreover, in following that the increasing mobility, both physical (i.e., objective circumstances) and psychological (i.e., subjective experiences) (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006), demands individuals to make further sense of knowing of who they are, their skills and knowledge, and relationships at their disposal (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006), the IE journey embeds the changes in one’s perception of self over time (Brown, 2015; Brown et al., 2015; Williams, 2000; Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016). Drawing more nuanced attention to careers’ psychological constitution (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006), this research holds that each career actor has different yet interdependent interpretations of one’s career trajectory (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Fugate et al., 2004).

The narrative constitution of IE as an individual-level journey

Lastly, taking a narrative sense-making perspective on past experience and events (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005) directs our attention further into the relational, temporal and even performative efforts by which entrepreneurs (and researchers) contextualize—or constitute—their focal personal journeys (Garud et al., 2014; Garud & Giuliani, 2013). Accordingly, with a narrative 'author' perspective, we ought to start off with less presumptions on how the boundaries should be drawn (Garud et al., 2014, p. 1181), that is, what counts as context in the IE journey, and appreciate more *'the efforts by actors to organize and imbue experiences with meaning'* (see further e.g., Bruner, 1986; Czarniawska, 2004; Polkinghorne, 1988; Ricoeur, 1984).

The 'relational' dimension of authoring one's narrative provides a lens to the constitution of agency through relationships across social and material elements (Garud & Giuliani, 2013). Therefore, I posit that narrative elements of making sense of international entrepreneurship as a journey emerge through and from interactions and dialogue, and therefore reflect not just the personality, aspirations and motivations of a focal entrepreneur, but also manifest and reflect those of the individuals' social worlds, that is, various stakeholders (i.e., investors, policymakers, public at large) in construction of that journey (Garud et al., 2014). Then, when considering context as an event (Johns, 2006, p. 388), '*a single event or happening can punctuate context'*, the occurrence of events—the 'temporal' dimension in narrative sense-making—refers us to the variety of accounts of past, present and future points in time in the focal journey as it unfolds in qualitative accounts of people's experience. By paying attention to 'performative' efforts of narrating, we are also tuning into how individuals' meaning making processes trigger action towards certain goals (Garud et al., 2014), in other words, how actors' narratives generate *'capacity to act and to give meaning to action'* (Callon, 2007, p. 160). At any moment in the journey, in the occurrence of particular events (Johns, 2006), entrepreneurs have had to interpret and make sense of what has already happened and negotiate future directions for what is currently happening (Garud & Giuliani, 2013).

The purpose of this theoretical framing has been so far to venture beyond a static view of personality, traits and experiences, and the cognitive and behavioural views of individuals along the opportunity-focused discourse of IE. I have proposed a view of international entrepreneurs as 'authors' and their narrative sense-making as something that can provide us with a more holistic framework to study and understand the IE phenomenon at the individual-level. To the best of my knowledge and reading of the IE literature, we have no empirical studies exploring, for example, the developmental or transitional nature of experiences (i.e., international career transitions) by which founders make sense of their personal journeys of becoming and being international entrepreneurs. In the study of the individual and their experiences in IE, seeing into the different dialogic routes to meaning construction (Beech, 2008) of the 'international entrepreneurial self' as an 'autobiographical author' means that we appreciate how these key individuals make sense of themselves in the process and how their identity work has unfolded in navigating through the uncertain and complex context of IE in practice—for example as a career trajectory.

The above notions also show some lag in reflexivity of how we— as IE researchers— can make sense of the individuals' journeys of becoming and being international entrepreneurs and adjust the theoretical implications to the collective-level and meta-level discourse we re-tell as researchers. In order to explore founders' IE journeys and their personal-level narratives, I will now further elaborate on the researcher's (here: me) contextualization of the research subjects. In the last section of the conceptual framework, I will discuss the idea of 'contextualization' in this study of the international entrepreneurs and their personal journeys.

2.4 Historical contextualization of the process of 'becoming and being'

In this dissertation, internationalization is regarded as a *'contextualized and socially constructed activity'*, and the unfolding of events increasing international involvement, in which *'entrepreneurs are in dialogue and interaction with the worlds of others'* (Fletcher, 2004, p. 302). It is through the contextual experience that individuals make sense and understand the social world they live in as it is the very means of reasoning their way through the challenges venturing pose on them in and over time (Morris et al., 2012). International entrepreneurs' experiences and their understanding of them are not only socially, but also historically and culturally mediated (Meretoja, 2014).

Furthermore, international entrepreneurs can be regarded as the historically embedded actors and authors of their own *history*, that is, who they are and have become over time, embodying agency in enacting their context either aware or unaware of it (Smith, 2014; Baker & Welter, 2018). In acknowledging the above, I grant attention to the historical dimensions of interpretations emerging from narratives of individuals' as 'authors'—but especially when interpreting international entrepreneurs and their journeys and further authoring of them as researchers. To 'turn to the past' and to explore IE from a historical perspective (Wadhwani, 2016, p. 67), I acknowledge that *'entrepreneurs use historical contextualization—i.e., they do historical context—in ways that differ importantly from how researchers take account of history'* (Baker & Welter, 2018, p. 378).

2.4.1 International entrepreneurship and the historical time context

Descending from its 'parent disciplines' international business (Cantwell et al., 2010; Jones & Khanna, 2006) and entrepreneurship (Baker & Welter, 2018; Welter, 2011), IE is also an inherently historically contextual phenomenon (Mollan, 2018). Time is central in IE as a phenomenon and has so far been expressed either through dimensions like precocity (i.e., ventures going international early in their life-cycle) and speed (i.e., fast international growth) (Zucchella et al., 2018). Due to the visible rapid changes in our economic environment during the past decades, it may have been tempting to label and inquire about the IE phenomenon as something 'new' and relative to the current global market trends.

However, in consideration of ancient international trade by travelling entrepreneurs (Etemad, 2019) and the developments in our economic history marked by earlier waves of (de)globalization in the past 200 or so years, neither the phenomenon nor the concept of early internationalizing ventures can be said to be new (Mudambi & Zahra, 2007). For example, firm-level studies in the more traditional IB literature, the concept of BGs (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004) have rather recently been discussed together with the concept of 'a free-standing company' (FSC). FSCs have been discussed in studies investigating the immediate foreign direct investments of new ventures during the 19th century (Casson, 1994; Jones & Khanna, 2006; Mollan, 2018; Wilkins, 1988; Mudambi & Zahra, 2007). Acknowledging the number of such FSCs both prior to and after the Second World War (Mudambi & Zahra, 2007), it was not until the more recent changes in societal, political and business conditions globally that we could see these 'novel' type of firms—early internationalizing ventures—emerge (again) and their rapid increase in number to gain scholarly interest (McDougall, 1989; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). Despite the term we choose to use for these early internationalizing ventures (i.e., INVs or BGs), or whether we study the individuals or the ventures they found, or even practice reflexivity as IE researchers, IE as a journey is always contextually embedded in historical time (Jones & Khanna, 2006; Wadhwani et al., 2019).

Historical contextualization of individuals allows a closer look at how contexts change over time because of entrepreneurial behaviour (Baker & Welter, 2018). As such, the international entrepreneurs' agency in this dissertation refers to the *'individuals' ability to intentionally pursue interest and to have some effect on the social world, altering the rules or the distribution of resources'* (Battilana, 2006, p. 657; see also Scott, 2001). Over the years, 'context-centric' perspectives in entrepreneurship research have had the tendency to undermine human agency, while more 'agent-centric' perspectives—by bringing individuals' entrepreneurial agency to the centre stage—have left context either underexplored or treated it in terms of mere control variables (Garud et al., 2014). As a bridge between these two ends so-called constitutive approaches have been proposed as means to explore the *'different ways in which entrepreneurs and their environments are co-created'* where entrepreneurship is seen as a contextually unfolding journey (Garud et al., 2014, p. 1180). In the light of this, international entrepreneurs' actions, reactions and interactions with their surrounding world over time contribute to the context (Nayak & Maclean, 2013) of doing IE: enact the world of opportunities, and further shape the 'future' of global business (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019). As entrepreneurs go about the increasing international involvement, not only do their perceptions of their work and venturing circumstances – the market, networks, institutions – and means (i.e. technology, infrastructure, cognitions) evolve, but also those circumstances and means take new shape through these entrepreneurs' actions and interactions over time (Sarasvathy et al., 2014; Venkataraman et al., 2012). Discussion about this kind of change agency of international entrepreneurs is emergent (Autio et al., 2011; Zahra et al., 2014), but has remained very limited in terms of knowing how these agentic processes unfold and drive historical (i.e., economic, societal) change (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019).

2.4.2 Subsequent generations of international entrepreneurial actors

The context of experience in general has the potential *'to shape the very meaning underlying human behaviour and attitudes'* (Johns, 2006). In this vein, an individual's generational context is seen to influence one's perceptions of who they are and what they do in the stream of chronological time (Gelderen & Masurel, 2012). Relatedly, in each country, the prevalent cultural identity of a society together with the generational location in which an individual is embedded offers their unique histories, tales and norms into the 'narrative knowing' (Polkinghorne, 1988) from which the 'experiencer' of a particular historical time context draws from when making sense and describing one's life-narratives, including working life experiences.

Being born around the similar historical time context poses similar macro-level events and experiences on the focal individuals' developmental years (Mannheim, 1952), creating some preliminary difference in modes of behaviour, feelings and thoughts *across* different age-cohorts in encountering working life (Pilcher, 1994). A generation is regarded at the same time as a product and a driver of societal change, that is, a nation's economic fluctuations and the unfolding working-life discourse in a society (Järvensivu et al., 2014). An individual's sense of being part of a generation is seen as the awareness or sense-making of one's life and career journey and the embedded developmental and transitional experiences locating around certain critical societal changes and recalling of meaningful events, which then become meaningful in terms of one's generational 'identity' (Järvensivu et al., 2014). Moreover, the way one's age-cohort and the certain historic period of meaningful years in life are intertwined has been noted to have meaning in terms of how one's (work-)life narrative becomes constructed, that is, what kind of story one wants to be part of and sustain though many other things are inevitably meaningful as well (Järvensivu, et al., 2014). Relative to this, individuals' 'literary consciousness' in generations (Clifford & Marcus, 1986) and narrative sense-making often reflects and interprets events and situations in one's life through a generational content of memory, the surrounding possibilities and opportunities as well as boundaries stemming from the individual's social and cultural 'stock of narratives' (Hänninen, 1999).

Acknowledging entrepreneurs as actors embedded in their social environment (Thornton, 1999; Zahra et al., 2005), IE research has over the years aimed to advance a more comprehensive understanding of the international entrepreneurs' cognitions and behaviour reflecting their environment (McDougall-Covin et al., 2014) as well as their interaction with it (Weick, 1995). In accordance with the (social) surroundings of international entrepreneurs continuing to shape the individuals' cognitive processes (Zahra et al., 2005), wherein such developments may eventually lead to behavioural patterns in communities of entrepreneurs (Liu et al., 2019), we may also assume that international entrepreneurs' sense-making always remain somewhat environment-constrained (Oyson & Whittaker, 2015), perhaps not least due to their generational context. If we perceive IE as a developmental and/or career journey at the individual-level, it serves purpose to view those individuals we study as (potential) international entrepreneurs for their common age-cohort as a generational location in the stream of social historic processes (Liu et al., 2019). Moreover, IE in practice (which IE scholars of the field assumedly more or less seek to understand) becomes negotiated and interpreted by the individuals we call international entrepreneurs when they engage in the everyday activities of their international work through the lens of their generational underpinnings (Liu et al., 2019), providing its dialogue and temporal context for action and agency.

To summarize the conceptual and contextual framing of this doctoral study, I conclude along the terms of Garud et al. (2014): to contextualize the journey the individuals I have set out to study and I myself as a qualitative narrative researcher, I associate with the social and material elements in the surrounding world by accounting for the particular events of past, present and/or projections of future actions, and 'perform' the conditions required for making progress. Therefore, I hold that the personal narratives and journeys I study are contextualized and become effective through narrative sense-making both in real time (past – present – future) and over time (history). Furthermore, thinking of what constitutes the substantive content of this focal research, it is actually close to a 'journalistic' practice of telling a contextual story (Johns, 2006): describing the *'who', 'what', 'when', 'where'*, and *'why'* to the reader, this piece of research is putting recounted events in their proper context (Johns, 1991, p. 392). Accordingly, in this dissertation, I have tried to avoid an ad hoc or a one-dimensional understanding of context (i.e. as constraints versus opportunities for a certain behaviour) but aimed to introduce a plural view of contextualization of the IE journey as historical events in narrative (Johns, 2006). While contextualization is surely always incomplete leaving questions unanswered, the aim here is to have introduced the dimensions of context that are relevant to this particular narrative inquiry of the 'I' in international entrepreneurship.

3 Research design

> *'Experience is meaningful and human behaviour is generated from and informed by this meaningfulness. Thus, the study of human behaviour needs to include an exploration of the meaning systems that form human experience.'*
> —Polkinghorne, 1988

To apply Donald Polkinghorne's (1988) words, this dissertation is an inquiry into the international entrepreneurship (IE) narrative, the primary form by which experience of IE is made meaningful. Between the theoretical presumptions and conclusions of this doctoral study lie the conducted research and interpretation of findings. After I became aware of the IE discourse largely being at the firm-level, though acknowledging the multidimensional and human-led nature of the phenomenon, my interest turned to reviving the discourse of the individual international entrepreneurs and their personal journeys. In alignment with the major outlook of 'process-based' studies in both internationalization (Catherine Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014) and entrepreneurship (McMullen & Dimov, 2013), my doctoral study evolved as a qualitative inquiry, designed to construct and interpret interview- and archival-based 'biographic histories' (Fillis, 2007) of international entrepreneurs through a narrative approach (Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 1993). Differing from conventional studies of the processes of founding and internationalization of new ventures, the so-called (auto)biographies constructed in and for this study aim to focus our attention on the individual international entrepreneurs' *narrative histories* (McGaughey, 2007), instead of that of the venture. Also, whereas the unit of analysis in this study might seem to be the individual "international entrepreneur", or the would-be international entrepreneur, it is not only or even primarily that. Instead, my interest lies in the individual-level journeys of 'becoming and being international entrepreneurs' and the retrospective sense-making of them, resembling a type of micro-level analysis in the IE research domain (Coviello & Jones, 2004).

3.1 Theoretical paradigm and rationale of the study

Every piece of research has its underlying basic assumptions and beliefs, in other words, 'a worldview' that influences not only how the researcher adopting a certain belief system goes about his or her decisions regarding the research and its design, but also how that particular piece of research should be interpreted by the reader and then related to other studies of a phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These basic assumptions and beliefs encompass the questions of ontology ('what is the form of reality and what is there that can be known about it?'), epistemology ('what is the nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known?') and methodology ('how can the inquirer—the would-be knower—go about finding out whatever s/he believes can be known?') (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). At the end, the beliefs in which these questions are embedded are *'basic in the sense that they must be accepted simply on faith'* as there is still—after millennia of philosophical debate—no flawless way to establish their ultimate truthfulness (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, pp.107–108) in our community of scientific knowledge creation and accumulation (see Table 2).

The vast majority of modern philosophies of science, reflected also in IE literature (Seymour, 2006), are based around a Cartesian split of subject–object (Tymieniecka, 2010). Ontologically, this dissertation is close to a relativist worldview of human experience, in which we are believed to construe *subjective*, local and specific realities (of meaning) that are not available to direct observation as "objects" (Polkinghorne, 1988). Therefore, the ontological, epistemological and methodological foundations of this dissertation are in the interpretivist constructivist paradigm, for the major part interested in the subjective experience of becoming and being an international entrepreneur. In contrast to the rationale of this present doctoral study, we can find the dominant positivist and postpositivist objective 'worldviews' in social sciences, which acknowledge a "real" reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) (only) for its concrete structures—the material and organic realms—where humans respond (or at least adapt) to that reality (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). At this end of the ontological and epistemological spectrum, prioritizing the matter for its (observable) attributes, things and substance are perceived as having an "inherent" character which can then be studied independently of any perceiving subject: the assumption is that *'reality is ultimately made up of context-free, independent substances that privilege a detached attitude of contemplation'* (Seymour, 2006, p. 140). In contrast to constructivist studies aiming for understanding through informed and sophisticated reconstruction of knowledge, research in the positivist school aims for explanation through prediction and control (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Between the major tension of positivist and constructivist paradigms, we find postpositivist and critical realist research, which reject the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the other two more extreme ends to different degrees. Whereas I largely reject naive realism in positivist aspirations of finding the objective or universal 'truths' when studying socially and historically embedded phenomena such as international entrepreneurship and experiences associated with the process, I also reject a 'naive relativist' argument, where reality does not exist beyond subjects but only in our interpretations (Järvensivu & Törnroos, 2010). Therefore, I find the rationale of this dissertation located somewhere in between the spectrum of constructivist–moderate constructionist views, and, depending on the publication, perhaps more leaning to the constructivist school of thought (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Among other things, observable human behaviour is generated from and informed by the *meaningfulness of experience* (Polkinghorne, 1988). Therefore, if we want to study and understand behaviour, be it international entrepreneurs' or their ventures', we must study how individuals interpret the stream of their life events and actions in conjunction with "the meaning systems" that form that human experience (Polkinghorne, 1988). Such a knowledge-constitutive and descriptive meaning-centred stance (Alvesson et al., 2008; see further Habermas, 1972) in this research aligns with the exploration of individual-level experience through the lens of 'narrative meaning' (Polkinghorne, 1988; see also Gartner, 2007; Johansson, 2004; Mantere et al., 2013).

Mindful of the ontological presuppositions of this study on what kind of human reality is 'real' and fundamental, or whether there is an "original" experience that can be captured, I hold that *'human existence is embedded to various degrees in the material, the organic and the meaning realms'* (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 2). As a complement to the material and organic structures of reality in formal science, I treat 'narrative' as one of the operations of the realm of *meaning* (find a holistic discussion of the 'realm of meaning in Polkinghorne, 1988). Furthermore, by recognizing the different intertwined structures of reality—the 'matter', 'life' as well as the 'consciousness' (Polkinghorne, 1988) in the exploration of human experience, I approach 'narrative' as a structure for organizing our knowledge and experience (Bruner, 1986). By taking such a stance, in this study I lean into thinking of human existence and experience as *a temporal process of interpretation*, involving a constant intertwinement of the past, present, and future (Meretoja, 2014). One way of thinking this is that of 'narrative knowing', in which narratives are formed when human cognitive structures encode and store information in different formats (Mandler, 2014). However, if we go far enough, narrative is perhaps not simply a method, but rather a process of meaning making that encompasses all three major spheres of inquiry: the scientific (physical), the symbolic (human experience) and the sacred (metaphysical) (Hendry, 2009). In essence, *'narrative explicates the imbalance that is prompted by a question, lived experience, or puzzling phenomenon'* (Hendry, 2009, p. 73). Hence, our response to those "imbalances"—the questions and doubts—is narrative, as in the ways in which we organize and make meaning of them. At the extremes, if narrative is understood as the primary way in which humans make meaning, the epistemological roots of the scientific and humanistic traditions can be traced to narrative (Bruner, 1986; Ricoeur, 1981). Hence, it is the 'schematic format of knowledge' that becomes the interest in studying narrative sense-making and meaning (Polkinghorne, 1988) while researching life experiences and biographic histories, and their context *'should not be applied as an alternative or as supplementary but a complementary research method'* (Hänninen, 1999, p. 73).

In alignment with the epistemology of narrative as inquiry in general (Hendry, 2009; Riessman, 1993), this research makes use of subjective experiences, where multiple levels of interpretation take place. As a narrative researcher, I ought to *'eschew the objectification of the people that we study and we understand and espouse the constructedness of our knowledge* (Josselson, 2006, p. 3). According to the embedded core beliefs, the present study embodies a transactional and subjectivist nature of the relationship between the researcher—the would-be knower—and what can be known of the surrounding world, where findings are said to be "created" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Instead of primarily seeking to explain and generalize phenomena through prediction and control, the aim is to *understand* phenomena through more and more informed and sophisticated reconstructions of constructions that people (also researchers) initially hold and provision "vicarious experience" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Hence, there are no given nor fixed meanings to experience but meaning is socially constructed and subjective (Bruner, 1986). In addition, in my own interpretations and (re)constructions of knowledge, I ought to acknowledge the local, community-bounded (i.e., interview site, a research discipline) forms of knowledge and *'interacting forms of truth'* (Järvensivu &

Törnroos, 2010, p. 101), which are then understood through dialogue, the joint and reflexive knowledge construction in interviewer–interviewee or researcher–researcher interaction.

Table 2. Positivism versus constructivist beliefs underlying research

	Positivist (functionalist)	**Constructivist** (interpretivist)
Ontological beliefs • *What is the form/nature of reality and what is there that can be known about it?*	Objective, fragmented, divisible "real-world", where phenomena and relationships exist as independent from individuals' perceptions.	Subjective, contextual, holistic and multiple realities, where phenomena and relationships are socially constructed. Individuals make sense of the external and/or internal world.
Epistemological beliefs • *What is the nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known?*	Natural laws govern all aspects of existence, which can be observed from "outside" the situation and context and abstracted in order to provide generalization beyond a specific context (causal models and theories). Nomothetic knowledge.	Principles governing conduct in a situation are to be contextualized. Concluded relationships between contextual "factors" and observations may transfer to similar situations. Idiographic knowledge. Interactive, co-operative relationship between researcher and research subject.
Human nature • *How do we account for human behaviour?*	Behaviour and being of individuals is reactive and deterministic (exceptions explained e.g., by variance from the mean or lack of rationality).	Human behaviour and being is voluntaristic and proactive ("free will") and may be constrained by external forces. Actions are not done merely under certain laws of behaviour.
Methodological beliefs • *How can the inquirer go about finding out whatever s/he believes can be known?*	Researchers are after generalizations to *explain*. Models and theories of behaviour as outcomes of analysis from large samples and small scope findings and systematic methods to construct theories to demonstrate causality in the "real world". Quantitative and qualitative data.	Researchers conclude in-depth transferable subjective reports of events and situations in order to *understand*; analyse observations from small samples in detail where the presence of the researcher is accounted for. Qualitative data.

Table constructed from Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Hudson and Ozanne (1988).

3.2 Methodological approach

Methodology—the techniques I have used to explore 'reality'—in this dissertation roots from hermeneutics and is aligned with narrative research (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012) that *'strives to preserve the complexity of what it means to be human and to locate its observations of people and phenomena in society, history and time'* (Josselson, 2006, p. 3). Consequently, the understanding of human experience in this dissertation has its ontological and epistemological roots in interpretivism and constructionism, where the notion is that *'our existence cannot be separated from the stories that we tell of ourselves'* (Ricoeur, 1981). It is a different, but complementary worldview to the 'logico-scientific' mode of thought (Bruner, 1986)—one of many modes transforming knowing into telling (Mishler, 1986). With the interest in how individuals assign meaning to their experiences through the stories they tell (Moen, 2008), the analytical approaches in this study serve as both descriptive and explanatory (Polkinghorne, 1988).

In general terms, a narrative is understood as *'a story that tells a sequence of events that are significant for the narrator and his or her audience'* (Denzin, 1989, p. 37). In resemblance of a person's 'literary consciousness' (Clifford & Marcus, 1986), narration—or storytelling—occurs naturally along with mastering a language (Moen, 2008). As a way of recounting and creating order out of experience, narration starts in early childhood and continues through all stages of our lives. Hence, personal narratives are related to *'the world of human action'* and often serve as *'a response to the human experience of feelings of discord of fragmentation in regard to time'* (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 67). Derived from this, the kind of narrative sense-making of one's 'becoming and being' process in the world is in a sense an evolving construction of "a plot" around lived events and episodes, which brings together the narrator's goals, causes and chance within the temporal unity of a whole action (Polkinghorne, 1991).

As one of the publications for this dissertation deals with historical contextualization (Baker & Welter, 2018; Welter, 2011) of internationalization and the international entrepreneurs from the perspective of their 'legacy' in and across two generations, one objective in applying a narrative approach was to explore what historical narratives reveal about individuals and their relation to the past (Polkinghorne, 1988). While it does not directly tap on the first-hand oral accounts of human experience and narrative sense-making of the international entrepreneur, it deals with the historical evidence and (re)construction of founder narratives and their meaning in and over time. In alignment with the other publications on more contemporary literary data, the conducted historical inquiry is primarily about the *'past activities of human agents and about nonrepeatable events, while employing narrative descriptions and interpretations as the primary form by which it organizes and explains its data'*, a function of human science versus formal science with a deductive-nomological form of explanation (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 37). According to the hermeneutic perspective of narratives, they are 'imaginative constructions of order' (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012) and are not suggested to describe what is "real", but what gives an experience its significance in one's reality (Ricoeur, 1988).

Applying an interpretivist historical perspective (Vaara & Lamberg, 2016) in the analysis of the collected archival data, the study combines traditional historical research—characterized by its focus on actor and actions as contextual and temporally situated and the search for the actors' motives (Bucheli & Wadhwani, 2014)—with the new stream of literature that aims to use historical research in theorizing in a dialog with social sciences (Kipping & Üsdiken, 2014; Rowlinson et al., 2014). Contextualizing the international entrepreneurs as sense-makers and agents embedded in their historical time, we may embrace and raise further context-bound questions of the focal IE phenomenon, that is, who, when, where, what and why (Welter, 2011) on the top-down and bottom-up effects of the embeddedness occurring over time (Baker & Welter, 2018).

Different from chronicles, which are often mere listings of events placed on a timeline, narratives provide hermeneutic and symbolized sense-making accounts of actions with temporal dimensions. In more specific terms, sense-making and answers to the question of "what's the story?" *'emerge from retrospect, connections with past experience, and dialogue among people who act on behalf of larger social units'* (Weick et al., 2005, p. 413). Within a narrative, we can detect the establishment of comparisons and contrasts between the 'old' and the 'new'; what is distinctive and what is similar (Taylor & Van Every, 2000).

As mentioned, life- and self-narratives serve as means of making sense of and strengthening personal identities (Linde, 1993; Riessman, 1993). In this research, both temporal and schematic understanding of linking events and actions in the founders' journeys as a memorable knowledge format makes this dissertation an interpretative turn in exploring the constructions of 'narrative identity' of becoming and being an international entrepreneur. In relation to the idea of a narrator's *reflexivity* (James, 1890/1950) and human 'selfhood' (McAdams & Cox, 2010), the process of meaning-making—where "I" encounters the "me"—produces discursively an objective perspective of the "self". In this dissertation, I considered the narrator (either the international entrepreneur or me) as both the "knower" and the "object of that knowing" (McAdams, 2013). Through analysing the sense-making processes and construction of narrative identities (McAdams & McLean, 2013) of the interviewed founders as well as international entrepreneurs in the literary history, the aim was to gain a more diverse founder-view of the different ways it has meant and/or means to 'become and be' an international entrepreneur.

By approaching the 'historic and hermeneutic' activity of storytelling (Banks, 1982), I recognize the narration of both subjects of research as well as that of the researchers (i.e., authors of case studies, reports and scientific treatises). Therefore, in a way, both interviews and other means of data collection as well as conducting analyses of those interviews and other material are 'micro-sites' of narrative production (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 51; see also Riessman, 1933), where researchers first as interviewers or collectors of archival material and then as (co-)writers of findings *'join with the aim of crystallizing varied community-based accounts of knowledge'* (Lehto, 2015, p. 286). Therefore, we may hold that such theorized knowledge, narrative being not only a fleeing moment of temporal interpretation, may also become transferable to other related contexts through rigorous research (Polkinghorne, 2007).

3.2.1 Narrative material of the study

In order to study the realm of meaning through narrative sense-making, there is an inherent need for linguistic data, where language is commensurate with meaning (Polkinghorne, 1988), and to provide holistic descriptions and subjective causal pathways between relevant events, actors and the context (Makkonen et al., 2012). Hence, we acknowledge that at the personal level, narrative as sense-making serves as the fundamental means by which individuals organize, explain and understand life and social relations that are heterogeneous, which further highlights the local context, diversity and emotionality of human experience (Riessman, 1993).

Narration is said to be present in language, image, gesture as well as myth, painting and conversation and appears in many forms, be it heard, seen or read (Barthes, 1982; Sandelowski, 1991). Some typical examples of narrative material in qualitative business research include narrative interviews and conversations; oral histories, chronicles, biographies and family/company stories; journals and autobiographical writings; field notes; and letters, photographs, and personal artefacts (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 216). However, generating narrative material for research is itself a selective activity in a specific time and context, to a specific audience (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). While narrative material can be found or generated in and from various sources, the source of choice is determined by what one wants to describe or explain (Polkinghorne, 1988).

The source material I used in this dissertation are historical archival documents, published literature and face-to-face interviews. In addition, I used personal notes, online articles and other relevant literary sources to aid the construction of 'hermeneutic circles' adding layers of meanings in the process of interpreting the interview data as much as the historical case narratives. As such, all the individual studies were non-linear processes and progressed through the dialogue between theory and empirical data—iteration and analysis (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

Overall, I generated the primary qualitative research material for this study between 2015 and the end of 2018, and as such it creates a compilation of three separate but—at the end—supplementary narrative datasets. Both the two autobiographical data (interviews with founders and narrative texts of the students), as well as the archival data describing IE in another historical time, were generated, handled and analysed to reveal more of the variety of international entrepreneurial journeys (Hansen, 2012; Labov, 2013; Lieblich et al., 1998; Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 1993).

Sampling

The "key informant" to tell of the personal experience of becoming and being an international entrepreneur was assumedly the international entrepreneur her or himself—

the founder and the "internationalizer". Hence, I contacted 20 international entrepreneurs to take part in the interviews. To gain a reflective understanding of being a potential international entrepreneur, I asked 33 Master's students aiming for an international and entrepreneurial career about their journey to international entrepreneurship studies and their understanding of IE. These narrative texts came to serve as sense-making of individuals at the early stage of their potential international entrepreneurial journeys, prior to having established the legal entity of a firm. As the study unfolded, a research opportunity emerged in 2017 to study three historical case firms and their founders of which two ended up being part of this dissertation in Publication IV. In order to study the historical entrepreneurs and the initial developments of their ventures in a different historical time context, the only choice was to rely on archival data and coeval writings[1] to iterate a narrative of the focal individuals and their journeys to international entrepreneurship.

The sampling design in each study was purposive and judgement-based and expected to ensure an acceptable quality and transferability of findings, however sample-specific and therefore non-generalizable in the positivist sense. The research problem in this doctoral study necessitated rich deep information and analysis, which would mean a smaller set of cases as appropriate (Smith et al., 1989) and provides that generalizability is not assumed. Purposive sampling (Fletcher & Plakoyiannaki, 2011; Sandelowski, 1995) was appropriate for selecting informants and sources who could provide insight into individuals' international entrepreneurial journeys, as the aim was to hear a maximally broad range of stories from the field.

Furthermore, with a view to acquiring both 'obtainable' and 'important' data (Coviello & Jones, 2004, p. 493), the initial and perhaps the most explicit criterion for the sample (including interview data, historical archival data and student data) was based on the framed "conclusions" of the international entrepreneurial journeys, in other words, the outcome of the process in question (McMullen & Dimov, 2013). This criterion deviates from the common criteria of IE research—the firm characteristics (i.e., firm size, age and sector)—which aims to generalize findings and generate comparison between studies (Coviello & Jones, 2004).

Though made explicit in the description of interviewees and the historical case firms, there is no specific industry scope in this research as the "unit of analysis" is the journey of the entrepreneur or potential entrepreneur, not the ventures or the individuals as such. Therefore, the industry settings vary across manufacturing-oriented and service-oriented, as well as high- and low-technology ventures, which follows the view that IE research calls for investigations beyond high-technology samples (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Zahra & George, 2002). Again, due to the interest lying in the variety of journeys, the size and age of the firms as context do not hold high relevancy in this study. All of the ventures employed at least two people plus project-based expertise in some cases. With an initial

[1] Means the writings of people having lived and experienced the world roughly at the same time as the person under study.

SME focus, most of the ventures at the time of the firms' internationalization had fewer than 100 employees. The matter of "early internationalizing venture" provided that all of the interviewed founder-CEOs were leading at least a 2-year-old venture, whereas some of the interviewed had been leading the firm for several decades already, although internationalizing the venture early on. In addition, the historical cases in Publication III were selected from those now successful and large multinationals since they offered adequate and appropriately preserved, rich archival data. Moreover, the distinction between small firms and entrepreneurial firms is a matter of emphasis (Coombs et al., 2009), and many venture types are relevant in IE (Jones et al., 2011). Therefore, there was an initial decision to refrain from selecting a sample by, for example, any particular industry, internationalization strategy, or entry-mode characteristics.

In terms of the research's country context, the overall geographic focus of the study is Finland, a small open economy, where 93 % of the venture population consists of firms of under 10 employees (Suomen Yrittäjät, 2020). At the country level, this study has focused on the narratives of entrepreneurs with origins in Finland, their small ventures and their outward internationalization to various countries, and was conducted largely within the borders of Finland. At the researcher level, this study has incorporated the interpretations of three scholars of different nationalities—Finland, Denmark (Publication II), Norway and the United Kingdom (Publication IV)—as well as the larger international academic community of IE and international business (IB) scholars in a number of seminars and conferences across Europe.

In consideration of the fieldwork's "time frame" in the present qualitative research design, Publications I, II and III are based on one-shot retrospective narrative interviews and texts, complemented with later emerging published newspaper articles or online material. The historical archival data collected for Publication IV is longitudinal in nature, based on the collections of private and public archives covering almost 200 hundred years of the firms' operations. Though time in the research field does not "follow up" and reveal passing of time or aim to capture the "ongoing" process as such, both data sets reflect time as a significant backdrop for analysing holistic sequences of events and patterns, and contextualizing sense-making of past and future from the vantage point of the present (McMullen & Dimov, 2013; Weick et al., 2005).

Narrative interviews

As noted above, life-narratives serve as fundamental resources in approaching the sense-making of human conduct and identity (McAdams, 2008). It has been argued that in presenting a subjective version of reality, narratives '*transport narrators and audiences to more authentic feelings, beliefs, and actions and ultimately to a more authentic sense of life*' (Ochs & Capps, 1996, p. 23). Narration in interviews is a threshold activity as it captures a narrator's interpretation of a link among elements of the past, present and future at a 'liminal place' and fleeting moment in time (Churchill & Churchill, 1982). As such, the interview situation is an opportunity for interviewees to (re)construct their (life-) narratives in different ways, unfolding '*different perspectives on the past, leading to* *different understandings of the present, with implications for the future'* (Birch & Miller, 2000, p. 93; referring also to Ricoeur, 1991; Rosenthal, 1993).

Accordingly, I chose to generate data through open-ended narrative interviews (Riessman, 1993) in order to ensure first-person, personal accounts of international entrepreneurs' real-life experiences and sense-making regarding their IE journey. The overall aim was to obtain a prolific description of their experiences, as the interview strategy I applied can be broadly summarized according to the simple principles laid out for (auto)biographical, narrative interviews (Hendry, 2007; Hollway, 1997; Rosenthal, 1993), namely, by the use of open-ended questioning, with a willingness to elicit stories, embrace silence, avoid 'why' questions, and to follow up on on-site emerging content by using the interviewee's own ordering and phrasing of experiences.

In total, this dissertation discusses the retrospective interview narratives of 19 founder-CEOs and their personal sense-making of their past, present and future. Interviewees were sampled and the "conclusion" criteria (see earlier section for the sampling design)—the artificially contrived end of the journey—based on the assumed position and role of the individual at the time the interview was conducted. In other words, by the time they were narrating their story, the interviewed individuals had founded and internationalized their company one way or another. Moreover, the main criteria for the interviewees—the founder-CEOs—were (a) that they had founded a company that had been running for over two years; (b) that they had led the internationalization of the firm in some way or another during the first years of operation; and (c) that they were managing the company at the time of the interview. The founder-CEOs' ventures had begun their international operations either from inception or within the first five years of operation. Operations were commenced either reactively, due to the firm's global client base and seemingly limited market in the country, or proactively, due to the desire to seek new markets, challenges, and so on.

Based on my discretion as a narrative researcher and holding a particular view of the field's general developmental stage, I initially sought entrepreneurs with different kinds of 'narratives' from the practical field in order to gain a diverse set of perspectives for the focal subject under study—journeys of becoming international entrepreneurs. Therefore, no limitation in regard to the founder-CEOs' background (i.e., education), field of business, international target markets or entry modes was set when initial sampling of potential interviewees was done. Potentially suitable interviewees were identified through business magazines, internet searches, personal networks and an industry fair/exhibition, after which the interviewees were contacted via phone and/or email. The 'first-contact' invites to participate in the research interview was sent by email to potential interviewees between 2015 and 2018. The majority of the contacted founder-CEOs agreed to meet for an interview, usually in their personal office or the like. When contacting the (potential) interviewees and discussing the time and place of the interview with them, I also informed them of the kind of life-narrative method I was applying (Atkinson, 2007; Riessman, 1993) and how I wanted their original personal accounts of their experiences. The interviews were conducted one-on-one and face-to-face by me, lasting between 50 minutes to 2 hours and 26 minutes each. The interviews were audio recorded with the permission of the interviewee and produced up to 31 hours of discussion. I provided anonymity by transcribing the recordings either myself or with the permission of the interviewee through a service that was bound by privacy policies (due to emerging wrist problems in the end year 2018 and consequent time limitations). Transcriptions produced 340 pages of text (Times New Roman, font 12, single space). Also, I carefully removed and/or deliberately changed initials or marks of any specific recognizable details (i.e., names, places, countries) in the interview accounts at the time of analysing and reporting findings.

Overall, when stepping into the interview situations, the fundamental goal was to facilitate a setting where it would be possible for the interviewee to—in person and without pressure—tell of personally important and significant events, experiences and relationships, and their meaning (Riessman, 1993). Therefore, by giving the interviewees the freedom to choose the place for the interview, I sought to minimize any feelings of externality or uneasiness one might have in coming to and being in a research interview setting with their experiences. Again, in the beginning of the interviews as well as at later stages, I would try to emphasize that my desire was to hear the person's own experience and subjective account, rather than a polished company story. Before going into the actual theme, I further highlighted my prioritizing of trust, confidentiality and sensitivity to the interviewee's story as we would be operating on the terms of the interviewee, not me as a researcher.

The 19 in-depth interviews I have included in this study were subsequent to a pilot interview with a founder-CEO of a Finnish small internationally grown manufacturing company. This interview was later removed from further analysis, but it served well as a practice situation for the rather challenging and demanding type of narrative interview technique. After having conducted interviews with four founder-CEOs during the fall of 2015, not yet fully embedded in the academic discourse of IE, I was still relatively 'unfamiliar' with the theoretical conventions and traditions of the discipline, and had a fresh ear for hearing of the practical side of the phenomenon. At this point, I was able to start following up on both my own as well as the interviewees' sense-making processes of constructing the IE narrative complementary to the conventional or 'realist' one. This prompted a methodologically oriented, more reflexive research manuscript for future use.

As can be anticipated of any doctoral student engaged in their learning process, simultaneously with becoming more 'informed'—or less 'novice'—in my reading of IE literature and beyond, I became more and more experienced as a "life-narrative interviewer". While generating comprehensive interviews with 15 more founder-CEOs, I had developed a much more "attentive ear" to certain reoccurring themes and "nature" of experiences in the founders' accounts and detected a raw sense of similarity as well as difference across the interviews, which then assisted me in my note-taking as well as preparedness for diving further into my analysis.

The actual focus—the theme—in the interviews was the journey of becoming what they were now career-wise—international entrepreneurs. In practice, the start of the interview entailed a single, open question forming a kind of invitation: “Please, tell me in your own words, how did you become an international entrepreneur?” This would prompt them to start their personal story from where they felt their journey into international entrepreneurship had started—from what they considered as the “beginning”. Further inquiry would prompt: “From your own perspective, what have been the experiences, events and/or relationships that have been meaningful for you on the way?”. My interview guide (see Appendix I) provided me with a tool to go over times and dimensions in their lives and encourage the participants for a free discussion over certain themes, if not emerging from the interviewee’s own ‘stock of narratives’ (Hänninen, 1999).

The narrative type of interviewing technique and loose structure with open-ended and then attentive elaborative interview-content based questions was to encourage a “story-telling” kind of space and allowed rich accounts of the interviewees’ life journey, spanning events from their early childhood to projections of future visions. Digression from the initial topic was avoided by asking for elaboration on related events and experiences arising from the interviewee’s own distinct accounts, while aiming for neutrality in probing those further elaborative questions. This allowed me to follow up themes, adhering to the narrated order, and using the respondent’s own words and phrases. On-site recall of thematically relevant accounts activated the interviewee to elaborate events and experiences in greater detail. Although this approach limits strict comparability across the interview data, it provides better insights into the themes, content, and meaning within and across the data (Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 1993) and a more profound understanding of their ‘IE narratives’ and the critical incidents marking their journeys.

Textual narrative data

In addition to the main interview data, a literary student dataset gives perspective to the IE phenomenon at a ‘to-be’ founder level. In 2016, a course-related workshop was conducted, in which 33 students between the ages of 21 and 33 were asked to narrate their ‘journey’ to pursue a degree in international business and entrepreneurship that culminated in attending a Master’s program in a Finnish university. In conjunction, they were to provide their personally constructed definitions of IE in their written text. This dataset ended up holding complementary value in exploring generational perceptions of IE, more specifically the relative meanings individuals give to the phenomenon and motivations for an international entrepreneurial career path prior to actually having transitioned into being a full-time entrepreneur or an international business professional. Therefore, this literary data can shed light on “pre-IE” perceptions, where one is not yet fully engaged in the processes but can be assumed to have gained some preliminary ideas or experience of the concept “in theory”.

Appendix II gives an outline of the data collection setting and context. A total of 24 pages of individual-level insights in a workshop setting, the student narratives serve as a window into the individual sense-making of IE before one has “entered” international entrepreneurial work as a founder and “internationalizer” of a company. The group was diverse in terms of their national background and gender, hence, the aim was not to compare these individuals for their demographic or cultural profile, but to gain insight of their narration of their own ‘generational location’ (Mannheim, 1952) in comparison to previous and future times of being an (international) entrepreneur (i.e., social and structural settings of growing up and working). Seeing international entrepreneurs as well as students in the data for their “membership” in their own ‘age-based cohort’—their generation —the preliminary analysis would position them into groups of people born and raised in similar general chronological, social and historical contexts (Gibson et al., 2009). However, as in the ongoing discussion in generations research, in this study I acknowledge that *‘generational cut-off points aren’t an exact science. They should be viewed primarily as tools [...] But their boundaries are not arbitrary. Generations are often considered by their span, but again there is no agreed upon formula for how long that span should be’* (pewresearchcenter.org, 2019).

Publication IV is based on archival data and treats historical narrative as a source of meaning making, but from a slightly different perspective. In addition to the interview data of contemporary founders and their narratives, an archival dataset was collected iteratively during 2017–2018 of the founder-entrepreneurs of two early internationalized Finnish companies in the latter half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. The historical documents provide authentic, first-hand accounts by the focal entrepreneurs. The generated historical dataset adds longitudinal historical perspective to the “collective narrative” of IE at the individual level as it produces two biographical narratives of international entrepreneurs from “the time before the Oviatt and McDougal, 1994” definitions of IE. Here, archival data provides a constructivist lens to the contextual and historical narration (Hansen, 2012) and my own sense-making of international entrepreneurial agency as a researcher. Approaching the lives of the founders of two family firms and their successors from their adolescence onwards, the generated narratives provide means to shed light on the emergence of international venturing during the first global economy. Through presenting the actions and social relationships of the founders in their historical context and in the chain of events, the analysis dives into the detailed description of each entrepreneurs’ engagement in IE as a historically-bound journey.

According to the initial sampling for a larger research project studying the internationalization of family firms, Publication IV investigates two Finnish family firms originating from the businesses launched by the international entrepreneurs Antti Ahlström and Gustaf Serlachius in the mid-1800s, whose initial ventures have since evolved into two global multinationals—currently known as Alhstrom-Munksjö and Metsä Group, respectively. The historical context of their international venturing was a time of intensified economic activity in a remote and developing country benefitting from the international expansion of the forest industry when coming to the end of the 1800s and early 1900s (Lamberg et al., 2012; Sajasalo, 2002). In terms of the specific country context, former research provides that the welfare of today’s Finland and the ability of such a small country to be a global leader in sharing well-being has significantly been based on the emergence of early and rapidly internationalizing wood-processing ventures lead by nationally renowned entrepreneurs during the wave of globalization in the 1800s as much as the further growth and development of the new ventures into the world-leading paper companies of the more recent global economy (Hjerppe, 1989; Kirby, 2006; Lamberg et al., 2012; Singleton & Upton, 1998). Case descriptions and timelines indicating both the micro- and macro-contexts for their international venturing are found in Publication IV, pages 10–11.

Prior to and after attending the archives, we drew on existing history books, research publications and biographies written on the histories of these firms and their entrepreneurs to direct the process of data collection and further contextualization of the analysis. With access to the company documents, the archival data were collected from the Central Archives for Finnish Business Records (ELKA) and the Ahlström archives in Noormarkku. In the archives, collecting information from files in the form of international correspondence, diaries and meeting minutes was prioritised after having consulted existing literature for critical events and years in the founder's and their successors' international venturing. See Table 3 below for a description of the complete dataset.

Table 3. Data description

Interview data	Age-cohort	Highest degree	Field of business	Main and other foreign office(s); international scope	Time and duration of interviews
Interviewee 1	61-65	Master's degree (MSc)	Software design, management consulting	Finland; global MNE client base	Fall 2015; 1h 24m
Interviewee 2	56-60	Bachelor's degree (BA)	Management consulting	Finland / Western expert network; European SME client base	Fall 2015; 1h 17m
Interviewee 3	31-35	MSc	Software design, management consulting	Finland; global MNE client base	Fall 2015; 1h 21m
Interviewee 4	71-75	MSc	Manufacturing, machinery	Finland; global SME client base	Spring 2017; 1h 27m
Interviewee 5	71-75	BA	Manufacturing, machinery	Finland; European, US, Australian SME and MNE client base	Spring 2017; 2h 26m
Interviewee 6	56-60	BA	Industrial technology and services	Finland, Sweden, Norway; European SME/MNE client base	Spring 2017; 1h 38m
Interviewee 7	46–50	MSc	Tourism, management consulting	Finland; Asian online consumer base	Spring 2017; 1h 12m
Interviewee 8	26–30	BA	Media production and marketing	Finland / Western freelance-network; European and US consumers	Spring 2017; 1h 51m

Interviewee 9	26-30	BA	Software design and marketing	Finland, Germany, US; global SME/MNE clients and online consumer base	Summer 2017; 1h 23m
Interviewee 10	31-35	BA	Software design, e-learning	Finland; global online consumer base	Summer 2017; 2h 8m
Interviewee 11	31-35	BA	Software design, business consulting	Finland, UK; global SME and MNE client base	Fall 2017; 1h 33m
Interviewee 12	56-60	Doctoral degree (PhD)	Industrial technology and services	Finland, USA; global MNE client base	Fall 2017; 2h 6m
Interviewee 13	46-50	BA	Security technology and services	Finland; global SME distributors and consumer base	Fall 2017; 1h 51m
Interviewee 14	36-40	High school	Manufacturing, hygiene	Finland, US; global online consumer base	Spring 2018; 1h 37m
Interviewee 15	56-60	MSc	Security technology and services	Finland; global SME and MNE client base	Spring 2018; 2h 0m
Interviewee 16	46-50	MSc	Industrial technology and services	Finland; global SME and MNE client base	Spring 2018; 1h 49m
Interviewee 17	41-45	PhD	Industrial technology and services	Finland; European SME client base	Spring 2018; 1h 44m
Interviewee 18	41-45	MSc	Software design, business consulting	Finland, Germany; global SME and MNE client base	Fall 2018; 50m
Interviewee 19	36-40	PhD	Manufacturing, packaging	Finland; Western SME and MNE client base	Summer 2018; 1h 15m

Student data	**Age-cohort**	**Highest degree**	**Nationality**	**International and work experience**
Student 1	26-30	BA	Finnish	Exchange in South-Korea
Student 2	21-25	BA	Finnish	Exchange in UK; data analysist in a firm
Student 3	31-35	BA	Finnish	Exchange in Taiwan
Student 4	21-25	BA	Russian	Lived in Belgium for 6 months
Student 5	31-35	MSc	Finnish	Lived 16 years in Spain; a military career
Student 6	31-35	BA	Finnish	No international experience; an entrepreneur
Student 7	26-30	BA	Philippine	Marketing background
Student 8	21-25	BA	Russian	Exchange in Austria and Germany
Student 9	21-25	BA	British	Exchange in and moving to Finland; starting up a business
Student 10	21-25	BA	Czech Republican	No other than moving to Finland
Student 11	21-25	BA	Azerbaijani	No other than moving to Finland
Student 12	21-24	BA	Indian	Studies and work in UK; founder of an e-commerce business
Student 13	21-25	BA	Chinese	No other than moving to Finland
Student 14	26-30	BA	Finnish	Lived 1 year in Spain; work in customer service
Student 15	36-40	MSc	Finnish	Work background in environmental management

Student 16	21-25	BA	British	Exchange in the Netherlands and work experience in the US
Student 17	21-25	BA	Vietnamese	Lived and studies in India and Sri Lanka; work in MNE consultancy
Student 18	21-25	BA	Finnish	Exchange in South Korea; work in tourism
Student 19	21-25	BA	Finnish	Exchange in Ireland
Student 20	21-25	MSc	Ukrainian	Internships in Poland; artist / entrepreneur
Student 21	26-30	BA	Finnish	Exchange in Malaysia; work in an international company with domestic focus
Student 22	31-35	MSc	Finnish	10 years in defence forces
Student 23	26-30	BA	Vietnamese	Work experience in marketing
Student 24	21-25	BA	Japanese	Exchange in Canada; work experience in sales in a semiconductor company
Student 25	21-25	BA	Indian	work experience of 3 years in a manufacturing company
Student 26	21-25	BA	German	Exchange in Finland; some work experience in a multinational
Student 27	31-25	BA	Bangladesh	Work experience in UK
Student 28	26-30	BA	N. American/ Mexican	Multicultural family background; working in marketing and purchasing
Student 29	21-25	BA	German	Work experience in banking
Student 30	21-25	MSc	Finnish	Work experience in an international law firm
Student 31	26-30	BA	Zimbabwean	Studies in the US, S. Africa; working in accounting, retail & social entrepr.
Student 32	21-25	BA	British/Brazilian	Multicultural family background, exchange in Chile and Switzerland
Student 33	31-35	BA	Chinese	Immigrant in Finland; worked in international supply chain management

Archival data	**Place and time of data collection**	**Amount and nature of data**
Case Ahlström	ELKA, Mikkeli; September–November 2017	ca. 60 pages of international and domestic letter correspondence between 1905–1940
(currently Ahlström-Munksjö)	Ahlström Central Offices, Noormarkku; November 2018	ca. 310 pages of international and domestic letter correspondence, and internal documents between 1861–1963
Case Serlachius (currently Metsä Group)	ELKA, Mikkeli; September 2017–March 2018	ca. 400 pages of international and internal correspondence, diaries and meeting minutes between 1868–1978

3.2.2 Analysis of narratives

Narrative approaches to data recognize more than one ultimate principle in approaching data analytically (Lieblich et al., 1998). As a principle, knowledge and derived truth are not "absolute", but exist in relation to the context, where experience of the world depends on the individual's perception for its existence (Lieblich et al., 1998). Therefore, a narrative approach to analyses of literary data forces us to attend first to what is placed immediately before us—stories (Denzin, 1989; Sandelowski, 1991). Only after can we *'transform them into descriptions and theories of the lives they represent'* (Sandelowski, 1991, p. 162). In many ways, narrative researchers argue that in conducting analyses with a narrow focus on only content and coding data searching for simplicity and in order to present causes or generalities (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007), much of the fruitful nuances and underlying meanings in the research material will be lost. Then, as a consequence, human voice and sense-making become distanced, and initially interesting cases lose their life, relatedness as well as transferability.

The well-known works of Lieblich et al. (1998), Riessman (1993), Polkinghorne (1995), and Labov (2013) represent the various approaches of conducting narrative research. In general, they do not abide with certain coding procedures per se, but commit to making sense of the complexity of data with an open mind on its meaning. To spare some those nuances and different meanings in the data, there are two general ways to approach narratives: narrative analysis (NA) and analysis of narratives (AoN) (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Polkinghorne, 1988). The primary focus of AoN is on stories told by people and the *narrative as a form of representation*, as it approaches the narrative to analyse its plot, structure and/or story types. On the other hand, NA is organizing and interpreting empirical data into descriptions of events, happenings and actions, which is followed by the construction of one or more narratives for further interpretation and discussion. Therefore, it can be said that the focus is on *narrative as a mode of analysis* (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The overall aim is in preserving and interrogating particular instances embedded in the local context of the narrative (Silverman, 2015). However, there are several alternative focuses of both NA and AoN, which may end up overlapping and applied in the same study. The broad view in the different focuses of analysis is to interpret the *narrative nature* of data, either concerning its meaning and content ('what is told?'), its structure and form ('how is it told?'), or both—the 'how' affecting the interpretation of 'what', and vice versa.

Embedded hermeneutics

Highlighting the hermeneutic sense-making of individuals (Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005) and applying the analysis of narratives in such a way as to encompass the *'fragile, emerging and provisional character of any kind of 'unit' that emerges from and is embedded within a process'* (Steyaert, 2007, p. 459), this dissertation complements the theoretical view of the international entrepreneur with the "autobiographical author" dimension. Overall, the analysis processes in each of the publications aimed to bring together *'the past, present and future and embracing both unique and the recurring events and actions and their interlinkages, content, contexts and processes within time'* (Hurmerinta et al., 2016). Therefore, understanding of the collected narrative material builds on both hermeneutic and interpretivist historical understanding of the narratives.

Studies of narrative identity in psychology (McAdams, 2001; McAdams & McLean, 2013) as well as autobiographical research approaches (Hansen, 2012) offer their well-grounded work for the interdisciplinary and multidimensional lens needed to better understand the processes through which individuals make sense of their socially constructed and temporal identities, as well as rationalize and reason their contextual agency (Alvesson et al., 2008). Publications I, II and III, have their main focus on sense-making of the 'self' in the stream of narrated experiences (Krueger, 2007), either developmental (Krueger, 2007; McAdams, 2013), transitional (Ibarra, 1999; Tagliaventi, 2019) or generational (Järvensivu et al., 2014) in nature. Therefore, the different aspects of one's self are socially and culturally constructed meanings for making sense of one's identity and agency in various environments and relationships. Acknowledgment that retrospective accounts of the people's experiences are based on their current memory and knowledge, the studies draw upon the earlier research of the structures for memorizing and recalling patterns in experience (Mandler, 2014), reflecting the critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954). Accordingly, approaching interviews as narrative sensemaking (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2012; McMahon & Watson, 2013) means to take also note of the hermeneutic (re)construction process of experience in interviews (i.e., the intent, the content and the context of the account). In contrasting the narration of more superficial descriptions of the chronological sequence of events, I would explore the "paths" of creating a richer description of and linkages between events with meaning to the individual (Hurmerinta et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2016; Ruvio & Belk, 2018).

In Publication IV, hermeneutic interpretation of historical data means that the archival sources are defined as texts that should be interpreted in an historical context. The focus was thus on the structuring and interpretation of 'how and why something has happened', providing a historical individual agent and their actions coherence and plausibility in relation to past, present and future projections and trajectories (Polkinghorne, 1988). In recognition of '*the meaningfulness of individual experiences by noting how they function as parts in a whole*', hermeneutic methods provide adequate tools for understanding narrative (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 1, 36). In the analysis of context-sensitive qualitative data, hermeneutic reasoning provides means for recognizing and interpreting analogies and patterns in those focal linguistic messages and for drawing conclusions from them (Polkinghorne, 1988).

After the meaning and structure of narrative sense-making

In exploring the content of the narrative material, both interviews and archival data (i.e., what happened, to whom, where and how), I started with preliminary thematic analysis to organize the empirical data. Examining narratives as they are told or written by other actors, that is, biographies or life stories, I would find common narrative patterns or themes. As I recognized certain concepts, trends and ideas emerging both in and across different data, I began to integrate these themes into meaningful episodes and eventually larger storylines. By constructing a storyline, I would communicate the found meaning in the data—the individual events and actions in relation to their context in the story as well as in relation to the overall life-story.

A reconstruction of an interview or other literary data in a narrative format—the emplotment of the story—aims to make sense of and take into consideration the whole storyline. Such "reconstruction" of narrative material in searching for its 'storyline' becomes in itself a form of narrative analysis (Polkinghorne, 1995), a *holistic–content* approach to narrative interpretation. Such an approach is often used with (auto)biographies, and relevant in the present dissertation in terms of making sense of the life-narrative interviews as well as the archival data. Introducing the narrative material in its totality as well as in sets of smaller narrative fragments of text, the narrative is approached as a whole, where any one part of the narrative is interpreted in the context of the other parts (Polkinghorne, 1988).

In Publications I and IV, there is perhaps a clearer development and presentation of a constructed storyline as an outcome of the analysis of the narratives. In Publication I, I present five exemplary stories of the five ‘scripts’ that resemble the behavioural elements and narrative identities international entrepreneurs align with when they talk about their experiences that are developmental in nature. Publication I aligns with the narrative approach to internationalization (used in McGaughey, 2007), and takes a broad picture of narrative sense-making in the data. The analysis incorporates both the form and content dimensions of the interviews (Lieblich et al., 1998): by detecting narrative construction of interrelated, temporal and sequential events and actions, the aim is to detect the meaning—or “the plot”—of the whole narrative. To capture the different qualities and meanings of IE for the individual in their own context, the transcripts were analysed by considering the narrative episodes (McAdams & McLean, 2013) and their differences across the narratives (Polkinghorne, 1988). Moreover, applying principles of narrative inquiry into human life experiences (Polkinghorne 1988; Riessman 1993), which is seen as having made major contributions to the study of human cognition, Publication I draws upon script theory and autobiographic memory (Hiles & Cermák, 2008). Accordingly, it makes use of life-narratives as “scripts” (McAdams, 2006) which function as sense-making instruments (Brown et al., 2008) and also provide means for analysing how research participants encode information about their experiences, the surrounding world (Labov, 2013), and themselves (McAdams, 2013).

In light of this, Publication II is an analysis of the evolving ‘stories of the self’ (McAdams, 2008; Phoenix, 2008) in a transitioning context of becoming international and examines the hermeneutic process of reconstructing coherence between one’s past, perceived present and imagined future identities (Ibarra, 1999). This was done through investigating the process of sense-making of the meaning of one’s IE journey by working “backwards” through the particular triggering events and critical transitions and making use of the well-known critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954). The analysis focuses on how interpretation of prior experiences and expressed “identity work” mark the individuals’ processes—the different routes constructing meaning—of ‘becoming and being’ an international entrepreneur. Notions of the “vertical” construction of sense-making in time in contrast to the chronologically, or horizontally, unfolding events in one’s autobiographical narration guided the analysis further with a more hermeneutic perspective of the interview content. At the end, the analysis of the narrative sense-making brought ‘*together the past, present and future and embrac[ed] both unique and the recurring events and actions and their interlinkages, content, contexts and processes within time*’ (Hurmerinta et al., 2016, p. 811) in relation to the founder-CEO’s international(ising) sense of self.

In Publication IV, there are also four storylines that make sense of the data and its meaning. In constructing the historical cases, the ‘biographical approach’ enabled us to contextualize, interpret and narrate the historical actions as situated in their ‘social time’ and ‘social place’ (Abbott, 1998). That said, in Publication IV, meaning was found in the longitudinal treatment of the data, where archival narratives would form the story of two generations of a family firm, which would build up and give more nuanced content for both a historically embedded family narrative as well as a more intrinsic story of the incumbent–successor dynamics between two individuals. Inevitably, I as a researcher am a central part of the analysis as I construct the findings into such storylines, claiming meaning for the narrative accounts and archives.

The overarching focus of this dissertation being on the meaning of the narrative material, I also attended to the structure of narrative sense-making in order to venture between the structural and content dimensions in the data. In narrative research and analysis, the structure and form of a narrative have significant effect on how the content is interpreted (Riessman, 1993). To gain a broader picture of the narrative material, both the holistic–content and *holistic–form* dimensions of the material have to be analysed: (1) the narrative construction of interrelated, temporal and sequential events and actions, and (2) the structure and argumentative building of the “plot” of the story.

Therefore, before making sense of the overall experiences in the construction of the whole narrative, I also considered the *holistic-form dimension* of the data, that is, ‘how is the story told?’ or ‘what is the point of the story?’ (Labov & Waletzky, 2003; Mishler, 1986), which goes beyond the immediate content of the narrative (Riessman, 1993). For example, in Publication I, I used the classical Labovian approach (Labov & Waletzky, 2003) to initially reveal more of how a person encodes information about experience and makes sense of the surrounding world (Labov, 2013). This means that I considered the importance of structure, form and sequence in terms of “plot-making”, and that the analysis procedure on the interview accounts would inherently examine the narrative construction of “abstract” (how does the narrative begin?), “orientation” (who/what does the narrative involve, and when/where?), “complicating action” (then what happened?), “resolution” (what finally happened?), “evaluation” (so what?) and coda (what does it all mean?). These are considered as the “tellings” themselves and devices individuals use to make meaning (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

Both the narrative interview technique as well as archival data collection procedure I applied produced narrative data that I would soon recognize as consisting of smaller, scattered pieces of evidence. Also, I could not immediately recognize and point out the precise “beginning” and “ending” of each individual IE journey—be it the life-story interview or the historical story—but multiple beginnings and endings in between. These, what I would see as “miniature narratives”, were accumulated onto each other and dynamically affected one another. Pieces of the same puzzle, they would together build up the coherency of one’s whole story. What became important in analysing the interviews was the *evaluation* dimension of these miniature narratives—what did they communicate of the story as a whole? I would analyse how the interviewee (the narrator) would in a way exit the action (within the story) in order to comment on a meaning of a particular event or communicate a certain retrospective emotion or attitude attached to an incident. Such commenting on one's own narrative could be seen as giving the "soul" to the narrative (Labov, 1982), which further helped me to understand the interviews for their dynamic construction of present and past activity and experience. As an example, there is a comment one of the interviewees made in the middle of an account of a mismatched position of employment he had had in the past. It there and then aimed to give meaning to how it occurred and why (content in brackets added by author).

> *We somehow charmed each other within the recruitment process [description of past action]... Or that's how I've perceived it afterwards [commenting on the action based on the present knowledge].*

The *categorical–content dimension* of narrative analysis becomes relevant when further investigating any comparable content, for example, different themes emerging in different accounts across multiple interviews. The categorical approach in the analysis of narratives (Polkinghorne, 1988; 1995) is more appropriate in exploring a phenomenon assumed as somewhat common to a group of people. By dissecting each group member's narrative and collecting the resulting sections (e.g., themes, words) into defined categories (Lieblich et al., 1998), the goal is to find prevailing conceptual meaning or manifestation among the narratives (Polkinghorne, 1995). In this dissertation, the categorical–content approach is inherent to all of the publications. After obtaining the whole storyline and structure of a story as an individual piece, analysis of the narrative materials continued with integrative categorical analysis, where content became intertwined with its form of presentation. Based on the purposes and research questions of the different research articles, the (auto)biographic histories of international entrepreneurs were further analysed with respect to different theoretical lenses.

For Publication III, the interview and student data were further analysed with a focus on content relating to the individuals' sense-making of their own generational context, suggesting differences and similarities across their narrative sense-making. The analysis in and across the narrative content was done to see what one narrated of oneself among peers of similar age and people representing another generation of international entrepreneurs or other actors relevant in their own IE journey. The analysis was also conducted to detect the meaningful societal and/or political situations at certain (life-)events, feeding into a generation's sense-making of international venturing. The analysis of the student data furthermore aimed to break down different motivations for an IE education and career, as well as emerging values and defining features of IE from a "next-generation perspective".

In Publication IV, by making use of a historical 'biographical' approach (Fillis, 2015; Jones, 1998), the study ends up with stories constructed to describe human action in a social and historical context (Roberts, 2002). Exploring entrepreneurs with a different historical time lens enables further contextualization of IE as a social process (Welter, 2011) linking generations of entrepreneurs. The initial approach to the data focused on the biographical and archival data from different sources of the two founder-entrepreneurs and their domestic and international network ties during their pre-launch phases and the early internationalizing orientation of their ventures (from the 1850s to the turn of the 1900s). The historical data was explored in order to understand the individuals'—both founders' and successors'—life events and social network ties both holistically and categorically (Lieblich et al., 1998) and to trace the "formal" and informal relationships and influences (Fernhaber & Li, 2013) on their internationally oriented action at play during the extended intergenerational period of time. Moreover, social network ties (e.g., their type, location and strength) in the domestic to international context constructed the categorical-content of the literary data, whereas holistic-content in understanding the international networking (hi)stories and social legacy of these family firms emerged through interpreting the meaning of more particular network ties in light of the overall internationalization process and the succession—the "whole story". Then, a cross-case analysis allowed us to see differences and similarities between the two family narratives.

The *categorical–form* approach refers to analysis of expression and focuses on linguistic or stylistic characteristics in the narrative (Lieblich et al., 1998). This approach does not explicitly apply to any of the Publications of this dissertation. However, since the interview accounts reflect past and present experiences, future visions as well as taking part in a process called life-narrative interview, the interview itself is considered as a "co-created" meaning-making process taking place in a given time and space. Therefore, analysis of the interviews also considered the initial 'form' of telling as a means of making a point at the end, unfolding in a cyclical form. Also, the use of certain expressions, for example, culturally-specific words or metaphors, pointed towards a deeper analysis of the meaning of certain accounts in relation to the larger whole.

Briefly analysing this doctoral study as a whole, it also embeds other possibilities of interpretation if one takes some alternative focuses as suggested by Boje's (2001) so-called 'antenarrative' analysis. For example, choosing the actor-agent-author-frame (see Chapter 2) reveals a "developmental state" of the IE literature of the individual entrepreneur. Such framing unfolded as an analytical process of *deconstructing* the field narrative (Boje, 2001), through which I could recognize an under-current of profiling the individual, and then further focused on understanding some of the "unspoken" and rather implicit assumptions, ideas and frameworks that are currently forming the basis for our thoughts and beliefs when we discuss 'who is the international entrepreneur?'. In the same vein, by framing IE as a narrative journey and incorporating the "historic and hermeneutic" activity of storytelling (Banks, 1982; Sandelowski, 1991) of IE from both the research subject's and researcher's perspective, we may begin to *shatter* some of elements in the "grand narrative" (Boje, 2001)—the meta-narrative—of positivist IE research and IE as a firm-level phenomenon. This so-called shattering further problematizes the current dialectic quest of constructing a linear, unified and mono-voiced understanding of international ventures and their founders, and embraces dialogue and polyphonic narratives as generating meaningfulness of the phenomenon (Boje, 2001). Then again, resembling a so-called *microstoria* (Boje, 2001), contrasting the "grand narrative" of international new ventures and entrepreneurship of our current context with a broader understanding of the evolving macro history of internationalizing new ventures and their founders (earlier waves of globalization), the findings in this research together aim to revive and draw attention to local knowledge and ordinary people's histories, toning down the 'great man' accounts (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

This present methodological chapter together with some other parts of the research report can also be regarded as an account of the 'interactional context' (Riessman, 2002) of narrative sense-making of IE journeys, where the interest is in paying additional attention to the interviews and research reports as occasions for storytelling (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Typical for constructivist research is that narratives—be it data or reports of that data—are not produced in vacuums (Sale & Thielke, 2018). Therefore, the focal study also has elements of accounting for my own participation as a researcher in constructing the interview narratives as well as the "research narrative". What is not accounted for in this dissertation is the "performance" of narrative, which as an analytical focus, serves special interest beyond talk (Riessman, 2002). In particular, it examines how narrative is performed by the narrator alone or as a dialogue through the combination of spoken and body language, or storytelling in order to achieve something, for example, by complaining, explaining, justifying (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). However, research reports and presentations do encompass implicit and explicit narrative performative elements of the latter by telling stories "to achieve something" through their argumentative form.

3.3 Rigour of and reflexivity in the present narrative inquiry

In light of the particular methodological approach I have taken, this section reflects on the ethical decisions intertwined with the practical decisions comprising my study. A widely accepted notion in social sciences is that absolute objectivity and the conduct of unbiased methodological procedures throughout the research process from the beginning to the end in both quantitative and qualitative research are impossibilities (Davies & Dodd, 2002). Simply put, a researcher is always prone to their own pre-understandings and biased decision-making when conducting research (Stenbacka, 2001). Nevertheless, while knowledge does not dwell in value and attitude-free vacuums, one can still make a concerted effort to identify their own presence in the research process by paying attention to responsibility, accountability, partiality and subjectivity as a researcher (Davies & Dodd, 2002).

A good, rigorously unfolding qualitative study aids a researcher in the process of uncovering and understanding a phenomenon or a situation that otherwise could remain rather confusing, even cryptic (Stenbacka, 2001). The overall goal of generating deeper understanding of IE as an individual-level journey with a relatively open mind, the value and reliability of this doctoral study ought to be found in the method—the pathway through which new understanding of the topic has been attempted— and its application described above. The purpose of this narrative research was not to produce one definite

”truth” but offer one contextual version of it (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Polkinghorne, 2007). Therefore, evaluation criteria of positivist and postpositivist research are not applicable in this study: as a comparison, we can either aim to tell of the world somehow external from us and try to obtain objectivity or embrace the plural rhetorical, interpretations of human experience (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Hence, this study holds that it is possible to narrate the same event in different ways. However, in the validity discussion of narrative research, there is a “middle-course” (Polkinghorne, 2007) of understanding storied texts (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 8):

> *We do not advocate a total relativism that treats all narratives as texts of fiction. On the other hand, we do not take narratives at face value, as complete and accurate representations of reality. We believe that stories are usually constructed around a core of facts or life events, yet allow a wide periphery for freedom of individuality and creativity in selection, addition to, emphasis on, and interpretation of these remembered facts.*

It is said that credible and rigorous narrative research offers novel insights in an open-minded, individual and nuanced manner (Gartner, 2007).

3.3.1 Reflexivity in data generation, analysis and interpretation

In this study, I consider the thoroughness of the work as the foundation and source of overall reliability and trustworthiness of the dissertation. Hence, care is taken in applying certain practices and ethical considerations that ought to be found in the core of qualitative narrative research. More specifically, the rigour of my research is linked to its underlying “attitude” for attentiveness, empathy, carefulness, sensitivity, respect, reflection, conscientiousness, engagement, awareness and openness (Davies & Dodd, 2002) throughout my four-year exploration of the personal narratives of and historical data on international entrepreneurs.

Moreover, in qualitative research, reflexivity is defined and applied in various ways, but among most researchers, the purpose of reflexivity is largely that of enhancing the *‘credibility of the findings by accounting for researcher values, beliefs, knowledge, and biases’* (Cutcliffe, 2003, p. 137). For some scholars, reflexivity is linked with the practice of “bracketing” (e.g., Ahern, 1999) in an attempt to achieve a position of neutrality (i.e., in the object–subject position); others advocate different means of reflexivity (e.g., reflexive journaling) as a base for explaining the various judgment calls the researcher has made (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which then enhances the trustworthiness of the reported qualitative findings (Cutcliffe, 2003).

Qualitative narrative interviews

Collection, analysis and interpretation of findings of interviews with individuals is a human-influenced process, in which both the researcher (me) as well as the research subjects (the founder-CEOs) are engaged fully as subjective individuals. Throughout the process of data collection, transcription and interpretation of the narratives, I remembered that this was the documentation and memoires of life events and experiences reflecting the narrators' mental constructions of them that I deal with. That being said, according to the narrative approach, accounts of experience would not prove of less value in terms of truthfulness or correctness but of a different form of knowledge (Polkinghorne, 1988). Moreover, both the interviews and other literary data were to be considered fundamentally as a (co-)constructed meaning-making process. A narrator's—the interviewee's or a historical document's—situational relationship to the audience, in this case to me as the researcher, guided the process and meaning of temporal narrating.

In the context of an interview, the interviewee either consciously or unconsciously selects to tell the audience a certain story, which may then function to present a certain image of the interviewee (Alvesson, 2003). This can also be called "collaborative authorship" as the interviewee adapts what one says and how one says it in the social interaction, while partial "selves" are brought to life through which the interviewee is positioning oneself to the narrative (Ochs & Capps, 1996). While the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee frames and somewhat guides the responses, sense-making within the context of an interview invokes different identities (Alvesson, 2003). Traces of such narrative identities are found in both the situational and relational construction of the 'self' (Ricoeur, 1994).

Then, why impose the "international entrepreneur identity" on the interviewees (also the historical figures) under study from the start? First of all, in the Finnish language, the word "entrepreneur" is a relatively neutral word for a person who has set up/founded a business. It is used more or less interchangeably with the word 'founder'. For example, the people I interviewed had the word 'founder' or 'entrepreneur' on their website or LinkedIn profile, suggesting that they would already naturally identify themselves as a person that had founded / set up a business venture. Furthermore, the invitation to and starting question of the interview was placed as such, giving a crude frame for the interview. In other words, I was explicit in what was initially expected of the interviewee's session and what was to be discussed. I therefore invited them to "talk as" international entrepreneurs (Hytti, 2003), not primarily as CEOs, employers or as a co-worker for example, though such "role identities" could and would emerge in their stories anyway. While it may be argued that I imposed a ready-made identity on the interviewees, I as a researcher had taken a knowledgeable role in framing the research setting. In the interviews, some would reflect how they did not feel or describe themselves as something like "traditional" entrepreneurs, which would then affirm that they were able to challenge the "label" of an international entrepreneur if they so wished, or became as a means of making sense of one's identity in more specific terms. As a researcher, I need to acknowledge and take note of the unequal power relations between myself and the "researched" (Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2018). While I perceive power as shared to some extent in narrative-like and more open interviews, where I choose not to pose a structured set of theoretically formulated questions, I question together with some other scholars '*whether it is desirable to share the responsibility for the research with participants who were not involved in conceptualizing the research or its design*', especially later on in terms of the more or less abductive process of analysing historical and/or retrospective qualitative data (Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2018, p. 1470–1476).

From the very beginning, my main mission as the interviewer was to engage in attentive listening and note taking in order to ask for and encourage elaboration with content-specific questions. As noted above, I—as an interviewer—desired less "control" in terms of having rather little prior idea of IE in practice. Hence, my own practical or theoretical assumptions colouring the questioning of what it could be to become and be an international entrepreneur were kept at a minimum in having an open ear for what the interviewee wanted to say around the issue of international entrepreneurship. Then again, as occurred to me in many of the interviews, the flow and pace of their narrating would not let me resort too much to the ongoing remarks I was making of their IE process. Instead, the founders' abilities to generate their "stories" completely on their own put me into the role of a sensitive and active listener. I would prompt elaborative questions arising from the interview accounts only when the interviewee would seemingly anticipate or deliberately ask for my involvement in the form of further questions. While encouraging an interviewee to tell more about things and events which she or he had brought up as meaningful, in order to produce more detailed narratives of these mentioned issues (Riessman, 1993), I would start my questions like, *'You just told me about [...] can you tell me more of that time when…?'*, *'Then, what happened…?'*, or *'Can you give a concrete example of that…?'* This was also done when the accounts of certain experiences were brief and ended up short in description. By encouraging more reflective work, I tried to provide more contextual material for later interpretation.

The in-depth nature of the one-on-one and face-to-face interviews posed its own human dimension to making sense of the rich, unorganized and contextual data of experiences and personal lives. When interviewees are encouraged to tell—in their very own words—how they personally felt about or experienced something such as internationalization, or how they found meaning in their journey to entrepreneurship, one can be sure to obtain data that goes beyond the pre-set borders one way or the other (Davies & Dodd, 2002). Moreover, the narrative interviewing technique includes and relies largely on the researcher's rather intuitive observations of the social interaction onsite—the time, space and context for shared communication—which generates a two-way traffic of information (Davies & Dodd, 2002). Accordingly, I had to acknowledge and reflect to some extent on how my very own interaction and presence with the interviewee may have influenced the data generation process, without that being the very focus of my analysis.

In the same vein, the context and sequence in which an interview is given affects the generation of narrative data (Polkinghorne, 1988), which I became aware of during the research process. By conducting and reading the interview transcripts, I could see myself improving in asking less leading questions mistakenly (e.g., "yes or no" questions) and more neutral, open questions (e.g., what does … mean to you?) in order to help interviewees in their elaboration of their experiences. In my analysis, I would handle the more "directive" parts of the interview data with more care in order to see its "fit" within the complete interview and in interpretation of the whole "story". Though it was undesirable to follow a tightly worded pre-written set of questions in the interviews due to the aim of hearing a variety of experiences and journeys to IE, I would notice certain themes emerging one interview after the other. However, I took my role as “the listener”, resisting internal urges to direct the conversation too much into previously discussed topics, and being intuitive and attentive in following topics and experiences that seemed personally meaningful for the interviewee.

‘Intellectual entrepreneurship’—Tacit knowledge, intuition and intellectual work as close affiliates

Whereas traditional, theory-led approaches to interviews and coding have the advantage of having a predetermined focus, assumed objectivity and perhaps more comparative value, a narrative approach requires an additional layer of reflexivity from a researcher (Polkinghorne, 1995). In addition, life-narrative interviews as interpersonal events embed phenomena that appear to occur within both therapeutic interviews and qualitative interviews (Cutcliffe, 2003). Coming across the article discussing their similarities in March 2019, I could easily recall some of the occasions manifesting them. For example, at the end of the pilot interview, the founder-CEO expressed how the interview situation had “felt like a therapy session” for him, which implicitly indicated to me the unrestricted atmosphere in the moment as well as the holistic nature of the discussion we had had. Later on, this was confirmed by another interviewee’s spontaneous reaction and comment during the interview as she laughed through her tears when we spontaneously walked—figuratively—into a tougher topic in her “becoming” narrative. Such moments could be seen as time and space which had allowed the desired honesty and openness, even vulnerability, as well as a time and space for the interviewees to be open and reflexive about their journeys, including their ups and downs, wins and losses.

Drawing on the similarities between interviews in qualitative research and therapeutic interviews (e.g., see Cutcliffe & Goward, 2000), I became more aware of the role empathy and transference (Cutcliffe, 2003) had played in conducting the (life-)narrative interviews in particular. During my data gathering, I would frequently recognize my own feelings and emotions arising during and/or emerging after some of the interviews from what the entrepreneurs were telling me. Only later would I become aware of their significance in terms of reflexivity in my own research process, and intuitive thoughts and findings while analysing the interview data. In Cutcliffe’s words, I would temporally *‘gain an empathic ‘felt sense’ of what it is like to be in the participant’s world’* (Cutcliffe, 2003, p. 141) during the interviews. This occurred when hearing about life events or instances that would somehow trigger a personal experience or something that I had heard before. The interview settings temporarily convoluting our worlds and stories, I can now openly agree that in attending and experiencing the others’ “worlds” through the narrative interview processes, my values and beliefs (as a human being and a researcher of international entrepreneurship) would to some extent, however implicitly at first, become influenced by the interviewee’s world of values and beliefs (Cutcliffe, 2003).

What I then became aware of later, when reading more of my methodology and beyond, was the ‘emotional transference’ (Cutcliffe, 2003) that I, as the sensitive person I have come to know myself to be, had quite apparently experienced after the interviews. This transference explained how often I would ‘pick up’ or inherit not only certain difficult emotions (i.e., sadness, anger, frustration) but also more uplifting feelings such as joy and confidence brought into the interview by the interviewees. After almost all of the interviews, I would feel at least motivated and empowered to carry on the research, but many times also inspired and encouraged by the unfolding narratives of how these individuals had been and were navigating their challenging journeys to set up an international business and living their lives in general. This can be confirmed by the people more closely observing my journey as a doctoral student (e.g., my supervisor), who would hear me describe the research interviews as inspiring, my (anonymous) interviewees as lively or interesting characters, or their work so ‘boundaryless’ that I would feel a nagging worry over the future generations of entrepreneurs. Hence, while I was aware and honest about but also open to such feelings after interviews, I would still not be quite sure of where exactly that feeling was coming from initially (Cutcliffe, 2003). As I left the interviews with such feelings and those planted, yet unsprouted thoughts of what had happened to these individuals or was going on in their narratives, changes in me and my ideas and beliefs of what becoming an international entrepreneur might have been like for these individuals, only became more evident in the “intuitive hunches” (Cutcliffe, 2003) subsequently unfolding in my data analysis process.

Based on my methodologically derived judgements on the in-depth nature and breadth of the life-narrative interviews in the study, I decided to officially interview the founder-CEOs only once. This was also known from the start by the interviewees and perhaps resulted in some, having forgotten something meaningful in the interview and which had then come into their minds, sending me an email shortly afterwards to add insight to their narrative. Due to this, my analysis may be seen as vulnerable to alternative or misinterpretations that have not enjoyed the benefit of follow-up interviews and/or participant checking the ‘correctness’ of my conclusions. It is surely probable that my interpretations of their accounts do not convey the ‘whole story’ and therefore give a much narrower account of what has actually happened. However, due to the philosophical stance and attributes of the realm from which I am inquiring, I do not argue for having reached a certain ‘level of certainty’ or ‘truth’ for my claims beyond what is possible from the type of evidence I have gathered (Polkinghorne, 2007). In addition, my decision to interview only once acknowledges that self-narratives evolve over time and are always told from that specific point in time (Polkinghorne, 1988). This means that for example the story I tell of myself is different today than it is tomorrow (i.e., the story of yesterday’s ‘me’), and is therefore a produce of the ongoing process of living (i.e. temporal moods). However, certain “anchoring” events in our lives rarely change and have become more defining experiences in our memorizing of the past and through which we understand “who we are now”. Such experiences then may remain as points of references time after time – or become scripts for our selves.

With these notions, I align with the philosophy that we will never gain or give the ”fullest” account of an experience, not as researchers nor as those who have personally attended that experience (Silverman, 2015). Upfront, this is different from the implicitly and/or explicitly more positivist qualitative research and treatment of interviews as gathering “facts” about the world (i.e. behaviour), which suggest the interviews to be more as research *resource*, where several rounds of interviews have an aim for a more complete picture of how things are (Silverman, 2015). Instead of the idea that “more is more”, this study treats the 19 interviews as *topics* on how interviewees construct narratives of events, people and themselves (Silverman, 2015; Riessman, 1993). Moreover, as the first research question asks ‘how do individuals make sense of themselves as becoming and being international entrepreneurs?’, the 19 interviews are treated as 19 ways of making sense of that journey (topics) versus treated as a “resource”. Hence, it is different to aim to reach sort of a theoretical saturation in each individual narrative (or across them) than attending more closely to the ways meaning is constructed *in* them.

As a narrative researcher, part of the process is that of accepting my role as a ‘co-author’ in narrating the international entrepreneurs’ story with the help as well as burden of my own thinking and assumptions, skills and overall unfolding life and research journey. In appreciation of the uniqueness of the interview situation, where I have been trusted that particular side and tone of the story at that specific time in the interviewee’s life, together with my theoretical and practical knowledge, I have grounded my analysis as an intuitive and creative yet fully true iteration of what I have heard, seen, asked, read and made sense of in the course of interpreting the given narrative material. In conjunction with being reflexive of the retrospective data (i.e., one-shot interviews, historical documents) and the analytical process, I could discuss my participation in the narrative sense-making of the journeys of becoming international entrepreneurs as so-called “intellectual entrepreneurship” (Cutcliffe, 2003) where we find the intense *‘intellectual work and allowing one’s tacit knowledge, creativity, and intuition to interact with the data’* as close affiliates (Cutcliffe, 2003, p.143; see also May, 1994).

Self-reflexive journaling, peer discussions and feedback

Acknowledging and locating the researcher in the research process (Davies & Dodd, 2002) contributes to the ethical practices of this present research, which I consider to be an integral part of the whole research process (Davies & Dodd, 2002): if something cannot be accounted for or reported without manipulation of what one considers as the truth, one has already started to lose the ethical groundings of the whole process. For example, in relation to generating data and the iterative analysis processes, the considerations in a thorough qualitative research process become visible in the reflexive reporting of subjectivity and social interaction in the interviews.

Throughout the research process I was to remain transparent for both myself as well as the (potential) reader of the study in carefully and truthfully acknowledging my own ‘voice’—thoughts, fears, emotions, reflections and insights on any challenges or possible contradictions—and whenever found relevant to the process of understanding the case in question. Furthermore, embracing and maintaining accountability and openness through discussion with academic peers and seniors as well as “non-academic” friends (e.g., entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs), together with self-reflexive daily journaling, helped me in acknowledging the creeping preconceptions steering parts of the interpretation and analysis process (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Stenbacka, 2001). That said, in this “interpretivist” dissertation, my aim has been to avoid at least the obvious pitfalls of drawing from my own presumptions into the interpretations of the data as far inside my brain allows me to venture. However, pre-knowledge on certain topics does serve as bouncing-boards for new angles on the data (and no brain is a blank board without associations with whatever is placed before the eyes). Along those lines, I still tried my best to be reflexive with my own decision making—the implicit dialogue between the ‘rational’ and ‘intuitive’ me—in iteration of the research plan or process of analysis and open up any biased hopes and theoretical presumptions for critique (Davies & Dodd, 2002) in front of the research community in conferences, seminars as well as one-on-one discussions with peers and professors.

Both reflectivity and reflexivity therefore served as a relatively powerful tool in steering the research into directions where it “wanted” to go, despite the presumed research objectives I had in the beginning. I have therefore become into terms with reflexivity not being *‘simply a change in research plan as a reaction to poor test results or ambiguous findings; rather, it involves a reflective self-examination of our own ideas and an open discussion and comparison of our research experiences’* (Davies & Dodd, 2002, p. 286). Here, peer-reviewing and honest discussions with professors of my own and other fields encouraged as well as increased the level of reflexivity throughout the research process in general.

The verisimilitude and significance of narratives

Moreover, in this research, the significance is found in the importance of a finding and their verisimilitude (Polkinghorne, 1988), not the quantities or frequencies of certain content proving importance. The interest and significance of this dissertation is found in the meaning individuals give to events, episodes and phases on their journeys into international entrepreneurship, and how they understand their own experience in narrative means. Therefore, *if it is important to the international entrepreneur and in one’s journey, it is significant.* It is then up to the reader of the findings to judge whether the journey is relatable and if the significance is applicable to their own journeys or not.

In positivist social science research, also dominant in the IE domain, the attempt has been to tap on the ‘objective truths’ and modelling phenomena in a law-like manner (Seymour, 2006), obtaining a satisfactory level of ‘truthfulness’ and generalizability of the study and its results. Therefore, claims need to be made that *‘an instrument measures variations among participants in a theoretical construct’* (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 475). Accordingly, the instrument’s content must accurately sample the kinds of things that make up the theoretical construct, have its measurements consistent with other instruments that measure the same construct, and that the instrument is actually measuring the concepts and qualities of the construct (Isaac & Michael, 1987). Therefore, the issue of validity in conventional research is the question of *'how well the scores produced by instruments are representative of the intended construct'* (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 479). Moreover, the number of observations (or interviewees) is significant when seeking generalizability through a sufficiently representative sample of research subjects.

In consideration of introducing interpretative narrative approaches more fully into the IE community, we ought to acknowledge the challenges, while retreating from the more "conventional" and established qualitative methodology in the IE field, such as the Yinian or Eisenhardtian case study method (Welch et al., 2011), and the narrative perspective in following narrative scholars (Stake, 2005). Sense-making of human experience is something we cannot measure or enclose into neat brackets. Hence, this research is to be viewed in terms of the plausibility, credibility, and/or trustworthiness of the claims it makes, providing that it offers sufficient justification to the reader for those claims (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; 2007). Furthermore, the criteria in narrative research stress the study's quality of being apparent, its appearance of being real and the overall level to which the findings of the study can be transferred and understood in other contexts or settings (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). As a representation of a different philosophy of science, the present narrative research is concerned with the clarification of what a storied text is intended to represent (i.e., reflections of memories or projections about past events and happenings), and, for you as a reader to be able to judge claims resting on the textual evidence I have provided, I am to spell out my understandings of the nature of my collected evidence (Polkinghorne, 2007).

Instead of validating new knowledge claims as a mechanical process and levelling out the certainty of the claims in research reports, I aimed to engage in an 'argumentative practice' for weighing the plausibility, credibility, or trustworthiness of my claims (Polkinghorne, 2007). In this study, it shows at least in two ways. Trustworthiness of the doctoral study and its four publications was increased by the progression of evidence, that is, the extensive quotations from the generated data both in the body of text but also in terms of providing relevant appendixes and source references for further inspection. Also, by being reflexive as a researcher, I cannot take for granted fully making sense of the narrative accounts or texts as the "researched narrator" him or herself—or even another researcher—does. Therefore, having been provided enough evidence, the reader may make their own judgements of the influence of the researcher's 'presence' and 'co-authorship' in the overall narrative, be it the raw data or the very findings derived from that data. Therefore, narrative inquiry ought to provide reflexively enough extensively also the other—though perhaps less adequate—interpretative claims than the final concluding ones. This ensures the chosen claims to carry an acceptable level of credibility, and to show the interpretative choices of the researcher. However, this kind of exhaustive argumentative practice does not enjoy favour in terms of the compact and limited reporting space and structure provided for journal articles and conference papers on the cost of theoretical contribution. Thus, large chunks of data and reporting of analysis procedures and findings have been left out or simplified based on the bounded judgement of the authoring researcher(s) also in the publications of this dissertation.

4 Summary of Publications: Purpose, findings and contributions

In this chapter, I summarise the four publications found at the latter part of this doctoral dissertation. I have devoted a section for each publication in order to present their initial purpose and background as individual studies as well as their main findings and roles in the dissertation. Then, the final section draws the publications together with an integrative framework of their findings (see Figure 8). All of the publications have been initially presented at international and refereed academic conferences during the process of writing this thesis in 2016–2020. In addition, Publication I has been published in a scholarly journal in June 2019, and Publication IV has been formally accepted for publication in a scholarly handbook and forthcoming in Spring 2021.

4.1 Publication I. Well-trodden highways and roads less travelled: Entrepreneurial-oriented behaviour and identity construction in international entrepreneurship narratives

4.1.1 Purpose and background of the study

In this study, we investigated the sense-making and contextual identity constructions of founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalised new ventures, seeking to gain new insights into individual-level international entrepreneurship and international entrepreneurial behaviour literature as an exploration of their life experiences feeding into their behaviour as international entrepreneurs.

Early entrepreneurship scholars have remained close to the initial view of entrepreneurially oriented small firms as the extension of the individuals in charge (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). However, there have been relatively few explorations of the nature, motivation, or background of these international entrepreneurial actors (Autio, 2005; Coviello, 2015; Hannibal, 2017; Jones et al., 2011; Jones & Casulli, 2014; Keupp & Gassmann, 2009; Peiris et al., 2012) whereas research on international entrepreneurial behaviour (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a) has, on the whole, been dominated by firm-level studies (Joardar & Wu, 2011; Jones, 2005).

International entrepreneurship research seeks to understand *'by whom and with what effects'* international entrepreneurial opportunities are acted upon (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005b, p. 7). In line with the definition of IE as an inherently entrepreneurial act, scholars agree that founders' initial perceptions, interpretations, knowledge, and know-how serve as the key influential factors in initial firm-level internationalisation behaviour (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a; Sarasvathy et al., 2014).

In alignment with a constructivist stream of entrepreneurship (Steyaert, 1997; Steyaert & Katz, 2004; van Burg & Romme, 2014) and in conjunction with the lack of studies exploring the nature of IE entrepreneurs and their past (Jones et al., 2011; McGaughey, 2007), the present curiosity stems from understanding more of the cognitive processes engaged in by individuals (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Reuber et al., 2018) when ‘becoming’ an international entrepreneur. In such a process, the entrepreneurial actions of the founders become influenced by their prior developmental experiences and cognitive structures (Krueger, 2007), more specifically, by how they *interpret their life events* and construct a sense of self (Morris et al., 2012).

With these concerns in mind, the study set out to explore *how founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalised new ventures make sense of their life experiences and construct their identities relative to their behaviour as international entrepreneurs*.

4.1.2 Main findings

Our study employed a qualitative methodology as the most appropriate means for studying under-researched processes, namely, the socially constructed view of the international entrepreneur. Via a constructivist study of the life narratives, we explored how the formation of mental constructions—the narrative scripts—of the ‘self’ as an actor derived from the founders’ episodic autobiographical memories and formed the basis for their international entrepreneurial behaviour. With the analysis of the individuals’ interview accounts, we arrived at five scripts of international entrepreneurial behaviour: a Pioneer, Native, Diplomat, Gambler, and an Eclectic.

The findings show how individuals, engaging in the narration of their journeys of becoming and being international entrepreneurs, construct their narrative identities as ‘scripts’ – Pioneer, Native, Diplomat, Gambler, and/or Eclectic – for their international entrepreneurial behaviour. Findings of the life narratives illuminate how founder-CEOs’ developmental experiences feed into and frame their international entrepreneurial behaviour as emergent in the range of historically bound and generational contexts. Furthermore, our findings encompass the sense-making of international social interaction and the emotional aspects relative to one’s international entrepreneurial journey.

With this study, we add to the growing body of literature on individual-level international entrepreneurial behaviour and offers insights on how founder-CEOs’ life experiences and sense-making of them narrate the foundation – the script – for their socially constructed identities and (subsequent) behaviour relative to their international venturing. We add to IE literature on individual-level IE behaviour (Coviello, 2015; Jones et al., 2011; Prashantham & Floyd, 2019; Sarasvathy et al., 2014) by exploring the developmental experiences and identity constructions of founders. Furthermore, findings illuminate life narratives to have emerged in a range of historically bound contexts (i.e., ideological, political, and cultural discussions within society) and generational contexts (i.e., multi-culturalism and digitalisation), encompassing also experiences of international social interaction and emotional aspects. In addressing the founders’ sense-making processes and identity construction as the undercurrent for international entrepreneurial behaviour (Coviello, 2015; Hannibal, 2017; Sarasvathy et al., 2014), we provide insights on how 'international orientation' and 'identity' become manifested in different individuals, at different times, and through different contexts.

According to our findings, international entrepreneurs construct identities and enact behaviours grounded in their sense-making of personal life experiences and in their interpretations of the various (temporal) contexts within which these experiences take place. As active participants in the streams of their contextual experiences (Morris et al., 2012), the temporal IE behaviours of international entrepreneurs emerge as grounded on their assumptions and understandings (Karp, 2006). These in turn are derived from their cultural context (Pioneer script), generational context (Native script), and social context (Diplomat script), and from the emotions that underpin their actions and behaviour (Gambler script).

4.1.3 Role in the thesis

This study served as the initial point of departure for the whole dissertation, eventually complementing the extant understanding of the international entrepreneurs as social actors and motivated agents through their personally "authored" narratives of themselves. It developed from the very first manuscript written for this doctoral study and is now placed first in the sequential order of the publications. The emerging findings show a) how meaning-loaded narratives of the 'international entrepreneurial self' emerge from the individual-level sense-making of actions and behaviour in temporal and contextual developmental experiences (becoming) and (b) how the narratives the individuals construct feed into their identity constructions as international entrepreneurs (being). The future avenues identified from the findings of IE as a 'developmental journey' of becoming an international entrepreneur are further addressed in Publication II (concerning IE as a 'transitional journey' and the embedded identity work) and Publication III and IV (exploring IE as a '(inter)generational journey' and its historical contextualization). As such, this study could also be read *after* the other three studies, as its findings combine the different perspectives in the other studies and serves as an overarching lens for their more specific focuses.

4.2 Publication II. Boundarylessness and boundaries in international entrepreneurship identity work

4.2.1 Purpose and background of the study

In this study, the purpose was to explore the experiences of 13 founder-CEOs of 'becoming and being' an international entrepreneur with the specific interest to discuss their *identity work* in order to advance individual-level IE literature. Furthermore, the study provides an empirical basis in navigating the contemporary career outlook for international entrepreneurs by answering the research question *how is the meaning of international entrepreneurship as a career journey constructed through an individual's identity work?*

As already argued, seminal research positions the founder-entrepreneurs as key drivers in the IE process (Coviello, 2015; Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Keupp & Gassmann, 2009; Knight & Cavusgil, 1996; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994), while current research remains dominated by firm-level studies, i.e. ventures' internationalization patterns or speed, behavioural orientations or relative performance (Coombs et al., 2009; Jones et al., 2011). By 2011, only a marginal proportion of the IE body of research had focused genuinely on the individual-level processes and the entrepreneur (Jones et al., 2011).

Moreover, conventional paths in entrepreneurship and international business research are still delimiting more exploratory and novel approaches towards the IE phenomenon (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Nummela & Welch, 2006), and as such, carry an inherent risk of overlooking alternate interpretations and framework (Hannibal, 2017; Jones et al., 2011; Nummela & Welch, 2006). Therefore, we want to acknowledge the calls for more research into human agency (Hannibal et al., 2016; Rasmussen et al., 2009) and the role of the international entrepreneurial actors' experience and their sense-making of it (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Zahra et al., 2005) to achieve insight on the IE phenomenon.

Furthermore, together with reacting to the call to study the founder(s) as the initial driver(s) and sense-maker(s) in the IE process, the study's perspective gains momentum from regarding the centrality of the founder-entrepreneurs' sense-making of who one is (identity), what one knows (knowledge) and whom one knows (interpersonal networks) (Sarasvathy, 2001; Sarasvathy et al., 2014). From this perspective, we may regard the 'self' as a cornerstone of understanding not only human cognition (Ochs & Capps, 1996), motivation and behaviour (Terry et al., 1999) but also the socialization 'betwixt and between' new contexts of work (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Ibarra & Obodaru, 2016). Therefore, sense-making of identity (McAdams & McLean, 2013) can arguably be raised as a fruitful ground to unearth the individual in IE (Coviello, 2015; Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Hannibal, 2017) as a social actor and forward-looking agent in their IE journey, and account for their experiences associated with their narration of a becoming and being process (Duening & Metzger, 2017; Nielsen & Lassen, 2012).

Throughout the empirical process in this study, Ibarra's (1999) seminal work provided a basis for escaping a static view of individual traits or personality correlations, allowing a more processual and socially embedded understanding of the subjective side of the process of becoming and being in IE as a transitional journey. Furthermore, through the analytical lens we adopted, we engaged with the 'new career' research and discourse of entrepreneurial careers (Burton et al., 2016; Hytti, 2010; Tams & Arthur, 2010) to understand how the entrepreneurs themselves 'internationalize' (Fletcher, 2004) prior to founding a venture, simultaneously with their international venturing, and/or at later stages of their IE journey.

4.2.2 Main findings

In this study, we set out to explore the founders' retrospective sense-making of their subjective experience of becoming and being an entrepreneur as a journey (McMullen & Dimov, 2013) in the context of time prior to and during their international venturing process. Our findings provide insight on how the meaning of IE as a holistic journey encompassing career transitions is constructed through an individual's narrative identity work (Ibarra, 1999). Our study provides both a theoretically and practically interesting lens to and findings of navigating physically, socially and psychologically 'boundaryless' careers in IE, especially as regards making sense of triggering and transitional experiences. The contribution of our findings is found at the intersection of individual level IE research (Coviello, 2015; De Clercq et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2011), i.e. entrepreneurs' perceptions and sense-making in internationalization (Fletcher, 2004; Jones & Casulli, 2014), identity work (Hannibal, 2017; Ibarra, 1999) and physical and psychological mobility in transitions of contemporary careers (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006).

Based on our findings of these international entrepreneurs' narration of their experiences of becoming founders and internationalising their ventures (Jones et al., 2011; Kyvik et al., 2013; Oviatt et al., 2011; Zahra et al., 2005), we could further trace their self-perception, knowledge base and social surroundings (Sarasvathy et al., 2014). Taking further steps into characterising the entrepreneur as a holistic bundle and sense-maker of the IE process, we draw upon Ibarra's notions (1999) in constructing new insight on how possible selves become selected and rejected during the process of becoming and being an international entrepreneur, that is, IE as a career. Complementing the studies of firm-level processes that occupy the discussion of international entrepreneurial behaviour and cognition (Covin & Miller, 2014; Jones & Casulli, 2014), our methodological approach further advances 'narrative sense-making' as a bridging element between the physical, social and psychological aspects related to the IE processes.

Our findings of the entrepreneurs' identity work in their narrative sense-making are illustrative of the psychological and physical boundarylessness of the IE journey as a career. Engaging in – though not tying ourselves to – a cross-disciplinary discussion with the compelling 'framing' of a boundaryless career (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) and identity work (Ibarra, 1999; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) made it possible to interpret the multidimensional 'boundarylessness' that would characterize IE as a career and highlight the individual sense-making process. Framing the individual-level IE journey as a career path, we would see its psychological and physical 'mobility' (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) and how the individuals' IE journeys would resemble a boundaryless career through its independence from traditional organizational career arrangements (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). In this sense, our findings highlight the unfolding sequence of a person's work experiences over time (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) and their meaning (Meijers, 1998) in retrospect of the process of becoming and being an international entrepreneur.

Consequently, in reflection of the individuals' sense-making with the two temporal dimensions of the narrative – horizontal sequence and vertical layers of time – we could further trace the ‘cycles’ of a founder’s identity work becoming manifested through the different roles and mental orientations taking shape in the transitions from a largely domestic working context to a more international one and in the ambiguity inherent in making sense between a self- and firm-identity along the way to becoming an international entrepreneur. Our findings of the layered nature of one’s ‘self’ along the journey brings forth nuances in the organizing activity of recalling the past, ongoing present sense-making, and projection of future intentions (Weick, 1995) prior to and during the IE process. It is further evident how motivation and subsequent actions gain momentum from the continuous (re)negotiation of where the international entrepreneur is coming from, where s/he is now, and where s/he is potentially going next. In a way, these findings also reflect the different boundaries drawn within the boundarylessness in the globalising world and complex physical and (psycho)social ‘spaces’ in which international entrepreneurs need to operate and over time.

While a sense of ‘boundarylessness’ may reflect the complex context or sense of mobility in international entrepreneurs’ careers, it offers us also a lens to the bounded yet flexible nature of the international individuals’ work identities despite (or because of) various physical and psychological dimensions that characterise international business and entrepreneurship careers. Our findings show how the identity work of these individuals relates to a multi-fold and evolving sense-making of prior and present experience and future projections (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Rasmussen et al., 2001) as ‘detaching’ from a domestic ‘self’ and/or ‘attaching’ to an international ‘self’. This entails recalling past observations, external feedback or pressure of what is regarded as being international and entrepreneurial, being reflexive with the more temporal professional self with regards to the various current international contexts and working settings, and evaluation of their meaning according to present internal visions and motivations for the future.

By discussing international entrepreneurship as ‘identity work’, we do not suggest that there is an international entrepreneurial identity as a final outcome or an end product concluding any particular career transition. With our findings we aim to indicate a processual continuum or series of transitions within an IE journey, involving shifting between various physical and psychological (social and mental) contexts of internationally arching roles, tasks, or operations; when the ventures’ organisational structure is more or less fluid and dynamic, entrepreneurs must switch between different ‘identities’ in their daily working life and over time in their careers. Moreover, the individuals in our study were differently managing their perceptions of themselves in respect of the global arena they played in, the performance or success of the internationalisation of the firm not being the prevalent one.

By recognising identity work and its evolvement over time linked to the organisational context (Brown, 2015; Brown et al., 2015; Williams, 2000; Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016), we may engage in supporting the construction of and maintaining of a meaningful ‘self-perception’, broadening the knowledge base and a healthy psychosocial understanding in both practical and theoretical firm-level processes of internationalisation. Our findings stress the notion that contextualising the interpretation of past and recurring events and actions as well as their interlinkages and complexities (Hurmerinta et al., 2016) give much more meaningful interpretation of human behaviour and choices in IE.

4.2.3 Role in the thesis

In this study, we took a deeper look into the international entrepreneurs' identity work in relation to their personal narrative of their IE journey and continues further from the framing of Publication I. Whereas Publication I focused on the developmental experiences that have contributed to their so-called behavioural scripts and identity constructions they find effective in their (social) actions, this study provides a more nuanced look into the multidimensional transitions and embedded identity work within the overall IE journey. The detection of the unfolding of individual entrepreneurs' hermeneutic identity work, i.e., in socialisation processes, benefit from interpreting the IE process at the individual level as a dynamic and 'boundaryless' career journey. Through both Publications I and II, I wish to shed light over the sense of 'international entrepreneurial self' being intertwined in the actor, agent and author dimensions of their stories—reflections of their narrative identity—which gain meaning both as developmental and transitional journeys.

4.3 Publication III. Founders, generations and the evolving dialogue of international entrepreneurship

4.3.1 Purpose and background of the study

This study serves the purpose of exploring further the different generations of individuals as (potential) international entrepreneurs (Coviello, 2015; Liu et al., 2019) and designed to investigate qualitatively the perceptions of the IE phenomenon among both founders of early internationalised ventures and university students who have embarked on a master's degree study programme combining international business and entrepreneurship. It is a novel empirical exploration of generation-related sense-making of international entrepreneurs and those who have not yet set out to fully engage in international entrepreneurial activities. In this study, I adopted an initially historical point of view (Vaara & Lamberg, 2016) of the IE phenomenon and a qualitative approach for its explorative nature.

In recent years, both entrepreneurship and IE scholars have thought it timely to recognise individual entrepreneurial actors in terms of their generational context (Liu et al., 2019), that is, to contextualize individuals' experiences in regards to their 'age-based cohort' and their sharing a common location in the social historic process (Mannheim, 1952), reflecting a more or less distinct consciousness that is the result of important events of that time (Pilcher, 1994). In general, organisational behaviour studies have theorised on generations and the individuals in organisational contexts (i.e. employees) (Joshi et al., 2011). However, (international) entrepreneurship literature is very limited in reflecting entrepreneurs and their experiences of venturing in terms of their generational context, though age-based factors have been acknowledged as significant in understanding individuals' values and motivations, behaviour, cognition (Liu et al., 2019; Zahra et al., 2005), and even coping mechanisms in the dynamics of working life (Järvensivu et al., 2014). Particularly in IE literature, there is a lack of research on the most recent generations of entrepreneurs (the so-called 'Millennials') and their experiences relative to internationalisation and entrepreneurship, which as such limits us in terms of developing our theorisation of IE in a timelier manner and in regard to the historical contingencies having their dynamic influence on the rapidly transforming global environment of venturing (Coviello et al., 2017; Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019).

Over the years, the accumulating bulk of IE research on individuals and firms has remained rather cross-sectional and largely focusing on the features of the firm-level phenomenon (Coviello & Jones, 2004) and has lacked understanding of what occurs over (historical or chronological) time (Jones & Khanna, 2006; Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019; Wadhwani & Jones, 2006). The scarcity of knowledge of generational undercurrents has had an influence on how we perceive and interpret IE as a phenomenon and relative behaviour of individuals and firms venturing beyond national borders. The lack of the sociological point of view in IE points out that our theorisation has paid limited attention to the values, beliefs, expectations and preferences that are being shared within and/or across individuals of different generations of currently active international entrepreneurs as well as the potential future founders, i.e. entrepreneurship students, of international ventures.

Accordingly, with the initial interest of this study on '*how do (potential and current) founders of early internationalised ventures representing different generations—the age-based cohorts sharing a common location in the social historic process—reflect on the motivations and meaning of IE?'*, I add empirical insight to the contextual embeddedness of individuals engaged in IE as a historical phenomenon. Moreover, in this study, I regard the historical and generational content and context of sense-making as a relevant dimension in analysing individuals and their perceptions of IE (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Rasmussen et al., 2001).

4.3.2 **Main findings**

By interpreting individuals' narratives through their 'membership' in their own age-based cohort in this study, I have positioned them into groups of people born and raised in more or less similar general chronological, social and historical contexts (Gibson et al., 2009): Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z. I set out to explore 'generations' as having agency in the organizational setting and as linked through the transmission (or descent) of ideas, values, skills and knowledge (Joshi et al., 2011). Based on the findings of this study, I suggest how different generations can be detected to be linked through a more chronologically unfolding narrative sense-making ('transmission') as well as a more cyclical 'dialogue' of motivations and meanings of IE (see Figure 6 and Figure 7 below), where the narrative historical content and context (underpinnings in their narrative sense-making) elevate the individual's interpretations in terms of how international entrepreneurs come to understand their work in terms of their own and other age-cohorts. While these are by no means generalisations of what they were saying, the findings illustrate the 'literary consciousness' of making sense of IE in and across generations.

Firstly, based on my interpretations of their social and cultural 'stock of narratives' and sense-making of their history, the individuals' perceptions indicate a generational 'baton-passing' and subsequent changes in the meanings of the process of becoming and being an entrepreneur in the globalising world. Based on my findings within and across the narrative content, I found traces of the *transmission* of motivations and meaning of IE, as well as a shift from IE involving being a 'lonely rider' on a pioneering type of bilateral internationalisation journey towards understanding IE as a more collective and multilateral (or global) phenomenon. Different historical contingencies grounded the multidimensional meanings of events, developments, and turning points defining an individual's international entrepreneurial journey. For example, my findings suggest how Millennials, motivated by their opportunities to drive global change simultaneously with digitalisation, leverage on their ventures founded in contexts of diverse and multidisciplinary groups of friends. Moreover, sustainably designed international working cultures feature what we could perhaps characterise as 'intellectual philanthropy'. The narratives of Millennial founders and students embedded dimensions of self-actualisation, reflecting the personally meaningful careers and entrepreneurial work with friends in the global setting. Generation X founders described adapting and/or reinventing themselves in terms of the demands of the internationalising and increasingly dynamic venturing context. Baby Boomers on the other hand reminisced about their experiences as the ones setting out upon the pioneering paths of IE and personal endeavours of seeing the future world beyond their own institutional or national context.

Furthermore, findings encourage us to explore further the previous generations in terms of the 'ground work' they've provided for the subsequent generations, or how founders construct meaning for IE in dialogue with the emerging generation. For example, while the Baby Boomers may reflect upon being a generation that has internalised the increasing importance of cultural and international education and work experience when embarking on one's career, Generation X—and now, perhaps even more so, the Millennials—reflect upon having already grown into taking the 'international' aspects of their entrepreneurial careers more for granted, finding other means of 'becoming international' more meaningful.

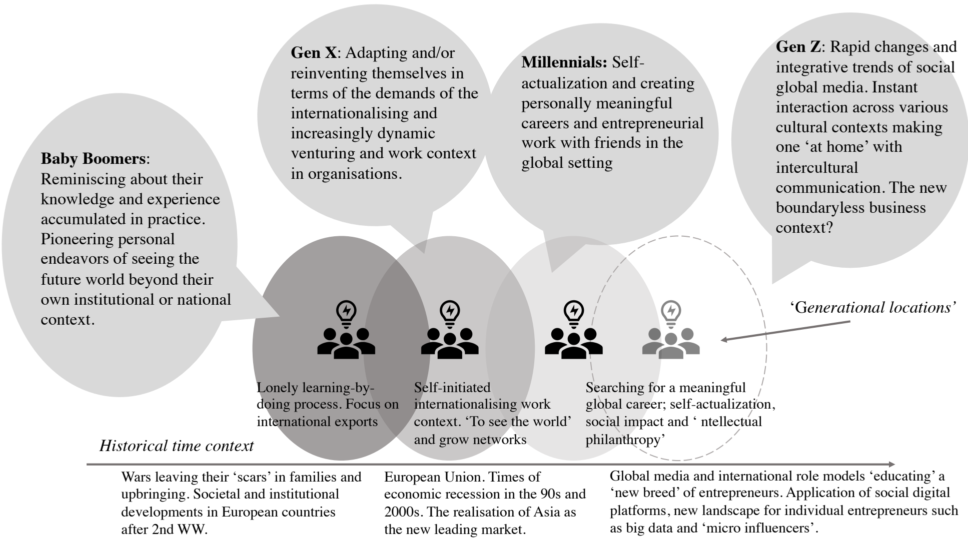


Figure 6. A ‘transmission’ of motivations and meaning of IE across the generations

Secondly, the findings also point towards the *dialogue* within and between different generations that suggests a generational journey of disrupting and re-thinking the essence and meaning of IE. By exploring the stock of narratives in and across their age-cohorts as journeys unfolding with the historical backdrop of time, I detected an increasing willingness to transmit values and ‘better practices’ across generations as well as personal processes of re-thinking these practices and generational scripts. Hence, it seems not to be solely about a ‘linear’ progress or change, as in a transmission process, but about engaging in a developmental discussion with different generations around the same table to make sense of the IE phenomenon from different angles, which pinpoint generational differences as a positive dynamism between these individuals.

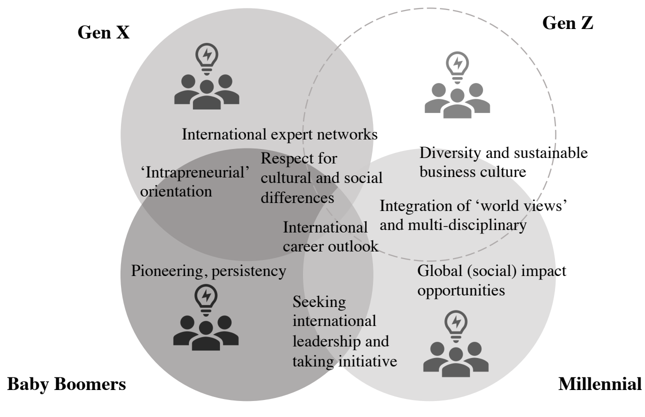


Figure 7. An emerging ‘dialogue’ within and between different generations

Accordingly, in this study, I posit motivations and meanings of IE at the individual level as the reflections of the certain historical and sociological underpinnings, i.e. the working culture of a society (Järvensivu et al., 2014) in conjunction with the globalizing and digitalizing career context, where the individuals’ common locations in a historic time period generate certain distinctions in their narrative ‘consciousness’ (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Joshi et al., 2011) of the internationalizing world in which they (will) work. Adding to the emergent discussion of how the generational context of ‘becoming an international entrepreneur’ influences and transcends theoretical understanding of international entrepreneurs (Liu et al., 2019), the findings of this study bring forth both differences and similarities in the meaning of IE across generations and the transmission of underpinning values and motivations (Coviello, 2015). Moreover, these findings begin to trace intersubjective-level understandings between individuals (Sarasvathy et al., 2014) representing different generations practicing IE. From the suggested generational journey perspective, it is perhaps also timely to look further into the meanings of different demographically bound international entrepreneurial ‘profiles’ and/or generational identities constructed as embedded in the historically unfolding circumstances across both developed and more emergent economies.

4.3.3 Role in the thesis

With this study, I wish to contribute to the observations of the ‘generational context’ of individual practitioners in IE. While Publication I suggests how (subsequent) generations of international entrepreneurial actors come about individually, this paper goes further in exploring the implicit dialogue within and across generations. It points out the importance of understanding our globalising and digitalising world through the differently motivated agency of individuals and that the “authorship” (i.e. narrative sense-making) of generations becoming and being international entrepreneurs is grounded in their different locations in the social historic processes. In the context of the field of IE research, this study is a novel empirical exploration of IE as a *generational journey*, which considers the sociological underpinnings of entrepreneurship (Thornton, 1999) and as such contributes to our understanding of the IE phenomenon. Together with Publication I, it is an illustration of how the historical context comes about as the generational context and content in narrative sense-making.

4.4 Publication IV. The ‘unwritten will’ in interpersonal network ties: Founder legacy and international networking of family firms in history

4.4.1 Purpose and background of the study

In this study, we explored the role of interpersonal network ties in the context of internationalising family firms through two historical cases: Alhström and Serlachius. By using a longitudinal qualitative approach, we study how the founder-entrepreneurs’ domestic and international identity-based and calculative ties emerged and further evolved within and across country borders in the transitional incumbent–successor context.

In this study, we examined the network ties for the internationalisation of family firms by focusing on how interpersonal ties (e.g. Hite & Hesterly, 2001) emerged and evolved in the transitional incumbent–successor context of international networking prior to our modern-world international business context (Coviello et al., 2017) in a time when communication was limited to slow postal systems, travelling, face-to-face visits and interactions and, later, the telegraph.

Interpersonal network ties, both domestic and international (Arregle et al., 2007; Harris & Wheeler, 2005; Salvato & Melin, 2008; Zellweger et al., 2019), are regarded as important for providing guidance and support for family firms' internationalisation processes (Arregle et al., 2012; Graves & Thomas, 2008; Kontinen & Ojala, 2012). The international networking activities of family firms (Kampouri et al., 2017; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014) are typically characterised by their embeddedness in an extended family context and network ties with high levels of trust, closeness and long-term commitment (Arregle et al., 2007; Roessl, 2005; Salvato & Melin, 2008; Zellweger et al., 2019). Therefore, interpersonal ties take time and effort to develop into interorganisational ones (Greve & Salaff, 2003; Larson & Starr, 1993). Furthermore, these ties can also be seen as either assets for or constraints on the firm's development (Kampouri et al., 2017) when embedded in both domestic and international networks during the internationalisation process (Leppäaho et al., 2018).

Together with the emergent yet limited understanding about how interpersonal ties emerge (Kontinen & Ojala, 2010) at the founder level, how they take shape (Kampouri et al., 2017) and how they transition to the next generation (Shi et al., 2019), recent literature addresses an underexplored connection between intergenerational succession patterns, including incumbent-successor dynamics, and internationalization of family firms in terms of the next generation's utilization of the prior interpersonal networks in internationalization and their attitudinal commitment to it (Shi et al., 2019). In our study, the embeddedness of different network ties (Arregle et al., 2015) in conjunction with the continuity (Konopaski et al., 2015) and the 'founder effect' in family firm evolution (Hammond et al., 2016; Kelly et al., 2000) when taking the business 'from local to global' (Baù et al., 2017) become more specific aspects to consider.

Our study embarks from prior notions that the founder-generation's 'legacy' is an important grounding dimension in furthering the understanding of a firm's long-term behaviour and strategy (Ahn, 2018; Baù et al., 2017; Ogbonna & Harris, 2001) with regards to the centrality of the individual actor, i.e. the founder-entrepreneur, in a venture's emerging and evolving networks (Coviello, 2006; Hite & Hesterly, 2001). Such a 'founder legacy' has been thought of as what the founder-entrepreneur leaves behind and how he or she is remembered when no longer working in the family business (Baker & Wiseman, 1998; Harris & Ogbonna, 1999; Hunter & Rowles, 2005). Moreover, the cultivation of a 'social legacy' of the founder reflects the maintenance of strong social ties to the community (Hammond et al., 2016). However, it has not been discussed in the context of family firm internationalization and networks, though embeddedness of ties between individuals developing in emotional intensity and intimacy and through reciprocal services (Granovetter, 1973) often mark family-firm international networks (Arregle et al., 2007).

In order to explore the interpersonal network ties for the internationalisation of family firms, the research questions we posed were:

> *'Looking back in history, how did founders' interpersonal ties for internationalisation emerge and evolve (and transition) to the next generation?'*
>
> *'How did the social legacy of the founder become manifested in the succeeding generation's networking?'*

4.4.2 Main findings

Our findings in this study are based on the two historical cases—of two founders and their successors—of Ahlström and Serlachius, currently known as the two successful global firms Ahlstrom-Munksjö and the Metsä Group, respectively. Both firms have over time grown into large multinationals, and the longitudinal qualitative data we draw on has been generated from public and private archives as well as secondary literary sources. With its findings, the study elaborates on how the interpersonal ties of the founder-generations seem to work as the mechanism for forming a 'social legacy' in the firm's border-crossing networks and, more specifically, manifest in the succeeding generation as the founder-entrepreneur's 'international networking legacy'.

We discovered how the interpersonal *domestic* ties via earlier jobs, personal and family interests, societal commitments, and in border-crossing networks (to the family-like captains of ships, international agents and technology providers, extended family) were necessary not only to identify opportunities, but also to attract like-minded people to advance their internationalising business. While we may take note of the founder-entrepreneurs' interpersonal network ties 'as their most valuable asset to provide resources' (Hite & Hesterly, 2001, p. 278; Larson & Starr, 1993), we could further recognise the importance of domestic investments and acquisitions across industry borders through interpersonal networks as they laid an important new groundwork for the family firm's internationalisation. With these insights, we advance understanding on the international networking of family firms (Kampouri et al., 2017; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014). We further explicate on the emergence of both domestic and international interpersonal network ties (Kontinen & Ojala, 2010) and their role (Elfring & Hulsink, 2007) for the family firms' internationalising venturing by highlighting the importance of domestic ties for the internationalisation process, which is minimally discussed in the literature to date.

Secondly, we found that the founder-entrepreneurs' interpersonal network ties were meaningful and in different ways influential in regard to the successors' networking. By this we advance knowledge of family firm internationalisation and networking in the continuum of the intergenerational context (e.g. Shi et al., 2019). On one hand, our findings show how both domestic and international ties with both business or personal dimensions become managed in the next generation (Chetty & Agndal, 2008) and over the course of the firm's internationalisation. This supplements our notions of how the identity-based network ties, i.e. through political interests and societal involvement of the founder-entrepreneurs, did not become less 'strong' or influential in the successor's hands (Greve & Salaff, 2003) but actually served as something like an internationalizing 'network identity' of the firm (Coviello, 2006), e.g. elevating its ideological reputation both in the region and abroad and becoming more intentionally managed by the successor.

Drawing from the above, our findings illustrate how the 'social legacy' (Hammond et al., 2016) of the founder through his interpersonal network ties manifests and transfers to the next generation (Shi et al., 2019). Through the cases, we show how a founder's more or less socially embedded ties (Anderson & Jack, 2002) become the 'initial endorsement' (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1220) of the family firm's internationalizing network behaviour (Arregle et al., 2015)—the 'unwritten will'—which manifests in the international networking of the next generation. By these notions, we advance the current understanding of both the continuity (Konopaski et al., 2015) and the 'founder effect' in family firm evolution beyond national borders (Hammond et al., 2016; Kelly et al., 2000). By interpreting the social legacy of the founder becoming considered by the next generation either as an advantage or a disadvantage (Coviello & Munro, 1997) for their own approaches to international networking, we suggest it is the 'international networking legacy' manifesting in how the successors begin to treat and manage their own interpersonal ties in the networks (Jack, 2005). This further elaborates and contextualises a mechanism that either promotes or inhibits subsequent internationalisation of a venture (Ellis, 2011; Kellermanns et al., 2012; Shi et al., 2015).

Then, with our methodological approach to the history of interpersonal network ties of internationalising firms, our findings show how to embrace both macro-context and microfoundations of internationalisation (Coviello et al., 2017). For example, our notions of the establishment of the Finnish Paper Mills' Association with the mutually calculative but strong interpersonal network ties in an inter- and after-war period (beginning of 1900s), we see how historical contingencies ramped up or changed the meaning of interpersonal ties, like in the border-crossing negotiations and agreements of these two family firms, when experiencing a time of more restricted international business. Moreover, the findings of the two cases against a different backdrop of historical contingencies than the modern world show also how the generation of meaningful interpersonal ties remains imperative in international venturing and strategies (Coviello, 2006; Ellis, 2011). While contemporary, knowledge-intense and service-oriented business of today may have perhaps fewer limitations in terms of network(ing) and resources for their internationalisation (Ojala et al., 2018), family businesses that are passed from generation to generation (Baù et al., 2017; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015) will still benefit from finding ways to cultivate mindful networking strategies and endorse and promote a desired social legacy of the family firm when taking the business 'from local to global' (Baù et al., 2017).

4.4.3 Role in the thesis

This study is a historical narrative of IE as an *intergenerational journey*, embracing the macro-context enacted by the international entrepreneurs as social actors and motivated agents in the microprocesses. i.e., networking, that contribute to IE as a temporal phenomenon (Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014; Coviello et al., 2017). While Publication I and III work as illustrations of how the historical and generational context of a narrative and relative sense-making adds to our understanding of IE as a social and contextual phenomenon, Publication IV pinpoints the importance of contextualizing IE narratives—and theorising of them—in a historical time context and its contingencies over time. Moreover, it gives an example of doing a narrative analysis with historical data—a historical reconstruction of literary data and interpretation of it in context.

While this study touches upon family firm internationalization and the manifestations of the 'social legacy' of the founder-generation in the interpersonal network ties, I also wish to show how the concept of 'founder legacy' works and has meaning beyond the firm – or even a whole generation of international entrepreneurs of a similar age-cohort, if considering the current age of global social impacting. Hence, the meaning of international entrepreneurial actions and agency is therefore first and foremost a production of the historical time and made sense in that time's interpersonal interaction and relationships. As a socially constructed process, individuals are key in transferring theory and practice of IE to the next generations

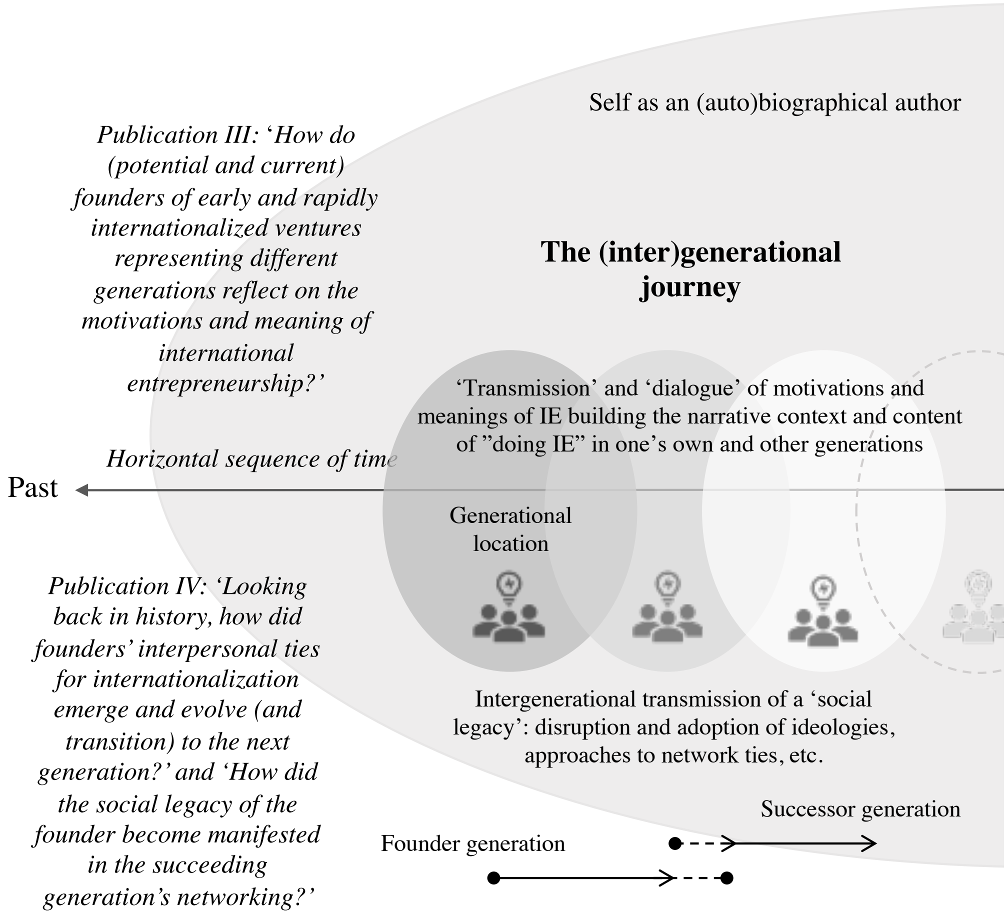
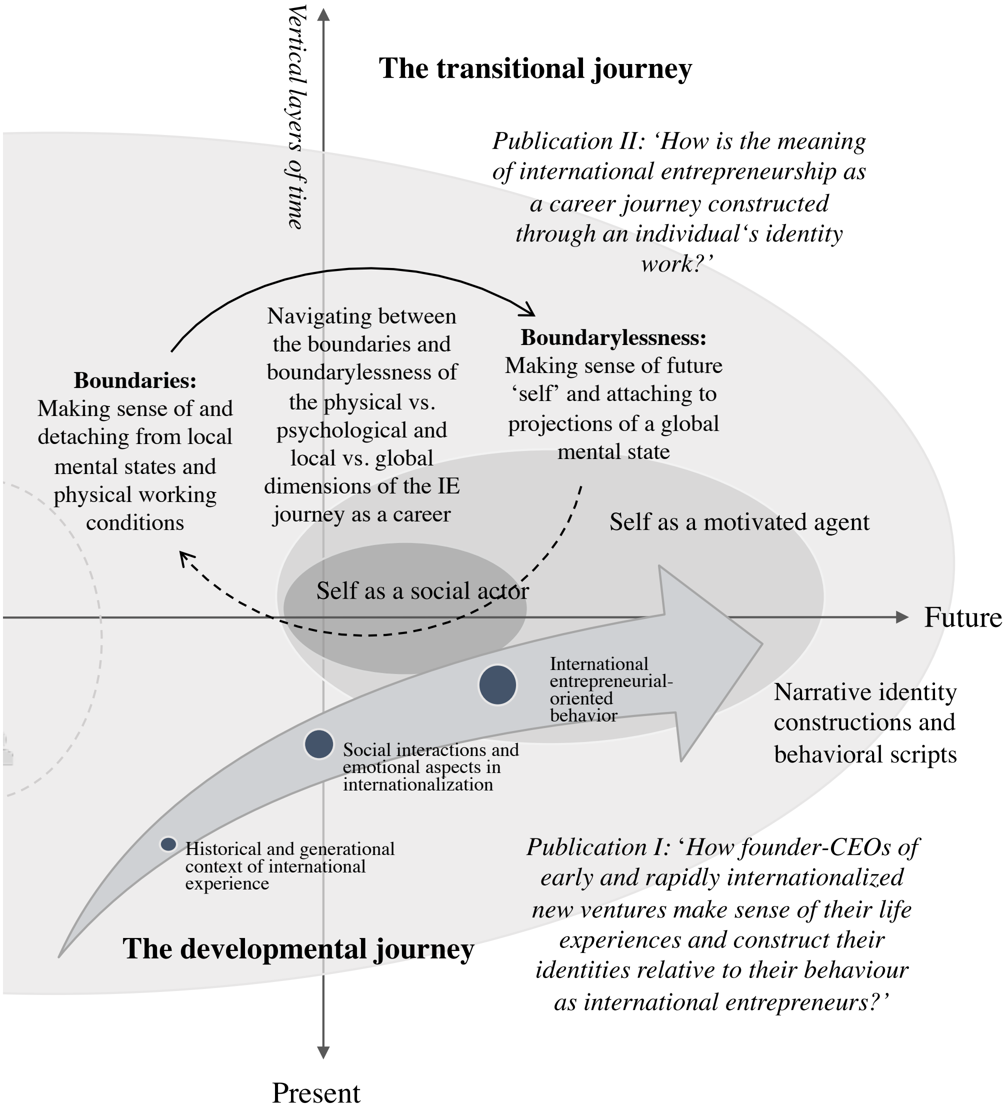


Figure 8. An integrative frame of the main findings of IE as a journey – The authors of becoming and being an international entrepreneur

4.4 Publication IV. The 'unwritten will' in interpersonal network ties: Founder legacy and international networking of family firms in history 121



5 Discussion and Conclusions

Every story has a beginning and an end. What lies between those two points is the journey. —R.C. Richter

The theoretical purpose and practical relevance of this doctoral study stems from the shortcomings in the individual-level studies in IE, in particular, in the understanding of the phenomenon as a human-driven process (Coviello, 2015; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). Derived from the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of this dissertation, the main objective was to advance understanding of who the international entrepreneurs we discuss in IE literature are and how they have come to be who they are by exploring their journeys. Along with studying and analysing the personal journeys of individuals through a narrative approach, the secondary objective was to advance the understanding of the narrative sense-making of both international entrepreneurs as practitioners and that of us as researchers studying IE as a historical and socially constructed phenomenon.

5.1 Answering research questions and fulfilling objectives

With completing my quest of finding answers to the two main research questions and objectives of this doctoral study, I am both broadening and deepening our theoretical and methodological discourse in the field (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Nummela & Welch, 2006; Seymour, 2006) in the following ways.

Through the empirical work of this study based on the analysis of the narrative accounts of 19 founder-CEOs and 33 student narratives, I shed light on the first research question of this thesis:

'How do individuals make sense of themselves as becoming and being international entrepreneurs?'

Embracing 'narrative' as meaning structure to the actions and lived events of the research participants according to their effect on the entire ongoing self-narrative (Polkinghorne, 1988; Polkinghorne, 1991) allowed me to explore in a more nuanced way how the international entrepreneurial 'self' appears as an actor and agent in retrospect, and manifests as an 'autobiographical author' in the different meanings given to past experiences of personal IE journeys. By discussing the meaning of developmental, transitional and generational experiences in these journeys, Publications I, II and III provide evidence of how the founders' sense-making of their past, present and future (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Rasmussen et al., 2001; Zahra et al., 2005) intertwine and feed into their current understanding of themselves, i.e. identity constructions, and their work in becoming and being *international* entrepreneurs (Coviello, 2015; Hannibal, 2017; Leitch & Harrison, 2016; Nielsen & Lassen, 2012).

With the acknowledgement that the stories individuals construct of their lived lives provide a menu of images, metaphors and stories for their 'self' (McAdams, 1999, 2013), my exploration of the narrative sense-making of international entrepreneurs ‘put skin on bones’ of the individuals’ identity work (Ibarra, 1999; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) in ‘becoming international’. This contrasts the treating of international experience as a prerequisite or an antecedent to IE (i.e. a global mindset, educational background)—experience as a ‘factor’ in the causal modelling of internationalisation of a firm (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a, 2005b), and in Publication I and II, I bring forth an internationalising *identity as a process* embedded in the developmental and more transitional (career) experiences in the overall journey of becoming an international entrepreneur. Based on the findings in Publication I, I offer novel premises to understand more of the sense-making of the *developmental experiences* (Krueger, 2007) in the process of becoming and being an international entrepreneur as *narrative scripts* of individuals. In the study, I elaborate on how international entrepreneurs make sense of their behaviour through different kinds of scripts such as those of the Pioneer, Diplomat, Native, Gambler and Eclectic, and how these serve as an effective behavioural orientation when attributed to one’s self as an international entrepreneur. Furthermore, considering the journey of becoming international through narrative scripts of behaviour, I highlight the evolving ‘story’ of how entrepreneurs make sense of themselves, i.e., their actions and agency, and those of their external world (Steyaert & Katz, 2004; van Burg & Romme, 2014) in terms of their historical, generational, social and affective context of international venturing.

In Publication II, with my co-author we set out to further explore the more *transitional nature of experience* and contextualization of IE as an individual’s career journey. Such a lens elevates the *boundaries and boundarylessness in identity work of becoming and being an international entrepreneur*. These aspects of individual-level IE become manifested in the intertwined narration of the ‘psychophysical’ states of their journeys in making sense of themselves: one is not only constantly shifting between physical national borders but needs to mentally remain ‘betwixt and between’ cultural, political and mental boundaries in the globalising working environment. Moreover, the kind of identity work founders conduct in the midst of border-crossing ambiguities and uncertainties in their globalizing working context (Ibarra & Obodaru, 2016) becomes elevated and particularly meaningful when reflected upon the sense-making of certain *triggering experiences*. These could be the different contingencies in social relations, experiencing life crisis or managerial and organizational changes, which all demand and aid the individual to detach from a previously held, domestically bounded understanding of oneself, and start attaching to a new boundaryless international self. Understanding this as the liminal context of becoming an international entrepreneur (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019), the transitional experiences accent the career trajectories and intertwining of ‘old’ and ‘new’ roles and mental international orientations without having yet established clarity about ‘new’ ways or places of being in the dynamic ambiguous globalising context of work.

In regard to the first research question, I suggest that both narrative scripts as well as the bounded and boundaryless context of identity work in the sense-making process of becoming and being an international entrepreneur lend their meaningfulness in navigating the otherwise uncertain and complex context of internationalisation at the individual level.

Furthermore, in Publications I and III, I show how individuals make sense of themselves as becoming and being international entrepreneurs through *generational experiences*. Based on the findings, I provide some insights in understanding the changing time context of IE for individuals and its trajectories as a generational journey. In the two studies, the generational and 'working culture' context in dialogue with the content in their narratives suggest how (subsequent) generations of IE practitioners are making sense of their generation-bound becoming as entrepreneurs and international. Hence, we may start tracing more of the implicit socially constructed dialogue of what being an international entrepreneur is within and across the previous and next generations. The outcomes of a generation's sense-making of their experiences in relation to their own socio-economic environment can be regarded as one of the developmental dimensions of experiences when interpreting their "IE behaviour". For example, in Publication I, our findings of a 'Native script' in many ways manifest the Millennials, and even younger generations, engaging in 'doing IE'. By looking more closely into the generational context, we may better interpret how and to what extent some people and their ventures are savvier than others in navigating the global business environment right from the word 'go' and are more culturally or digitally agile.

Furthermore, in relation to Publication III and international career discourse in general, the so-called Millennial founders and students of today may talk about self-actualisation, personally meaningful career trajectories and entrepreneurial 'work with friends' in the global setting, whereas Generation X founders may have been more on a developmental journey, reinventing themselves in terms of the demands of the dynamism of the globalising corporate context when transitioning into an increasingly international working life. Baby Boomers on the other hand seem to 'reminisce' about their international experiences and being the ones starting off along the 'pioneering paths' of IE due to both personal entrepreneurial and/or intrapreneurial endeavours of seeing the future world beyond their own institutional or national context of work. Moreover, the findings in Publication III suggest that subsequent generations of (potential) international entrepreneurs are embedded in a 'transmission' process but also construct a 'dialogue' of what international venturing means between people of different ages. It is a sort of co-narrative of the IE story they want to be part of. Overall, the findings of the individuals' perceptions of IE in Publication III indicate a sense of 'baton-passing', i.e., the subsequent similarities and changes, in motivations and values between generations. Learning from the previous generations (i.e. personal family inheritance, previous managers) as well as newcomers (i.e. students, own children, younger co-workers) is vital in making sense of becoming and being an entrepreneur in the globalising world.

Furthermore, together with this introductory part of the overall doctoral study, Publications I, III and IV offer perspective to the narrative 'argumentative practice' of IE researchers as a means to gain novel insight of the 'becoming and being' process of international entrepreneurs. The insight gained through the present study therefore answers the second research question:

'How to theorise of individuals becoming and being international entrepreneurs through a narrative approach?'

In respect, I have addressed how the historically evolving context of the IE journeys—both contemporary and historical—contribute to our theoretical "re-narration" of the social and historical phenomenon of becoming and being an international entrepreneur. By answering the second question below, I shed light on the a) historical contextualisation of the phenomenon and b) the different levels of discourse in the theorising of IE.

With this doctoral study, I suggest that making sense of individuals 'becoming and becoming' international entrepreneurs ought to be perceived as narratives of individual-level *developmental journeys* (Krueger, 2000, 2007), which encompass certain behavioural groundings and mental frames for international entrepreneurial orientations and identities. Moreover, by looking at the individuals through the lens of sense-making of *transitional journeys*, we may further tap onto the identity work of 'becoming international' and the navigation within and across the psychological and physical boundaries of IE as a career trajectory. Furthermore, I suggest that by contextualizing individuals not only as social actors and motivated agents but also as authors of their IE narratives in accordance to their generational location of becoming and being international entrepreneurs, their sense-makings become reflections of their selves being embedded in their surrounding external world, i.e. the society and culture (Busenitz & Lau, 1996; Leung et al., 2005), and in that of other individuals (Fletcher, 2004). If seen as a socially constructed context for IE (Seymour, 2006), the dialogue within and across different generations of individuals (Coviello, 2015) enacts the transmission, disruption and re-thinking of the meaning of IE in time. It also elevates the intersubjectivity of sense-making of individuals (Sarasvathy et al., 2014) as members of their own age-cohort and beyond. In this vein, we are to bravely co-author their IE stories according to their and our own retrospective treatment of the cultural stock of narratives (Hänninen, 1999; Weick et al., 2005) flowing from the historical 'becoming' context of the 'self'.

In this vein, Publications III and IV, together with this introductory part, contribute to the attempt to contextualize our theorizing of IE as a historically embedded narrative. With this, we can further explore all practices, perceptions and theories of internationalization (Perchard et al., 2017) and entrepreneurship emergent and evolving in the course of history (e.g. Schumpeter, 1934; Smith, 1776). In this vein, Publication III is a novel attempt to address how we may set out to study IE as a *generational journey* and make use of the analysis of narratives in regard to their generational content (Hänninen, 1999; Järvensivu et al., 2014). Furthermore, Publication IV shows how the IE phenomenon manifests in historical narratives and how it can be understood as a historically contingent social process: interpreting IE as an *intergenerational journey*, becoming and being an international entrepreneur is embedded in the transmission of the founder's 'legacy' in the incumbent–successor context. As such our study suggests how re-narrating historical cases can reveal more of the individual's motivated agency and enactment of a historical context due to the prevalence of ideological, political or cultural underpinnings within and across generations.

In the early 21st century, our theoretical understanding of IE has been largely framed by the behavioural view of the phenomenon and as *"…the discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities—across national borders—to create future goods and services"* (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a, p. 540). One may note how the definition implicitly expresses the sense-making effort of individuals as an integrated element in the definition. Now that I have grounded the question of 'who is an international entrepreneur' at the intersection of the actor–agent–author framework and discussed the developmental, transitional and (inter)generational journeys of 'becoming international', I suggest IE scholars shift their attention to IE as *a socially constructed journey that weaves together individual, organizational and contextual dimensions in relation to increasing international involvement.* (For the construction of this alternative definition, see page , section 1.1.) If identity and agency are 'translated' through the sense-making of the social and material worlds of the individuals in a narrative form (by themselves or us as researchers), and the individual's journeys are contextualised through their relational (i.e. social construction), temporal (i.e. historical contingencies) and performative efforts (i.e. how meaning-making processes trigger action) (Garud et al., 2014), a narrative approach to IE as a socially constructed journey allows also more discussion of us, the researchers, as the 'authors' of the IE discourse. All in all, it seems that 'authors' of the meta-level IE theory are simultaneously taken for granted and still very much silenced in current methodological and theoretical approaches. Descending from its 'parent disciplines', IB (Cantwell et al., 2010; Jones & Khanna, 2006) and entrepreneurship (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005b; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), IE ought to be considered inherently historically contextual both as a phenomenon and as a research domain (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019; Mollan, 2018).

5.2 Theoretical contributions

By referring back to the very beginning of this book—the title—I take the letter '*I*' to lead us to the discussion of the following contributions of this doctoral study. Firstly, it will focus our attention to the *individual*—the founder-entrepreneur—as a significant point of departure in discussing IE both as a human experience and an evolving historical phenomenon made sense of by the focal 'actor' and 'agent' of the journey. Moreover, individuals as 'authors' of the IE narrative, including the researcher, are key in interpreting the dynamics of the IE phenomenon and in giving meaning to it as an evolving journey (McMullen & Dimov, 2013). Consequent to the findings in this research, the notion of 'I' unearths *identity construction* as a central, intertwined dimension in making sense of IE as a subjective and personal experience of 'becoming'. Hence, IE becomes the amalgam of transformative journeys different generations of individuals set out upon and narrate in relation to the internationalisation of entrepreneurship. Accordingly, I provide empirical insight of the different current and historical 'times' and 'spaces' (Abbott, 1998) that have served as the context for IE to emerge as an individual-driven phenomenon.

Contribution 1 – The many journeys of becoming an international entrepreneur

The first contribution of this study stems from tuning into *the personal histories of individuals* becoming international entrepreneurs. By exploring the different individual-level journeys, the process of 'becoming', I work 'backwards' from the current discussion of 'who are the international entrepreneurs' at and after the inception of the firm (Andersson, 2015). The findings of the international entrepreneurs' journeys as both developmental and transitional unearth the meaning of different *nature* of past (international) events and experiences at the individual level (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Rasmussen et al., 2001). Therefore, I stress the 'becoming' journey as anything but predetermined, clear-cut or the same for anyone, who has "attended" the experience.

The meaning of developmental experiences

Prior (international) experience is arguably the most recognized antecedent in modelling internationalization and, in general, a vital part of the explanations of IE as a phenomenon (Bloodgood et al., 1996; Reuber & Fischer, 1997). However, 'experience' as an individual-level factor (Reuber et al., 2018; Ruzzier et al., 2007) carries somewhat little value and meaning in the big picture, if not made sense of in relation to the personal history—the journey—as a whole. With the exploration of the individual's life-experiences from a *developmental* perspective (Krueger, 2007), I bring new insight to the discussion of the historical background of individual entrepreneurs (McGaughey, 2007) and their role as social actors.

As active participants in the streams of their contextual experiences (Morris et al., 2012; Karp, 2006), the temporal and social behaviours of international entrepreneurs emerge as grounded on their assumptions and understandings developed early in life. For example, our findings regarding the 'Native' script of international entrepreneurs reflect the grounding positions of founder-CEOs, who are 'privileged' in being internationally and/or entrepreneurially oriented from an early period in their life. However, certain developmental experiences later in life may become transformative and nudge the development of one's behavioural orientations into new directions. When, for example, becoming engaged in the dynamic and changing contexts of an international market or work place in which a different level of sensitivity is needed in terms of one's actions, an individual may transform from a world-citizen and culture-savvy 'Native' into an arbiter-like 'Diplomat', appreciating negotiation and personal learning processes. With these insights, I also contribute to the understanding of the meaning and role of social interaction and networks (Ellis, 2011; Evers & O'Gorman, 2011) in the course of the personal developmental experiences. For example, while perhaps having developed a strong sense of self as a 'Pioneer' over the course of time due to surviving unfavourable episodes in one's life, i.e. experiencing a burnout or launching a career in an externally uncertain situation, such as during an economic recession, one's autonomous orientation unheeding of external voices could benefit from networking and seeking help from others.

With the findings, I draw attention to international entrepreneurs becoming 'Eclectics' in their behaviour as international entrepreneurs who are able to integrate experiences of confronting resistance and challenges (as Pioneers and Diplomats), enhancing an internal motivation to reach out to and work hard for the next big thing (as Gamblers and Natives), be it socially, economically or personally important. The findings indicate IE as a journey of developing an ability to challenge personal 'beliefs' on the basis of feedback from others. Hence, it is a socially constructed journey in which individuals come to understand that their socially and contextually embedded international entrepreneurial 'identity constructions' are negotiated under the influence of the persons' family values and relations, peers, and temporal and committed international relationships, that is, the meaningful relationships around them—and not least the effects of their own behaviours on those relationships. Overall, such a developmental perspective complements our understanding of the behavioural (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005a; Covin & Miller, 2014; Joardar & Wu, 2011; Jones & Coviello, 2005) and cognitive premises of individual international entrepreneurs (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Acedo & Florin, 2006; Zahra et al., 2005).

The meaning of transitional experiences

With the exploration of the entrepreneurs' personal internationalisation experiences as *transitional* in nature and more or less grounded in their internationalising career trajectories, I discuss the physical and psychological mobility, or 'boundarylessness', (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) of the international(ising) context of work for an international entrepreneur. For example, pursuing a career in an industry, which builds upon freelancer networks that are both international and fluid, reflects how IE serves as a context of transitional experiences in navigating business without proper boundaries of a focal organisation and the "in-between" dynamics when referring to people one works with. At the same time, some of international entrepreneurs has experiences of rejecting promising domestic career opportunities and moving on towards a personally meaningful international business—a career transition from one field to another.

By looking into the experiences individual entrepreneurs narrate of themselves going through a personal 'internationalization' (Adam et al., 2018; Fletcher, 2004) either prior to or during founding a venture, I contribute to IE literature by revealing how a significant role career transitions (Burton et al., 2016; Nowiński & Haddoud, 2019) and the sense of physical and psychological mobility (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) were to the identity work of international entrepreneurs and their world-views, i.e. expectations, moral underpinnings of work, or religious beliefs. The experiences of more intense transitions of 'becoming international' happened through the validation of having become more international than domestic in one's identity by, for example, serving as an expatriate or with peacekeeping forces abroad for an extended period of time, profoundly affecting one's sense of 'self' and obtaining an internal meaning for having an internationally proactive career.

Moreover, the findings of the transitions individuals navigate goes deeper into how international entrepreneurs become aware of different personal hindrances (i.e. prior bad experiences, burnout) to moving forward with their internationalising venturing and 'letting go' of them, while simultaneously 'reaching out' to different sources of visions (i.e. childhood dreams, activism for equal rights in and across countries), international social support (i.e. industry advisers and international mentors) and overall clarity in making sense of their dynamic international working context. Based on the findings, we *empirically* show how the recent conceptualization of IE as a liminal transitioning process (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019) elevates the key individuals' sense-making of becoming international and becomes aided by different personal 'transitioning capabilities', such as building a collective culture in one's company or being reflexive of one's own comfort zones and leaving them purposefully. Moreover, I suggest that these individuals becoming aware and making sense of the transitions they've gone through have served as testing sites of their coping behaviours (e.g. Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004) in the midst of ambiguous entrepreneurial career processes (Patzelt & Shepherd, 2011) as well as 'career anchors' (e.g. Schein, 1990) in navigating their contemporary international careers.

Contribution 2 – Narrative scripts and identity work of international entrepreneurs

The second contribution of this study stems from taking *a narrative approach* to the individual's sense-making (Weick et al., 2005) of the different nature of experiences in the process of becoming and being an international entrepreneur. Here, I further stress that when it comes to methods of research in IE, there is an underlying threat of conducting individual-level studies predominantly within the positivist conventions inherent to entrepreneurship and international business research (Nummela & Welch, 2006; Welch et al., 2011).

Based on the findings of the individual's retrospective sense-making of the developmental, transitional and generational experiences of becoming an international entrepreneur, I have elaborated on the meanings of the individual's personal life-experience of a different nature (Morris et al., 2012). These findings complement literature on *how* entrepreneurs' history and their sense-making of it as narrative matters in the process of founding and venturing (Mathias et al., 2015) and the internationalization in particular (McGaughey, 2007).

The narrative scripts of being an international entrepreneur

Interpreted as 'narrative scripts', the findings in this study reveal more of the development of mental mechanisms (Grégoire et al., 2011; Sommer & Haug, 2011) routing the path of becoming and being an international entrepreneur. Based on the findings, I show how the 'narrative scripts' of the individuals function as sense-making instruments (Brown et al.,

2008) and provide means for analysing how international entrepreneurs encode information about their experiences, the surrounding world (Labov, 2013), and themselves (McAdams, 2013).

Based on our findings, IE therefore becomes a story of the 'Gambler', 'Native', 'Pioneer' or 'Diplomat' or something else, manifesting the very essence of becoming an international actor and agent in one's own IE journey. 'IE behaviours' are therefore interpreted in relation to events, actions, and personal self-efficacy within the social and cultural contexts in which the behaviour takes place. The result is that founders have different (experience-bound) perceptions of their own motivations, orientations and capabilities when addressing different contexts relative to their personal IE journey and responding to the demands these contexts have posed on them as individuals. Hence, individuals seem to define their international entrepreneurial 'identities' and related behaviour by means of their earlier experiences and to adjust them according to what they personally draw from these experiences.

The above notions add to the central discussion of cognitive premises of international entrepreneurs, i.e. the role of affect as a source of perceptions and attitudes (Sommer, 2010) as well as micro-level learning (Prashantham & Floyd, 2012) as it relates to how important information becomes stored in memory and retrieved for later use (Baron, 2008). For example, through the findings of the narrative scripts of being a 'Gambler', we can see how certain past experiences have been emotionally affective and reveal more of the founder-entrepreneurs as emotional – as much as social and analytical – actors with dispassionate ways of handling their own (genuine) emotions and those of others.

Previous IE literature treats prior experience more or less as a 'boundary condition' (Child et al., 2017) and its determining logic to understand the reasoning with which it is applied in the internationalisation of a firm (Jones & Casulli, 2014). However, my findings point towards the diversity of the international entrepreneurs' cognitive schema from past events and incidents (Mandler, 2014—the 'stock of narratives' (Hänninen, 1999)—from which an individual creatively and perhaps in an ever-changing way draws in their process of 'becoming international'. Therefore, this study underlines how the way entrepreneurs 'connect the dots' in their venturing opportunities (Baron & Ensley, 2006, p. 1341) is primarily a narrative practice of giving meaning to the past, present and future, or 'plotting' prior experiences into a constitutive whole (Garud et al., 2014).

Moreover, the above insights balances some of the current emphasis on the firm-level research in IE (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Jones et al., 2011) and revive the central role of founder-entrepreneurs and their thinking processes (Milanov & Maissenhälter, 2015). To complement the 'positivist' views of cognitive processes of the individuals in IE (Zahra et al., 2005), I suggest narrative sense-making, i.e. self-narratives and storytelling, as an explicit illustration of and practice of one's 'metacognitive' abilities (Haynie et al., 2010) as an international entrepreneur. Such abilities could become the individual's means of having some control over one's 'go-to' cognitive strategies in relation to internationalisation decision-making (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Reuber et al., 2018) that may over time become preferred or avoided in given contexts or situations. Such retrospection of experience unearths some of the specificities of how individuals' beliefs and assumptions have developed into either having a positive or negative influence in a given domestic or international context (Acedo & Florin, 2006).

Conducting 'identity work' in becoming an international entrepreneur

From the vantage-point of retrospection of the IE process unfolding as a journey (McMullen & Dimov, 2013; Welch et al., 2016), I offer an analytical lens through which we may further interpret the individual and international entrepreneurial behaviour in transition (Jones & Coviello, 2005; Prashantham & Floyd, 2019): 'identity work' in the personal narrative of becoming international. The value for IE research lies in how identity work expresses the ways individuals can find both coherence and/or distinctiveness in one's sense of 'self' in and across social contexts (Ibarra, 1999; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003) through authoring their psychophysical space of becoming and being an international entrepreneur.

Through the findings, I have indicated towards a variety of mental and physical states that occur when experiencing more intensive transitioning from a local way of 'being' to a global way of 'being'. These 'states' unearthed the individual's interpretations of the most influential and meaningful events affecting their careers (e.g. unemployment or other life crisis) and their contribution to the transformative states of becoming international. Moreover, findings of the mental and social as much as the physical contingencies of becoming an international entrepreneur as a career journey further indicate how the international entrepreneurs' sense-making reflects 'identity work' (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) in constructing their internationalising self. The different routes to meaning construction of the international self were found in relation to their effort of organising the sequence of events and experiences in terms of 'horizontal time' as well as in layering experiences in terms of 'vertical time'. Sense-making of one's 'self' in such a hermeneutic manner brings forth nuances of the requirements to continuously (re)negotiate one's identity in terms of where the international entrepreneur is coming from, such as the country context or past employments, where s/he is now, and where s/he is potentially going next.

This kind of organisation of a psychophysical space of 'becoming an international entrepreneur' illustrates the recurring *"tensions involved in transitioning from one condition and identity to another"* (Söderlund & Borg, 2018, p. 2). By explicating different triggers that have become meaningful in the international entrepreneurs' 'identity work', we can concretise something of the individuals' ambiguous and changing 'career' settings (Karhunen et al., 2017) for the professional identity (re)construction for international entrepreneurs always being 'in between'.

Based on the findings, I suggest that an individual as a motivated agent and the relative firm-level behaviour (Miller, 2011; Covin & Miller, 2014; González-Pernía & Peña-Legazkue, 2015) become meaningful when reinterpreted through the lens of identity construction and in the light of what one has come to know as being 'internationally entrepreneurial'. Moreover, through the interpretations of the individuals 'becoming international' as a career journey, we gain more nuanced and personal understanding of having a 'global mindset' (Kyvik et al., 2013; Nummela et al., 2004), either as preceding or following the internationalisation of a firm, especially in terms of what it means to develop, obtain and have one. The international entrepreneurs' identification of certain bounded and localised "old" identity constructions when contrasted with one's social context or future visions of global scale (the 'boundaryless' career orientations) could be seen as assistance and/or encouragement for future and current founder-entrepreneurs' career processes in navigating the dynamic space of their global work.

By interpreting the individual's sense-making as a narrative of the 'self', we can add 'flesh and bones' to the emergent understanding of 'identity' as an integral part of the IE journeys (Coviello, 2015; Hannibal, 2017; Sarasvathy et al., 2014). Furthermore, motivated by the limited understanding of the initial key drivers in the internationalization of the new venture and their sense-making (Jones et al., 2011; Coviello, 2015; Jones & Casulli, 2014), in my inquiry of a variety of individuals' personal histories and experiences regarding the process of 'becoming and being' an international entrepreneur, identity work becomes resemblance of the different 'dialogic routes' (Beech, 2008) to meaning construction of the international entrepreneurial 'self' in the narrative. By seeing the narrative sense-making as the different internal dialogic routes to identity of the authoring 'self' becoming international, I complement and extend the present and future-oriented discourse of the international entrepreneur as an actor and agent, and them suggesting rather static or distinct 'profile' of an individual in IE (e.g. Ghannad & Andersson, 2012; Joardar & Wu, 2011; Perks & Hughes, 2008). To further follow a 'dialogic'[2] view of the narrative of the process of becoming and being (Watson, 2009), we may attend to the various "voices" (i.e., narratives of self) that coexist and are relativistic in their interaction, producing no final conclusion or 'last word' at the end, but a more inclusive view of the meaning of 'being international'. In this respect, IE could be approached as a 'dialogue' of different environment-, firm- and individual-level meanings of the process, where narrative sense-making constructs different routes to the understandings of it as a personal journey.

I have also discussed how IE as an individual-level journey is embedded in the social historic process having no clear beginning nor ending in sight: the nature of 'being international' evolves due to the world changing (i.e. wars, changes to the mobility across borders) and new, different meanings being associated with the phenomenon (i.e. "pioneering", networking, digitalization). In that sense, I find myself in the middle of the "co-authoring" discourse (Steyaert, 2007) of IE—the dialogic routes to it—in and over time by both the practitioners and us researchers making sense of a phenomenon. With

[2] In contrast to the dialogic view in this thesis, a 'dialectic' view aims to describe interaction and resolution between the various "voices" of becoming and being, where one putative conclusion (i.e. a certain identity) would establish primacy over the others. See further for example in "Dialectic and dialogue" by D. Nikulin, Stanford University Press, 2010.

this I note that by undermining the threat of continuing to impose ‘pre-informed’ assumptions of ‘who international entrepreneurs are’ or who and how they ‘become’, we may lose sight of the various nature of experiences and complexities individuals make sense of – and the different *meanings* of those experiences to the very practitioners themselves.

Contribution 3 – The historical narrative of international entrepreneurs

The third contribution of this study stems from the *historical contextualisation of the individual-level journeys* into the social historic process.

Generational locations of individuals

By framing the individual international entrepreneurs as protagonists of their generation’s ways of ‘doing IE’ and as the sense-makers of their own motivations to and perceptions of IE, I contribute empirically to the so-far conceptual discussion of ‘generations’ having agency in the practice of IE (Liu et al., 2019) and historical contextualisation of being and becoming an international entrepreneur.

My findings suggest both traces of a ‘dialogue’ between generations of (potential) founders of international entrepreneurial ventures as well as a subtle ‘transmission’ and transformation of motivations for and perceptions of being an international entrepreneur in a long run. For example, we can see traces of generational shifts in the value, perception and motivation through interpreting the generation’s narratives promoting, for example, either education-based or experience-based learning of internationalisation. For example, my findings indicate how Baby Boomers make sense of and promote their ‘learning through experience’, which had become a meaningful practice early in their internationalising career paths in a time when no internet or instant messaging aided their adjustments to foreign countries and further reflected their humbleness to learn. On the contrary, the Millennial generation of (to-be) international entrepreneurs had enjoyed the advantage of being born into a time when the globalising media coloured their ‘international education’ and the developmental years of their international orientation via the rapid increase in individuals’ consumption and contribution to the social media.

Furthermore, Publication III adds to the practitioners’ views of the historical contingencies of our globalising and currently vigorously digitising world of IE (Domenico et al., 2014; Ojala et al., 2018) and the key actors’ collective sense-making as embedded in more or less distinct social historical processes (Joshi et al., 2011). Practitioners’ sense-making of generation-related contexts and content of their experiences ought to include the ‘generational narratives’ in our theorising of IE as one of the historically embedded ‘pre-conditions’ international entrepreneurs may possess when embarking on an international entrepreneurial career.

Minding the founder legacy in and over time

Based on the findings of IE unfolding as an 'intergenerational journey' embedded in historical contingencies of a nation and its international outlook (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019) in conjunction with the incumbent–successor context of a family firm and its internationalisation, I add to the historically longitudinal perspective of our internationalisation studies (Welch et al., 2016) and the contextualisation of IE as a social process (Fletcher, 2004).

With the historical 'biographies' of the international entrepreneurs and their successors of two family firms, our findings indicate how the individual founders and their interpersonal networks set the groundings for the next generation and the evolving internationalisation of the firm. Though the study is primarily positioned at the intersection of interpersonal networks of entrepreneurs (Greve & Salaff, 2003; Hite & Hesterly, 2001), founder legacy (Hammond et al., 2016; Harris & Ogbonna, 1999) and internationalisation of family firms (Arregle et al., 2007; Salvato & Melin, 2008; Zellweger et al., 2019), it builds on an understanding of the emergence and evolution of the interpersonal (international) network ties of a founder as either identity-based or calculative and further reveals enablers of and hindrances (Ellis, 2011) to international networking (Hennart et al., 2019; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014). By explicating founders' and their successors' embedded ties and alignment of their identity-based or calculative patterns in networks in support of their international venturing, the findings highlight the social and historical meaning of the 'founder legacy' (Hammond et al., 2016; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015; Ogbonna & Harris, 2001) for future generations of entrepreneurs (Shi et al., 2019). By contextualizing IE in a different historical time sequence, we may tell new 'stories' of the founders' and their intergenerational embeddedness in their historically unfolding social contexts (De Massis et al., 2018).

By constructing the biographical narratives of four international entrepreneurs representing a historical time context extending from the 1800s to the beginning of the 1900s and scrutinising the founder's international networking legacy in a family firm, we show how studying IE in and across the historical time context offers a potential bridge between the agent-centric and the context-centric perspectives—a void problematised in entrepreneurship research (Garud et al., 2014) and internationalisation literature (Coviello et al., 2017). Narratives and contextualisation of IE in light of the earlier periods of historical time in comparison to the one we are experiencing now add to the discussion of IE as a temporal phenomenon and challenge our presumptions of time-specific factors enabling and/or disabling emergence of the phenomenon.

5.3 Conclusions

To conclude, in this doctoral study, I have explored and made sense of the extant individual-level IE literature and the personal narratives of the international entrepreneur. By going beyond the current configuration of the international entrepreneur as a social actor and motivated agent, I have illuminated insight of the *(auto)biographical author* of the international entrepreneurship narrative—both the research subject and researcher. These two as 'authors' have largely been distanced from our theorising of IE. That said, my thesis is that the current 'developmental state' of our understanding of *international entrepreneurs* ought to recognise its maturity for adolescence and emerging adulthood: the construction of *an integrative storyline of the 'self' of international entrepreneurs as much as us IE researchers is constitutive and meaningful in understanding IE as a journey and a transformative phenomenon.*

Displayed in Chapter 2, the three anchoring elements of a narrative identity (McAdams, 2013)—the 'self' as actor, agent and author of IE—have guided my theoretical discussion of the individual international entrepreneur regarding what we know in the light of past literature and could still know more of when it comes to the past experiences of international entrepreneurs and their meaning today and in the future. In discussing the research questions and theoretical contributions of this dissertation through the four complementary yet individually comprehensible Publications I–IV, the main contribution of this doctoral study lies in understanding more of the socially constructed *'authorship'* of the (theoretical) phenomenon of becoming and being an international entrepreneur and the "co-authoring" work between the researcher and the research subject.

Hence, reminding ourselves of how and why we co-construct the meta- and collective-level discourses of the IE phenomenon the way we do challenges us to be reflexive. As an ending insight, I posit that sense-making of identity relates to the idea of the sense-maker's reflexivity (James, 1890/1950) and human selfhood in the context of their personal narrative (McAdams, 1999). Therefore, the narrative identity, where 'I' encounters the 'me', produces discursively a sort of objective perspective of the 'self'—be it that of the entrepreneur or the researcher. Considering my own exploration of the personal histories of international entrepreneurs in relation to the past, present and future, it reveals the biographical author dimension of me as a researcher as well. In the end, I consider myself as a narrator—both the 'knower' and the 'object of that knowing' (McAdams, 2013)—and as a result this dissertation has become an effort of making sense of my identity as a narrative IE researcher.

5.4 Practical implications

The practical relevance of this doctoral study stems from identifying individuals as the career actors in the context of IE and their personal 'becoming' journeys. As the key authors of the IE phenomenon in the chain of generations, international entrepreneurs enact change in the social and cultural dynamics of the contemporary working life and the developments of the global economy.

Self-narrative as a tool of leaving the 'Old World' and finding 'New Worlds'

Findings of the different journeys of becoming and being an international entrepreneur can aid an individual in identifying oneself in the narratives presented in this study. On page 25 in Publication I, there is a figure illustrating the different features of the different ‘scripts’ that we unearthed from the narrative accounts of 19 entrepreneurs. In particular, the narrative scripts of the Pioneer, Native, Diplomat, Gambler as well as that of the Eclectic may well resonate with many of those who have ever engaged in some sort of international business and entrepreneurial endeavour. To me, that is what stories are for—finding yourself in the narratives of others and perhaps mirroring from them what you would like to learn and foster in your own future life endeavours. While the reported typologies do not do justice to the diversity of experiences in real life, they serve as a launchpad for self-reflection. Through them, an international entrepreneur may acknowledge and work on certain strengths as well as ‘blind spots’ in his or her sense-making or beliefs *of who s/he is as an* international entrepreneur. These and the other stories provided in this dissertation seek to provide different ‘teachings’ by which readers can learn something of themselves or the world around them.

Practitioners of IE who seek approaches that give perspective on integrating daily challenges in international business (i.e. ineffective interactions with people of different backgrounds or internal confusion and a sense of ‘liminality’ in between cultural contexts) will benefit from introspective self-narratives and other tools that assist an individual in tracking down clues and constructing holistic sense of one’s life and career experiences, identity and behaviour. For example, if the sense of boundarylessness or liminality of one’s internationalising career is more of a source of insecurity and fear than an exciting and transformative experience affirming a stronger sense of agency over one’s career, retrospective construction and reflexivity of one’s life narrative (i.e. a life story technique) may aid one in finding and breaking loose of the past ‘triggering’ events and experiences that are implicitly becoming the ‘present’ experience in the uncertainty of doing international business. In addition, not being aware of certain “outdated” beliefs of one’s self or the misinterpretations one makes about social and cultural surroundings could either hinder international entrepreneurs’ abilities or amplify ‘delusional’ behaviours in leading a firm into uncertain futures, for example, taking on risks or continuing with a specific international business partner.

Based on the findings of this study and readings of psychology, I suggest that a conscious distinction between past and present affect and behavioural orientations in internationalisation and/or entrepreneurship can become a mindful and rather practical act of identifying and ‘letting go’ of the mental hindrances that may in the present be disabling free ‘movement’ towards future opportunities. By making sense of who one is and is becoming as an international entrepreneur, that is, conducting ‘identity work’ in conjunction with the internationalisation of one’s venture, a practitioner would lend structure to the ambiguous process of becoming international. Not only in a more personal sense, but also in respect to the organisations he or she wants to successfully lead into change. In this sense, this study verifies arguments of the importance of integrating and facilitating self-reflecting learning in accelerator and incubator programs, enterprise training of individuals on their journeys of becoming and/or being international (Prashantham & Floyd, 2019) and entrepreneurs (Garcia-Lorenzo et al., 2018). Like individuals navigating tensions between being an artist and doing business in the creative industries (Hägg, 2011), also international entrepreneurs can find it valuable to seek guidance from coaches, mentors and advisers for these parallel processes in order to learn about and mindfully manage their identity work "in-between" different contexts. Even counsellors offering solution-focused brief therapy for one's behavioural orientations (i.e. 'scripts') and evolving self-perception in the middle of the complexity of the cross-border venturing process and the events triggering emotion provide a source for personalised tools in unearthing the fears, hopes and visions—both rational and irrational—in one's unfolding IE journey.

Storytelling as a tool for unearthing new strategic directions for international venturing

Furthermore, storytelling and the freedom of imagining alternative 'endings' for the internationalising business may serve as premises for practicing a form of elastic and creative thinking of international strategies and socialisation into new foreign markets for the individuals involved. While the transitioning process of entrepreneurs themselves becoming international sets a new tone to their newly internationally arching context of leadership, it could possibly influence the intergroup relations in the small firm as well as organisational collaborations externally. Here, reflexivity of the situation through narratives may also help in unearthing different meanings, motivations for internationalisation and integral identity work 'strategies' at the company level, which then become effective in building a new company narrative and future visions of its international expansion.

Through narratives as examples of the development of behavioural orientation of international ventures and/or outcomes of a 'founder legacy', firm leaders may also see how the founders' journeys may be enabling or hindering the development of the firm over time (i.e. status, socioemotional, network). By being mindful of the legacy of the founder, for example, in the incumbent–successor change context, the second-generation leader of an international venture can recognize what kind of interpersonal networks abroad and networking behaviour the founder is leaving and how those relations could be developed further.

Also, in Publications I, II and III, we can see examples of how the practitioners may themselves (re)narrate personal histories of IE as part of the dialogue of the current understanding of theory and practice they see and experience as international entrepreneurs. Hence, this study verifies the value of storytelling in (international) entrepreneurship in the form of building of storied 'legacies'. For example, for more than a decade now, the storied legacies of globally known international entrepreneurs, such as Richard Branson and Elon Musk, benchmark what people perceive as entrepreneurship and/or IE. In the current world of elevated social impact based on single individuals through social media and the understanding of algorithm, we have effective underlying mechanisms in developing a generational legacy of IE—the narrative that becomes cultivated as the act of reaching out to global opportunities.

Policy makers enacting the public IE discourse

The emergence of new international opportunities and the entrepreneurs who bring those 'new worlds' of opportunities to life are important to diverse stakeholders, including investors, policymakers, employees and the coming generations. The findings of this doctoral study become relevant in relation to designing support structures and education aimed at fostering IE in acknowledgement of individuals' journeys along different paths of becoming and being international entrepreneurs.

Those who are engaged in designing policies for internationalisation and entrepreneurship ought to avoid the mentality of 'one size fits all'. Encouraging and fostering a public discourse of who international entrepreneurs are as an 'eclectic' and inclusive narrative prompting new meanings of what IE is as time goes by and seasons change would inevitably help a larger variety of individuals engage in the creation of international opportunities and ventures.

Policies ought to acknowledge IE as a fundamentally human experience, which in different degrees and for an unspecified length of time will involve a range of personal and organisational challenges and a sense of uncertainty. Hence, a larger spectrum of public support, designed to aid entrepreneurs on their journeys abroad, would encompass different methods to identify, assist, trigger, intervene or even amplify the different states of the personal- and organisational-level development.

On the other hand, I want to point out the criticality of engaging different generations of 'doing IE' in the processes of making sense of the phenomenon. I draw attention to the practice of bringing different stakeholders of the new ventures (i.e. investors, consultants, policy makers, media) into reflexive dialogues—or forums—and engaging representatives of different generations in learning how to interact meaningfully and work effectively with international entrepreneurs of different age-cohorts. The varying value-compositions of generations ought to be seen as fostering the spectrum of IE, not unifying its meaning, while still finding the intersubjective grounds of experience and space for sense-making across generations.

Related to generations as the products and creators of their social historic processes, we ought to be mindful of the dark sides of advocating and prioritising a narrow sector of international opportunities, i.e. the software industry, or certain export-related industries in creating a 'bubble-like' discourse of IE within countries or generations of entrepreneurs. As a small economy and society like Finland, it is perhaps risky and unnecessary to be only 'playing one card' at a time when it comes to financing and building ecosystems to support IE. For example, digital platforms may serve as a great emissary in 'constructing a shared narrative of IE', but a lousy master, if only gathering like-minded people to define the future of globally arching entrepreneurship.

For the educators of new generations of international entrepreneurs

In the current global economy, IE calls for further attentiveness and novelty from educators. In conjunction with the agenda of entrepreneurship educators already beginning to embrace international mobility and inclusion in study programs and curricula (Bell et al., 2004; Hannon, 2018), I suggest educators consider more practice of 'identity work' as an integral part of doing international business and entrepreneurship studies.

Here, it is worth mentioning that not everyone in entrepreneurship programs will become entrepreneurs, nor does international business studies make one pursuit an international career automatically. However, many will work for entrepreneurs and/or under international management, and therefore, different implications of the idea of identity work can apply. For example, in addition to receiving education on cross-cultural differences or similar subjects, students would be made to attend to and become more aware the different contexts and means by which they would conduct identity work throughout their careers (i.e. career transitions, international mobility). Also, becoming reflexive of the 'scripts' educators sometimes reinforce in their narration of international entrepreneurs(hip) can lead into a more dialogic understanding of the polyphonic narratives of becoming international.

Furthermore, if aiming toward designs that acknowledge individual and social dynamics of both internationalisation and entrepreneurship, educators could add different methods that allow for intergenerational mentoring, together with international career guidance, and multicultural peer-group and personal reflection opportunities. Such methods would potentially and perhaps more efficiently facilitate real-time (un)learning and experimenting with possible identities as an international entrepreneur and the exchange of perspectives between individuals. Hearing narratives from both students and practitioners of different generations would become relevant in terms of designing timely yet 'intergenerational' IE education. For example, there may be a need for different forms of education for the process of 'becoming and being international', or even new understandings of what 'international experience' as a process is, to raise new understandings of cross-cultural business conduct that stem from the increasingly boundaryless IE context, in which country borders seem to have less and less relevance.

5.5 Limitations and cross-roads for future research journeys

In this doctoral study, the narrative approach and 'explanations' of certain occurrences in the journeys of individuals do not claim causality: they were not aimed to be written according to a model of cause and effect, but according to the explanations obtained from the overall narrative (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990)—the change from 'beginning' to 'end'. As a contextual phenomenon, IE evolves over the course of history. Hence, it has no clear beginning nor end in sight but is always 'in-between'. Derived from the above, the present study has stressed the importance of further research into what 'becoming' means in IE as a historically and socially embedded journey.

Publication I initialises IE journeys as narrative scripts, which opens up a different 'realm of meaning' (Polkinghorne, 1988) in IE research and our study of the individuals embedded in the historically, generationally, socially and emotionally 'flux' phenomenon. Storytelling and meaning-making of personal experiences advocate the social constructivist approach to internationalising business and how people understand their own and others' engagement in it. Relatedly, I suggest that future research directions should follow up by looking in greater depth at the individual scripts and their broader implications.

Furthermore, making cross-cultural (or industry) comparisons between narrative scripts and founder-level identity constructions, plus the different contexts (institutional, political) in which they emerge would serve to better the understanding of assumptions and beliefs embodied in individual-level behaviour. This could also involve looking more specifically, and also longitudinally, at the real-time emergence and development of the individuals' contextual sense-making of international venturing. Furthermore, to better understand the significance of (prior and current) social interactions of teams and communities in founding international ventures, I suggest studies that explore the experiences of teams and their members in relation to the different 'narrative scripts' they follow, or identity work they do (e.g. if being of different ages and nationalities and with differing expertise and educational paths). To better grasp the essence of identity work unfolding dialogically *over time*, I align with suggestions of longitudinal approaches (Beech, 2008) in order to follow up on the process of 'narrating and re-narrating the self' with others. These avenues of future research related to what could be seen as a limitation in the present study: my decision to interview the entrepreneurs only once. At this point of my personal process 'becoming' a researcher, I well agree on the view that recurring interviews have an effect on the depth and breadth of the content that emerges in the interviews (i.e. "filling gaps" or elaborating on certain issues from previous interviews). However, it is not only the content of the generated data, but also the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee that develops over time. Becoming more familiar with the other person and co-creating a sort of "circle of trust" can possibly elicit a dialogue that would not necessarily emerge in the first round of interviews.

In relation to daily identity work, Publication II initialises venturing into the unexplored opportunity for both IE scholars and practitioners of engaging with the 'new career' research discourse and entrepreneurial careers (Burton et al., 2016; Hytti, 2010; Tams & Arthur, 2010), the international human resource management literature on international job mobility and volatility of future career management (Baruch & Reis, 2016; Cerdin & Le Pargneux, 2010). I suggest that together with physical and psychological mobility and liminality of individuals' IE careers, research has yet to explore the various meanings of the globalising career and context for individuals in the future generations of entrepreneurs.

Moreover, in both interviews and the historical cases, we can see how their entrepreneurial careers and related internationalisation is not a straightforward process but in instead very much in-progress, due to, e.g., national economic situations and political situations domestically and globally. Accordingly, our understandings of IE in the social historic process requires a broader understanding of the historical context in which IE emerges and the overall embeddedness of human agency (Welch et al., 2016; Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014). In particular, I suggest deeper research into the trends emerging dynamically in the global context and developments (i.e. social, cultural, technological and ideological) that have only conceptually or implicitly been present in IE literature in relation to *generation-related* discourse and sense-making of the phenomenon.

Currently our theoretical approaches to the IE phenomenon ought to be extended with both generational (Liu et al., 2019) and historical lenses (Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019), which serve as launchpads for more longitudinal and historical research both in and over time (Hurmerinta-Peltomäki, 2003; Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014). Interpretations of IE and its meaning are needed by different generations (of individuals) and agents (i.e. founders, academia, country-specific institutions) enacting the context of 'doing' IE that stems from a particular country context and culture. Hence, it is timely to look further into the meanings of different geographically and demographically bound international entrepreneurial 'profiles' and/or identities constructed as embedded in the historically unfolding circumstances and development of the different 'home' economies of individuals. A complementary suggestion is that generations of international entrepreneurs would be studied with mixed-methods approaches to increase our knowledge of both the generalisable views and tendencies of different generations, while still appreciating the more fine-grained nature of the individual experience and microfoundations of IE at the organisational level (Coviello et al., 2017) occurring in and between generations of practitioners.

References

Abbott, A. (1998). The causal devolution. *Sociological Methods Research*, *27*(2), 148–181.

Acedo, F., & Florin, J. (2006). An entrepreneurial cognition perspective on the internationalization of SMEs. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *4*(1), 49–67.

Acedo, F. J., & Jones, M. V. (2007). Speed of internationalization and entrepreneurial cognition: Insights and a comparison between international new ventures, exporters and domestic firms. *Journal of World Business*, *42*(3), 236–252.

Adam, H., Obodaru, O., Lu, J. G., Maddux, W. W., & Galinsky, A. D. (2018). The shortest path to oneself leads around the world: Living abroad increases self-concept clarity. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *145*, 16–29.

Adams, G. R., & Marshall, S. K. (1996). A developmental social psychology of identity: understanding the person-in-context. *Journal of Adolescence*, *19*(5), 429–442.

Ahern, K. A. (1999). Ten tips for reflective bracketing. *Qualitative Health Research*, *9*(3), 407–411.

Ahn, S.-Y. (2018). Founder Succession, The Imprint of Founders' Legacies, and Long-Term Corporate Survival. *Sustainability*, *10*(5), 1485.

Al-Aali, A., & Teece, D. J. (2014). International Entrepreneurship and the Theory of the (Long-Lived) International Firm: A Capabilities Perspective. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 95–116.

Al-Laham, A., & Souitaris, V. (2008). Network embeddedness and new-venture internationalization: Analyzing international linkages in the German biotech industry. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *23*(5), 567–586.

Alvesson, M. (2003). Beyond Neopositivists, Romantics, and Localists: A Reflexive Approach to Interviews in Organizational Research. *Academy of Management Review*, *28*(1), 13–33.

Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. (2007). Constructing mystery: empirical matters in theory development. *Academy of Management Review*, *32*, 11265–11281.

Alvesson, M., Ashcraft, L. K., & Thomas, R. (2008). Identity Matters: Reflections on the Construction of Identity Scholarship in Organization Studies. *Organization*, *15*(1), 5–28.

Anderson, A. R., Dodd, S. D, & Jack, S. L. (2012). Entrepreneurship as connecting: some implications for theorising and practice. *Management Decision*, *50*(5), 958–971.

Anderson, A. R., & Jack, S. L. (2002). The articulation of social capital in entrepreneurial networks: a glue or a lubricant? *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *14*(3), 193–210.

Andersson, S. (2000). The Internationalization of the Firm from an Entrepreneurial Perspective. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, *30*(1), 63–92.

Andersson, S. (2002). Suppliers' international strategies. *European Journal of Marketing*, *36*(1/2), 86–110.

Andersson, S. (2004). Internationalization in different industrial contexts. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *19*(6), 851–875.

Andersson, S. (2015). The international entrepreneur: From experience to action. In S. A. Fernhaber & S. Prashantham (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to International Entrepreneurship* (pp. 70–83). Routledge.

Ardichvili, A., & Gasparishvili, A. (2003). Russian and Georgian Entrepreneurs and Non-Entrepreneurs: A Study of Value Differences. *Organization Studies*, *24*(1), 29–46.

Arregle, J. L., Batjargal, B., Hitt, M. A., Webb, J. W., Miller, T., & Tsui, A. S. (2015). Family Ties in Entrepreneurs' Social Networks and New Venture Growth. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *39*(2), 313–344.

Arregle, J. L., Hitt, M. A., Sirmon, D. G., & Very, P. (2007). The Development of Organizational Social Capital: Attributes of Family Firms. *Journal of Management Studies*, *44*(1), 73–95. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2007.00665.x

Arregle, J. L., Naldi, L., Nordqvist, M., & Hitt, M. A. (2012). Internationalization of Family-Controlled Firms: A Study of the Effects of External Involvement in Governance. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *36*(6), 1115–1143.

Arthur, M. B., Hall, D. T., & Lawrence, B. S. (1989). enerating new directions in career theory. In *Handbook of Career Theory* (pp. 7–25). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Arthur, M. B., & Rousseau, D. M. (1996). A Career Lexicon for the 21st Century. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *10*(4), 28–39. https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.1996.3145317

Atkinson, R. (2007). The life story interview as a bridge in narrative inquiry. In *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*, 224–245.

Autio, E. (2005). Creative tension: the significance of Ben Oviatt's and Patricia

McDougall's article 'toward a theory of international new ventures'. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *36*(1), 9–19.

Autio, E., George, G., & Alexy, O. (2011). International Entrepreneurship and Capability Development-Qualitative Evidence and Future Research Directions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *35*(1), 11–37.

Autio, E., Sapienza, H. J., & Almeida, J. G. (2000). Effects of age at entry, knowledge, intensity, and immutability on international growth. *Academy of Management Journal*, *43*(5), 909.

Baker, K. G., & Wiseman, K. K. (1998). Leadership, Legacy, and Emotional Process in Family Business. *Family Business Review*, *11*(3), 207–213.

Baker, T., & Welter, F. (2018). Contextual Entrepreneurship: An Interdisciplinary Perspective. *Foundations and Trends® in Entrepreneurship*, *14*(4), 357–426.

Bandura, A. (2006). Toward a Psychology of Human Agency. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *1*(2), 164–180.

Banks, S. A. (1982). Once upon a Time: Interpretation in Literature and Medicine. *Literature and Medicine*, *1*(1), 24–28.

Baron, R. A. (2008). The Role of Affect in the Entrepreneurial Process. *Academy of Management Review*, *33*(2), 328–340.

Baron, R. A., & Ensley, M. D. (2006). Opportunity Recognition as the Detection of Meaningful Patterns: Evidence from Comparisons of Novice and Experienced Entrepreneurs. *Management Science*, *52*(9), 1331–1344.

Barthes, R. (1982). Authors and writers. In S. Sontag (Ed.), *A Barthes reader* (pp. 185–193). New York: Hill & Wang.

Baruch, Y., & Reis, C. (2016). How Global Are Boundaryless Careers and How Boundaryless Are Global Careers? Challenges and a Theoretical Perspective. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *58*(1), 13–27.

Battilana, J. (2006). Agency and Institutions: The Enabling Role of Individuals' Social Position. *Organization*, *13*(5), 653–676.

Baù, M., Block, J. H., Discua Cruz, A., & Naldi, L. (2017). Locality and internationalization of family firms. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *29*(5–6), 570–574.

Beech, N. (2008). On the Nature of Dialogic Identity Work. *Organization*, 15(1), 51–74.

Bell, J., Callaghan, I., Demick, D., & Scharf, F. (2004). Internationalising Entrepreneurship Education. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *2*(1/2), 109–124.

Birch, M., & Miller, T. (2000). Inviting intimacy: The interview as therapeutic opportunity. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *3*(3), 189–202.

Bjerregaard, T. (2014). Engaging institutions in global careers: highly skilled self-initiated expatriates' journeys through a Nordic welfare state. *European Management Journal*, *32*(6), 903–915.

Bloodgood, J. M., Sapienza, H. J., & Almeida, J. G. (1996). The Internationalization of New High-Potential U.S. Ventures: Antecedents and Outcomes. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *20*(4), 61–76.

Boje, D. M. (2001). *Narrative methods for organizational & communication research*. Sage.

Bolzani, D., & Foo, M. Der. (2018). The "why" of international entrepreneurship: uncovering entrepreneurs' personal values. *Small Business Economics*, *51*(3), 639–666.

Boyce, M. E. (1995). Collective centring and collective sense-making in the stories and storytelling of one organization. *Organization Studies*, *16*(1), 107–137.

Brown, A. D, Stacey, P., & Nandhakumar, J. (2008). Making sense of sensemaking narratives. *Human Relations*, *61*(8), 1035–1062.

Brown, A. D. (2015). Identities and Identity Work in Organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *17*(1), 20–40.

Brown, A. D., Colville, I., & Pye, A. (2015). Making Sense of Sensemaking in Organization Studies. *Organization Studies*, *36*(2), 265–277.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruyat, C., & Julien, P.-A. (2001). Defining the field of research in entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *16*(2), 165–180.

Bucheli, M., & Wadhwani, R. D. (2014). *Organizations in time: History, theory, methods*. Oxford University Press on Demand.

Bucheli, M., & Salvaj, E. (2018). Political connections, the liability of foreignness, and legitimacy: A business historical analysis of multinationals' strategies in Chile. *Global Strategy Journal*, *8*(3), 399–420.

Burton, M. D., Sørensen, J. B., & Dobrev, S. D. (2016). A Careers Perspective on Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *40*(2), 237–247.

Busenitz, L. W., & Lau, C. M. (1996). A cross-cultural cognitive model of new venture creation. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *20*(4), 25–40.

Busenitz, L. W., Gomez, C., & Spencer, J. (2000). Country Institutional Profiles: Interlocking Entrepreneurial Phenomena. *Academy of Management Journal*, *43*(5), 994–1003.

Busenitz, L. W., & Barney, J. B. (1997). Differences between entrepreneurs and managers in large organizations: Biases and heuristics in strategic decision-making. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *12*(1), 9–30.

Cahen, F. R., Lahiri, S., & Borini, F. M. (2016). Managerial perceptions of barriers to internationalization: An examination of Brazil's new technology-based firms. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(6), 1973–1979.

Callon, M. (2007). An essay on the growing contribution of economic markets to the proliferation of the social. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *24*(7–8), 139–163.

Campbell, J., Trapnell, P., Heine, S., Katz, I., Lavallee, L., & Lehman, D. (1996). Self-Concept Clarity: Measurement, Personality Correlates, and Cultural Boundaries. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *70*(1), 141–156.

Campbell, K. (2011). Caring and daring entrepreneurship research. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *23*(1), 37–47.

Cantwell, J., Dunning, J. H., & Lundan, S. M. (2010). An evolutionary approach to understanding international business activity: The co-evolution of MNEs and the institutional environment. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *41*(4), 567–586.

Cardon, M. S., Wincent, J., Singh, J., & Drnovsek, M. (2009). The nature and experience of entrepreneurial passion. *Academy of Management Review*, *34*(3), 511–532.

Carlen, J. (2016). *A Brief History of Entrepreneurship*. New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press.

Carsrud, A. L., & Johnson, R. W. (1989). Entrepreneurship: a social psychological perspective. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *1*(1), 21–31.

Casson, M. (1994). Institutional Diversity in Overseas Enterprise: Explaining the Free-Standing Company. *Business History*, *36*(4), 95–108.

Cerdin, J. L., & Le Pargneux, M. (2010). Career anchors: A comparison between organization-assigned and self-initiated expatriates. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *52*(4), 287–299.

Chandra, Y., Styles, C., & Wilkinson, I. (2009). The recognition of first time international entrepreneurial opportunities. International Marketing Review, 26, 30-61. *International Marketing Review*, *26*(4), 30–61.

Chetty, S., & Agndal, H. (2008). Role of Inter-organizational Networks and Interpersonal Networks in an Industrial District. *Regional Studies*, *42*(2), 175–187.

Child, J., Hsieh, L., Elbanna, S., Karmowska, J., Marinova, S., Puthusserry, P., Tsai, T.e, Narooz, R., & Zhang, Y. (2017). SME international business models: The role of context and experience. *Journal of World Business*, *52*(5), 664–679.

Churchill, L. R., & Churchill, S. W. (1982). Storytelling in Medical Arenas: The Art of Self-Determination. *Literature and Medicine*, *1*(1), 74–81.

Clifford, J., & Marcus, G. E. (1986). *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*. A School of American Research Advanced Seminar. Univeristy of California Press.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, *19*(5), 2–14.

Coombs, J. E., Sadrieh, F., & Annavarjula, M. (2009). Two Decades of International Entrepreneurship Research: What Have We Learned – Where Do We Go from Here? *International Journal of Entrepreneurship*, *13*(1), 23–64.

Coviello, N. E. (2006). The network dynamics of international new ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *37*, 713–731.

Coviello, N. E. (2015). Re-thinking research on born globals. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *46*(1), 17–26.

Coviello, N. E., & Jones, M. V. (2004). Methodological issues in international entrepreneurship research. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *19*(4), 485–508.

Coviello, N. E., McDougall, P. P., & Oviatt, B. M. (2011). The emergence, advance and future of international entrepreneurship research — An introduction to the special forum. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *26*(6), 625–631.

Coviello, N. E., & Munro, H. (1997). Network relationships and the internationalisation process of small software firms. *International Business Review*, *6*(4), 361–386.

Coviello, N. E., & Tanev, S. (2017). Initiating a New Research Phase in the Field of International Entrepreneurship: An Interview with Professor Nicole Coviello.

Technology Innovation Management Review, *7*(5).

Coviello, N. E., Kano, L., & Liesch, P. W. (2017). Adapting the Uppsala model to a modern world: Macro-context and microfoundations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *48*(9), 1151–1164.

Covin, J. G., & Miller, D. (2014). International Entrepreneurial Orientation: Conceptual Considerations, Research Themes, Measurement Issues, and Future Research Directions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 11–44.

Covin, J. G., & Wales, W. J. (2012). The Measurement of Entrepreneurial Orientation. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *36*(4), 677–702.

Cunliffe, A., & Coupland, C. (2012). From hero to villain to hero: Making experience sensible through embodied narrative sensemaking. *Human Relations*, *65*(1), 63–88.

Cutcliffe, J. R., & Goward, P. (2000). Mental health nurses and qualitative research methods: A mutual attraction? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *31*, 590–598.

Cutcliffe, J. R. (2003). Reconsidering Reflexivity: Introducing the Case for Intellectual Entrepreneurship. *Qualitative Health Research*, *13*(1), 136–148.

Czarniawska, B. (2004). *Narratives in social science research*. Sage.

Davies, D., & Dodd, J. (2002). Qualitative Research and the Question of Rigor. *Qualitative Health Research*, *12*(2), 279–289.

De Clercq, D. D., Sapienza, H. J., & Crijns, H. (2005). The Internationalization of Small and Medium-Sized Firms. *Small Business Economics*, *24*(4), 409–419.

De Clercq, D. D., Sapienza, H. J., Yavuz, R. I., & Zhou, L. (2012). Learning and knowledge in early internationalization research: Past accomplishments and future directions. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *27*(1), 143–165.

De Massis, A., Frattini, F., Majocchi, A., & Piscitello, L. (2018). Family firms in the global economy: Toward a deeper understanding of internationalization determinants, processes, and outcomes. *Global Strategy Journal*, *8*(1), 3–21.

Defillippi, R. J., & Arthur, M. B. (1994). The Boundaryless Career: A Competency-Based Perspective The boundaryless career: a competency- based perspective. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *15*(15), 307–324. Retrieved from

Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive biography. Qualitative research methods.* (Vol. 17). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Desa, G. (2012). Resource Mobilization in International Social Entrepreneurship:

Bricolage as a Mechanism of Institutional Transformation. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *36*(4), 727–751.

Dickmann, M., & Harris, H. (2005). Developing career capital for global careers: The role of international assignments. *Journal of World Business*, *40*(4), 399–408.

Domenico, M. D., Daniel, E., & Nunan, D. (2014). 'Mental mobility' in the digital age: entrepreneurs and the online home-based business. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, *29*(3), 266–281.

Down, S., & Reveley, J. (2004). Generational Encounters and the Social Formation of Entrepreneurial Identity: 'Young Guns' and 'Old Farts'. *Organization, 11*(2), 233–250.

Down, S., & Warren, L. (2008). Constructing narratives of enterprise: clichés and entrepreneurial self-identity. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research, 14*(1), 4–23.

Dodd, S. D. (2002). Metaphors and meaning a grounded cultural model of us entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing, 17*(5), 519–535.

Dubois, A., & Gadde, L.-E. (2002). Systematic combining: an abductive approach to case research. *Journal of Business Research*, *55*(7), 553–560.

Duening, N., T., & Metzger, M., L. (2017). *Entrepreneurial identity: The process of becoming an entrepreneur*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Edwards, P., & Elger, T. (2014). *The global economy, national states and the regulation of labour*. Routledge.

Elfring, T., & Hulsink, W. (2007). Networking by entrepreneurs: Patterns of tie-formation in emerging organizations. *Organization Studies*, *28*(12), 1849–1872.

Ellis, P. D. (2011). Social ties and international entrepreneurship: Opportunities and constraints affecting firm internationalization. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *42*(1), 99–127.

Erichsen, E. A. (2011). Learning for Change: Transforming International Experience as Identity Work. *Journal of Transformative Education*, *9*(2), 109–133.

Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and Society* (2nd ed.). New York: Norton.

Eriksson, K., Johanson, J., Majkgaird, A., & Sharma, D. D. (1997). Experiential knowledge and cost in the internationalization process. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *28*(2), 337–360.

Eriksson, P., & Kovalainen, A. (2008). *Qualitative methods in business research*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Etemad, H. (2018). The essence of entrepreneurial internationalization: Managing the dynamic complexity of interactive relationship and reflective adaptations. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 16*(3), 325–337.

Etemad, H. (2019). Actions, actors, strategies and growth trajectories in international entrepreneurship. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 17*(2), 127–143.

European Comission. (2011). 'Small Business, Big World — a new partnership to help SMEs seize global opportunities'. *Publications Office of the EU*. Retrieved 16 May 2020, from https://op.europa.eu/fi/publication-detail/-/publication/018ab56d-daec-11e1-905c-01aa75ed71a1/language-fi/format-PDF/source-130509309

Evers, N., & O'Gorman, C. (2011). Improvised internationalization in new ventures: The role of prior knowledge and networks. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *23*(7–8), 549–574.

Fan, T., & Phan, P. (2007). International new ventures: revisiting the influences behind the 'born-global' firm. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *38*(7), 1113–1131.

Farashah, A. D. (2015). The effects of demographic, cognitive and institutional factors on development of entrepreneurial intention: Toward a socio-cognitive model of entrepreneurial career. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *13*(4), 452–476.

Fernhaber, S. A., & Prashantham, S. (2015). *The Routledge Companion to International Entrepreneurship*. Routledge.

Fernhaber, S. A., Gilbert, B., & McDougall, P. P. (2008). International entrepreneurship and geographic location: An empirical examination of new venture internationalization. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *39*(2), 267–290.

Fernhaber, S. A, & Li, D. (2013). International exposure through network relationships: Implications for new venture internationalization. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *28*(2), 316–334.

Fernhaber, S. A, McDougall, P. P., & Oviatt, B. M. (2007). Exploring the Role of Industry Structure in New Venture Internationalization. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *31*(4), 517–542.

Fillis, I. (2007). A methodology for researching international entrepreneurship in SMEs. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, *14*(1), 118–135.

Fillis, I. (2015). Biographical research as a methodology for understanding entrepreneurial marketing. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior &*

Research, *21*(3), 429–447.

Flanagan, J. (1954). Psychological bulletin. The critical incident technique. *Psychological Bulletin*, *59*(4), 257–272.

Fletcher, D. E. (2004). International entrepreneurship and the small business. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *16*(4), 289–305.

Fletcher, D. E. (2006). Entrepreneurial processes and the social construction of opportunity. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *18*(5), 421–440.

Fletcher, M., & Plakoyiannaki, E. (2011). Case selection in internaitonal business: key issues and common misconceptions. In R. Piekkari & C. Welch (Eds.), *Rethinking the Case Study in International Business and Management research* (pp. 171–191). Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar.

Folkman, S., & Moskowitz, J. T. (2004). Coping: Pitfalls and Promise. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *55*(1), 745–774.

Fugate, M., Kinicki, A. J., & Ashforth, B. E. (2004). Employability: A psycho-social construct, its dimensions, and applications. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *65*(1), 14–31.

Galinsky, A. D., & Maddux, W. W. (2009). Cultural borders and mental barriers: The relationship between living abroad and creativity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *96*(5), 1047–1061.

Ganotakis, P., & Love, J. H. (2012). Export propensity, export intensity and firm performance: The role of the entrepreneurial founding team. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *43*(8), 693–718.

Garcia-Lorenzo, L., Donnelly, P., Sell-Trujillo, L., & Imas, J. M. (2018). Liminal Entrepreneuring: The Creative Practices of Nascent Necessity Entrepreneurs. *Organization Studies*, *39*(2–3), 373–395.

Gartner, W. B. (1988). "Who Is an Entrepreneur?" Is the Wrong Question. *American Journal of Small Business*, *12*(4), 11–32.

Gartner, W. B. (2007). Entrepreneurial narrative and a science of the imagination. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *22*(5), 613–627.

Gartner, W. B. (1985). A Conceptual Framework for Describing the Phenomenon of New Venture Creation. *Academy of Management Review*, *10*(4), 696–706.

Garud, R., Gehman, J., & Giuliani, A. P. (2014). Contextualizing entrepreneurial innovation: A narrative perspective. *Research Policy*, *43*(7), 1177–1188.

Garud, R., & Giuliani, A. P. (2013). *A Narrative Perspective on Entrepreneurial Opportunities*. *The Academy of Management Review* 38(1), 157–160.

Gelderen, V. M., & Masurel, E. (2012). *Entrepreneurship in context* (Vol. 3.). Routledge.

Gertsen, M. C., & Søderberg, A.-M. (2011). Intercultural collaboration stories: On narrative inquiry and analysis as tools for research in international business. *Source: Journal of International Business Studies*, *42*(6), 787–804.

Ghannad, N., & Andersson, S. (2012). The influence of the entrepreneur's background on the behaviour and development of born globals' internationalisation processes. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, *15*(2), 136.

Gibson, J., Greenwood, R., & Murphy, E. (2009). Generational differences in the workplace. *Journal of Diversity Management*, *4*(3), 1–8.

Gioia, D. A., & Manz, C. C. (1985). Linking Cognition and Behavior: A Script Processing Interpretation of Vicarious Learning. *Academy of Management Review*, *10*(3), 527–539.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. London: Allen Lane.

González-Pernía, J. L., & Peña-Legazkue, I. (2015). Export-oriented entrepreneurship and regional economic growth. *Small Business Economics*, *45*(3), 505–522.

Grahn, M. (2014). *Perheyhtiö ja paikallisuus: A. Ahlström Osakeyhtiön historian perintö Noormarkussa*. University of Turku.

Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The Strength of Weak Ties'. *American Journal of Sociology*, *78*(6), 1360–1380.

Graves, C., & Thomas, J. (2008). Determinants of the Internationalization Pathways of Family Firms: An Examination of Family Influence. *Family Business Review*, *21*(2), 151–167.

Gray, B., & Farminer, A. (2014). And no birds sing-reviving the romance with international entrepreneurship. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *12*(2), 115–128.

Grégoire, D. A., Corbett, A. C., & McMullen, J. S. (2011). The Cognitive Perspective in Entrepreneurship: An Agenda for Future Research. *Journal of Management Studies*, *48*(6), 1443–1477.

Greve, A., & Salaff, J. W. (2003). Social Networks and Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *28*(1), 1–22.

Gross, N., & Geiger, S. (2017). Liminality and the entrepreneurial firm. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, *23*(2), 185–209.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105–117). Sage Publications, Inc.

Gupta, V., & Fernandez, C. (2009). Cross-cultural similarities and differences in characteristics attributed to entrepreneurs: A three-nation study. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, *15*(3), 304–318.

Haapala, P. (2009). Modernisation of Finland 1800–2000. In M. Perkiö (Ed.), *Perspectives to Global Social Development* (pp. 48–66). Tampere: Tampere University Press – Juvenes Print.

Habermas, J. (1972). *Knowledge and Human Interests*. London: Heinemann.

Haddoud, M. Y., Jones, P., & Newbery, R. (2017). Export promotion programmes and SMEs' performance. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, *24*(1), 68–87.

Hamilton, E. (2014). Entrepreneurial narrative identity and gender: A double epistemological shift. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 52(4), 703–712.

Hammond, N. L., Pearson, A. W., & Holt, D. T. (2016). The Quagmire of Legacy in Family Firms: Definition and Implications of Family and Family Firm Legacy Orientations. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *40*(6), 1209–1231.

Hannibal, M. (2017). Enacted identities in the university spin-off process—bridging an imaginative gap. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *15*(3), 239–265.

Hannibal, M., Evers, N., & Servais, P. (2016). Opportunity recognition and international new venture creation in university spin-offs—Cases from Denmark and Ireland. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *14*(3), 345–372.

Hannon, P. D. (2018). On becoming and being an entrepreneurship educator: a personal reflection. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *30*(7–8), 698–721.

Hansen, P. H. (2012). Business history: A cultural and narrative approach. *Business History Review*, *86*(4), 693–717.

Harris, L. C., & Ogbonna, E. (1999). The strategic legacy of company founders. *Long Range Planning*, *32*(3), 333–343.

Harris, S., & Wheeler, C. (2005). Entrepreneurs' relationships for internationalization: Functions, origins and strategies. *International Business Review*, *14*(2), 187–207.

Haynie, J. M., Shepherd, D., Mosakowski, E., & Earley, P. C. (2010). A situated metacognitive model of the entrepreneurial mindset. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *25*(2), 217–229.

Hendry, P. M. (2007). The Future of Narrative. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *13*(4), 487–498.

Hendry, P. M. (2009). Narrative as Inquiry. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *103*(2), 72–80.

Hennart, J. F. (2014). The Accidental Internationalists: A Theory of Born Globals. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 117–135.

Hennart, J. F., Majocchi, A., & Forlani, E. (2019). The myth of the stay-at-home family firm: How family-managed SMEs can overcome their internationalization limitations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *50*(5), 758–782.

Hiles, D., & Cermák, I. (2008). Narrative psychology. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 147–164).

Hisrich, R., Langan-Fox, J., & Grant, S. (2007). Entrepreneurship research and practice: A call to action for psychology. *American Psychologist*, *62*(6), 575–589.

Hite, J. M., & Hesterly, W. S. (2001). The evolution of firm networks: from emergence to early growth of the firm. *Strategic Management Journal*, *22*(3), 275–286.

Hitt, M. A., Keats, B. W., & DeMarie, S. M. (1998). Navigating in the new competitive landscape: Building strategic flexibility and competitive advantage in the 21st century. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *12*(4), 22–42.

Hjerppe, R. (1989). *The Finnish Economy, 1860-1980: Growth and Structural Change*. Helsinki: Government Printing Centre.

Hjerppe, R. (2010). Suomen talouden kasvun vaiheet ja vaihtelut 1860–2010. In O. Martio (Ed.), *Vuosikirja 2010*. Helsinki: Suomen Tiedeakatemia.

Hoang, H., & Gimeno, J. (2010). Becoming a founder: How founder role identity affects entrepreneurial transitions and persistence in founding. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *25*(1), 41–53.

Hollway, W. (1997). Eliciting Narrative Through the In-Depth Interview. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *3*(1), 53–70.

Hudson, A. L., & Ozanne, J. L. (1988). Alternative Ways of Seeking Knowledge in Consumer Research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *14*(4), 508–521.

Hunter, E. G., & Rowles, G. D. (2005). Leaving a legacy: Toward a typology. *Journal of*

Aging Studies, *19*(3), 327–347.

Hurmerinta-Peltomäki, L. (2003). Time and internationalisation: Theoretical challenges set by rapid internationalisation. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *1*(2), 217–236.

Hurmerinta, L., Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E., & Hassett, M. E. (2016). TEMPUS FUGIT: A Hermeneutic Approach to the Internationalisation Process. *Management International Review*, *56*(6), 805–825.

Hutchinson, K., Alexander, N., Quinn, B., & Doherty, A. M. (2007). Internationalization Motives and Facilitating Factors: Qualitative Evidence from Smaller Specialist Retailers. *Journal of International Marketing*, *15*(3), 96–122.

Hytti, U. (2003). *Stories of Entrepreneurs: narrative construction of identities*. University of Turku.

Hytti, U. (2005). New meanings for entrepreneurs: from risk-taking heroes to safe-seeking professionals. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *18*(6), 594–611.

Hytti, U. (2010). Contextualizing entrepreneurship in the boundaryless career. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, *25*(1), 64–81.

Hägg, O. (2011). Yrittäjyysvalmennus ja yrittäjäidentiteetti. Doctoral thesis. Tampere: Tampere University Press – Juvenes Print.

Hänninen, V. (1999). *Sisäinen tarina, elämä ja muutos*. Doctoral thesis. Tampere: Tampereen University Press – Juvenes Print.

Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional Selves: Experimenting with Image and Identity in Professional Adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *44*(4), 764.

Ibarra, H., & Barbulescu, R. (2010). Identity As Narrative : Prevalence , Effectiveness , and Consequences of Narrative Identity Work in Macro Work Role Transitions. *The Academy of Management Review*, *35*(1), 135–154.

Ibarra, H., & Obodaru, O. (2016). Betwixt and between identities: Liminal experience in contemporary careers. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *36*, 47–64.

Ibarra, H., Petriglieri, J. L., Kolb, A. Y., & Kolb, D. A. (2010). Identity work and play. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *23*(1), 10–25.

infoFinland. (2020). Living in Finland: Finnish working culture. Retrieved 16 May 2020, from https://www.infofinland.fi/en/living-in-finland/work-and-enterprise/finnish-working-culture

Isaac, S., & Michael, W. B. (1987). *Handbook in research and evaluation* (2nd ed.). San Diego, CA: EdITS Publishers.

Jack, S. L. (2005). The role, use and activation of strong and weak network ties: A qualitative analysis. *Journal of Management Studies*, *42*(6), 1233–1250.

James, W. (1860/1950). *The Principles of Psychology*. New York: Dover.

Jaskiewicz, P., Combs, J. G., & Rau, S. B. (2015). Entrepreneurial legacy: Toward a theory of how some family firms nurture transgenerational entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *30*(1), 29–49.

Jayawarna, D., Rouse, J., & Macpherson, A. (2014). Life course pathways to business start-up. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 26(3–4), 282–312.

Jenks, L. H. (1950). Approaches to entrepreneurial personality. *Explorations in Economic History*, *2*(2), 91.

Joardar, A., & Wu, S. (2011). Examining the Dual Forces of Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation and Liability of Foreignness on International Entrepreneurs. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, *28*(3), 328–340.

Johannisson, B. (2002). Walking the promised land: Enacting and researching entrepreneurship. In *ESBRI workshop new practices of entrepreneurship research in May 23–26*. Stockholm, Sweden.

Johanson, J., & Vahlne, J. E. (1977). The internationalization process of the firm—a model of knowledge development and increasing foreign market commitments. *Ournal of International Business Studies*, *8*(1), 23–32.

Johansson, A. W. (2004). Narrating the Entrepreneur. *International Small Business Journal*, *22*(3), 273–293.

Johns, G. (1991). Substantive and methodological constraints on behavior and attitudes in organizational research. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *49*(1), 80–104.

Johns, G. (2006). The essential impact of context on organizational behavior. *Academy of Management Review*, *31*(2), 386–408.

Jolly, V. K., Alahuhta, M., & Jeannet, J.-P. (1992). Challenging the incumbents: How high technology start-ups compete globally. *Strategic Change*, *1*(2), 71–82.

Jones, D. G. B. (1998). Biography as a methodology for studying the history of marketing ideas. *Psychology and Marketing*, *15*(2), 161–173.

Jones, G. (2005). *Restoring a Global Economy, 1950–1980. Working Knowledge: The thinking that leads*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School.

Jones, G., & Khanna, T. (2006). Bringing History (Back) into International Business. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *37*(4), 453–468.

Jones, M. V., & Casulli, L. (2014). International Entrepreneurship: Exploring the Logic and Utility of Individual Experience Through Comparative Reasoning Approaches. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 45–69.

Jones, M. V., & Coviello, N. E.. (2005). Internationalisation: conceptualizing an entrepreneurial process of behaviour in time. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *36*(3), 284–303.

Jones, M. V., Coviello, N., & Tang, Y. K. (2011). International Entrepreneurship research (1989–2009): A domain ontology and thematic analysis. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *26*(6), 632–659.

Jones, R., Latham, J., & Betta, M. (2008). Narrative construction of the social entrepreneurial identity. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 14(5), 330–345.

Joshi, A., Dencker, J. C., & Franz, G. (2011). Generations in organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *31*, 177–205.

Josselson, R. (2006). Narrative research and the challenge of accumulating knowledge. *Narrative Inquiry*, *16*(1), 3–10.

Järvensivu, A., Nikkanen, R., & Syrjä, S. (2014). *Työelämän sukupolvet ja muutoksissa pärjäämisen strategiat*. Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Järvensivu, T., & Törnroos, J.-Å. (2010). Case study research with moderate constructionism: Conceptualization and practical illustration. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *39*(1), 100–108.

Kampouri, K., Plakoyiannaki, E., & Leppäaho, T. (2017). Family business internationalisation and networks: emerging pathways. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *32*(3), 357–370.

Kano, L., & Verbeke, A. (2015). The Three Faces of Bounded Reliability: Alfred Chandler and the Micro-Foundations of Management Theory. *California Management Review*, *58*(1), 97–122.

Karhunen, P., Olimpieva, I., & Hytti, U. (2017). Identity work of science-based entrepreneurs in Finland and in Russia. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *29*(5–6), 544–566.

Karp, T. (2006). The inner entrepreneur: A constructivistic view of entrepreneurial reality construction. *Journal of Change Management*, *6*(3), 291–304.

Kauppinen, A., & Juho, A. (2012). Internationalisation of SMEs from the perspective of social learning theory. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *10*(3), 200–231.

Kellermanns, F. W., Eddleston, K. A., & Zellweger, T. M. (2012). Extending the Socioemotional Wealth Perspective: A Look at the Dark Side. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *36*(6), 1175–1182.

Kelly, L. M., Athanassiou, N., & Crittenden, W. F. (2000). Founder Centrality and Strategic Behavior in the Family-Owned Firm. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *25*(2), 27–42.

Keupp, M. M., & Gassmann, O. (2009). The Past and the Future of International Entrepreneurship: A Review and Suggestions for Developing the Field. *Journal of Management*, *35*(3), 600–633.

Kipping, M., & Üsdiken, B. (2014). History in organization and management theory: More than meets the eye. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *8*(1), 535–588.

Kirby, D. (2006). *A concise history of Finland*. Cambridge University Press.

Kirzner, I. M. (1973). Entrepreneurship and competition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Knight, G. A., & Cavusgil, S. T. (1996). The Born Global Firm: A Challenge to Traditional Internationalization Theory. In S. T. Cavusgil & T. K. Madsen (Eds.), *Advances in International Marketing* (Vol. 8, pp. 11–26). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Knight, G. A, & Cavusgil, S. T. (2004). Innovation, organizational capabilities, and the born-global firm. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *35*(2), 124–141.

Knight, G. A., & Liesch, P. W. (2016). Internationalization: From incremental to born global. *Journal of World Business*, *51*(1), 93–102.

Kohonen, E. (2008). The impact of international assignments on expatriates' identity and career aspirations: Reflections upon re-entry. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *24*(4), 320–329.

Kohut, H. (1977). *The restoration of the self.* Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Kokkinen, A. (2012). *On Finland's Economic Growth and Convergence with Sweden and the EU15 in the 20. Statistics Finland Research Reports* (Vol. 258).

Konopaski, M., Jack, S., & Hamilton, E. (2015). How Family Business Members Learn About Continuity. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *14*(3), 347–364.

Kontinen, T., & Ojala, A. (2010). The internationalization of family businesses: A review of extant research. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, *1*(2), 97–107.

Kontinen, T., & Ojala, A. (2012). Social capital in the international operations of family SMEs. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, *19*(1), 39–55.

Krueger, N. F. (2000). The cognitive infrastructure of opportunity emergence. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *24*(3), 5–23.

Krueger, N. F. (2007). What Lies Beneath? The Experiential Essence of Entrepreneurial Thinking. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *31*(1), 123–138.

Kyvik, O., Saris, W., Bonet, E., & Felício, J. A. (2013). The internationalization of small firms: The relationship between the global mindset and firms' internationalization behavior. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *11*(2), 172–195.

Labov, W. (1982). *Speech actions and reactions in personal narrative, in Analyzing Discourse: Text and Talk*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.

Labov, W. (2013). *The language of life and death: The transformation of experience in oral narrative*. Cambridge University Press.

Labov, W., & Waletzky, J. (2003). *Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Lamberg, J. A., Ojala, J., Peltoniemi, M., & Särkkä, T. (2012). *The Evolution of Global Paper Industry 1800¬–2050: A Comparative Analysis* (Vol 17). Springer Science & Business Media.

LaPointe, K. (2010). Narrating career, positioning identity: Career identity as a narrative practice. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *77*(1), 1–9.

Larson, A., & Starr, J. A. (1993). A Network Model of Organization Formation. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *17*(2), 5–15.

Lederman, D., Olarreaga, M., & Payton, L. (2010). Export promotion agencies: Do they work? *Journal of Development Economics*, *91*(2), 257–265.

Lehto, I. (2015). International entrepreneurial selling as construction of international opportunities. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *13*(3), 277–302.

Leitch, C. M., & Harrison, R. T. (2016). Identity, identity formation and identity work in entrepreneurship: conceptual developments and empirical applications.

Entrepreneurship & Regional Development, *28*(3–4), 177–190.

Leppäaho, T., Chetty, S., & Dimitratos, P. (2018). Network embeddedness in the internationalization of biotechnology entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *30*(5–6), 562–584.

Leung, K., Bhagat, R. S., Buchan, N. R., Erez, M., & Gibson, C. B. (2005). Culture and international business: recent advances and their implications for future research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *36*(4), 357–378.

Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative research: Reading, analysis, and interpretation* (Vol 47). Sage.

Light, A. E., & Visser, P. S. (2013). The Ins and Outs of the Self: Contrasting Role Exits and Role Entries as Predictors of Self-concept Clarity. *Self and Identity*, *12*(3), 291–306.

Lim, D. S. K., Morse, E. A., Mitchell, R. K., & Seawright, K. K. (2010). Institutional Environment and Entrepreneurial Cognitions: A Comparative Business Systems Perspective. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *34*(3), 491–516.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). Establishing trustworthiness. *Naturalistic Inquiry*, *289*(331).

Linde, C. (1993). *Life Stories. The Creation of Coherence*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Liu, C., Keeling, D. I., & Hogg, M. K. (2016). Strategy narratives and wellbeing challenges: The role of everyday self-presentation. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(1), 234–243.

Liu, J., Zhu, Y., Serapio, M., & Cavusgil, S. T. (2019). The new generation of millennial entrepreneurs: A review and call for research. *International Business Review*, 1–10.

Lubinski, C., & Wadhwani, R. D. (2019). *International entrepreneurship and business history*. In T. da S. Lopes, C. Lubinski, & H. J. S. Tworek, *The Routledge Companion to the Makers of Global Business*. New York: Routledge.

Lumpkin, G. T., Cogliser, C. C., & Schneider, D. R. (2009). Understanding and Measuring Autonomy: An Entrepreneurial Orientation Perspective. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *33*(1), 47–69.

Lumpkin, G. T., & Dess, G. G. (1996). Clarifying the Entrepreneurial Orientation Construct and Linking It to Performance. *Academy of Management Review*, *21*(1), 135.

Lundmark, E., Krzeminska, A., & Shepherd, D. A. (2017). Images of Entrepreneurship: Exploring Root Metaphors and Expanding Upon Them. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *43*(1), 138–170.

Lussier, R., N., & Pfeifer, S. (2000). A comparison of business success versus failure variables between US and Central Eastern Europe Croatian entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice Practice*, *24*(4), 59–67.

Madsen, T. K., & Servais, P. (1997). The internationalization of Born Globals: An evolutionary process? *International Business Review*, *6*(6), 561–583.

Mainela, T., Puhakka, V., & Servais, P. (2014). The Concept of International Opportunity in International Entrepreneurship: A Review and a Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *16*(1), 105–129.

Mainela, T., Puhakka, V., & Sipola, S. (2018). International entrepreneurship beyond individuals and firms: On the systemic nature of international opportunities. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *33*(4), 534–550.

Makkonen, J., Aarikka-Stenroos, L., & Olkkonen, R. (2012). Narrative approach in business network process research: Implications for theory and methodology. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *41*(2), 287–299.

Mandler, J. M. (2014). *Stories, scripts, and scenes: Aspects of schema theory*. Psychology Press.

Mannheim, K. (1952). The problem of a sociology of knowledge. *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, 134–190.

Mantere, S., Aula, P., Schildt, H., & Vaara, E. (2013). Narrative attributions of entrepreneurial failure. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *28*(4), 459–473.

Mathews, J. A., & Zander, I. (2007). The International Entrepreneurial Dynamics of Accelerated Internationalisation. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *38*(3), 387–403.

Mathias, B. D., & Williams, D. W. (2018). Giving up the hats? Entrepreneurs' role transitions and venture growth. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *33*(3), 261–277.

Mathias, B. D., Williams, D. W., & Smith, A. R. (2015). Entrepreneurial inception: The role of imprinting in entrepreneurial action. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *30*(1), 11–28.

May, K. A. (1994). Abstract knowing: The case for magic in method. In J. M. Morse (Ed.), *Critical issues in qualitative research methods* (pp. 10–21). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McAdams, D. (2008). Personal narratives and the life story. In O. John, R. Robins, & L. Pervin (Eds.), *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research* (pp. 242–262). New York: Guilford Press.

McAdams, D. P. (1999). Personal narratives and the life story. In L. Pervin & O. John (Eds.), *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research* (pp. 478–500). New York: Guilford Press.

McAdams, D. P. (2001). The psychology of life stories. *Review of General Psychology*, *5*, 100–122.

McAdams, D. P. (2006). *The role of narrative in personality psychology today*. *Narrative Inquiry* (Vol. 16).

McAdams, D. P. (2013). The Psychological Self as Actor, Agent, and Author. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *8*(3), 272–295.

McAdams, D. P., & Cox, K. S. (2010). Self and identity across the life span. In M. E. Lamb, A. M. Freund, & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *The handbook of life-span development, Vol. 2. Social and emotional development* (pp. 158–207). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

McAdams, D. P., & McLean, K. C. (2013). Narrative Identity. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *22*(3), 233–238.

McDougall-Covin, P., Jones, M. V, & Serapio, M. G. (2014). High-Potential Concepts, Phenomena, and Theories for the Advancement of International Entrepreneurship Research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 1–10.

McDougall, P. P. (1989). International versus domestic entrepreneurship: New venture strategic behavior and industry structure. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *4*(6), 387–400.

McDougall, P. P., & Oviatt, B. M. (2000). International Entrepreneurship: the Intersection of Two Research Paths. *Academy of Management Journal*, *43*(5), 902–906.

McDougall, P. P., Oviatt, B. M., & Shrader, R. C. (2003). A Comparison of International and Domestic New Ventures. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *1*, 59–82.

McDougall, P. P., Shane, S., & Oviatt, B. M. (1994). Explaining the formation of international new ventures: The limits of theories from international business research. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *9*(6), 469–487.

McGaughey, S. L. (2007). Hidden ties in international new venturing: The case of portfolio entrepreneurship. *Journal of World Business*, *42*(3), 307–321.

McMahon, M., & Watson, M. (2013). Story telling: crafting identities. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, *41*(3), 277–286.

McMullen, J. S., & Dimov, D. (2013). Time and the Entrepreneurial Journey: The Problems and Promise of Studying Entrepreneurship as a Process. *Journal of Management Studies*, *50*(8), 1481–1512.

Meijers, F. (1998). The development of a career identity. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, *20*, 191–207.

Meinander, H. (2011). *Suomen historia: linjat, rakenteet, käännekohdat*. Helsinki: WSOY.

Meretoja, H. (2014). Narrative and human existence: Ontology, epistemology, and ethics. *New Literary History*, *45*(1), 89–109, 153.

Merton, R. K. (1973). *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Meyer, G. D. (2009). Commentary: On the Integration of Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship: Views of a Contrarian. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *33*(1), 341–351.

Mikkilä, T. (2016). *Työn tekijät: Suomen yrittäjät ja sen edeltäjät 1898–2016*. Suomen Yrittäjien Sypoint.

Milanov, H., & Maissenhälter, B. (2015). Cognition in international entrepreneurship. In S. A. Fernhaber & S. Prashantham (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to International Entrepreneurship* (pp. 47–69). Routledge.

Miller, D. (2011). Miller (1983) Revisited: A Reflection on EO Research and Some Suggestions for the Future. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *35*(5), 873–894.

Miller, Danny. (1983). The Correlates of Entrepreneurship in Three Types of Firms. *Management Science*, *29*(7), 770–791.

Miller, D. (2011). Miller (1983) Revisited: A Reflection on EO Research and Some Suggestions for the Future. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, *35*(5), 873–894.

Mishler, E. G. (1986). *Research Interviewing: Context and Narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mitchell, R. K., Smith, J. B., Seawright, K. W., & Morse, E. A. (2000). Cross-cultural cognition and the venture creation decision. *Academy of Management Journal*, *43*(5), 974–993.

Moen, T. (2008). Reflections on the Narrative Research Approach. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *5*(4), 56–69.

Mohr, L. B. (1982). *Explaining organizational behavior*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mollan, S. (2018). The Free-Standing Company: a “zombie” theory of international business history? *Journal of Management History*, *24*(2), 156–173.

Morgan, G., & Smircich, L. (1980). The case for qualitative research. *The Academy of Management Review*, *5*(4), 491–500.

Moroz, P. W., & Hindle, K. (2012). Entrepreneurship as a Process: Toward Harmonizing Multiple Perspectives. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *36*(4), 781–818.

Morris, M. H., Kuratko, D. F., Schindehutte, M., & Spivack, A. J. (2012). Framing the Entrepreneurial Experience. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *36*(1), 11–40.

Mudambi, R., & Zahra, S. A. (2007). The survival of international new ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *38*(2), 333–352.

Musteen, M., Datta, D. K., & Butts, M. M. (2014). Do International Networks and Foreign Market Knowledge Facilitate SME Internationalization? Evidence From the Czech Republic. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(4), 749–774.

Möttönen, T. (2017). *Kasvun tekijät. Tutkimus Suomen teollistumisen ajan perustajayrittäjistä 1870-1990*. University of Jyväskylä.

Nambisan, S. (2017). Digital Entrepreneurship: Toward a Digital Technology Perspective of Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *41*(6), 1029–1055.

Nasra, R., & Dacin, M. T. (2010). Institutional arrangements and international entrepreneurship: The state as institutional entrepreneur. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *34*(3), 583–609.

Nayak, A., & Maclean, M. (2013). Co-evolution, opportunity seeking and institutional change: Entrepreneurship and the Indian telecommunications industry, 1923–2009. *Business History*, *55*(1), 29–52.

Neisser, U. (1967). *Cognitive Psychology*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Nielsen, S. L., & Lassen, A. H. (2012). Identity in entrepreneurship effectuation theory: a supplementary framework. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, *8*(3), 373–389.

Nowiński, W., & Haddoud, M. Y. (2019). The role of inspiring role models in enhancing entrepreneurial intention. *Journal of Business Research*, *96*, 183–193.

Nummela, N., Saarenketo, S., & Puumalainen, K. (2004). A global mindset - A prerequisite for successful internationalization? *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, *21*(1), 51–64.

Nummela, N., & Welch, C. (2006). Qualitative research methods in international entrepreneurship: Introduction to the special issue. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *4*(4), 133–136.

Obschonka, M., Goethner, M., Silbereisen, R. K., & Cantner, U. (2012). Social identity and the transition to entrepreneurship: The role of group identification with workplace peers. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *80*(1), 137–147.

Obschonka, M., Silbereisen, R. K., Cantner, U., & Goethner, M. (2015). Entrepreneurial Self-Identity: Predictors and Effects Within the Theory of Planned Behavior Framework. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 30(4), 773–794.

Ochs, E., & Capps, L. (1996). Narrating the Self. *Annual Review of Anthropology Annu. Rev. Anthropol*, *25*(25), 19–4319.

OECD. (2017). Enhancing the Contributions of SMEs in a Global and Digitalised Economy. *Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level*, (1), 7–8. Retrieved on 16 May, from https://www.oecd.org/mcm/documents/C-MIN-2017-8-EN.pdf

OECD. (2019). *OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook 2019*. Retrieved on 16 May, from https://doi.org/10.1787/34907e9c-en

Ogbonna, E., & Harris, L. C. (2001). The Founder's Legacy: Hangover or Inheritance? *British Journal of Management*, *12*(1), 13–31.

Ojala, A., Evers, N., & Rialp, A. (2018). Extending the international new venture phenomenon to digital platform providers : A longitudinal case study. *Journal of World Business*, *53*(5), 725–739.

Oviatt, B. M., Maksimov, V. R., & McDougall, P. P. (2011). International entrepreneurship. In L. P. Dana (Ed.), *World encyclopedia of entrepreneurship* (pp. 268–273). Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar.

Oviatt, B. M., & McDougall, P. P. (1994). Toward a Theory of International New ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *25*(1), 45–64.

Oviatt, B. M., & McDougall, P. P. (2005a). Defining International Entrepreneurship and Modeling the Speed of Internationalization. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *29*(5), 537–554.

Oviatt, B. M., & McDougall, P. P. (2005b). The Internationalization of Entrepreneurship. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *36*(1), 2–8.

Oyson, M. J., & Whittaker, H. (2015). Entrepreneurial cognition and behavior in the discovery and creation of international opportunities. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *13*(3), 303–336.

Packard, M. D. (2017). Where did interpretivism go in the theory of entrepreneurship? *Journal of Business Venturing*, *32*(5), 536–549.

Peiris, I. K., Akoorie, M. E., & Sinha, P. (2012). International entrepreneurship: A critical analysis of studies in the past two decades and future directions for research. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *10*(4), 279–324.

Perchard, A., MacKenzie, N. G., Decker, S., & Favero, G. (2017). Clio in the business school: Historical approaches in strategy, international business and entrepreneurship. *Business History*, *59*(6), 904–927.

Perks, K. J., & Hughes, M. (2008). Entrepreneurial decision-making in internationalization: Propositions from mid-size firms. *International Business Review*, *17*(3), 310–330.

Phillips, N., Tracey, P., & Karra, N. (2013). Building entrepreneurial tie portfolios through strategic homophily: The role of narrative identity work in venture creation and early growth. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *28*(1), 134–150.

Phoenix, A. (2008). Analysing narrative contexts. In M. Andrews, C. Squire, & M. Tamboukou (Eds.), *Doing narrative research*, 64–77. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Pilcher, J. (1994). Mannheim's Sociology of Generations: An Undervalued Legacy. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *45*(3), 481–495.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Suny Press.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1991). Narrative and Self-Concept. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, *1*(2–3), 135–153.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *8*(1), 5–23.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2007). Validity Issues in Narrative Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *13*(4), 471–486.

Poropudas, O. (2015). Mistä Suomen talouskasvu alkoi? *Poliittinen Talous*, *3*(1), 113–140.

Prashantham, S., & Dhanaraj, C. (2010). The Dynamic Influence of Social Capital on the International Growth of New Ventures. *Journal of Management Studies*, *47*(6), 967–

994.

Prashantham, S., & Floyd, S. W. (2012). Routine microprocesses and capability learning in international new ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *43*(6), 544–562.

Prashantham, S., & Floyd, S. W. (2019). Navigating liminality in new venture internationalization. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *34*(3), 513–527.

Prashantham, S., & Young, S. (2011). Post-Entry Speed of International New Ventures. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *35*(2), 275–292.

Pukall, T. J., & Calabrò, A. (2014). The Internationalization of Family Firms. *Family Business Review*, *27*(2), 103–125.

Rasmussen, E. S., Koed Madsen, T., & Evangelista, F. (2001). The founding of the Born Global company in Denmark and Australia: sensemaking and networking. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, *13*(3), 75–107.

Ray, D. M. (1989). Entrepreneurial companies 'born' international: four case studies. In *Paper presented at the Babson Entrepreneurship Research Conference*. St Louis, USA.

Reuber, A. R., & Fischer, E. (1997). The Influence of the Management Team's International Experience on the Internationalization Behaviors of SMEs. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *28*(4), 807–825.

Reuber, A. R., & Fischer, E. (2011). International entrepreneurship in internet-enabled markets. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *26*(6), 660–679.

Reuber, A. R., Knight, G. A., Liesch, P. W., & Zhou, L. (2018). International entrepreneurship: The pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities across national borders. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *49*(4), 395–406.

Ricoeur, P. (1981). *Hermeneutics and the human sciences: Essays on language, action and interpretation*. Cambridge University Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1984). *Time and narrative 1*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1988). The human being as the subject matter of philosophy. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, *14*(2), 203–215.

Ricoeur, P. (1991). Narrative Identity. *Philosophy Today*, *35*(1), 73–81.

Ricoeur, P. (1994). *Oneself as another*. University of Chicago Press.

Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis (Vol. 30)*. Sage.

Riessman, C. K. (2002). Analysis of personal narratives. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of Interview Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Roberts, B. (2002). *Biographical Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Roessl, D. (2005). Family Businesses and Interfirm Cooperation. *Family Business Review*, *18*(3), 203–214.

Rosenthal, G. (1993). Reconstruction of life stories: principles of selection in generating stories for narrative biographical interviews. *The Narrative Study of Lives*, *1*(1), 59–91.

Rousseau, D. M., & Fried, Y. (2001). Location, location, location: contextualizing organizational research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *22*(1), 1–13.

Rowlinson, M., Hassard, J., & Decker, S. (2014). Research Strategies for Organizational History: A Dialogue Between Historical Theory and Organization Theory. *Academy of Management Review*, *39*(3), 250–274.

Ruvio, A., & Belk, R. (2018). Strategies of the extended self: The role of possessions in transpeople's conflicted selves. *Journal of Business Research*, *88*, 102–110.

Ruzzier, M., Antoncic, B., Hisrich, R. D., & Konecnik, M. (2007). Human Capital and SME Internationalization: a Structural Equation Modeling Study. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, *24*(1), 15–29.

Sadeghi, V. J., Nkongolo-Bakenda, J.-M., Anderson, R. B., & Dana, L.-P. (2019). An institution-based view of international entrepreneurship: A comparison of context-based and universal determinants in developing and economically advanced countries. *International Business Review*, *28*(6), 101588.

Sajasalo, P. (2002). Internationalization of a Key Industry: Implications for a Business and Society Relationship's development – Case Finland. *Journal of International Business Research*, *8*(1), 45–62.

Sale, J. E. M., & Thielke, S. (2018). Qualitative research is a fundamental scientific process. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, *102*, 129–133.

Salvato, C., & Melin, L. (2008). Creating Value Across Generations in Family-Controlled Businesses: The Role of Family Social Capital. *Family Business Review*, *21*(3), 259–276.

Sandelowski, M. (1991). Telling Stories: Narrative Approaches in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, *23*(3), 161–166.

Sandelowski, M. (1995). Sample size in qualitative research. *Research in Nursing & Health*, *18*(2), 179–183.

Sarasvathy, S. D. (2001). Causation and Effectuation: Toward a theoretcal shift from economic inevitability to entreprenurial contigency. *Academy of Management Review*, *26*(2), 243–263.

Sarasvathy, S. D. (2008). *Effectuation: Elements of entrepreneurial expertise*. Edward: Cheltenham.

Sarasvathy, S. D., Kumar, K., York, J. G., & Bhagavatula, S. (2014). An Effectual Approach to International Entrepreneurship: Overlaps, Challenges, and Provocative Possibilities. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 71–93.

Sarup, M. (1998). *Identity, culture, and the postmodern world*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Schein, E., H. (1990). *Career anchors: Discovering your real values*. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company.

Schumpeter, J. A. (1934). Change and the Entrepreneur. *Essays of J. A. Schumpeter*.

Schwens, C., Zapkau, F. B., Bierwerth, M., Isidor, R., Knight, G., & Kabst, R. (2018). International Entrepreneurship: A Meta–Analysis on the Internationalization and Performance Relationship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *42*(5), 12280.

Scott, W. (2001). *Institutions and Organizations*. Thousand Oaks.

Selden, P. D., & Fletcher, D. E. (2015). The entrepreneurial journey as an emergent hierarchical system of artifact-creating processes. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *30*(4), 603–615.

Seymour, R. G. (2006). Hermeneutic phenomenology and international entrepreneurship research. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *4*(4), 137–155.

Shane, S., Locke, E. A., & Collins, C. J. (2003). Entrepreneurial motivation. *Human Resource Management Review*, *13*(2), 257–279.

Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The Promise of Entrepreneurship as a Field of Research. *Source: Academy of Management Review*, *25*(1), 217–226.

Shantz, A. S., Kistruck, G., & Zietsma, C. (2018). The opportunity not taken: The occupational identity of entrepreneurs in contexts of poverty. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 33(4), 416–437.

Shepherd, D., & Haynie, J. M. (2009). Birds of a feather don’t always flock together:

Identity management in entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 24(4), 316–337.

Shi, H. X., Shepherd, D. M., & Schmidts, T. (2015). Social capital in entrepreneurial family businesses: the role of trust. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, *21*(6), 814–841.

Shi, H. X., Graves, C., & Barbera, F. (2019). Intergenerational succession and internationalisation strategy of family SMEs: Evidence from China. *Long Range Planning*, *52*(4), 101838.

Shrader, R. C., Oviatt, B. M., & McDougall, P. P. (2000). How new ventures exploit trade-offs among international risk factors: Lesson for the accelerated internationalization of the 21st century. *Academy of Management Journal*, *43*(6), 1227–1247.

Shrader, R. C. (2001). Collaboration and performance in foreign markets: The case of young high-technology manufacturing firms. *Academy of Management Journal*, *44*(1), 45–60.

Sieger, P., Gruber, M., Fauchart, E., & Zellweger, T. (2016). Measuring the social identity of entrepreneurs: Scale development and international validation. *Journal of Business Venturing,* 31(5), 542–572.

Silverman, D. (2015). *Interpreting qualitative data*. Sage.

Singer, J. A. (2004). Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan: An Introduction. *Journal of Personality*, *72*(3), 437–460.

Singleton, F., & Upton, A, F. (1998). *A Short History of Finland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, A. (1776). *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. London.

Smith, R. (2014). Authoring second-generation entrepreneur and family business stories. *Journal of Family Business Management*, 4(2), 149-170.

Smith, K. G., Gannon, M. J., & Sapienza, H. J. (1989). Selecting Methodologies for Entrepreneurial Research: Trade-offs and Guidelines. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *14*(1), 39–50.

Söderlund, J., & Borg, E. (2018). Liminality in Management and Organization Studies: Process, Position and Place. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *20*(4), 880–902.

Somers, M. R. (1994). The narrative constitution of reality: a relational and network approach. *Theory and Society*, *23*(5), 605–649.

Sommer, L. (2010). Internationalization processes of small- and medium-sized enterprises-a matter of attitude? *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *8*(3), 288–317.

Sommer, L., & Haug, M. (2011). Intention as a cognitive antecedent to international entrepreneurship—understanding the moderating roles of knowledge and experience. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, *7*(1), 111–142.

Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative Case Studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 443–466). Sage Publications Ltd.

Steensma, K. H., Marino, L., Weaver, M. K., & Dickson, P. H. (2000). The Influence of National Culture on the Formation of Technology Alliances by Entrepreneurial Firms. *Academy of Management Journal*, *43*(5), 951–973.

Stenbacka, C. (2001). Qualitative research requires quality concepts of its own. *Management Decision*, *39*(7), 551–556.

Stets, J. E., & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory. *Social Pyschology* Quarterly, 63(3), 224–237.

Stewart, W. H., Watson, W. E., Carland, J. C., & Carland, J. W. (1999). A proclivity for entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *14*(2), 189–214.

Steyaert, C. (1997). A Qualitative Methodology for Process Studies of Entrepreneurship. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, *27*(3), 13–33.

Steyaert, C. (2007). 'Entrepreneuring' as a conceptual attractor? A review of process theories in 20 years of entrepreneurship studies. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *19*(6), 453–477.

Steyaert, C., & Katz, J. (2004). Reclaiming the space of entrepreneurship in society: geographical, discursive and social dimensions. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *16*(3), 179–196.

Sullivan, S. E., & Arthur, M. B. (2006). The evolution of the boundaryless career concept: Examining physical and psychological mobility. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *69*(1), 19–29.

Suomen Yrittäjät. (2020). Yrittäjyys Suomessa. Retrieved 26 May 2020, from https://www.yrittajat.fi/suomen-yrittajat/yrittajyys-suomessa-316363

Sveningsson, S., & Alvesson, M. (2003). Managing Managerial Identities: Organizational Fragmentation, Discourse and Identity Struggle. *Human Relations*, 56(10), 1163–1193.

Swaminathan, R., & Mulvihill, T. M. (2018). *Teaching qualitative research: Strategies for engaging emerging scholars* (Kindle Edition). Guilford Publications.

Tadmor, C. T., Hong, Y.-Y., Chao, M. M., Wiruchnipawan, F., & Wang, W. (2012). Multicultural experiences reduce intergroup bias through epistemic unfreezing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *103*(5), 750–772.

Tagliaventi, M. R. (2019). *Liminality in Organization Studies: Theory and Method*. Routledge.

Tams, S., & Arthur, M. B. (2010). New directions for boundaryless careers: Agency and interdependence in a changing world. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *31*(5), 629–646.

Taylor, J. R., & Van Every, E. J. (2000). *The emergent organization: Communication as its site and surface*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Terry, D. J., Hogg, M. A., & White, K. M. (1999). The Theory of Planned Behaviour: Self-identity, Social Identity and Group Norms. *The British Journal of Social Psychology*, *38*, 225–244.

The World Bank. (2020). Entrepreneurship: Why it matters? Retrieved 16 May 2020, from https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/data/exploretopics/entrepreneurship/why-it-matters

Thomas, D. C., Lazarova, M. B., & Inkson, K. (2005). Global careers: New phenomenon or new perspectives? *Journal of World Business*, *40*(4), 340–347.

Thornton, P. H. (1999). The sociology of entrepreneurship. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *25*(1), 19–46.

Torkkeli, L., Nummela, N., & Saarenketo, S. (2018). Chapter 1: A Global Mindset – Still a Prerequisite for Successful SME Internationalisation? (Vol. 34, pp. 7–24).

Turcan, R. V, & Juho, A. (2014). What happens to international new ventures beyond start-up: An exploratory study. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *12*(2), 129–145.

Turner, V. W. (1969). *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure: Liminality and Communitas*. Aldine, New York.

Tymieniecka, A. T. (2010). *Phenomenology and Existentialism in the Twenthieth*

Century: Book III. Heralding the New Enlightenment. Springer Science & Business Media.

Vaara, E., & Lamberg, J. A. (2016). Taking historical embeddedness seriously: Three historical approaches to advance strategy process and practice research. *Academy of Management Review*, 41(4), 633-657.

Vahlne, J.-E., & Johanson, J. (2017). From internationalization to evolution: The Uppsala model at 40 years. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *48*(9), 1087–1102.

van Burg, E., & Romme, A. G. L. (2014). Creating the Future Together: Toward a Framework for Research Synthesis in Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(2), 369–397.

Van de Ven, A. H. (1980). Early planning, implementation and performance of new organizations. *The Organizational Life Cycle*, (83), 83–133.

Van de Ven, A. H. (2007). *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Van de Ven, A. H., Polley, D. E., Garud, R., & Venkataraman, S. (1999). *The Innovation Journey*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Van de Ven, A. H., & Engleman, R. M. (2004). Event- and outcome-driven explanations of entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *19*(3), 343–358. 1

van Gennep, A. (1909). *The rites of passage (Trans. M. B. Vizedom & G. L. Caffee)*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Van Maanen, J., & Schein, H. (1979). Toward a Theory of Organizational Socialization. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *1*, 209– 264.

Vandor, P., & Franke, N. (2016). See Paris and… found a business? The impact of cross-cultural experience on opportunity recognition capabilities. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *31*(4), 388–407.

Venkataraman, S., Sarasvathy, S. D., Dew, N., & Forster, W. R. (2012). Reflections on the 2010 AMR Decade Award: Whither the Promise? Moving Forward with Entrepreneurship As a Science of the Artificial. *Academy of Management Review*, *37*(1), 21–33.

Verbeke, A., & Ciravegna, L. (2018). International entrepreneurship research versus international business research: A false dichotomy? *Journal of International Business Studies*, *49*, 387–394.

Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., Manzi, C., Golledge, J., & Scabini, E. (2006). Beyond self-esteem: Influence of multiple motives on identity construction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *90*(2), 308–333.

Volchek, D., Jantunen, A., & Saarenketo, S. (2013). The institutional environment for international entrepreneurship in Russia: Reflections on growth decisions and performance in SMEs. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *11*(4), 320–350.

Wadhwani, R. D. (2016). Entrepreneurship in historical context: using history to develop theory and understand process. In *A research agenda for entrepreneurship and context* (pp. 65–78). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Wadhwani, R. D., & Jones, G. (2006). *Entrepreneurship and Business History: Renewing the Research Agenda*. *HBS Working Paper, 07-007*. Harvard Business School, Boston.

Waterman, A. S. (2002). Identity development from adolescence to adulthood: An extension of theory and a review of research. *Developmental Psychology*, *18*(3), 341–358.

Watson, T. J. (2009). Narrative, life story and manager identity: A case study in autobiographical identity work. *Human Relations*, 62(3), 425–452.

Watson, T. J. (2013). Entrepreneurship in action: Bringing together the individual, organizational and institutional dimensions of entrepreneurial action. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *25*(5–6), 404–422.

Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. Sage.

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the Process of Sensemaking. *Organization Science*, *16*(4), 409–421.

Welch, C., Nummela, N., & Liesch, P. (2016). The Internationalization Process Model Revisited: An Agenda for Future Research. *Management International Review*, *56*(6), 783–804.

Welch, C., & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E. (2014). Putting Process (Back) In: Research on the Internationalization Process of the Firm. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *16*(1), 2–23.

Welch, C., Piekkari, R., Plakoyiannaki, E., & Paavilainen, E. (2011). Theorising from case studies: Towards a pluralist future for international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *42*(5), 740–762.

Welch, L. S., & Luostarinen, R. (1988). Internationalization: Evolution of a Concept. *Journal of General Management*, *14*(2), 34–55.

Welter, F. (2011). Contextualizing Entrepreneurship—Conceptual Challenges and Ways Forward. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *35*(1), 165–184.

Westhead, P., Ucbasaran, D., Wright, M., & Binks, M. (2005). Novice, Serial and Portfolio Entrepreneur Behaviour and Contributions. *Small Business Economics*, *25*(2), 109–132.

Wilkins, M. (1988). The Free-Standing Company, 1870-1914: An Important Type of British Foreign Direct Investment. *The Economic History Review*, *41*(2), 259–282.

Williams, C. C., & Nadin, S. J. (2013). Beyond the entrepreneur as a heroic figurehead of capitalism: re-representing the lived practices of entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *25*(7–8), 552–568.

Williams, R. (2000). *Making identity matter: identity, society and social interaction*. Routledge Cavendish.

Wright, W. R., & Ricks, D. A. (1994). Trends in International Business Research : Twenty-Five Years Later. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *25*(4), 687–701.

Wood, M. S. (2020). Advancing the field of entrepreneurship: The primacy of unequivocal "A" level entrepreneurship journals. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 106019.

Yitshaki, R., & Kropp, F. (2016). Entrepreneurial passions and identities in different contexts: a comparison between high-tech and social entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *28*(3–4), 206–233.

Zahra, S. A., Randerson, K., & Fayolle, A. (2013). Corporate Entrepreneurship: where are we? Where can we go from here? *M@n@gement*, *16*(4), 357–361.

Zahra, S. A. (2003). International expansion of U.S. manufacturing family businesses: the effect of ownership and involvement. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *18*(4), 495–512.

Zahra, S. A. (2005). A theory of international new ventures: A decade of research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *36*(1), 20–28.

Zahra, S. A., Korri, J. S., & Yu, J. (2005). Cognition and international entrepreneurship: implications for research on international opportunity recognition and exploitation. *International Business Review*, *14*(2), 129–146.

Zahra, S. A., & George, G. (2002). International entrepreneurship: The current status of the field and future research agenda. *Strategic Entrepreneurship: Creating a New Mindset*, 255–288.

Zahra, S. A, Ireland, R. D., & Hitt, M. A. (2000). International expansion by new venture firms: International diversity, mode of market entry, technological learning, and performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, *43*(5), 925–950.

Zahra, S. A, Newey, L. R., & Li, Y. (2014). On the Frontiers: The Implications of Social Entrepreneurship for International Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 137–158.

Zellweger, T. M., Chrisman, J. J., Chua, J. H., & Steier, L. P. (2019). Social Structures, Social Relationships, and Family Firms. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *43*(2), 207–223.

Zhao, H., & Seibert, S. E. (2006). The Big Five personality dimensions and entrepreneurial status: A meta-analytical review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *91*(2), 259–271.

Zucchella, A., Hagen, B., & Serapio, M. G. (2018). *International entrepreneurship*. Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar Pub., Inc.

Zucchella, A., Palamara, G., & Denicolai, S. (2007). The drivers of the early internationalization of the firm. *Journal of World Business*, *42*(3), 268–280.

Appendix I: A general outline of the interviewing process

1. Before hitting on the recorder (if not already on at this point):

Tell the interviewee of the purpose for the interview, the overall information of the research, interests and procedures of confidential handling of the interview material (transcribing and anonymous handling of data throughout the research process).

2. After hitting on the recorder

The starting question and setting for their narration:

- Tell me your story, how did you become an international entrepreneur?
- In your own words, can you tell me, how did you end up being an international entrepreneur? You may start from where you think it begun.

If the invitation to narrate of the past and present experiences of becoming and being an international entrepreneur does not proceed into "storytelling", I help the interviewee with questions that would elaborate on their education, the point of founding the business or career contingencies and/or meaningful relationships:

- What has founding a company meant to you?
- What has 'being international' meant to you?
- Can you think of people that have been important during this journey?
- How do you think these experiences have been changing you?

Further content-derived questions are posed, with the idea of getting richer content of thoughts, actions, events, experience etc:

- Can you give a concrete example of that…?
- Then, what happened …?
- You just told me about […] can you tell me more of that time when…?"
- What did you do in that situation then…?
- How did you feel about that…?

3. After hitting off the recorder (sometimes the recorder was still on at this point):

Asking the interviewee whether it is ok to take contact again in case of some additional questions or concerns.

Appendix II: Personal notes for the student data collection setting

Research participants: First and second year master's degree students

Place and time: International business course in Nov 2016; Computer lab, a Finnish university/business school; 1,5 hours for the whole workshop session

Workshop introduction to the students and task:

- ✓ Workshop objectives (on ppt):
  - The aim is to
    - Collect narrative research data for the dissertation. Research interest: 'How international business students...
      - …make sense of their choice for a certain education and career path?'
      - …identify themselves within the international business field?'
      - …project their ideas/perceptions/anticipations of the future in the field?'
      - …define international entrepreneurship from the perspective of a "rookie"?'
    - Understand more of the construction of an international identity and perspectives to international business + entrepreneurship
    - Help students in self-identification as an international business expert through which one can become more self-aware and knowledgeable of a more holistic professional identity
      - to support self-knowledge and its meaning in one's international career

- ✓ The workshop task (given on paper):

  - Generate a piece of autobiographical writing, focusing on *your story* behind becoming an international business student and continuing studies and work of this field. You have the freedom to reflect life events and experiences as you wish. Flow of thought is encouraged, so don't be too picky in terms of what to write or how to write it. The form of writing is informal (e.g. journal entry style) and it will be handled with anonymity detached from any names, companies, geographical places etc. Your piece of writing will be anonymous throughout the whole the analysis process. Only the researcher will know your name. Any names of people, places or countries will be removed from the data if quoted or referred to. Time reserved for the writing task: 30 minutes.

1. For brief demographics, please list in the beginning of your document: Your age, nationality (and time in Finland, if not a citizen), a possible occupation, experience from abroad (where, when, how long), and are you an exchange student?

2. The following guiding questions may help, but does not limit your writing:
    - How did I become an international business student?
    - How is my projected professional role related to who I am?
    - How do I see myself contributing (now & in the future) to the field of international business?
3. In addition to your story, from your perspective, how do you define international entrepreneurship: what is it, by whom and where does it take place?

…

Own notes to the session:

1. Tell about yourself, your research framework and the objectives of the task.
2. Go through workshop objectives, ethics and rules, such as a) confidentiality (i.e. names, locations, cities, or countries will be removed upon analysis and reporting); b) keeping the timetable and investing time into the task ("please, use the time given", c) focus on the task and giving working peace for oneself and peers
3. (I will myself observe and answer possible questions during the individual task)
4. The texts are for the students themselves and for the focal research. They will not be graded or commented individually/personally → Return immediately by email to Satu
5. Not the meaning to produce creative or grammatically perfect text, but thoughts, perceptions and feelings that arise during the task around the theme "my international business identity".

Aim of the student to be honest and open for oneself, no need to hide, exaggerate, belittle or feel ashamed of anything. A longer time for writing may elicit self-criticism which takes over the process, so students are encouraged to let the thought "flow" to the text.

Publication I

Korhonen, S. and Leppäaho, T.

Well-trodden highways and roads less traveled: Entrepreneurial-oriented behavior and identity construction in international entrepreneurship narratives

Reprinted with permission from Springer
Journal of International Entrepreneurship
Vol. 17, Issue 3, pp. 355–388.
DOI: 10.1007/s10843-019-00246-3

Journal of International Entrepreneurship
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-019-00246-3

Well-trodden highways and roads less traveled: Entrepreneurial-oriented behavior and identity construction in international entrepreneurship narratives

Las sendas más trotadas y las rutas menos exploradas: Comportamiento emprendedor y construcción de identidad en base a narraciones sobre emprendimiento internacional

Satu Korhonen[1] · **Tanja Leppäaho**[1]

Published online: 08 June 2019

Abstract
We investigated the sense-making and contextual identity constructions of founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures, seeking to gain new insights into individual-level international entrepreneurship and international entrepreneurial behavior. Via a constructivist study of 19 founder-CEOs' life narratives, we explored how the formation of mental constructions—the narrative scripts—of the "self" as an actor derived from the founders' episodic autobiographical memories, and formed the basis for their international entrepreneurial behavior. We arrived at five scripts of international entrepreneurial behavior, i.e., a *Pioneer*, *Native*, *Diplomat*, *Gambler*, and an *Eclectic*. Our findings show (a) how meaning-loaded narratives emerge from the individual-level sense-making of temporal and contextual experiences and (b) how narratives feed into identity construction. They also show that individuals within IE have very different background scripts in the progression to where they are now.

✉ Satu Korhonen
satu.korhonen@lut.fi

Tanja Leppäaho
tanja.leppaaho@lut.fi

[1] School of Business and Management, Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT, P.O. Box 20, 53851 Lappeenranta, Finland

Resumen
En este trabajo, se investiga la creación de sentido y la construcción de identidad contextual por parte de fundadores-gerentes de nuevas empresas de temprana y rápida internacionalización con el objetivo de arrojar nueva luz sobre el emprendimiento internacional a nivel individual y el comportamiento emprendedor internacional. Mediante la elaboración de un estudio de corte constructivista, basado fundamentalmente en las narraciones de vida de 19 fundadores-gerentes, exploramos como la formación de construcciones mentales –los textos narrativos- del "yo" como un actor relevante pueden derivarse de las memorias autobiográficas y episódicas de los propios fundadores, configurando asimismo la base para entender su comportamiento emprendedor internacional. Se identifica, pues, de esta forma hasta un total de cinco descripciones (con)textuales distintas del comportamiento emprendedor internacional, a saber, la del Pionero, el Nativo, el Diplomático, el Jugador y el Ecléctico. Más concretamente, nuestros resultados muestran: (i) como las narraciones cargadas de significado emergen de la creación de sentido a nivel individual a partir de numerosas experiencias temporales y contextuales, y (ii) como dichas narraciones alimentan asimismo la construcción de identidad de cada emprendedor. También se pone igualmente de manifiesto como los emprendedores internacionales presentan, a nivel individual, textos sumamente diferentes sobre sus antecedentes vitales y en lo que concierne a su progresión hasta lo que son hoy en día.

Keywords International entrepreneur · International entrepreneurial behavior · Life experience · Narrative identity · Script

Palabras clave Emprendedor internacional · Comportamiento emprendedor internacional · Experiencia de vida · Identidad narrativa · Texto

Summary highlights

Contributions: Our study adds to the growing body of literature on individual-level international entrepreneurial behavior and brings insights to how founder-CEOs' life experiences and sense-making of them narrate the foundation—the script—for their socially constructed identities and (subsequent) behavior relative to their international venturing.

Research questions/purpose: Our study examines how founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures make sense of their life experiences and construct their identities relative to their behavior as international entrepreneurs.

Basic methodology and information: This study employs a qualitative methodology as the most appropriate means for studying under-researched processes, such as the socially constructed view of the international entrepreneur, and is based on the open-ended life-narrative interviews conducted with 19 founder-CEOs of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures.

Results/findings: Our findings show how individuals, engaging in the narration of their journeys of becoming and being international entrepreneurs, construct their narrative

identities as "scripts"—a Pioneer, Native, Diplomat, Gambler, and an Eclectic script—for their international entrepreneurial behavior. Findings of the life narratives illuminate how founder-CEOs' developmental experiences feed into and frame their international entrepreneurial behavior as emergent in the range of historically bound and generational contexts. Furthermore, our findings encompass the sense-making of international social interaction and the emotional aspects relative to one's international entrepreneurial journey.

Theoretical implications and recommendations: We contribute to the wider IE literature on the individual level. We provide with novel insights on how identities and international entrepreneurial behavior become manifested in different individuals, at different times, and through different contexts.

Practical implications and recommendations: The article highlights the importance of considering the various cultural and time contexts, generational contexts, and social contexts, as well as the emotional aspects in which one becomes and is an international entrepreneur. Such dimensions underpinning individuals' actions and behavior ought to be taken into consideration by entities contributing to the developmental processes of (potential) international entrepreneurs, such as education institutes as well as people in consultancy and media. The aim would hence be to develop reflective practices and reflexivity among those who engage in "writing the new scripts" of international entrepreneurship.

Limitations and future research suggestions: The nature of our interview data is subjective and socially constructed and relies on the individual's verbal output and ability to memorize past life events and experiences. Hence, being limited from an objective assessment of causal relationships of one's experience and behavior in and over time, we call for longitudinally unfolding research approaches and data generation. Our novel approach to international entrepreneurship at the individual level opens up interesting future directions for looking deeper into narrative scripts and their broader implications to their international venturing in different contexts; for example, comparisons between scripts, identity constructions, and behavior stemming from different cultural, institutional, political, or even industry settings would enable us to explore the assumptions and beliefs international entrepreneurs are embodying in their orientations towards international venturing.

Introduction

As noted by Oviatt and McDougall (2005b): 7), international entrepreneurship (IE) research seeks to understand "by whom and with what effects" international entrepreneurial opportunities are acted upon. Research on IE behavior (Oviatt and McDougall 2005a) has, on the whole, been dominated by firm-level studies (Joardar and Wu 2011; Jones et al. 2011). At the same time, early entrepreneurship scholars have remained close to the initial view of entrepreneurially oriented small firms as the extension of the individuals in charge (Lumpkin and Dess 1996). However, there have been relatively few explorations of the nature, motivation, or background of these international entrepreneurial actors (Autio 2005; Coviello 2015; Hannibal 2017; Jones and Casulli 2014; Jones et al. 2011; Keupp and Gassmann 2009; Peiris et al. 2012). Broadly speaking, in line with the definition of IE as an inherently entrepreneurial act, scholars agree that founders' initial perceptions, interpretations, knowledge, and know-how serve as the key influential factors in initial firm-level internationalization behavior (Oviatt and McDougall 2005a; Sarasvathy et al. 2014).

In conjunction with the lack of studies exploring the nature of IE entrepreneurs (Jones et al. 2011), one may well be curious as to the cognitive processes engaged in by international entrepreneurs (Jones and Casulli 2014; Reuber et al. 2018). Furthermore, in the constructivist stream of research, entrepreneurship is approached more as a "becoming" process (van Burg and Romme 2014; Steyaert and Katz 2004; Steyaert 1997). In such a process, the entrepreneurial actions of the founders are influenced by their prior developmental experiences and cognitive structures (Krueger 2007), more specifically, by how they interpret their life events and construct a sense of self (Morris et al. 2012) over time. In this paper, we seek to fill the gap by looking at IE individual behaviors (actions in the stream of events), operating in such a way as to construct identities and life narratives.

With these considerations in view, we undertook a constructivist exploration of the developmental foundations of (international) entrepreneurial behavior (Krueger 2007). In so doing, we sought to re-engage with real-life perspectives (Delios 2017) on "becoming" an international entrepreneur (Coviello 2015; Jones and Casulli 2014; Keupp and Gassmann 2009). Our research took the form of a qualitative study on the *life narratives of the founder-CEOs* of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures. Having conducted open-ended interviews with 19 founder-CEOs, we analyzed their experiences, considering how they made sense of the self as an actor relative to these experiences. This allowed us to see how their narrative identities unfolded as "scripts" of their IE behavior. In our findings, we present a pool of narratives, elaborating five exemplary scripts—a *Pioneer*, *Native*, *Gambler*, *Diplomat*, and an *Eclectic*. We suggest that these reflect differing individual-level constructions of "what it means to be an international entrepreneur" in the IE journey.

Our study contributes to IE literature on individual-level IE behavior (Coviello 2015; Jones et al. 2011; Prashantham et al. 2019; Sarasvathy et al. 2014) by exploring the developmental experiences and identity constructions of founders. Our findings illuminate life narratives to have emerged in a range of historically bound contexts (i.e., ideological, political, and cultural discussions within society) and generational contexts (i.e., multi-culturalism and digitalization), encompassing also experiences of international social interaction and emotional aspects. Moreover, in addressing the founders' sense-making processes and identity construction as the undercurrent for *international* entrepreneurial behavior (Coviello 2015; Hannibal 2017; Sarasvathy et al. 2014), we provide insights on how two "letter I" entities (International orientation and Identity) become manifested in different individuals, at different times, and through different contexts. According to our findings, international entrepreneurs construct identities and enact behaviors grounded in their sense-making of personal life experiences and in their interpretations of the various (temporal) contexts within which these experiences take place. As active participants in the streams of their contextual experiences (Morris et al. 2012), the temporal IE behaviors of international entrepreneurs emerge as grounded on their assumptions and understandings (Karp 2006). These in turn are derived from their cultural context (Pioneer script), generational context (Native script), and social context (Diplomat script), and from the emotions that underpin their actions and behavior (Gambler script).

The outline of the paper is as follows. We first provide an overview of the IE domain in terms of its main streams and less prevalent investigative approaches. The "Method" section covers our analytical approach to our qualitative data on founder-CEOs' life narratives, their selves, and their IE behavior. In the final sections, we discuss our findings and then indicate how our narrative inquiry may have theoretical and practical implications for IE processes at the individual level.

Theoretical framework

Well-trodden highways: Entrepreneurial behavior and the founder profile in international entrepreneurship research

In the IE field, entrepreneurship and internationalization are discussed as interdependent processes, with internationalization being viewed broadly as entrepreneurial behavior "manifested by events and outcomes in relation to time" (Jones and Coviello 2005: 299). Research on early internationalization, on the evolution of the cross-border activities of small firms, and on international entrepreneurial behavior (IE behavior) has mostly been conducted at the firm level (Coviello et al. 2011; Jones et al. 2011; McDougall-Covin et al. 2014). Moreover, the firms' characteristics (i.e., firm size and age), their behavior (i.e., internationalization patterns and pace), and the outcomes of such behavior (i.e., relative performance) have been investigated relative to the period of their inception or after the establishment of the firm (Coombs et al. 2009; Jones et al. 2011).

Fundamentally, research on entrepreneurial behavior has aimed to answer the question of what it means to be entrepreneurial (Miller 2011; Krueger 2007). Earlier studies tended to view "entrepreneurial" actions in terms of a particular personality, or else as the combined abilities of the entrepreneurial actor at the individual level (Schumpeter 1934), or in terms of the overall strategic orientation of the firm (Zahra et al. 2013). By contrast, current views of entrepreneurial behavior—seen, for example, in terms of an entrepreneurial orientation (EO)—tend to take into account firms' innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking in relation to the environment and to decision-making (Miller 2011; Covin and Wales 2012), and, further, their need for autonomy (Lumpkin et al. 2009). Such attributes of the firm are theoretically and practically accepted as the key forces driving entrepreneurial activities and the overall abilities of firms to engage in entrepreneurial behavior (Covin and Wales 2012). This has been the point of departure for IE studies on the strategic orientations preceding successful outcomes in international new ventures (INVs) (Covin and Miller 2014; De Clercq et al. 2005; Jones and Coviello 2005; Knight and Liesch 2016).

Although IE scholars have for several years primarily focused on the strategic orientation of entrepreneurial firms, *a number of scholars have continued to study entrepreneurial behavior as an individual phenomenon*, with a specific focus on the behavior of important firm leaders, such as founders (Joardar and Wu 2011; Weaver et al. 2002). The tendency has been to treat individual founders as having a more or less fixed profile in terms of their entrepreneurial tendencies and attributes (Stewart et al. 1999). A combination of attributes is seen as driving the individual to engage in international new-entry activity (Covin and Miller 2014). Such studies are broadly in line with traditional theories of the entrepreneur (e.g., Kirzner 1997; Schumpeter 1934), such that international entrepreneurial actors—founders—are regarded as proactive and innovative risk-takers (Joardar and Wu 2011), persons who have initially developed a global vision and necessary competences (Oviatt and McDougall 1994; McDougall et al. 1994).

A road less traveled: International entrepreneurs as the actors and sense-makers of their socially constructed identities

In considering the IE phenomenon as a multi-dimensional process over time, scholars have moved towards an integrative notion of the founder as a sense-maker and of (international) entrepreneurship as a complex and dynamic phenomenon within a social context (Hannibal et al. 2016; Rasmussen et al. 2001; Sarasvathy et al. 2014). Consequently, instead of border-crossing behavior at founding being seen in terms of key individuals per se, there is increasing perception of founders as holistic bundles of identity, knowledge, and networks (Sarasvathy et al. 2014). In addition, studies on international entrepreneurs and their role in the behavioral processes of their firms have emphasized the life history of the founder (McGaughey 2007), the construction of identity (Coviello 2015), and related cognitive processes (Acedo and Jones 2007; Jones and Casulli 2014; Reuber et al. 2018). These are seen as relevant to IE behavior at both individual and firm levels.

International entrepreneurial actors as sense-makers

Entrepreneurs are socially and contextually embedded actors who, over time, gain a sense of agency in enacting their context (Baker and Welter 2018). Moreover, individual founders are active participants in the streams of their experiences (Morris et al. 2012), with their temporal performance—or behavior—being grounded on their personal assumptions, understandings, and emotions (Karp 2006). In other words, individuals' entrepreneurial actions are motivated by their underlying intentions and attitudes (Krueger 2007), whereas the mental orientations in venturing behavior are developed through and catalyzed by ongoing life experiences that the individuals make sense of (Sommer and Haug 2011; Krueger 2007). Such sense-making encompasses "the entrepreneur's attempt to construct meaning to his/her plans and ideas together with other actors" (Rasmussen et al. 2001: 80).

In discussing entrepreneurial behavior relative to internationalization, it is noteworthy that entry into international markets is inherently an entrepreneurial act. By virtue of the act, the founders of INVs have come to be perceived as persons with an initial international entrepreneurial orientation (Covin and Miller 2014). Such a view was already apparent at an early stage in IE research; thus, McDougall et al. (1994) argued that prior to founding, the founders—as key actors in the emerging IE phenomenon—had have over time become more alert to the possibilities for combining resources from different national markets, due to competencies developed through their earlier experiences. So far, there have been relatively few studies on *how* international entrepreneurs draw upon such prior experiences or cognitive insights (Butler et al. 2010; Jones and Casulli 2014; Rasmussen et al. 2001). However, some recent studies have emerged (e.g., Hannibal 2017; Lehto 2015) dealing more specifically with the founders' ongoing, subjective interpretations of past experiences and present activities, along with projections of future intentions.

Life experiences and construction of identities enacting IE behavior

Life experiences, especially in the early years of life, are central to individuals' cognitive structures (Gioia and Manz 1985), their sense of "self" and human agency (Bandura 2006), and their adaptation to social roles and behavior (McAdams 2013). Studies have been conducted on entrepreneurial cognition as a process (i.e., as the evolution of mental representations and constructs) (Grégoire et al. 2011) and on the development of cognitive structures as foundations for entrepreneurial behavior. Work in these fields has led to a greater understanding of how and why individuals perceive and enact the surrounding world of, e.g., entrepreneurial opportunities the way they do (Krueger 2007).

The processes of "becoming" an entrepreneur have started to receive more attention (Gartner 1988; Hytti 2005; Williams and Nadin 2013; Krueger 2007). Scholars have been encouraged to move from a purely static view of the founder profile and to pay more heed to founders' evolving identities (Nielsen and Lassen 2012). Accordingly, research on international entrepreneurs has begun to discuss how founders make sense of their contextual identities (Hannibal 2017), with consideration also of their intentions relative to their faith in their own entrepreneurial capabilities—i.e., their self-efficacy (Hannibal et al. 2016; Dehghanpour Farashah 2015).

In general, life experiences as narratives are seen as a fruitful source for describing human actions and experiences. The intrinsic interpretation of life experiences (Polkinghorne 1988) serves as the basic organizing principle of human cognition (Boland and Tenkasi 1995). Moreover, such life narratives give prominence to human agency (Riessman 1993). Thus, they are recognized as having a pre-eminent role in making sense of individuals' actions relative to the entrepreneurship phenomenon (Byrne and Shepherd 2015; Brown et al. 2008). As founders narrate (to themselves or others) their "entrepreneurial journeys" (McMullen and Dimov 2013), they make sense of a variety of experiences in a range of social contexts across time (Carsrud and Johnson 1989; Hisrich et al. 2007; Sarasvathy 2001; Shane et al. 2003), and, in so doing, form subjective meanings for their actions within complex entrepreneurial processes (Leitch and Harrison 2016; McMullen and Dimov 2013; Moroz and Hindle 2012; Selden and Fletcher 2015; Fayolle et al. 2016).

In line with the literature on the founder as a key sense-making actor in the IE process, we set out to explore the foundations of IE behavior from a constructivist perspective. This takes developmental experiences (Krueger 2007) and life narratives as the basis for identity and behavior (McAdams 2008). In our analytic work, we started by exploring founder-CEOs' construction of narrative identities (McAdams 2013) relative to the IE phenomenon. In other words, we looked at their underlying perceptions of themselves and at how they made sense of their international venturing behavior over time.

Method

In this study, we employed a qualitative methodology. This appeared to be the most appropriate means for studying under-researched processes, such as the socially constructed view of IE and the developmental experiences in founder-CEOs' identity construction processes. Starting from an attempt to complement our view of IE with a sense-making perspective (Weick 1995; Rasmussen et al. 2001)—hence to include alternative interpretations of individual entrepreneurial behavior—we sought to apply our methods in such a way as to encompass the "fragile, emerging and provisional character of any kind of 'unit' that emerges from and is embedded within a process" (Steyaert 2007: 459). We also applied principles of narrative inquiry into human life experiences (Polkinghorne 1988; Riessman 1993), which see as having made major contributions to the study of human cognition, by drawing upon script theory and autobiographic memory (Hiles and Cermák 2008). Accordingly, we made use of life narratives as "scripts" (McAdams 2006). The scripts function as sense-making instruments (Brown et al. 2008) and, also, provide means for analyzing how research participants encode information about their experiences, the surrounding world (Labov 2013), and themselves (McAdams 2013).

Data

As part of a larger project in which we studied a range of processual paths to IE at the individual level, we conducted interviews with 19 founder-CEOs of small international ventures. These represented a variety of industries (see Table 1). Initially, with a view to having both "obtainable" and "important" data (Coviello and Jones 2004: 493), we selected the founder-CEOs through purposive sampling. The main criteria were (a) that they had founded a company that had been running for over two years; (b) that they had led the internationalization of the firm in some way or another during the first years of operation; (c) that they were managing the company at the time of the interview. Inevitably, all of the interviewed founder-CEOs shared a similar country context, i.e., the small open economy in Scandinavia. Since the distinction between small firms and entrepreneurial firms is a matter of emphasis (Coombs et al. 2009), and since many venture types are relevant in IE (Jones et al. 2011), we refrained from selecting the interviewees by any particular industry, strategy, or entry-mode characteristics (seeking thus to hear a maximally broad range of stories from the field). The founder-CEOs' firms had begun their international operations either (a) from inception or (b) within the first five years of operation. Operations were commenced either reactively, due to the firm's global client base and seemingly limited market in the country, or, proactively, due to the desire to seek new markets, challenges, and so on.

Generating narrative data Broadly speaking, a narrative refers to "the account of events in the world which are organized in a time-related sequence" (Watson 2009: 429). Narrative data, for their part, serve as means of accessing and providing a thick description of the contextually embedded sense-making of personally meaningful experience and knowledge (Birch and Miller 2000; Fletcher 2007; Johansson 2004; McMullen and Dimov 2013; Watson 2009). In inviting participants to talk about aspects of their life, researchers are, in effect, asking them to translate their "sense of self" into language (Birch and Miller 2000). The (transformative) sense-making cognitive activity pertaining to past, present, and future experiences (Weick 1995) both *constitutes* and *is produced by* narration. In this sense, the interviews themselves exist as opportunities for "(re)constructing narratives in different ways, evolving different

Table 1 Data

Founder	Age	Main area of business	Education	Year; duration of interview
Kim	61–65	Software design and development and consulting services	MSc in Economics and further training in exports	2015; 1 h 24 m
Per	56–60	Management consulting for industrial companies	BA in Engineering and MBA	2015; 1 h 17 m
Mel	31–35	Software design and development and consulting	MSc in Economics and some doctoral studies	2015; 1 h 21 m
Bert	71–75	Manufacturing of lifting and handling machinery	Engineering degree	2017; 2 h 26 m
Cam	46–50	Internet-based tourism services, service design, and consulting	MSc in Business and Economics	2017; 1 h 12 m
Moss	26–30	Production of media, music, and film	BA in Media	2017; 1 h 51 m
Oz	31–35	Software design and development and consulting services	BA in Natural Sciences	2017; 2 h 8 m
Joe	31–35	Software design and development and consulting services	BA in Engineering	2017; 1 h 33 m
Gio	56–60	Industrial machine and process development services	PhD in Physics	2017; 2 h 6 m
Ope	45–50	Production of communication technology and attached services	BA in Business Administration	2017; 1 h 51 m
Hope	36–40	Production of hygiene products	High school degree	2018; 1 h 37 m
Val	56–60	Production of communication technology, software development, and attached services	MSc in Engineering	2018; 2 h 00 m
Sam	46–50	Production of industrial measurement technology and attached services	MSc in Engineering and some doctoral studies	2018; 1 h 49 m
Mack	26–30	Marketing agency and attached software design and development	BA in Business and Economics	2017; 1 h 23 m
Stef	41–45	Production of measurement technology and attached services	PhD in Physics	2018; 1 h 44 m
Lars	71–75	Manufacturing of forest machinery	MSc in Engineering	2017; 1 h 27 m
Miles	41–45	Information tech. development and software consultancy	MSc in Business and Economics	2018; 50 m
Sandy	36–40	R&D and manufacturing of packaging for cosmetics	PhD in Chemistry	2018; 1 h 15 m
Tim	56–60	Production of industrial measurement technology	Electrical engineering	2017; 1 h 38 m

perspectives on the past, leading to different understandings of the present, with implications for the future" (Birch and Miller 2000: 93; referring also to Ricoeur 1991; Rosenthal 1993). Overall, there is a well-theorized and thoroughly analyzed link between the construction of identity (Bruner 1995; Riessman 1993) and the mental representations of individuals structured in terms of narratives (Polkinghorne 1988). Of particular relevance for this study is the recognition of narrative as fundamental in the formation of entrepreneurial identity (Jones et al. 2008; Mills and Pawson 2006; Nielsen and Lassen 2012; Yitshaki and Kropp 2016).

To ensure that we received first-person, personal accounts of international entrepreneurs' experiences and sense-making regarding the early years of their progression to their present self, we generated data through open-ended narrative interviews (Riessman 1993). We, thus, used open-ended and elaborative questions to encourage the participants to discuss their experiences freely, obtaining rich accounts that encompassed early childhood, current activities, and future visions. By focusing on how the founder-CEOs had become international entrepreneurs, the thematic interview structure encouraged "story-telling" of personal life journeys. The interviewer's main task was to engage in attentive listening in follow of guidelines aiming at maximally non-directive and empathic interviewing, to take notes, and to encourage elaboration with content-specific questions. Broadly, the interview strategy can be summarized according to the simple principles laid out for biographical and narrative interviews (Rosenthal 1993; Hollway 1997; Hendry 2007), namely, the use of open-ended questions, with a willingness to elicit stories, to embrace silence, to avoid "why" questions, and to follow up using the interviewee's own ordering and phrasing.

In practice, the start of the interview entailed a single, open question forming a kind of invitation: "Please, tell me how you became an international entrepreneur." Beyond this, the interviews evolved on the basis of attentive listening and note-taking during the initial narration. This allowed the interviewer to follow up themes, following the narrated order, and using the respondent's own words and phrases. Such an approach led to further narration via open questioning. On-site recall of thematically relevant accounts activated the interviewee to elaborate events and experiences in greater detail. Simultaneously—in a constructivist manner—it engaged both the interviewee and the interviewer in sense-making and reconstruction (Rosenthal 1993). Each of the interviews was conducted on a one-on-one basis by the same interviewer. The interviews were audiotaped, with durations ranging from 50 min to 2 h and 26 min. When transcribed, they produced 340 pages of text (Times New Roman, font 12, single space).

Analyzing the narratives

Over time, a person constructs plots for and internalizes experiences, covering events and the self within them as the evolving and integrative story of a life. The story is the *script* for the person's narrative identity construction (McAdams and McLean 2013). In this study, we aligned our approach with notions of human cognitive structures and mental representations of the surrounding world as modified by personally meaningful *life experiences*. Subsequent behavior is driven by the (now deeper) beliefs, adopted on the basis of the cognitive structures previously formed (Krueger 2007). Accordingly, in our analysis of the narratives (Polkinghorne 1988), we sought to follow the progressions through which founder-CEOs made sense of their early and ongoing experiences, forming a developing sense of their selves relative to their actions (McAdams 2013) within the stream of experiences relating to their IE journeys. Figure 1 encompasses the above-mentioned concepts. It also sets out our approach to narrative data, viewed as revealing scripts for the self and for behavior, used in the founder-CEOs' sense-making of their life experiences.

Our initial analysis resulted in a larger set of narrative episodes, providing an overall picture of the narratives constructed in our data (Lieblich et al. 1998), and the sense-making of meaningful periods in the interviewees' lives. These narrative episodes were often referred to in the interviews and served as the "body" of the interviews. We also traced the experiences and life events that influenced the individual's personal internationalization orientation (not yet related to the firm) and the actual founding of a new venture. We observed connections between the "then" and "now" in the narratives, seeking to interpret the emerging episodes in terms of the meaning they had for the individual in making sense of his/her own "becoming" process.

We treated the narrative data as providing episodic particulars of the interviewee's autobiographical memory, hence forming the person's narrative identity from the overall script (McAdams 2013; McAdams and McLean 2013). The procedure allowed us to extract episodes which made sense of (subsequent) behavior, and which provided more detailed elaborations of perceptions of the self. In line with Linstead and Thomas (2002: 2), we saw the self as "constructed in terms of the conjunction of past and future, as an explanation of previous events as episodes in an unfolding narrative in a way that positions the constructor of the account advantageously for future episodes." Such an approach made it possible to explore the different qualities and meanings of certain events and experiences, in association with the founder-CEOs' selves as social actors and motivated agents (McAdams 2013).

Our study was initially data-driven. However, it took on abductive characteristics as we detected across the interviews commonly shared descriptions of the self and

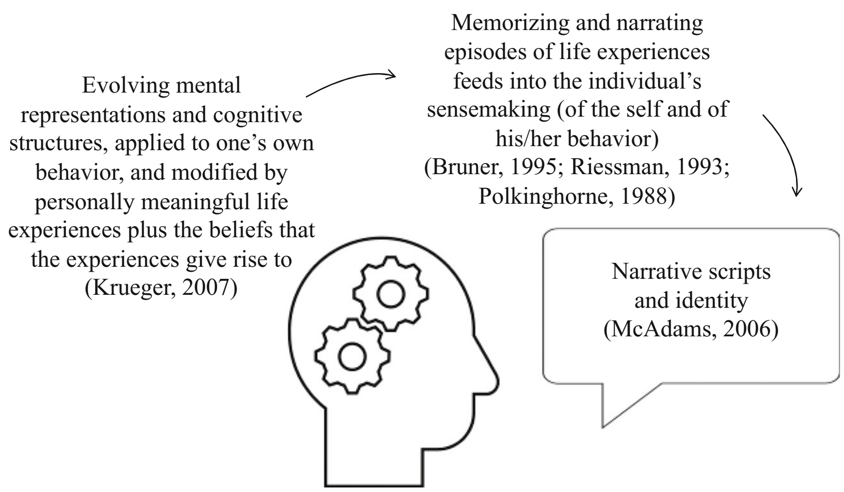


Fig. 1 Narrative scripts, viewed as tools for making sense of the self and of one's behavior in the processes of becoming an international entrepreneur

of related behavior as (international) entrepreneurs—involving a need for autonomy, innovativeness, a risk-taking tendency, and proactiveness. Having interpreted these as means by which the interviewees made sense of individual IE behavior (as involving certain underlying mental representations of the self, acting in accordance with the overall IE script), we decided to go more deeply into the life experiences that constructed (Krueger 2007) and fed into such scripts (Gioia and Manz 1985; McAdams 2006).

With this in view, in following the sense-making of identities and behavior in the life narratives (McAdams 2006) of the interviewees, we treated the narrative interviews as wholes with a certain overall meaning, such that any single narrative episode would be better understood in the context of the other parts (Polkinghorne 1988). Eventually, having analyzed and compared the narratives (Polkinghorne 1988), we were able categorize the main features of the self, determining the experiences from which certain behaviors appeared to stem.

Due to the extensive nature of our data and analyses, it became clear that we needed to simplify the presentation of our findings. Table 2, thus, provides an overview of the features of the developing international entrepreneurial self within the entire pool of life narratives. Thereafter, we elaborate on the content of the table with reference to the narratives of five founder-CEOs. These five cases preserve and bring to life the narrative "devices" through which the individuals made sense of their experiences and of their identity (Birch and Miller 2000: 192).

Findings

International entrepreneurial identities and behavior, as represented in five scripts

Deriving from our narrative analysis (Polkinghorne 1988), Table 2 provides an overview of our findings regarding the narrative scripts by which the founder-CEOs made sense of the "who" and the "how" of themselves (constructing identities as actors in IE). It also sets out the developmental experiences that framed the interviewees' behavior in the evolving process of becoming and being an international entrepreneur.

As shown in Table 2, the *Pioneer*, *Native*, *Diplomat*, and *Gambler* scripts represent the "pure" types of script, within which one's behavior and sense of self is largely dominated by clearly identifiable and consistent features of self in relation to experiences. By contrast, the *Eclectic* script is of a more "hybrid" type (see Fauchart and Gruber 2011 for the terms "pure" and "hybrid"). In fact, the "pure" scripts could be interpreted as, overall, less frequent in their occurrence. They may, therefore, represent, to some extent, "outliers" in the overall spectrum. For its part, the Eclectic script (resembling a "hybrid" of the four "pure" scripts) has characteristics of dynamism within the founders' narrative sense-making regarding their behavior.

In the sections "The pioneer script: A visionary explorer of unmarked paths," "The native script: Maybe he's born with it?," "The diplomat script: Building bridges between people and the self," "The gambler script: Positive delusion is the name of the game," and "The eclectic script: Transforming behavior, initiating change," we elaborate how the five scripts presented in Table 2 (*Pioneer*, *Native*, *Diplomat*, *Gambler*, and *Eclectic*) are represented in the narratives of Kim, Mel, Per, Oz, and Joe. In the

Table 2 Overview of the scripts revealed in the founders' narratives

Label of the script	Features of the self as an international entrepreneurial actor	Developmental experiences relating to the international entrepreneurial self	Founder(s) expressing similar experiences
Pioneer	Visionary	Situations of becoming accustomed to look for global trends with curiosity, and with the courage to do things that others may not dare. Life experiences of going beyond national borders, after new (life-)opportunities had contributed to an open mind.	Kim Lars Cam Val
	Persistent	Challenging events and related experiences, e.g., of losing personal health or facing external doubt and resistance. These later developed persistence, to do something that had not previously been done as a founder.	
	Altruistic	Situations involving a need to evaluate personal values while being obliged to put oneself on the line, sacrificing one's own privileges for a common benefit, while progressing along unmarked paths.	
	First-mover	Events and actions in which one was conspicuous for doing something crazy or novel, while maintaining a brave and honest attitude.	
Diplomat	People-oriented	Diverse cultural and social encounters. These were challenging, but provided learning opportunities. They involved required introspection plus interpretation of interactions with people from different backgrounds.	Paul Bert Gio Stef Tim
	Mentor	Through experiences of gaining help from others and developing know-how from previous work, personal learning was concretized. This brought about a genuine serving attitude, with a willingness to help less experienced persons through consulting, mentoring, or research.	
	Arbiter	Managerial experiences of constructing new knowledge of (international) human resource contexts over time enhanced a sense of responsibility, including a willingness to negotiate between diverse actors in cross-cultural situations.	
Native	Culture-savvy	Pre-adaptation to a "culture" from the very beginning (i.e., from being in multi-cultural family or as a "digi-native"), taking a cross-cultural context for granted.	Mel Mack Moss
	Searcher for meaningfulness	Episodes of searching for and finding personal motivation, and a context that would foster a meaningful independent career.	
	Sociable	Experiences in which the person benefited from a broad international social network, making it possible to spot venturing opportunities in the fluidity of one's proactive identity.	
Gambler	Positive delusion	Situations involving "hyper-optimistic" of oneself and possibilities for success, plus opportunities for risk-taking that would provide the desired emotional thrill. This encouraged the person to keep reaching towards larger goals.	Oz Ope

Table 2 (continued)

Label of the script	Features of the self as an international entrepreneurial actor	Developmental experiences relating to the international entrepreneurial self	Founder(s) expressing similar experiences
	Observant	Evaluation of uncertain situations; developing the ability to read the reactions and emotions of others, plus the ability to keep cool in stressful situations.	
	Competitive	Interpretations of the business context as a "sport" of logic and problem-solving, requiring one to keep a close eye on a competitor's behavior and reactions.	
Eclectic	Transformative	Experiences of being engaged in dynamic and changing contexts, in which sensitivity was needed in one's actions. → From a culture-savvy Native (from the very start), moving towards the arbiter category of Diplomat	Joe Sandy Miles Sam Hope
	Initiator	A continuous drive to confront new challenges, enhancing an internal motivation to reach out to and work hard for the next big thing, be it socially, economically, or personally important. → A combination of becoming a visionary Pioneer, searching for meaningfulness like a Native, and making sense of the positive delusion of a Gambler	
	Reflexive	Having a profound sense of one's own self, but also the ability to challenge these "beliefs" on the basis of feedback from others. → Taking on experience-based characteristics of the kind that differentiate an Eclectic "hybrid" script from a more dominant "pure" script.	

"An eclectic reading of the scripts for international entrepreneurial behavior" section, we consider our findings in terms of how the scripts compare to each other and how a more comprehensive interpretation of developmental experiences becomes relevant in such scripts.

The pioneer script: A visionary explorer of unmarked paths

Our data contained the life narratives of international entrepreneurs who described themselves as forward-looking, possessing a proactive attitude and eagerness to move along unmarked paths throughout their career. They emphasized that the experiences of becoming an international entrepreneur can be challenging but also rewarding in terms of personal growth, as when one persists in believing in something that has not hitherto been attempted. Such narrations encapsulated what we call the *Pioneer* script. Here, entrepreneurial acts were made sense of in terms of being persistent and visionary in one's outlook. The narrative sense-making attached to such a script partly reflected the context of doing international business at a time when there was perhaps less external support for conducting and enacting pioneering ideas. To this extent, the Pioneer script involved sensitivity to the ideologically, politically, and culturally different times that an international entrepreneur might have encountered. He or she might have been forced either to give in, or else to fight for something personally meaningful, while developing an unconstrained yet legitimate status for one's company and one's self.

Kim is the founder of an international software company that has enabled knowledge transfer in large enterprises during organizational changes. For her, becoming and being an international entrepreneur was the foundation for managing sensitive organizational processes in conjunction with international business. Born in the 1950s, as the daughter of an engineer and the granddaughter of an entrepreneur, she was—perhaps unusually at the time—raised to consider herself to be as capable of doing things as her male peers. Over time, Kim preferred to take her own path, and she grew into being an independent young woman: "My brother always had a big gang around, still has [—] At school I only had one close friendship. But not this kind of big gang. That way, I've always taken more of my own path."

Despite beginning her business career at a time when the field was still dominated by men, she said that she was—and had remained—straightforward, even somewhat naïve in her actions. She had always seen herself as having the same possibilities as others: "I read about what people were saying, but I never thought it had anything to do with me."

From an early age, Kim had frequently taken responsibility, through her first jobs and her school committee. However, during high school, she encountered health problems. The health issues and related challenges had continued to appear. However, rather than indulging in self-pity, she said that for her they had developed "an exceptional ability to endure things," plus a personal value system and motivation: "I've needed to go through pretty tough crises. Life has led me in a sense … that I've learned to look at things in a [certain] way … [—] I have these deep values, that you have to give back what you've learned in life. [—] It's the feedback from giving that is the driver, the motive."

Having initially entered a career in the health technology industry, she constantly educated herself on various topics on and off work, seeking to gain a holistic view of her work. By the age of thirty, Kim was assigned by her employers to take over a whole division, including the task of taking the business to an international level: "Within a year they wanted to send me to North America. They'd never sent anyone abroad. [—] At that time there were no subsidiaries. No culture of doing it, but they were looking into it."

At that time, without any Internet or educational support from the organization, she was to enter the unknown world of international business, quite alone, and in the absence of modern technology. Based on her learning, she now stressed the importance of cultural sensitivity and experiential learning, even if one might have all the access in the world to specific information: "Now everything is on the Internet and it is open, and you find it there. Back then we had nothing. [—] But of course, if you don't have cultural understanding, it is good to acquire it from [abroad]."

Altogether, Kim's narration of being a woman in technology and business, leading internationalization, and taking on a position that had no previously established structures, expressed strongly a sense of being a "first-mover" in many dimensions. Eventually, after several decades in employment and years of independent business consulting, Kim became convinced that no real learning was taking place in the industry. She was determined to put her unique knowledge of her subject to practical use. Pursuing her pioneering idea with a team of experts, she created innovative software that concretized her knowledge and experience. People around her considered the business idea unlikely to succeed, and only few people believed in her vision.

Nevertheless, she wanted to look far ahead to future opportunities and decided to take the risk.

Now, having invested all her finances in the business idea, she was seeking to expand her team to encompass a comprehensive set of skills and knowledge. On the basis of her various managerial positions, her years abroad, and her first-hand experience of innovative venturing and strategic renewal within the corporation, she described her path into entrepreneurship as multi-faceted:

> I have led organizations into growth in many ways, I have been in [both] large and family firms, and in small firms in various roles. And I've been a consultant in a role where I've had to analyze things. [—] I have always been sort of a visionary. So that I foresee things in advance, I listen to trends, signals carefully. [—] This kind of understanding of global growth, knowledge and all of this, how to grow and take risks, and think of what comes next …

From Kim's narrative, we see that experiences have grounded her beliefs in herself and her behavior as an independent, persistent, and value-driven international entrepreneur. She makes sense of herself through her early social relationships and independence from others' opinions (deriving from father–daughter relationship and sense of being equal with boys). Her sense-making also encompasses her self-assessed straightforward behavior and personality (i.e., her bluntness and naivety when she was growing up), her early and multiple experiences of going abroad by herself for work (i.e., summer work when she was a teenager and being the first woman as a global sales manager in an internationalizing company in the 80s), and the tough times she went through when starting her own business (i.e., sticking with an idea that people said was too difficult). Throughout her story, Kim continued to strengthen her international entrepreneurial self through an altruistic quest of putting her personal experiences to use for the good of others.

The native script: Maybe he's born with it?

A "native script" reflects the position of founder-CEOs who are internally driven by awareness of the necessity of doing international business; also by having an entrepreneurial mindset and the privilege of being internationally and/or entrepreneurially oriented from an early period in their life. Assuming that such a person also has a personal motivation for entrepreneurial practices, our interpretation of the native script fits well with the behavior of a "born global" entrepreneur, i.e., one who has the internal abilities to adapt easily to various global "cultures" of business (by being, e.g., a "world citizen" or a "digi-native"), and to a career in which they become more and more embedded. Such characteristics—in conjunction with the push of personal interests and education and the pull of broad social networks, accentuated by the technological advances of the time—enable the person to construct a flexible identity that will endure both personal and social scrutiny.

Mel is the co-founder of a small software company. It does consultancy work and facilitation of communication and knowledge transfer in overseas projects between large multi-national clients. For Mel, both becoming an entrepreneur and being international is self-evident. A strong source of his sense-making is located in his multi-cultural family background and his digitally savvy generation. Having been born into a multicultural family, Mel had dual citizenship at his birth and was exposed to three different languages.

Mel stressed his family and generational foundation as useful in his international encounters today. He estimated his willingness to speak foreign languages and to deal with strangers as above average. Moreover, in his opinion, modern-day business ought to be international from the start and should follow other global developments: "One must have the international grip from the start. If one aims to do up-to-date business at all." Like many of his age-peer international entrepreneurs, Mel enjoyed the benefits of being in the first waves of digitalization. He acknowledged the advantages possessed by the current digital-native generation and their potential in fostering entrepreneurship: "Digitalization, it has, if you like, concreteness in it, which has made it possible for a 20-year-old man or woman to do international business anywhere in the world."

Mel's entrepreneurial journey began at the end of his college years. He displays some characteristics of a born entrepreneur, insofar as he became an entrepreneur fairly quickly, without any notable prior working experiences. However, the spark to the co-founding of a company came from experiences in other environments. Growing from a fairly shy boy to a sports enthusiast and to a confident performer in his city theater in his early adulthood, Mel started to find his internal motivation for an entrepreneurial career before became he aware of it himself:

> At the time of my studies, these experiences, like establishing the (sports) team, and some courses, about establishing a firm, where you create your own business idea and gather substance around it … It was like actualizing a dream. [—] that's when it gave the spark, like, "damn, how cool was that, managing to do such a thing!" At the end of my studies, I had already decided that I'd become an entrepreneur.

Without having the kind of definite entrepreneurial family background that can often spark a positive attitude to work and an entrepreneurial mindset (or the opposite), Mel had been raised to work hard and always to do his work as well as possible. His farmer grandfather had engraved in Mel the image of working for one's own livelihood and aspirations, and Mel could not imagine working for someone else's dreams. He had recognized the importance of personal passion in working and had experienced great joy in creating something meaningful for himself. Despite a deepened knowledge of network management gained during a short period of employment at the university, his internal motivation, personal desires, and ideas were realized only after he became an entrepreneur. During the short period of employment after graduation, Mel had established trust with clients who shared broader visions with him. Conveniently, all of them were willing to take the risk of starting a business collectively:

> I am definitely not an entrepreneur doing it all by myself. [—] When we three established the company, we had strengths that were complementary, at least when it came to my own strengths. They probably could have made it by themselves, but I would have not survived. I am the kind who wants to do things together … I really enjoy the success which we can reach together.

In Mel's narrative, experiences from his early childhood and his studies were profound in making sense of the self-evident path by which he became an international entrepreneur. Mel's memories emphasize his birth into a multi-cultural family, respect for "entrepreneurial" work (i.e., a farmer grandfather as a role model), being part of proactive teams (i.e., in playing in sports teams or acting in the theater), finding the spark to establish a team on his own (i.e., founding a sports team), and having people as mentors and partners around him from the start (notably a professor in the university). Yet, overall, the most critical developmental experience in Mel's case was surely that he was born into a multi-cultural family and that he heard and spoke several languages at an early age. Furthermore, the episodes of Mel's narrative demonstrate the IE journey as a more or less self-evident career choice, one that was both externally driven (involving international business, digitalization, and university, clients) and internally driven (involving a multi-cultural identity, personal dreams, and motivation).

The diplomat script: Building bridges between people and the self

According to our interpretation, some of the founders' identity constructions and behaviors unfolded according to what we call a "diplomat script." The diplomat script seems to gain momentum from personal cultural and social encounters that both challenge and provide learning opportunities, constructing knowledge of the international context over time. As seen in Per's narrative in subsequent texts, this script manifests a developing path of internationalization, arrived at through introspection, with interpretation of interactions with people from different backgrounds along the life trajectory. In this sense, the diplomat script seems to be grounded in people-oriented experiences. It fits well with the demands of contemporary internationalization and of entrepreneurial careers that build on social relationships and networks.

Per is a founder-CEO and partner consultant in a knowledge-intensive business service firm. For him, IE is about helping domestic and international companies (small- and medium-sized) to develop their international services. Per was born into a normal working family without any initial entrepreneurship influences. However, there were pressures from his father and grandfather to perform to the best of his ability, personal challenges in balancing between studying and working, and eventually, the responsibilities of becoming a father in early adulthood. These were factors that developed Per into conscientious young man.

As a challenge-seeker, Per said that he easily became bored. In learning to balance his life between being a father and building a corporate career, Per had already gained extensive managerial experience by his thirties. His working career in different corporations had up to the present given him diverse work experience, both domestic and international: "I left [company X] when it started to feel so … maybe boring is a wrong word, but easy? And I saw that [company Y] was looking for a candidate to go to North America. And I sought the position, or applied, and got hired."

In addition to his extensive international experiences, Per increased his "intrapreneurial" orientation and his pursuit of strategic renewal in the corporations where he was employed. However, he emphasized that these involved lower risks than entrepreneurship, to be undertaken either by starting up a business or investing in buying one. He further elaborated on the motivating aspects of entrepreneurship, how he worked without counting the hours, seeing needs for change where others refused to see them: "Maybe I've always been a bit workaholic. That I haven't counted the hours I've worked. Maybe in that sense I've been an entrepreneur … or entrepreneurially oriented."

Freedom was a strong element in Per's narration. The way in which he liked to be led himself was the way he liked to lead others. In attempting to be a leader rather than a manager, he had been determined to give his employees autonomy. He saw it as necessary not to control people too much: "Maybe it has been one of the weaknesses in my leadership that I haven't followed up enough … or controlled. Control is exactly the kind of management that I don't like."

He had met his father's international business friends from an early age, worked as an expatriate for several years, and had specific experiences of being challenged by cultural differences among colleagues. He had thus grown to appreciate the need to encourage efforts for international relations in the workplace:

> In some cultures, they do things I can't accept, in a sense. But, it becomes understandable, if you give it a chance. [—] there are different kinds of people and different cultures and different kinds of ways of doing things and none of them is the right one. [—] The world view of the other person may be a somewhat different from one's own, and I'm not sure if my own is any better.

Furthermore, in reflecting on his growing international interests and mindset, Per indicated the connections between his experiences abroad and intuitive urges in his managerial decision-making. The fact that he took experience and enthusiasm for granted influenced his evaluation of ways to proceed: "At that point, I had lived abroad a good period, and somehow it felt natural. [—] I thought I'd try at an early enough stage to internationalize its operations. I didn't really think about it. Maybe I should have."

Despite encounters with various challenging situations and mistakes as an international manager, none of his experiences had made him regret his engagement with international business. In fact, those international experiences had changed him into what he was now and had given him the internally strong desire to seek development in international business, especially the development of small firms. Eventually, when one employment contract ended, Per found himself creating himself a "new" career as an entrepreneur, putting his knowledge and interests to specialized use: "Know-how is maybe the wrong word [—] but it has become natural for me in the course of many years. Then, in this firm, perhaps one aims to advance what one is good at. [—] First one ends up in international tasks, then it feels natural, and then one seeks to take these on."

From Per's narration, we can extract his experiences of pressure to work hard (from parents and grandparents expecting a good performance in school), exposure to cultural diversity from early on (from his father's international work colleagues and a cultural training program), the need to balance work and family life (returning from being an expatriate), and leading internationalization (as an employed manager). In fact, Per had been continuously handling situations which required balancing acts. Overall, he became an international entrepreneur after and through various life and career transitions. The founding of the company eventually emerged as a concrete service, concretizing his motivated approach to work, networks, and know-how from previous international assignments. Through his own learning of the international field, he had gained the motivation to help and serve less experienced peers, via his consulting, mentoring, and research-related work. It was perhaps no wonder that such a committed person would find it fulfilling to contribute in developing the internationalization processes of small firms, having himself had life stages of being an expatriate and a manager of a small firm.

The gambler script: Positive delusion is the name of the game

The gambler script manifests the behavior surrounding risk-taking amid the uncertainties of founding an INV. If the script is followed through, taking on calculated risks provides the thrill of the game. Moreover, as in the case of Oz (see subsequent texts), an international entrepreneur who takes on the gambler script tends to be one with big dreams. Thus, to take the example of Oz, reaching millions of online followers worldwide is both the motivation and the means for international venturing. As one might expect from such individuals, a pre-eminent characteristic is intelligence, applied to dealing dispassionately with human cognition and emotions. Thus, the founders following this script seem to have taken on responsibility for their risk-taking actions, as an integral part of their personality. If one disregards the negative connotations of "gambling," the narratives highlight the positive aspects of such behaviors. IE makes sense as a kind of "sport" of logic and problem-solving, one that makes it necessary to keep a close eye on competitors' actions and reactions. International entrepreneurs following a gambler script seem to have good abilities to handle emotions and manage their own reactions in stressful situations. It may also be that without the slightly "delusional" mindset, the interviewed founders in this category would never have gone beyond the average level.

Oz is the founder of a small online gaming company, one that brings scientific knowledge to the wider public. His sense-making narration of his path to becoming an international entrepreneur emphasized the logic of psychological human development. Oz was born and raised in a family that encouraged him to think independently and responsibly. "Verbal debates" at home developed his argumentative skills, a strong interest in sports and games from early on created a competitive drive, and an eagerness to continuously read and learn more gave him a foundation to holistically understand himself and to reflect on the world around him. He acknowledged personal experiences as important in shaping his thinking and values (i.e., being socially responsible) and placed an emphasis on parenting, society, and a university education in natural sciences.

Oz mentioned that his early background in sports had influenced his move to becoming an entrepreneur. Since he was seven years old, he had constantly played either soccer or ice hockey. Having participated in sports at a high level, he reflected on an early dream of becoming a professional athlete: "This might not be a surprise, but many entrepreneurs have sports in their background. And why sports, it might be something with the goal-directedness. Maybe competitiveness. [—] I have always loved games. [—] And I was very goal-directed already at a young age."

On coming into his twenties, Oz realized that he could not create a career in sports. At this time, he discovered online poker. Oz now liked to link this to his philosophy of wanting to reach goals, and his longing for action: "[Online poker] was this really intriguing mode of sports, competition, and games, and then, it was also logical. I've always liked math, physics, these kinds of logical subjects, problem-solving things. It was so fascinating. This combined it all."

After a relatively successful start with his online poker career, Oz decided he did not wish to continue down that road. He did not wish to become networked with the people he was meeting online and at events of the industry, as he could see how certain values held in that community would have gradually altered his own perspectives. Along with pursuing a degree in natural sciences, Oz had an idea developing in his head. This came to fruition after a motivational speaker, who was also a successful entrepreneur, pressed his "emotional buttons." Less than a year later, Oz had established his own company and had managed to book a meeting with a leading online gaming company in the country. During the first year of his company, Oz's major realization was that he had to concretize the ideas that he had in his head and to go beyond merely developing and learning new things in theory. Finding a co-founder who had the same love for the games as Oz was a turning point in getting his ideas into a realizable form.

For Oz, his internal drive of being an entrepreneur could be compared to that of an athlete. In soccer, one can see the desire to succeed in the way the players fight for every ball, without any certainty of achieving a final result:

> When you have an uncertain end result, you still very strongly believe that it will happen. You have no proof that it will, but you believe that it will happen. It links to when you present a vision to the investor, saying that such and such will happen, because we'll do such and such a thing. You have the arguments for it. [—] It's really hard to fake it, it shows through [—] Everything is based on this kind of strong manipulation of people.
> *(Authors' note: Term "manipulation" is a direct quote and the context is the convincing of people of a grandiose vision.)*

Describing himself as a person who rather makes intellectual guesses and develops his own opinion of where things are headed, Oz was skeptical about looking into the past and at the fluctuation of trends. Relating such a behavioral orientation to the dynamics of poker, he talked about forecasting, or predicting the future:

> The predictions are based on who you play with. The person you're playing with is much more important than the cards you play with. Who you play with, what they are thinking, their backgrounds, why they play and all sorts of things. [—] In a way, entrepreneurship or visioning, or anything, it's exactly the same.

Oz argued that of more importance than intelligence is how you handle your emotions. In gambling, as in life in general, one ought to understand and process feelings of failure, loss, success, and the entire spectrum of emotions. One must recognize what is fear-oriented and what is desire-oriented: "It's far more important than whether you can, as if were, logically do something. [—] That's what I strive for, reflecting on how I react."

For Oz, having an international start for the company was self-evident, due to the online nature of the gaming industry. However, realizing that he lived his own childhood in the 80s, Oz indicated that it was impossible to compare things now with what they would have been back then. The changes brought by the Internet have made "international" a starting point, "the default" position in any business. One interesting point was that though his poker career had been global by default, for Oz, traveling was never in itself a large part of the deal: “I think if I had started to travel, it would have been addictive in many ways.”

It was clear that Oz had found a career in which he was not just doing something for a living. His motivation was the passion for the game:

> In poker they call it “investment in loss,” meaning how much we are able to invest in the losing and learning process in the game, in everything, including in life. I realized I was doing something that I loved tremendously. I believed I could break through at some point and I was willing to accept quite a lot of loss, in that I could learn from it at some point.

Showing admiration for internationally known entrepreneurs, such as Elon Musk[1] and Richard Branson,[2] Oz talked about the positive “delusion” he would foster in being an entrepreneur. One’s belief may not really correlate with the present or “what is,” but the positive illusions of “what could be”: “It’s really interesting how many entrepreneurs want to live out of that. That they can dream big. [—] in a way, when we look at people who have succeeded in life, as measured in many ways, it is dependent on your values, what you see as valuable.”

Oz’s narration included the experience of an intellectually challenging childhood (family debates), being attracted to competition (playing games from an early age), and being intensively engaged in an environment of personal risk-taking, plus the emotional involvement associated with it (online poker). All in all, his narration emphasized the importance of a “delusional” mentality, plus an understanding of emotions as the basis for people’s behavior in start-up venturing. Containing plentiful metaphors from the poker and sports world, references to successful entrepreneurs, and mention of phenomena in the natural sciences, his narrative stressed his “positively delusional” outlook on the future, together with philosophical attributions regarding his engagement with entrepreneurship. Oz’s story, incorporating notions of both nature and nurture, aptly illustrated how personality, upbringing, personal behavioral choices (e.g., resisting addictive environments), and decisions on education had all affected the behavior that unfolded in the narrative.

The eclectic script: Transforming behavior, initiating change

In the eclectic script, many of the founders were both eager to and able to learn, with a strong willingness to be transformative in the dynamic and changing international business context. In addition to an internal motivation to initiate and to work diligently for the next big thing, these founders were reflexive persons, willing to reflect on and re-interpret their interaction with their (social) environment on the way. Manifesting a profound sense of one’s own self—but also the ability to challenge assumptions following feedback from others—an eclectic script seems to give people possibilities to adopt a myriad of approaches within the complexity of IE.

[1] Elon Musk is the founder-CEO of SpaceX, co-founder and CEO of Tesla Inc., and co-founder and CEO of Neuralink.

[2] Richard Branson is the founder of the Virgin Group.

Joe is the founder of a company that develops software solutions for education modeling. His narrative could be seen more or less as a hybrid version of the behavioral elements found in the four narratives mentioned previously. In general, the path to international entrepreneurship had been paved with both challenges and beneficial events that had affected his views on how he saw things coming together.

Born into a fairly small town, Joe was only 16 when he moved on his own to a larger town. Joe's narration on his youth was marked by independence from early on. Making sense of his personality now, Joe thought that he had found a good fit between his autonomous behavior and the work he was doing.

In recounting more details of his youth, Joe made sense of himself as a person who always wanted to come up with something that no one would have expected: "I've always been like that, I get bored, I need to do something new. Change something, start something totally new. It marks my actions a lot. I'm the kind of person who wants to try out things. [—] I did things no one was expecting. Good and not so good."

In line with this (here, resembling the pioneer script of doing something novel, and also the native script in terms of the desire to do something personally meaningful), Joe saw himself as an initiator, with the drive to create something new. On the other hand, he described himself as being the kind of person with a fearless attitude towards the things he had decided to do. New challenges, embedded in uncertainty, had become one of the main drivers of his actions. Here, he manifested a resemblance to the gambler script:

> I think actually, that quite many of those who have succeeded in growing something big, have something wrong in their head too. They don't think like other people. It's some kind of fearless orientation, or maybe it's just stupidity, I don't know, but it's the kind of thing that means you are not afraid. If you don't think about it too long, you may actually get something done.

The internal drive of to try out new things led Joe to set up a small two-person IT-support firm with a friend, while they were finalizing their engineering degrees. It was something that he was really enthusiastic about. In the manner of a native, Joe had grown up in a generation that enjoyed the increasing availability of information technology, forming the foundations for digitalization. After graduation, Joe and a couple of his friends could not find jobs in their home town: "We decided to do things differently, to found a company and sell our own thing. [—] We didn't want to move from home. [—] There were four of us. One left during the first year, because he couldn't handle the pressure of not knowing if there was money coming in or not."

Becoming aware that surrounding companies, founded locally, had survived, and were striving internationally, Joe gained the confidence to start venturing. He perceived that one could do global business with a local attachment. From this realization, "international" emerged as a self-evident dimension to his venturing: "I saw that there were other international firms, successful IT firms who had made it, so why not us. One local company in particular was a great inspiration. [—] When I saw that, I was like, why not. They're no different from us, the same kind of guys, and they have made it in the world."

Referring to having played with a cousin who had a different national heritage as a kid, Joe did not consider being international as something extraordinary. Rather, it was just something that had to be understood: "I've always thought that people are equal and the same, but they're different because they've been born into a different culture and stuff."

In addition, Joe's contextual embeddedness intertwined with his growing ability to navigate between different managerial perceptions, thus following a diplomat script. In broad terms, Joe's narration indicated his willingness to transform and adapt as needed in his IE journey. In learning to lead a rapidly internationalizing firm, he had formed a strengthened understanding of himself, the international (business) environment he was working in, and the people he was leading. Manifesting traits similar to Per's motivation to understand, help, and serve the people around him, and to connect with people of different backgrounds, Joe reflected on in his willingness to learn, and to analyze how to lead an international firm better: "You cannot blindly lead this kind of a company. It's not the kind of old-school management like in a metal shop. You have to create personal relationships with key people, and they need to trust you, and you them." In addition, bound up with Joe's social context of IE venturing, he had friends with similar job positions. Thus, he could reflect on phenomena behind and beyond the daily issues he was encountering in business.

Another behavioral aspect of the script, as revealed in Joe's narrative, was his tendency to make fairly rapid decisions. This became apparent in his reflections on both himself and the firm. Joe's preference for quick decision-making seemed to be driven by a deep tendency to become "bored," to need change: "That boredom has driven me further. [—] Two, three years and we change something. [—] It's probably one of the things that it demands, you have to be able to constantly change. If you don't like change, you shouldn't be doing this." At the same time, Joe described himself as having something of an attention deficit disorder,[3] since his way to get things done was to have too much going on at the same time. This gave him the right amount of pressure to complete the tasks at hand.

On the other hand, Joe said that he did not like surprises. Hence, he constantly considered "worst case scenarios" to deal with feelings of uncertainty. In some respects one can relate this to the Gambler script, which involves keen observance of the possible reactions of others. It is interesting that in making sense of the global landscape of his business, and the implications for his work, Joe found it hard just to settle for what he has achieved. Again, as in the Gambler script, Joe's attitude showed a certain degree of "positive delusion," insofar as there was always something more to conquer on his IE journey: "A person has climbed to the top of the mountain, but then, he's not at all excited about the fact that he's up there. He's just thinking "what should I do next?" There is always something [—] will not even take a cup of coffee to celebrate it, instead I'm already thinking of the next big thing."

[3] Attention deficit disorder (ADD) is a developmental disorder that is often marked by persistent symptoms of inattention or by symptoms of hyperactivity and impulsivity, or by symptoms of all three. It is not caused by any serious underlying physical or mental disorder.

An eclectic reading of the scripts for international entrepreneurial behavior

Identification of a Pioneer, Diplomat, Native, Gambler, or an Eclectic script leads to a multi-faceted perspective on what it is to *be* an international entrepreneur. The scripts shed light on individuals' interpretations of the essence in IE behavior. Figure 2 sets out a comparative framework for the five scripts, providing an overview of their strengths, plus situations that pose challenges for the individual who follows such a script. We also identify certain learning points that are crucial for each international entrepreneurial actor.

Overall, with regard to what it means to be an international entrepreneur, the five scripts show both an internal orientation (as with Oz, in following his internal "delusional" attitude towards executing new ideas) and an external orientation (as with Joe, in having to adjust his managerial approaches when his staff extends beyond borders). To some extent, all of the five scripts reflect IE behavior manifesting an internal drive to take on challenges, to seek freedom in working, to utilize one's knowledge, and to adjust or align behavior according to different (social) contexts. All of the scripts contain various similarities and differences.

The Gambler script prioritizes making one's mark in a bold, daring international venture, while doing the things one enjoys most within a value-driven, independent quest to put one's personal experiences and understandings to good use. In a similar way, the Pioneer script manifests motivation by large deeds, perhaps done in an altruistic way, helping one's "followers" to venture into a better world. A Pioneer develops a proactive and visionary identity in pursuing international and entrepreneurial opportunities. A Gambler, on the other hand, finds a thrill in setting "delusional" goals, forecasting the future, and making reactive intellectual guesses about different environments—in other words, the Gambler interprets his/her own reactions and those of others, in specific situations where people come from different backgrounds.

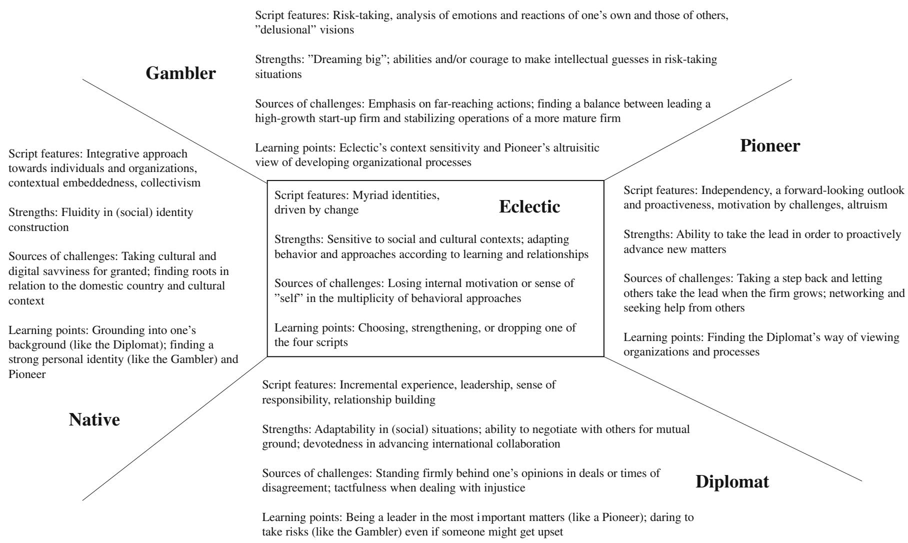


Fig. 2 Comparing the five scripts of international entrepreneurial behavior

In comparison to the Pioneer script, the Diplomat script, too, demonstrates a strong motivation to advance and develop international business, and utilize personal knowledge for the common good in the matter. However, one can see a Diplomat's approach to leadership and international relations as involving matters for negotiation in dialog, whereas the Pioneer is a "spearhead" for actions, in other words the person showing the way. If one adheres more to a Diplomat script, one will devotedly advance international collaboration, showing sensitivity and tact when dealing with others. Correspondingly, one who is drawn to the Pioneer script could perhaps learn ways of approaching people and organizations from a different culture in a more diplomatic manner—even while maintaining elements of straightforward pioneering behavior. Then again, in contrast to a Diplomat, who emphasizes the developing nature of international inclusiveness and leadership, a Native will pursue the IE journey as a natural path, based on an internalized entrepreneurial mindset and an inherent multi-cultural identity.

A founder with a Diplomat script may face difficulties in holding to a firm position in relation to other actors in the venturing processes. By contrast, a founder with a Gambler or a Pioneer script may find difficulties in taking a step back with their competitive visions, letting others take action when a firm grows or when they could profitably seek help from others. There are challenges in the Native script and possibly in the Eclectic script also, in that one may not truly identify with anything, or with any career. The dynamic working contexts may appear too complex to grasp, and there may be increasingly numerous options and venturing possibilities. All this could result in too many contradicting identities, or in no identity at all—producing internal chaos, and, at worst, burnout.

Interpreting the contextual underpinnings of behavioral scripts

Modern life has elements that are more or less irreversible. These involve the exponential development of technology and disruptive innovations, multi-cultural environments as default situations (i.e., in families, schools, workplaces), and the requirements for current generations to pursue an (international) entrepreneurial career in times of increasing uncertainty. The most intriguing differences in the scripts relate to developmental experiences pertaining to particular contexts.

The Pioneer script seems to be constructed over time in relation to developmental experiences in relation to historically bound contexts (i.e., ideological, political, economic, or cultural contexts) which represent certain broader agendas for behavior in a society. A founder following a Pioneer script will have developed a strong sense of the "self" in the context of international business (whether through "naivety" or through overall stability in the self-assessment of who the person is). He/she is able to operationalize personal visions without doubts encroaching from external voices (notably those of colleagues, business networks, gendered discussions).

The Native script seems to involve assumptions stemming from generational embeddedness (in a multi-cultural family, in the digitalization of business, in a contemporary working culture). Through such embeddedness, the person has developed certain IE behavioral tendencies. Persons with a Native cognitive script do not need to specifically identify with being either "international" or entrepreneurial. They take these phenomena as self-evident in the contemporary global business context. Becoming a Native in IE actually expresses a sense of freedom in constructing a global identity within the modern international business environment—an identity that is perhaps less and less fixed to any particular context or country.

The Gambler script stresses the "emotional context" of one's sense-making, with behavior being related to affective experiences. The founders of risk-taking small firms who follow a Gambler script have the advantage of an emotional affect grounded in a rapid start-up scene. Within this context, emotionally intelligent founders can attract investors who seek innovative courses of action; these may themselves be "delusional" entrepreneurs, seeking to revolutionize the world.

The Diplomat script seems to involve making sense of social interactions. Hence, the dialogical approach within a Diplomat script favors learning from interaction-oriented challenges, such as the culturally and socially diverse situations IE inevitably imposes on founder-CEOs. Such a script serves as a guidepost for customizing approaches in dealing with international business networks. It also encourages moderation in entrepreneurial opportunities.

All the scripts have certain beneficial aspects. Nevertheless, given fluctuations in trends, the emergence of disruptive innovations, and the necessity of internationalization, "hybrid" scripts have considerable advantages. They favor adaptability to change, with possibilities to adjust approaches to the varying demands of IE over time. Hence, in preference to internalizing any one fixed type of behavior or identity, there are good reasons to pursue dynamism in identity work, generating novel understandings of the "cycle of interactions with elements of the surrounding environment" (Randerson 2016: 582).

Discussion and conclusions

This study examined the life narratives of founder-CEOs, seeking to explore the developmental experiences which, over time (Krueger 2007), feed into the IE behavior of international entrepreneurs. It showed how individuals engaged in the IE journey and constructed identities relative to becoming and being international entrepreneurs. With this in view, we have retreated from viewing IE behavior as a firm-level construct (Miller 2011), reinterpreting what it means to be an international entrepreneur, and whence IE behaviors originate. Hence, considering entrepreneurship to be the product of how entrepreneurs make sense of the world (Steyaert and Katz 2004; van Burg and Romme 2014), and seeking to bridge various dimensions of the phenomenon (Gartner et al. 1992; Randerson 2016), we embarked on an exploration of the developmental experiences of founders (Gioia and Manz 1985; Jones and Casulli 2014; Krueger 2007).

Via the eclectic readings of our findings, we contribute to IE literature on individual-level IE behavior (Coviello 2015; Nielsen and Lassen 2012; Prashantham et al. 2019; Sarasvathy et al. 2014) in a number of ways. Via our interpretation of a Pioneer script, we argue that exploration of the developmental experiences of founders leads to recognition of the role of different historically bound contexts (ideological, political, or cultural discussions within society) in IE behavior. These contexts affect the processes of becoming an international entrepreneur, subsequent identities, and actions taken. We point to individuals who have developed a strong sense of self by following a Pioneer script and have gained a corresponding identity (i.e., persistency). This has stood them in good in unfavorable contexts (such as being a woman in a male-dominated business field) or in launching a career in an externally uncertain situation (such as during economic recession). The Pioneer script has made them more autonomous, unheeding of external voices that would seek to discourage their personal aspirations on the IE journey.

The Native script adds to our understanding of the generational contexts that certain IE behaviors and identities stem from. According to our interpretation of the Native script, we suggest that by looking at the generational context (such as the current one), we can better understand why some are savvier than others in navigating the global business environment right from the word go. Having the advantage of being more, e.g., culturally savvy, or being a native of the rapidly digitalizing world (Palfrey and Gasser 2011), individuals with a Native script manifest embeddedness in their generations.

The Diplomat script in particular illuminates the role of social interaction and networks (Evers and O'Gorman 2011; Ellis 2011) in IE developmental experiences. In our interpretation of the script, we draw attention to international entrepreneurs being on a socially constructed IE journey. Within it, individuals make sense of their identities—identities are formed under the influence of their international relationships, the meaningful people around them, and the effects of their own behaviors on those relationships. As we see in the narrative data, a Diplomat script adds to our knowledge of how certain experiences (such as getting help from others) develop a genuine serving attitude and influence the development of individual IE behavior and eventually the firm (e.g., when one becomes a mentor or sets up a consultancy business).

From our reading of the Gambler script, we suggest that the behavior of international entrepreneurs may be developed through experiences that are emotionally affective. An emotion-oriented perspective is helpful in recognizing the developmental experiences of founder-CEOs with a tendency to take risks, plus a drive to compete and achieve big outcomes. One can say that emotional factors are the key to their underlying motivations, and to the logics behind their risk-taking. However, as revealed in the Gambler script, success is not just a matter of big gains; it also involves learning the game in terms of human nature and testing one's own abilities to handle stress in situations of uncertainty. Hence, going beyond common views of international entrepreneurs as "mere" risk-takers and high achievers, we would argue that it is crucial to see founders as emotional—as much as analytical—actors with dispassionate ways of handling their own (genuine) emotions, and those of others. These factors are pre-eminent in their venturing over time and form the background to their behaviors in their IE ventures.

The study also addressed the importance of studying the founders' sense-making and identity construction as the undercurrent for IE behavior (Coviello 2015; Hannibal 2017; Jones and Casulli 2014; Sarasvathy et al. 2014). Accordingly, it sheds light on how, within IE, the "I" (both international- and identity-related) becomes manifested at different times and through different contexts (Buttriss and Wilkinson 2007) for individual experiences. At the individual level, as perceived through a life-narrative perspective, IE is a story, manifesting the very essence of becoming an international actor on the IE journey. The individual's IE identity—plus related behavioral orientations, attitudes, intentions, and self-efficacy in building an *international* self as an entrepreneur—evolves over time and definitely continues to evolve. The evolution is based on meaningful experiences such as interactions with people from different international backgrounds (as with the

Diplomat), the "historical" timing of an international employment relationship (the Pioneer), emotional arousal from global scale events and phenomena (the Gambler), or generational transitions (the Native).

According to our interpretations, IE behaviors are interpreted in relation to events, actions, and personal self-efficacy within the social and cultural contexts in which the behavior takes place. The result is that founders have different (experience-bound) perceptions of their own motivations, orientations, and capabilities when addressing different contexts relative to their IE journey, and responding to the demands these contexts have posed on them as individuals. For example, following through a Pioneer script, visionary ideas and personal persistency are motivating features when overcoming various challenges. In the Diplomat script, one's people-orientation stresses importance to act as an arbiter between people from different cultures, whereas, in the Gambler script, one has developed capabilities to read the reactions of others and to handle one's own emotions during the IE journey. Hence, individuals seem to define their international entrepreneurial identities (and related behavior) by means of their earlier experiences and to adjust them according to what they draw from these experiences, personally.

Considering possible limitations, related in part to the novel aspects of our narrative approach to IE, we suggest that future research directions should follow up by (a) looking in greater depth at the individual scripts and their broader implications; (b) making cross-cultural (or industry) comparisons between narrative scripts and founder-level identity constructions (involving the assumptions and beliefs that such identities embody), plus the different contexts (institutional, political) in which they emerge; and (c) looking in even greater depth at the "international" aspects in the process. This could involve looking more specifically, and, also longitudinally, at the emergence and development of the individuals' own internationalization. Furthermore, adding to another interesting research path involving the significance of (prior) social interactions of international entrepreneurs (e.g., Nowiński and Rialp 2016), one could pay more attention to the experiences of founding team members and the different narrative scripts they follow in their identity constructions (e.g., from experiences of being of different ages and nationalities and with differing expertise and education). Accordingly, there could be further exploration on the interpersonal relationships (involving the interaction of different identities and scripts) that could enable, develop, or even deter IE processes. This would be of most relevance prior to and around the founding of an international venture.

Entrepreneurship literature has long advanced "grand narratives," facilitating a spread of beliefs in what entrepreneurship is, or perhaps should be (Rehn et al. 2013: 546). This kind of narration is also how the field and the practice acquire an "identity" (Rehn et al. 2013: 546). It is true that constructs of entrepreneurial behavior that stress objectivity may be useful to scholars and practitioners as useful devices for interpreting the performance of small, early-internationalized firms. Nevertheless, we could also take advantage of a complementary perspective, involving developmental experiences of internationalizing behavior. In addition, if we are aware that the stories we tell of IE can be either productive or destructive, either useful or disruptive (Rehn et al. 2013), we can learn how to become usefully self-reflexive, with beneficial outcomes for IE processes.

If we look at IE behaviors via scripts, we shall be able to not only to describe, but also to explore more deeply the beliefs of individuals (and perhaps societies) regarding who they are, who they should be, and how they should behave. We would argue that overall, there could perhaps be more variation in the public narration of IE (i.e., in the media and educational institutes). After all, the phenomenon can remain on a somewhat "out there" level, as perceived by the ordinary person, if the discussion remains at the firm-level, employing only numbers and "faceless" performance indicators. Moreover, we suggest that educators should become aware of which scripts in IE are constructive, contributing to the developmental processes of (potential) international entrepreneurs, and which scripts might gradually move development in a disruptive direction. An aim in this would be to develop reflective practices and reflexivity among those who will educate new generations of (international) entrepreneurs, and among consultants to ventures that are seeking to internationalize. In pursuing this aim, we would seek to help individuals to keep their personal mental constructions of IE scripts open and accessible to new meanings—meanings perceivable in the ongoing sense-making of international entrepreneurial processes, or outcomes.

In discussing one's personal narrative, and the development of personally meaningful behavior, one can be defined, challenged, or empowered by the experiences one has gone through. Hence, we would encourage international entrepreneurs to explore and become aware of the underlying guiding scripts in their thinking, behavior, and even emotional responses to certain situations. The situations might involve, e.g., rapid growth or a new country context, and the responses might involve, e.g., uncertainty or over-rapid rejection of ideas.

Our study suggests that certain beliefs regarding the self, and certain interpretations of social surroundings, may hinder (potential) international entrepreneurs' willingness to take on certain risks, to invite an investor onboard, or to continue with an international business partner. On the other hand, there can be certain deeply-rooted beliefs regarding the self, plus early-developed scripts (such as engagement in cultural interaction) that may anchor one's behavior in something profoundly personal, even if everything else (e.g., the work role and the country context) changes over time. All in all, the above-mentioned scripts may serve as analytical windows to founders, shedding light on their behavior relative to IE.

In our data, retrospection of the past drew autobiographical elements from various challenging, rewarding, and incomplete experiences. These included, for example, a multi-cultural family background and exposure to several languages, traveling experiences as a child, expatriation, and subsequent reorientation in a home country, changing family settings, and other meaningful life events. All such events can feed into one's identity construction in IE. It may be helpful to founder-CEOs to go over their IE journeys, in other words, to give them authorship of their own IE narrative. In this way, they may develop a sense of who they are in relation to the IE phenomenon and, in so doing, gain a new understanding of their own behavior.

Acknowledgements The authors acknowledge the insightful comments that Lecturer Teppo Sintonen at the University of Jyväskylä and Professor Ulla Hytti at the University of Turku have provided for this study. The work was generously and kindly supported by the Foundation for Economic Education in Finland and the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

Funding Information Open access funding provided by LUT University.

References

Acedo FJ, Jones MV (2007) Speed of internationalization and entrepreneurial cognition: insights and a comparison between international new ventures, exporters and domestic firms. J World Bus 42(3):236–252. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2007.04.012

Autio E (2005) Creative tension: the significance of Ben Oviatt's and Patricia McDougall's article 'toward a theory of international new ventures.'. J Int Bus Stud 36(1):9–19. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8400117

Baker T, Welter F (2018) Contextual entrepreneurship: an interdisciplinary perspective. Foundations and Trends® in Entrepreneurship 14(4):357–426. https://doi.org/10.1561/0300000078

Bandura A (2006) Toward a psychology of human agency. Perspect Psychol Sci 1(2):164–180. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6916.2006.00011.x

Birch M, Miller T (2000) Inviting intimacy: the interview as therapeutic opportunity. Int J Soc Res Methodol 3(3):189–202. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570050083689

Boland RJ, Tenkasi RV (1995) Perspective making and perspective taking in communities of knowing. Organ Sci 6(4):350–372. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.6.4.350

Brown AD, Stacey P, Nandhakumar J (2008) Making sense of sensemaking narratives. Hum Relat 61(8): 1035–1062. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726708094858

Bruner J (1995) The autobiographical process. Curr Sociol 43(2):161–177

Butler JE, Doktor R, Lins FA (2010) Linking international entrepreneurship to uncertainty, opportunity discovery, and cognition. J Int Entrep 8(2):121–134. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-010-0054-x

Buttriss GJ, Wilkinson IF (2007) Using narrative sequence methods to advance international entrepreneurship theory. J Int Entrep 4(4):157–174. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-007-0012-4

Byrne O, Shepherd DA (2015) Different strokes for different folks: entrepreneurial narratives of emotion, cognition, and making sense of business failure. Enterp Theory Pract 39(2):375–405. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12046

Carsrud AL, Johnson RW (1989) Entrepreneurship: a social psychological perspective. Entrep Reg Dev 1(1): 21–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985628900000003

Coombs JE, Sadrieh F, Annavarjula M (2009) Two decades of international entrepreneurship research: what have we learned–where do we go from here? Int J Entrep 13(1):23–64

Coviello NE (2015) Re-thinking research on born globals. J Int Bus Stud 46(1):17–26. https://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2014.59

Coviello NE, Jones MV (2004) Methodological issues in international entrepreneurship research. J Bus Ventur 19(4):485–508. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2003.06.001

Coviello NE, McDougall PP, Oviatt BM (2011) The emergence, advance and future of international entrepreneurship research—an introduction to the special forum. J Bus Ventur 26(6):625–631. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2011.07.002

Covin JG, Miller D (2014) International entrepreneurial orientation: conceptual considerations, research themes, measurement issues, and future research directions. Enterp Theory Pract 38(1):11–44. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12027

Covin JG, Wales WJ (2012) The measurement of entrepreneurial orientation. Enterp Theory Pract 36(4):677–702. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2010.00432.x

De Clercq DD, Sapienza HJ, Crijns H (2005) The internationalization of small and medium-sized firms. Small Bus Econ 24(4):409–419. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-005-5333-x

Dehghanpour Farashah A (2015) The effects of demographic, cognitive and institutional factors on development of entrepreneurial intention: toward a socio-cognitive model of entrepreneurial career. J Int Entrep 13(4):452–476. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-015-0144-x

Delios A (2017) The death and rebirth (?) of international business research. J Manag Stud 54(3):391–397. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12222
Ellis PD (2011) Social ties and international entrepreneurship: opportunities and constraints affecting firm internationalization. J Int Bus Stud 42(1):99–127. https://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2010.20
Evers N, O'Gorman C (2011) Improvised internationalization in new ventures: the role of prior knowledge and networks. Entrep Reg Dev 23(7–8):549–574. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985621003690299
Fauchart E, Gruber M (2011) Darwinians, communitarians, and missionaries: the role of founder identity in entrepreneurship. Acad Manag J 54(5):935–957. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.0211
Fayolle A, Landstrom H, Gartner WB, Berglund K (2016) The institutionalization of entrepreneurship. Entrep Reg Dev 28(7–8):477–486. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1221227
Fletcher D (2007) 'Toy story': the narrative world of entrepreneurship and the creation of interpretive communities. J Bus Ventur 22(5):649–672. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2006.10.001
Gartner WB (1988) 'Who is an entrepreneur?' Is the wrong question. American Journal of Small Business 12(4):11–32. https://doi.org/10.1177/104225878801200401
Gartner WB, Bird BJ, Starr JA (1992) Acting as if: differentiating entrepreneurial from organizational behavior. Enterp Theory Pract 16(3):13–32. https://doi.org/10.1177/104225879201600302
Gioia DA, Manz CC (1985) Linking cognition and behavior: a script processing interpretation of vicarious learning. Acad Man Rev 10(3):527–539
Grégoire DA, Corbett AC, McMullen JS (2011) The cognitive perspective in entrepreneurship: an agenda for future research. J Manag Stud 48(6):1443–1477. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2010.00922.x
Hannibal M (2017) Enacted identities in the university spin-off process—bridging an imaginative gap. J Int Entrep 15(3):239–265. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-016-0168-x
Hannibal M, Evers N, Servais P (2016) Opportunity recognition and international new venture creation in university spin-offs—cases from Denmark and Ireland. J Int Entrep 14(3):345–372. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-016-0181-0
Hendry PM (2007) The future of narrative. Qual Inq 13(4):487–498. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800406297673
Hiles D, Cermák I (2008) Narrative psychology. In: The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology, pp 147–164
Hisrich R, Langan-Fox J, Grant S (2007) Entrepreneurship research and practice: a call to action for psychology. Am Psychol 62(6):575–589. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.6.575
Hollway W (1997) Eliciting narrative through the in-depth interview. Qual Inq 3(1):53–70
Hytti U (2005) New meanings for entrepreneurs: from risk-taking heroes to safe-seeking professionals. J Organ Chang Manag 18(6):594–611. https://doi.org/10.1108/09534810510628521
Joardar A, Wu S (2011) Examining the dual forces of individual entrepreneurial orientation and liability of foreignness on international entrepreneurs. Can J Adm Sci 28(3):328–340. https://doi.org/10.1002/cjas.203
Johansson AW (2004) Narrating the entrepreneur. Int Small Bus J 22(3):273–293. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242604042379
Jones MV, Casulli L (2014) International entrepreneurship: exploring the logic and utility of individual experience through comparative reasoning approaches. Enterp Theory Pract 38(1):45–69. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12060
Jones MV, Coviello NE (2005) Internationalisation: conceptualising an entrepreneurial process of behaviour in time. J Int Bus Stud 36(3):284–303. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8400138
Jones R, Latham J, Betta M (2008) Narrative construction of the social entrepreneurial identity. Int J Entrep Behav Res 14(5):330–345 https://doi.org/10.1108/13552550810897687
Jones MV, Coviello NE, Tang YK (2011) International entrepreneurship research (1989–2009): a domain ontology and thematic analysis. J Bus Ventur 26(6):632–659. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2011.04.001
Karp T (2006) The inner entrepreneur: a constructivistic view of entrepreneurial reality construction. J Chang Manag 6(3):291–304. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697010600876864
Keupp MM, Gassmann O (2009) The past and the future of international entrepreneurship: a review and suggestions for developing the field. J Manag 35(3):600–633. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308330558
Kirzner IM (1997) Entrepreneurial discovery and the competitive market process: an Austrian approach. J Econ Lit XXXV
Knight GA, Liesch PW (2016) Internationalization: from incremental to born global. J World Bus 51(1):93–102. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2015.08.011

Krueger NF (2007) What lies beneath? The experiential essence of entrepreneurial thinking. Enterp Theory Pract 31(1):123–138
Labov W (2013) The language of life and death: the transformation of experience in oral narrative. Cambridge University Press
Lehto I (2015) International entrepreneurial selling as construction of international opportunities. J Int Entrep 13(3):277–302. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-015-0147-7
Leitch CM, Harrison RT (2016) Identity, identity formation and identity work in entrepreneurship: conceptual developments and empirical applications. Entrep Reg Dev 28(3–4):177–190. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1155740
Lieblich A, Tuval-Mashiach R, Zilber T (1998) Narrative research: reading, analysis, and interpretation, vol 47. Sage
Linstead A, Thomas R (2002) "What Do You Want from Me?" A aoststructuralist feminist reading of middle managers' identities. Cult Organ 8(1):1-20
Lumpkin GT, Dess GG (1996) Clarifying the entrepreneurial orientation construct and linking it to performance. Acad Man Rev 21(1):135. https://doi.org/10.2307/258632
Lumpkin GT, Cogliser CC, Schneider DR (2009) Understanding and measuring autonomy: an entrepreneurial orientation perspective. Enterp Theory Pract 33(1):47–69. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2008.00280.x
McAdams DP (2006) The role of narrative in personality psychology today. Narrat Inq 16
McAdams DP (2008) Personal narratives and the life story. In: John O, Robins R, Pervin L (eds) Handbook of personality: theory and research, 3rd edn. Guilford Press, New York, pp 242–262
McAdams DP (2013) The psychological self as actor, agent, and author. Perspect Psychol Sci 8(3):272–295. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691612464657
McAdams DP, McLean KC (2013) Narrative identity. Curr Dir Psychol Sci 22(3):233–238. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721413475622
McDougall PP, Shane S, Oviatt BM (1994) Explaining the formation of international new ventures: the limits of theories from international business research. J Bus Ventur 9(6):469–487. https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9026(94)90017-5
McDougall-Covin P, Jones MV, Serapio MG (2014) High-potential concepts, phenomena, and theories for the advancement of international entrepreneurship research. Enterp Theory Pract 38(1):1–10. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12090
McGaughey SL (2007) Hidden ties in international new venturing: the case of portfolio entrepreneurship. J World Bus 42(3):307–321. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2007.04.011
McMullen JS, Dimov D (2013) Time and the entrepreneurial journey: the problems and promise of studying entrepreneurship as a process. J Manag Stud 50(8):1481–1512. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12049
Miller D (2011) Miller (1983) revisited: a reflection on EO research and some suggestions for the future. Enterp Theory Pract 35(5):873–894. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2011.00457.x
Mills CE, Pawson K (2006) Enterprising talk: a case of self construction. Int J Entrep Behav Res 12(6):328–344. https://doi.org/10.1108/13552550610710135
Moroz PW, Hindle K (2012) Entrepreneurship as a process: toward harmonizing multiple perspectives. Enterp Theory Pract 36(4):781–818. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2011.00452.x
Morris MH, Kuratko DF, Schindehutte M, Spivack AJ (2012) Framing the entrepreneurial experience. Enterp Theory Pract 36(1):11–40. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2011.00471.x
Nielsen SL, Lassen AH (2012) Identity in entrepreneurship effectuation theory: a supplementary framework. Int Entrep Manag J 8(3):373–389. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-011-0180-5
Nowiński W, Rialp A (2016) The impact of social networks on perceptions of international opportunities. J Small Bus Manag 54(2):445–461. https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12149
Oviatt BM, McDougall PP (1994) Toward a theory of international new ventures. J Int Bus Stud 25(1):45–64
Oviatt BM, McDougall PP (2005a) The internationalization of entrepreneurship. J Int Bus Stud 36(1):2–8
Oviatt BM, McDougall PP (2005b) Defining international entrepreneurship and modeling the speed of internationalization. Enterp Theory Pract 29(5):537–554. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2005.00097.x
Palfrey J, Gasser U (2011) Born digital: understanding the first generation of digital natives. Basic Books, New York
Peiris IK, Akoorie ME, Sinha P (2012) International entrepreneurship: a critical analysis of studies in the past two decades and future directions for research. J Int Entrep 10(4):279–324. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-012-0096-3
Polkinghorne DE (1988) Narrative knowing and the human sciences. Suny Press

Prashantham S, Kumar K, Bhagavatula S, Sarasvathy SD (2019) Effectuation, network-building and internationalisation speed. Int Small Bus J 37(1):3–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242618796145
Randerson K (2016) Entrepreneurial orientation: do we actually know as much as we think we do? Entrep Reg Dev 28(7–8):580–600. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1221230
Rasmussen ES, Koed Madsen T, Evangelista F (2001) The founding of the Born Global company in Denmark and Australia: sensemaking and networking. Asia Pac J Mark Logist 13(3):75–107. https://doi.org/10.1108/13555850110764793
Rehn A, Brännback M, Carsrud A, Lindahl M (2013) Challenging the myths of entrepreneurship? Entrep Reg Dev 25(7–8):543–551. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2013.818846
Reuber AR, Knight GA, Liesch PW, Zhou L (2018) International entrepreneurship: the pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities across national borders. J Int Bus Stud 49(4):395–406. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-018-0149-5
Ricoeur P (1991) Narrative identity. Philos Today 35(1):73–81
Riessman CK (1993) Narrative analysis, vol 30. Sage
Rosenthal G (1993) Reconstruction of life stories: principles of selection in generating stories for narrative biographical interviews. The Narrative Study of Lives 1(1):59–91
Sarasvathy SD (2001) Causation and effectuation: toward a theoretical shift from economic inevitability to entrepreneurial contingency. Acad Man Rev 26(2):243–263
Sarasvathy SD, Kumar K, York JG, Bhagavatula S (2014) An effectual approach to international entrepreneurship: overlaps, challenges, and provocative possibilities. Enterp Theory Pract 38(1):71–93. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12088
Schumpeter JA (1934) Change and the entrepreneur. In: Essays of J. A. Schumpeter
Selden PD, Fletcher DE (2015) The entrepreneurial journey as an emergent hierarchical system of artifact-creating processes. J Bus Ventur 30(4):603–615. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2014.09.002
Shane S, Locke EA, Collins CJ (2003) Entrepreneurial motivation. Hum Resour Manag Rev 13(2):257–279. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822(03)00017-2
Sommer L, Haug M (2011) Intention as a cognitive antecedent to international entrepreneurship—understanding the moderating roles of knowledge and experience. Int Entrep Manag J 7(1):111–142. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-010-0162-z
Stewart WH, Watson WE, Carland JC, Carland JW (1999) A proclivity for entrepreneurship. J Bus Ventur 14(2):189–214. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026(97)00070-0
Steyaert C (1997) A qualitative methodology for process studies of entrepreneurship. Int Stud Manag Organ 27(3):13–33. https://doi.org/10.1080/00208825.1997.11656711
Steyaert C (2007) 'Entrepreneuring' as a conceptual attractor? A review of process theories in 20 years of entrepreneurship studies. Entrep Reg Dev 19(6):453–477. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985620701671759
Steyaert C, Katz J (2004) Reclaiming the space of entrepreneurship in society: geographical, discursive and social dimensions. Entrep Reg Dev 16(3):179–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/0898562042000197135
van Burg E, Romme AG (2014) Creating the future together: toward a framework for research synthesis in entrepreneurship. Enterp Theory Pract 38(2):369–397. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12092
Watson TJ (2009) Narrative, life story and manager identity: a case study in autobiographical identity work. Hum Relat 62(3):425–452. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726708101044
Weaver MK, Dickson PH, Gibson B, Turner A (2002) Being uncertain: the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and environmental uncertainty. Journal of Enterprising Culture 10(2):87–105
Weick KE (1995) Sensemaking in organizations. Sage, Thousand Oaks
Williams CC, Nadin SJ (2013) Beyond the entrepreneur as a heroic figurehead of capitalism: re-representing the lived practices of entrepreneurs. Entrep Reg Dev 25(7–8):552–568. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2013.814715
Yitshaki R, Kropp F (2016) Entrepreneurial passions and identities in different contexts: a comparison between high-tech and social entrepreneurs. Entrep Reg Dev 28(3–4):206–233. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1155743
Zahra SA, Randerson K, Fayolle F (2013) Corporate entrepreneurship: where are we? Where can we go from here? M@n@gement 16(4):357–361. https://doi.org/10.3917/mana.164.0357

Publication II

Korhonen, S. and Hannibal, M.

Boundarylessness and Boundaries in International Entrepreneurship Identity Work

Accepted for publication in the proceedings of the 44th European International Business Academy Conference in December 13–15, 2018, Poznań, Poland, through a double-blind peer review of the full paper.

(A revised version of the paper is currently in journal review process, 2nd round.)

Boundarylessness and Boundaries in International Entrepreneurship Identity Work

Satu Korhonen [a]
Martin Hannibal [b]

[a] *School of Business and Management, Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT, Lappeenranta, Finland;* [b] *Department of Marketing and Management, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark*

Abstract

Seminal research has positioned the founder as a key driver in the international entrepreneurship (IE) process. Yet, only a marginal proportion of IE research take point of departure with the individual international entrepreneur. As a reaction, our study advances the discussion of founders and their identity work in theorizing on IE processes by exploring the career experiences and sense-making of 13 international entrepreneurs. Moreover, by engaging with the career research discourse, we provide empirical basis for navigating the contemporary career outlook for international entrepreneurs. Our contribution is three-fold. Firstly, we apply the lens of "boundarylessness" to advance the discussion of individual-level entrepreneurship as a career to explore how founders' identity work and sense-making influence IE processes. Secondly, the intersection of career and IE research highlights the founder's international, entrepreneurial and other work-related experiences over time and their meaning for an individual in the context of IE. Consequently, our third contribution stems from our methodological approach: 'narrative sense-making' serves as a bridging element between the physical, social and psychological aspects related to the IE process and advances the analysis of both horizontal and vertical time dimensions of the phenomenon.

Keywords: international entrepreneurship, identity work, sense-making, boundarylessness

1 Introduction

Seminal research has positioned founders as key drivers in the IE process (Coviello, 2015; Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Keupp & Gassmann, 2009; Knight & Cavusgil, 1996; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Oviatt & McDougall, 2005; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). However, current research is dominated by firm-level studies internationalization patterns or speed, venture types or relative performance (Coombs, Sadrieh, & Annavarjula, 2009; Jones, Coviello, & Tang, 2011). Only a marginal proportion of the IE body of research take point of departure in approaches emphasizing the individual international entrepreneur (Coombs et al., 2009; Jones et al., 2011). In addition to this the conventional paths in entrepreneurship and international business research often delimit exploratory and novel approaches towards the phenomenon

(Coviello & Jones, 2004; Nummela & Welch, 2006). Due to these tendencies, there is a risk of overlooking alternate interpretations and framework (Hannibal, 2017; Jones et al., 2011; Nummela & Welch, 2006). Accordingly, extant literature calls for more research into the human agency (Hannibal, Evers, & Servais, 2016; Rasmussen, Hannibal, Lydriksen & Servais, 2009), experience and reasoning (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Zahra, Korri, & Yu, 2005) to achieve insight on the IE phenomenon.

In reacting to this call this study emphasize the founder(s) as key driver(s) in the IE process. This perspective has been gaining momentum from effectuation logic, where the process derives from founder's sense-making of who one is, what one knows and whom one knows (Sarasvathy, 2001; Sarasvathy, Kumar, York, & Bhagavatula, 2014). Following these current thoughts, we explore the founder's sense-making of the subjective experience of becoming and being an entrepreneur as a journey (McMullen & Dimov, 2013) in the context of time prior and during international venturing. In this perspective, the self is the cornerstone of understanding human cognition (Ochs & Capps, 1996), motivation and behaviour (Terry, Hogg, & White, 1999) and socialization (Adams & Marshall, 1996). The study provides insights on how meaning of IE as a career journey is constructed through individual's narrative *identity work* (Ibarra, 1999). Sense-making of identity (McAdams & McLean, 2013) have been raised as a fruitful element to describe IE as a process and the experience associated with being an international entrepreneur (Coviello, 2015; Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Hannibal, 2017; Nielsen & Lassen, 2012; Duening and Metzger, 2017). As such, Ibarra's (1999) seminal work provide a basis for escaping a static view of individual traits or personality correlations and allows a more processual and socially embedded understanding of the subjective side of becoming and being engaged in IE over time.

Thus, the purpose of the paper is to advance the discussion of founders' identity work (Ibarra, 1999) in theorizing on IE at the individual level by exploring *how is the meaning of international entrepreneurship as a career journey constructed through an individual's identity work.* To this end, we become engaged with the "new career" research and entrepreneurship discourse (Burton, Sørensen, & Dobrev, 2016; Hytti, 2010; Tams & Arthur, 2010) or more specifically the term "boundarylessness" in providing empirical basis for navigating the contemporary career outlook for international entrepreneurs.

Our contribution to literature is three-fold. Firstly, in exploring the 'becoming and being' an international entrepreneur, we advance the discussion of individual-level sense-making in the IE process (Rasmussen, Koed Madsen, and Evangelista 2001; Jones & Casulli, 2014). Secondly, with a career lens we are able to contribute to our understanding on how founders' identity work serves as the means of making sense of the IE journey. Thirdly, the intersection of career and IE research highlights "the unfolding sequence of person's work experiences over time" (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996: 30) and their meaning (Meijers, 1998) for an international entrepreneur. Through such an approach, we become aware of the manifestation of "boundarylessness" in IE as a career. Complementing the studies of firm-level processes that occupy the discussion of international entrepreneurial behaviour and cognition (e.g. Covin & Miller, 2014; Jones & Casulli, 2014), our methodological approach gives way of further advancing 'narrative sense-making' as a bridging element between the physical, social and psychological aspects related to the IE processes as they have been experienced by the 13 international entrepreneurs.

The outline of the paper is as follows. First, we provide an overview of the current status of the entrepreneur-level research in the IE domain. We move on to introduce and connect the theory complex *identity work* and *career* to research into the dynamic IE process. Subsequently, the methods section explicates our research design and our analytical approach. This is followed by our analysis of how identity work and interpretation of prior experience marks the process of ‘becoming and being’ an international entrepreneur. In the final sections, we conclude on our main findings and reflect on the potential value of the findings in terms of the future theorization and practise of IE.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 International entrepreneurship and the individual

Traditional IE research stems from the seminal work of Oviatt and McDougall (1994) and their research on early, rapidly and dynamically internationalizing small firms (Knight & Liesch, 2015; Oviatt & Mcdougall, 1994). From this position at the intersection of entrepreneurship and international business (IB) research, the field has evolved into a conceptually and empirically diverse domain over the last two or more decades (Keupp & Gassmann, 2009; McDougall & Oviatt, 2000).

During the past years, IE research has seen more process oriented, concerning international entrepreneurial dynamics of firms (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) and time (Coviello, 2006; Mathews & Zander, 2007), in acknowledging the dynamism of the phenomenon at hand. As a consequence of this, much IE research has a closer departure in "the discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities — across national borders" through focusing on "how, by whom, and with what effects those opportunities are acted upon" (Jones et al, 2011; Oviatt & McDougall, 2005).

Oviatt and MgDougall (1994) criticised the traditional view of internationalization (e.g. Johanson and Vahlne, 1977) theorizing for ignoring the individual-level analysis. Instead research into the IE phenomenon would benefit from focusing on the entrepreneur as the key driver of the international new venture creation process (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). This approach has been supported by seminal scholars in the field and the subsequent research has highlighted the founder’s influence in the firm-level internationalization process, behaviour and capabilities (Knight & Cavusgil, 1996; Andersson, 2000; Madsen & Servais, 1997). Overall, entrepreneurs have been present for their experiential knowledge (e.g. Andersson, 2002; Hutchinson, Alexander, Quinn, & Doherty, 2007), aspects of personal history (e.g. McGaughey, 2007) and individual characteristics and capabilities (e.g. Gupta & Fernandez, 2009; Lussier and Pfeifer, 2000).

Yet, according to Jones et al’s (2011) extensive literature review as well as more recent insights of the field (Coviello, 2015), entrepreneur-level studies in the IE domain remain limited in number. In 2011, only three from the body of 323 reviewed studies were focusing on the individual-level dynamics (Jones et al., 2011). These studies explored the influence of the entrepreneur’s international orientation on the firms’ degree of internationalization (Ruzzier, Antoncic, Hisrich, & Konecnik, 2007), portfolio entrepreneurs and their personal history (McGaughey, 2007), and the connection between the tacit knowledge and vision of entrepreneurial managers and their decision-making (Perks & Hughes, 2008). Accordingly, major IE researchers have since then stressed for a greater understanding and richer insight on "who the entrepreneurs driving these international ventures are" (Coviello, 2015: 23). Following such suggestions for drawing on concepts and theory from the entrepreneurship and psychology literatures into IE, the socialization and identity work underlying the internationalization process has emerged as a fruitful are of further research (Hannibal, 2017).

2.2 The founder making sense of transition into international entrepreneurship

Research on the entrepreneur is rooted in the seminal work of Schumpeter (1934) and Kirzner (1997), where entrepreneurial behavior and creativity are rooted in personal traits held by specially endowed and highly alert individuals. Over time the trait perspective on entrepreneurs and a more or less fixed personality and identity, has lost legitimacy (Hytti, 2010; Nielsen & Lassen, 2012; Stewart, Watson, Carland, & Carland, 1999; Williams & Nadin, 2013). Moreover, epistemological foundations of theories in entrepreneurship are often contrasted due to their departure from either the 'discovery approach' (Shane, 2000; Alvarez and Barney, 2010) or the 'effectuation approach' (Sarasvathy, 2001; Sarasvathy 2008). Whereas the discovery approach assumes objectivity in the entrepreneurship process and behavior (Venkataraman 1997; Casson, 2003; Alvarez and Barney, 2010), effectuation approach adopts a constructionist view of the process being integrative of the entrepreneur's identity, prior knowledge and networks (Sarasvathy, 2004; Hannibal, 2017).

Individual experience and the associated behaviour is recognized as central in understanding the process of international venturing (Jones et al., 2011; Oviatt, Maksimov & McDougall, 2011; Kyvik et al., 2013; Zahra et al., 2005). In addition, a recent study of the logics of reasoning of international entrepreneurs, Jones and Casulli (2014) highlight the importance of understanding the *process of how* individuals make sense and draw upon their prior experiences. This is echoed by Sarasvathy et al. (2014) in their suggestions of IE research to take further steps into *characterizing the entrepreneur as a holistic bundle and sense-maker of one's self-perception, experiences and social surroundings*. This perspective holds strong resemblance to Ibarra's (1999) seminal work focused on the analysis of 'identity work' and how possible selves are selected and rejected during career transition, introducing the process of constructing a (professional) identity. According to her initial and subsequent work (Ibarra, 1999; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), the process of identity work relates to a three-fold internally evolving sense-making task of adaptation entailing the observation of role models, experiments with provisional selves and evaluation of results according to internal standards and external feedback (Ibarra, 1999). Later on, Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) have called for more attention on the narrative sense-making of individuals, which aims to make a point of the narrator as it further enables individuals to manage their individual perceptions of themselves across organizational contexts. In general, exploring identity work serves as means of making sense of the sense-making of experiences in relation to one's identity recognition and development over time (Williams, 2000; Brown, 2015; Brown, Colville, & Pye, 2015; Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016), while gaining insight of the construction and maintaining of a sense of self in social relationships (Hall, 1999). Moreover, according to the evolving nature of identity construction in and over time, it can be treated as an organizing activity of sense-making (Weick, 1995) *recalling the past 'self', present 'self', and projection of future 'self'* (Dervin, 1998). As mentioned, social sciences recognize the 'self' and identity constructions as the basis for human cognition (Ochs & Capps, 1996), where motivation and behaviour (Terry et al., 1999) as well as socialization into new contexts (Adams & Marshall, 1996) gain momentum from the continuous negotiation of who one is.

2.3 Towards an international entrepreneurship career?

A processual and socially embedded understanding of identity construction processes as identity work provide a basis research into the emergence of IE as a transition embedded in one's career trajectory (e.g. Hannibal, 2017). To embark from the seminal work of Ibarra (1999) and add the element of the sense-making associated with becoming and being an international entrepreneur (Coviello, 2015; Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Hannibal, 2017; Nielsen & Lassen, 2012; Duening and Metzger, 2017) as a transitional career experience, we turn to the careers perspective of entrepreneurship (Burton et al., 2016). In doing so, we are guided by the established terminology in considering 'career' as "the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time" (Arthur, 1989; Arthur, 2014). In this respect, international entrepreneurship could be framed more as unfolding steps along one's career journey, challenging the traditional view of the phenomenon as a final destination (Burton et al., 2016) or a mere opportunity-focused creation of a new venture (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005). By approaching IE as a career journey, embedding work and life stages and/or transient states of being, we enable an exploration inter alia the various cross-roads and trails in which different career experiences shape entrepreneurial activity, and the ways in which entrepreneurial activity may shape those career experiences (Burton et al., 2016).

The contemporary conceptualization of 'careers', as an alternative to the traditional employer-governed construction, views it as dynamic in time and space (Baruch & Reis, 2016). In addition, drawing increasing attention to careers' psychological constitution (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006), each career actor has different and independent interpretation of one's career trajectory (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). Moreover, the increasing mobility – both physical (i.e. objective circumstances) and psychological (i.e. subjective experiences) – due to career contingencies (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) demands individuals to make further sense of their knowing of who they are, their skills and knowledge, and relationships at their disposal (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006).

In this study, taking a constructivist perspective on becoming and being an international entrepreneur, we stress that individuals constitute meaning for their life experiences differently under different circumstances and relationships (Karp, 2006; Leitch & Harrison, 2016). Hence, in our empathetic interest in "the nuances in people's construction of the world rather than in evaluating the extent to which such constructions are 'true' in representing an external reality" (Karp, 2006), we explore the individuals' IE journeys as careers and more specifically taking the lens of the physical and psychological constitution of their career mobility. Moreover, we explore the manifestations of the unfolding identity work in the narrative sense-making of IE as a career journey and approach the founder-CEOs' personal construction of them becoming international entrepreneurs by incorporating the different ways of knowing (the 'why', the 'how' and the 'whom') as sense-making of past, present, and future.

3 Research design

This study is explorative in nature aiming to advance insights the individual level dynamics involved in IE. To this end we explore the deeper structures in narrative sense-making (Pentland, 1999) of international entrepreneurs involved in an INV process.

Our approach is motivated through observing that social processes individuals engage in their working life, i.e. identity construction (Ibarra, 1999; Down & Warren, 2008), involve construction of meaning of experience through sense-making (Weick, 1995). The construction entails subjective (human) perceptions of the phenomenon attained through one's engagement in retrospection of past experiences, ongoing present sense-making and enactment of perception of the future. In this study, incorporating a sense-making perspective allows us to explore the founder-CEOs' interpretations of events, their meaning and influence (Weick, 1995) on their own IE journey occurring in both time and space (Halinen, Medlin, & Törnroos, 2012; Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014). Our constructivist view of sense-making acknowledges entrepreneur's sense of self, prior experience and knowledge, and her network as central means for the entrepreneurial process (Sarasvathy, 2008). Socially constructed meaning of entrepreneurial venturing may be traced further down to an entrepreneur's narrative sense-making, identity as well as linguistic resources and expressions (Johansson, 2004; Down & Warren, 2008; Gartner, 2007).

Our research design acknowledges all of those three facets of meaning-making (Weick, 1995): past, present, future. Accordingly, we generated data through thematic in-depth interviews with 13 founder-CEOs. To support the generation of rich personal narrative accounts, our interview technique resembles a life-narrative interview approach (Riessman, 1993; Atkinson, 2007). Taking into consideration the chronological and temporal nature of narrating about experience and oneself, attention was also paid to the interview process itself. Encouragement of free association, neutrality in probing elaborative questions and valuing silence as essential for remembering served as a platform for personally meaningful content to emerge.

In asking the initial interview question ('tell me in your own words, how did you become an international entrepreneur?'), the interviewee was openly asked to adopt the present position of an (international) entrepreneur. This was acknowledged to guide the interviewee to narrate one's story in a particular way, either with a conforming attitude towards the position of an international entrepreneur or with more opposition to what one assumes "becoming and being an international entrepreneurship" is understood by the interviewer (Hytti, 2003). Digression from the initial topic was avoided by asking for elaboration on related events and experiences arising from the interviewee's own accounts. Though such approach creates limitations to the comparability across interview data, with a more profound understanding of 'narrative', we are provided an approach to themes and content, structure and meaning within and across the data (Polkinghorne, 1988; Labov, 1972; Riessman, 1993).

3.1 Data

The research interviews were conducted in Finland in 2016–2018. Each interview was audio recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The interviews varied in length, shortest being 1 hours 12 minutes and longest 2 hours 26 minutes, while number of lines in the transcripts would vary between 499 and 1301 lines. Variation in duration and verbal output could be ascribed to interviewees' perceived sense of ease being in the situation (interviewer's subjective observations of the face-to-face interaction), familiarity of talking to a researcher or other kind of interviewers, such as journalists (verbal comments made by the interviewee), and simply one's verbose output assumingly related to one's personality trait.

Table 1 provides descriptive data on the interviewees, the founder-CEOs. The given names are pseudonyms, which is to guarantee anonymity as promised to the participants. For the same reason, no detailed descriptions of the firms are given. With a quick glance, one may notice that the sample is diverse and spreads in terms of age, gender, educational background as well as geographic locations (though within Finland). The founders' ages range between 30 to 65, four of them being between 30 and 35 years, and four between 60 and 65 years. Three of the interviewees were female with no significant difference in their field of business or education compared to the male interviewees.

These entrepreneurs represent various fields of education. It has an effect on how we ought to interpret the embeddedness of founding and consecutive work-related experiences as well as the sense-making of entrepreneurship and internationalization. Also due to their different ages and generations they represent, it has been a different experience to e.g. study business in the 1970s than it was in the 2000s.

In geographic terms, all the interviewed founder-CEOs were from a small open Western economy, regionally spread in the country yet sharing the same nationality. Having the focus on the individual and analysing their narrative identity construction also beyond the firm context, classification by industry does not play a significant role in this study. However, majority of the founders' companies' activities focus on business-to-business products (e.g. machinery, technology, software) and services (e.g. consulting, service design). Four of them produce also consumer goods and/or services for individual customers, and one of them only serves the consumer market. Small and medium-sized enterprises such as these, departing from a small open economy, are not too alien to internationalization research (Gabrielsson & Gabrielsson, 2013; Oparaocha, 2015).

As founders, they have all been the main (or co-)initiators of founding and financing the establishing of the firm. As CEOs of these small ventures and being in charge of daily operations at the time, they have also been in charge of leading the internationalization during the first years of full-time operations. At the time of the interview, four of the founders had passed on the CEO's responsibilities in order to e.g. be effective in the board, focus more on their area of strength such as technological development, sales or marketing, or just enjoying a sabbatical year.

Table 1. Descriptive data on the founder-CEOs

Founder	Age	Main area of business	Chronological pre-founding experience (i.e. Education, occupation/work, other)	Time of the interview	No of lines in transcript
Kate	60-65	B2B: Software design and development, consulting	MSc in economics and further training in exports. Career in international sales, several managerial positions. "one-woman consultancy" and writing books. Partner-investor / start-up governance experience.	2015	817
Paul	55-60	B2B: Management consulting, industrial companies	BA in engineering and MBA. Employee, managerial and expatriation experience in an MNE. CEO experience in an SME.	2015	598
Mark	30-35	B2B: Software design and development; consulting	MSc in economics (+doctoral studies). "One-man consultancy". Competitive sports background and sports marketing services.	2015	499
Bill	60-65	B2B: Manufacturing of lifting and handling machinery	Engineering degree. Personal inventions.	2017	835
Carol	40-45	B2B and B2C: Internet-based services, service design and consulting	MSc in economics. Career in marketing, managerial positions. PhD in economics. Consultant-type training services.	2017	969
Milo	30-35	B2B: Production of media, music and film	BA in media. Project work for the media industry. Acting and radio experience.	2017	646

Osmund	30-35	B2B and B2C: Software design and development and consulting.	BA in natural sciences. Competitive sports background, semi-professional in online gaming.	2017	1031
Jose	30-35	B2B: Software design and development and consulting services	BA in engineering. Coder/software developing. Offering computer services alongside school < 2 years as an employee in an SME.	2017	1003
George	60-65	B2B: Industrial machine and process development services	PhD in Physics. Academic spin-off development.	2017	1192
Oliver	45-50	B2B and B2C: Production of communication technology and attached services	BA in business administration. Career in media industry, managerial positions. Involved in spouse's business.	2017	1172
Holly	35-40	B2C: Production of hygiene products	High school. Stay-at-home mother and running part-time business.	2018	1301
Valdemar	60-65	B2B and B2C: Production of communication technology, software development and attached services	MSc in engineering. Career in industrial security development.	2018	801
Sidney	45-50	B2B: Production of industrial measurement technology and attached services	MSc in engineering (+ doctoral studies). Career in industrial technology and software development, managerial positions.	2018	1205

3.2 Analysis

In line with our theoretical framework the data has been analysed using a 'psychosocial' perspective of narrative (Andrew et al, 2002). This guides an exploration of the founders' accounts as personal stories of the venturing process. Accordingly, we treated the 'self' as a socially embedded narrative "production" (Andrews et al, 2002: xi) and the (international) entrepreneurial process as an ongoing narrative practice of (re)constructing meaning into one's identity (Down & Warren, 2008). Consequently, these narrative accounts serve as both "windows" and as a tool for our analysis of identity work and experience (Giddens, 1991; Alvesson, 2010; McAdams & McLean, 2013). Through this approach we further acknowledge the temporal and spatial nature of the data. Hence, each interview can be said to be unfolded as narratives in both sequential and cyclical manner of the founders' life. This represent an analytical emphasis on the first two facets of constructing meaning (Weick, 1995): the 'retrospective' and 'ongoing sense-making'. Exploration of the retrospective interpretation process through one's experiences relates to the meaning given to the international venturing and temporally embedded 'self'. Accordingly, 'time' is apprehended as periods along the process, re- and deconstructed by the interviewee, studied "as events and stories told" (Halinen et al., 2012: 219).

Our analytical approach departed as a thematic ordering of accounts that reflected international and entrepreneurial experience. Broad categorization of founders' accounts of multicultural family background, international education, expatriation periods as well as experiences as a CEO and/or in other managerial positions, investment opportunities, "garage inventions" and other more hobby kind of activities guided us towards re-structuring the data for a chronological description and linear understanding of their lives and embedded career transitions. A structural narrative analysis (Labov, 1972) of the re-structured data guided us towards the diverse staging of the 'self' – and the evolving identity work in the journey – in opposition and/or in relation to one's social surroundings. The 'self' in 'opposition' define the contrasting of behaviour, actions, overall being to others in some way or form, whereas 'relation' describe the adaptation to behaviour, values, needs etc. of others. Throughout the analytical procedure social surroundings connoted other people, overall context, or concrete events in interaction. Moreover, we could trace sense-making of their motivations, aspirations, social relationships, personality and personal traits, and the socialization of their self-image and self-esteem along their personal IE journey.

During our preliminary analysis, we took note of the "vertical" construction of sense-making in time in contrast to the "horizontal" time dimension, the chronological sequence of experiences and events, in one's career journey. Here, "vertical" means the time spent (in the interview) on elaborating on things that were happening simultaneously in one's life. Therefore, having re-structured the raw data to see the "sequence of events" against a timeline, we began to grasp the layering and integrating (or hermeneutic) nature of sense-making of the meanings of certain events and actions. This evolvement of the sense-making of events and actions led us to work around the *triggering experiences* that seemed to gain more attention in the founder-CEOs narration. Telling of these triggering experiences set off sense-making process which we interpreted as the integrating personal, relational and overall contextual aspects of becoming and being an international entrepreneur. Linking together different (horizontally occurred) times in one's life course, we would see these elaborative accounts of the triggering experiences leading us further in analysing the more meaningful – or central – identity work in relation to their IE journeys.

The notion of identity work around the transitional nature of the IE journey and sense-making of the embedded career experiences guided our analysis further into the hermeneutic sense-making as "point mapping" (Halinen et al., 2012). Moreover, locating these narrative images of the triggering experiences and sense-making of them in relation to the IE process gave way to explore and further interpret the critical times of change and transition. Furthermore, the accounts of identity work contain the founder's reflections of the triggering experiences and the circumstances that either change, threaten, verify or strengthen some essential aspects of the identity construction process and future vision, either personal or organizational. Moreover, the narrative identity work either reflects the freedom in choosing one's way of being and doing as a "boundaryless" career actor or – on the other hand – expresses more of a "identity crisis" embedded in the IE career process. Therefore, in relation to the identity work of the founder-CEOs, taking a career view of the IE process inspired us to look deeper into the career mobility, or "boundarylessness" (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006), in their sense-making accounts. In addition to acknowledging the "psychological boundarylessness" of being an (autonomous) entrepreneur as well as "physical boundarylessness" in working beyond national borders, we could detect certain kind of ambiguousness in the boundaries in the founder-CEOs' sense-making of their orientation, role identification, relationship between one's individual and organizational identity, as well as the social organizational structures in their current and future venturing. These manifestations of 'boundarylessness' and 'boundaries' in becoming and being an international entrepreneur were derived of accounts in which attitudes, decision-making and actions are projected against geographical, institutional, mental, and otherwise relational boundaries.

4 Findings

This section first introduces more general observations from our analytical procedure on the founder-CEOs accounts building up an international entrepreneurial career. We then proceed by elaborating on our findings on how and in what terms these founder-CEOs made sense of their identity in becoming and being an international entrepreneur.

Going through our analytical procedure we have observed some overall qualities of the founder's narrative account. First of all, the career experiences and identity work brought through the narrative accounts of the founder-CEOs, provide strong indicators of the common denominator of boundaryless careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) such as the independence from traditional organizational career arrangements. In addition to this, our initial stages of analysis indicated that a majority of the founder-CEOs' account for mobility across different kinds of physical and psychological boundaries during their career (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). One example being that most of the entrepreneurs tell of their "flat" organization, free movement and agency between tasks and teams, and their willingness to advance their own as well as their employees personal as well as professional growth within and beyond the organization. Also drawing validation from outside the present context, these founder-CEOs base their international and entrepreneurial expertise and orientation upon personal life-experiences e.g. as former expatriates (see the example of Kate and Paul's accounts), as consultants (see Mark's account) or, as managers in start-ups (Carol's account, also Paul).

> *Kate: "At that time, I had been living there [in the US] for 1,5 years, and then they said to me here [in my home country], like 'hey, you've began to Americanize. I told them, 'well, you sent me there to learn these things, you don't wanna hear about it' [...] When I came back [to my home country], every year I was giving lectures there, how this divide, how one leads internationally and how these cultures... [...] It's totally different nowadays with the internet having all the information for you."*

> *Paul: "My first or second job was in sales and marketing, an international company, and there, kind of naturally, I gained contacts from various countries. And in my next job, quite similar to the previous one, I lived abroad for several years. So, in the next company, it was this kind of a start-up, I aimed to internationalize it fairly quickly. Didn't even think about it, maybe I should've... --- But it kind of died at that point... And then in the next firm, where I was employed and owner, there had been some international trade, but I was hitting the breaks to that. It was too scattered and wanted to make it more organized."*

> *Mark: "And actually, there, working for the university, I was assigned as a consultant type of role. I could take part of those projects. Establishing them, acquiring company customers for the university, so called clients for those projects, and then give consultancy in them myself. Be like the leader in the process."*

> *Carol: "...and then in telecommunications industry, in the change of millennia, when there were the dot com bubble years, I was in a growth company, the third or fourth employee. And I was in the top management team, and at its best the Finnish unit was 400 people. So, I like contributed to the growth and saw how it's lead..."*

For Oliver, on the other hand, it was nothing related to business from which he initially started to bring validation for his international orientation: his experiences serving with the peacekeeping forces abroad affected his personal drive for an international career:

Oliver: "--- in the 80s, 90s, without the internet or nothing, I had, at least from my own perspective, a bit broader view compared to many of my peers. I craved to go see the world. That international part, business wasn't the thing yet. But I went to serve as a peacekeeper, I got to see the whole Middle East and live abroad and experience that. And it only got worse, I need more and more of those international connections. ---- and that was really the reason, to bring in thought from the outside world, to be more of a global citizen.

Being a producer in the media industry, Milo has worked with projects that build up beyond the boundaries of the focal organization and domestic references. His networks are international and fluid – boundaryless – and sustained by personal references:

Milo: "--- the freelancer network was already then very wide, which is related to my original idea, why I wanted the company to be both about production as well as an agency. --- but I realized that in Finland there wasn't any need for such a service, because everyone has their own networks and in Facebook you're quite free to just shout out your needs for certain kind of skills and then the person comes."

Some of the founder-CEOs were making sense of their international entrepreneurship process through elaborate stories about the time they rejected personal career opportunities and moving on to advance personally meaningful careers. For example, Kate came home from the expatriate assignment because of her changing family situation and continuing as a consultant in Finland. Mark, on the other hand, had made it clear to his professor that getting a doctoral degree did not at this point contribute to his dream of becoming an entrepreneur:

Mark: "--- right before completing my master's degree, I stayed working for the University. At that time I had already decided to become an entrepreneur. When they asked me to come work for them, I told them that I wouldn't be continuing with an academic career. Great, if I could one day complete a doctoral degree, but I wanted to become an entrepreneur, not pursue career in academics.

Looking further into the sense-making of career experiences and their meaning in the context of IE, we found that the most prominent movement across boundaries deals with either finding and maintaining personal motivation, interest and drive despite external opposition, uncertainty and/or external demand of switching between role identities as the founder and CEO of an international venture. George summed up his perception of the future regardless of constraints:

George: "Like I said, now probably already the second time, that if they set limitations to me, I just get excited about it, how these limitations are going to be crossed or passed. I take it as an interesting challenge and get excited about it."

Now, going beyond the "framing" of the mobility in a boundaryless career of the founder-CEOs, we elaborate on how the boundarylessness of the IE as a career triggers the identity work of the focal founder-CEO.

4.1 Identity work of becoming and being an international entrepreneur

The first part of this section will unfold as we take a look at the experiences triggering one's identity work as an international entrepreneur in their retrospective sense-making. We will then discuss an image of *boundarylessness between identity work of self as an international* *entrepreneur and that in relation to the venture* that arise in the narratives. In the latter part, we zoom closer into the other three images of boundarylessness drawn from accounts in relation to that identity work by the founder-CEOs. By providing three exemplary cases of how founder-CEOs of international ventures make sense of their 'becoming and being' in relation their past and present experiences, and envisioned future, we show traces of the analysis of both horizontal sequence and vertical layers of time in the narrative interview. Such assists us in showing their identity work at multiple layers of sense-making of a boundaryless career. In particular, we provide a hermeneutic perspective on the international entrepreneurial "selves" in the midst of the individual and firm-level IE journey.

From the interview data, we found a range of *triggering experiences* that set off more elaborate sense-making and identity work of the founder-CEOs. It seems that one's identity work is associated to the sense of attachment and/or detachment in becoming international or an entrepreneur. This in turn is tightly connected to the founder's sense of losing or gaining momentum in the boundarylessness of the IE career. From gaining evidence of founders making sense of their self-perception, the course and complexity of their working careers, and creating coherence in one's identity work, we constructed certain narrative 'images of boundarylessness' that are projections from the triggering events. With the term 'image' we indicate that these constructs are subjectively built expressions of the sense-making of identity work that is interlinked with the events, relationships and other abstractions the founders were narrating of. In general terms, they incorporate the sense-making of the international entrepreneur's *orientation*, *roles* and *organizational* identity related to the process of becoming and being an international entrepreneur.

Findings from all 13 interviews are incorporated in Figure 1. Accordingly, this offers a combined thematic view of all the triggering experiences (i.e. events, actions, mental states) of identity work (in horizontal sequence of time) and their relation to the images of boundarylessness found in the processes of becoming and being an international entrepreneur. The horizontal axis indicates the chronological time, initially made visible by re-structuring the interview material. The vertical axis indicates the temporal layering of time, i.e. the sense-making of events or processes happening simultaneously. Figure 1, providing an overview of different triggering events setting off the identity work of international entrepreneurs, explicates the multiplicity of dimensions influencing one's sense-making of the IE process as a career. The right-hand column provides the images of boundarylessness, indicating the subjective sense-making of the nature of certain conditions in the process.

Drawing out key elements in the conceptual grounding of IE in terms of an unfolding boundaryless career, four images of boundarylessness (orientation, role identity, organizational structures and individual vs. firm identity) lead us towards understanding the sense-making process of certain triggering events setting off identity work in IE. Accordingly, to exemplify an image of *boundaryless orientation*, we present Milo's sense-making (Figure 2) and draw attention to his burnout experience during 'becoming' an international entrepreneur (Appendix I). Subsequently, to gain insights on how founder-CEOs juggle between different roles in 'being' an international entrepreneur, we elaborate on the image of *boundaryless roles*, exemplifying it through the sense-making components of Carol's narrative in Figure 3. Appendix II offers a further insight into Corinne' role identity switching between being an entrepreneur and a manager of an international venture. To conclude on our findings, we present the sense-making of Mark, illustrating the image of *boundaryless (organizational) structures*, to provide insights on how identity work during career transitions of a young founder-CEO expresses the organizational, industry-related, and generational embeddedness of contemporary international entrepreneurial venturing. The three sub-elements complement each other to offers detailed insight of his attachment and detachment from context in his identity work of being international and becoming entrepreneurial in Appendix III.

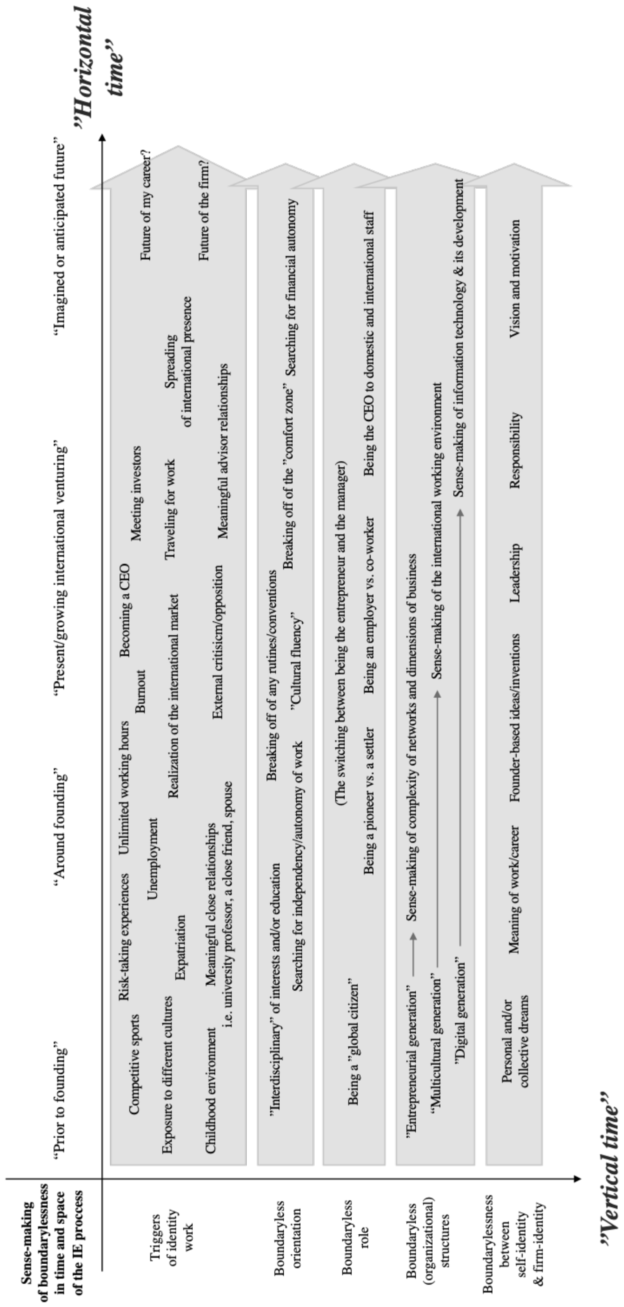


Figure 1. Sense-making of boundarylessness in time and space of the IE career processes

Boundarylessness between individual and organizational identity

It is nothing new to say that entrepreneurs identify strongly with the firms they have established or the business idea they've created. Yet, our data suggests that this notion should be taken into consideration when exploring e.g. the enter and/or exit processes of small firms. Kate and Holly express strong identification with the past, present and future of the firm they have founded and led through various phases. In their case, especially discussing the future of the firm becomes a point of elaboration of one's identity.

> Holly: *"I kind of see it like… Maybe at some point in the future I get the same feeling, that… --- if we've grown that big, then it doesn't matter, then I can step into the background, looking at others working with enthusiasm. --- I define myself a lot through this. Of course, it's a big part of my life… I honestly don't know what I would be… what would be… Maybe that certain kind of activism underneath would remain… I don't know."*

On the other hand, to Kate it is a negative thing, if the entrepreneur – or anyone for that matter – seems to be irreplaceable:

> *" – and I say all the time, from the beginning I've tried to build this company so that it won't be dependent on me, not on Gary, not on us. All the time I try so that… only then we can say it's a proper company when it's not dependent on us anymore. That it will fly on its own."*

Also Valdemar sees the birth and initial survival of the business idea as relative to the self-confidence:

> *"If we begin to think of the founding process, we start from zero. The prerequisite for succeeding is that you have to be sure of yourself, that you bring something to the market that is a big thing and there's a need. You have to know it, there cannot be any doubt, you have to believe in yourself and you shouldn't believe what other people say, you hold on to your own vision. Of course, it needs to be based on facts. --- If I would've believed them, this company wouldn't be here. Now we have 75 patents, this is it. --- "*

It is evident that these founders possess a strong sense of relatedness to – at least – the initiative of the firm, making it hard to detach either or from a holistic "behaviour equation". To offer insight of how and why the sense-making of further identity work during the IE process is meaningful, we proceed to zoom in on the founder-CEOs and their sense-making processes in relation to orientation, role identity and structures.

Boundaryless orientation

In the data we find traces of sense-making where the first narrative image, *a boundaryless orientation*, reflects an orientation through talking about their concrete actions and behaviour indicating an attitude or tendency to push one's limits and cross boundaries where ever they are set. In addition to George, as mentioned above, examples are found in ways of talking about encountering resistance from people or institutions who wouldn't believe their business idea would fly:

> Oliver: *"I guess it this endless defiance that everything is possible. I just don't accept the thought [that it's impossible]. Most of the people look through a certain scoop and say it's not gonna*

happen. --- They said it's the biggest mistake of your life --- The kind of childish belief into one's own abilities and doing. That we learn it the hard way --- I enjoy it when some critics, who were dissing us in the beginning, see that we succeeded."

Osmund: *"But I've noticed that many of these kind of mentors, whom I have reached during these years, have come on board exactly because they've seen that there is a good match. --- If you believe that something is possible, sincerely believe, you will get a grip of unbelievable resources within you personally and in your team and in everything else. This I also known in sports and everything else, how this kind of positive cycle effect begins to accumulate."*

Milo's sense-making of his experiences during the first years, when the founding process emerged, his becoming, and especially being, an international entrepreneur has not been an easy path but has asked for adjustments but also ability to dream beyond the circumstances. In Milo's interview there is a strong sense of searching for autonomy and freedom in being creative, agony of not yet having breakthrough and anticipation of living the "dream". Looking at both horizontal and vertical time dimensions, we can make connections between the events and experiences that have an effect on Milo's sense-making. Furthermore, we may find traces of how the different images construct meaning in the vertical, hermeneutic view of talking about past, present and future. The particular identity work can be seen as the dotted arrows and circles in the above Figure 2.

In Appendix I, we further elaborate on how Milo's accounts build a case around his burnout experiences and highlights their meaning in his sense-making of his career development, sense of 'self' and motivation to go on with the venture. The experience of burning out brings Milo into realization of certain uncontrollable challenges related to his early career. The events trigger identity work that both ask for an adjustment of the perception of oneself as "something special", but also triggers a strong desire to have "the ultimate freedom" which he recalls having when he was a child. That way he would be able to maintain the reason of founding the company in the first place: the mentality that he can just come up with any new thing and have the autonomy of going about it.

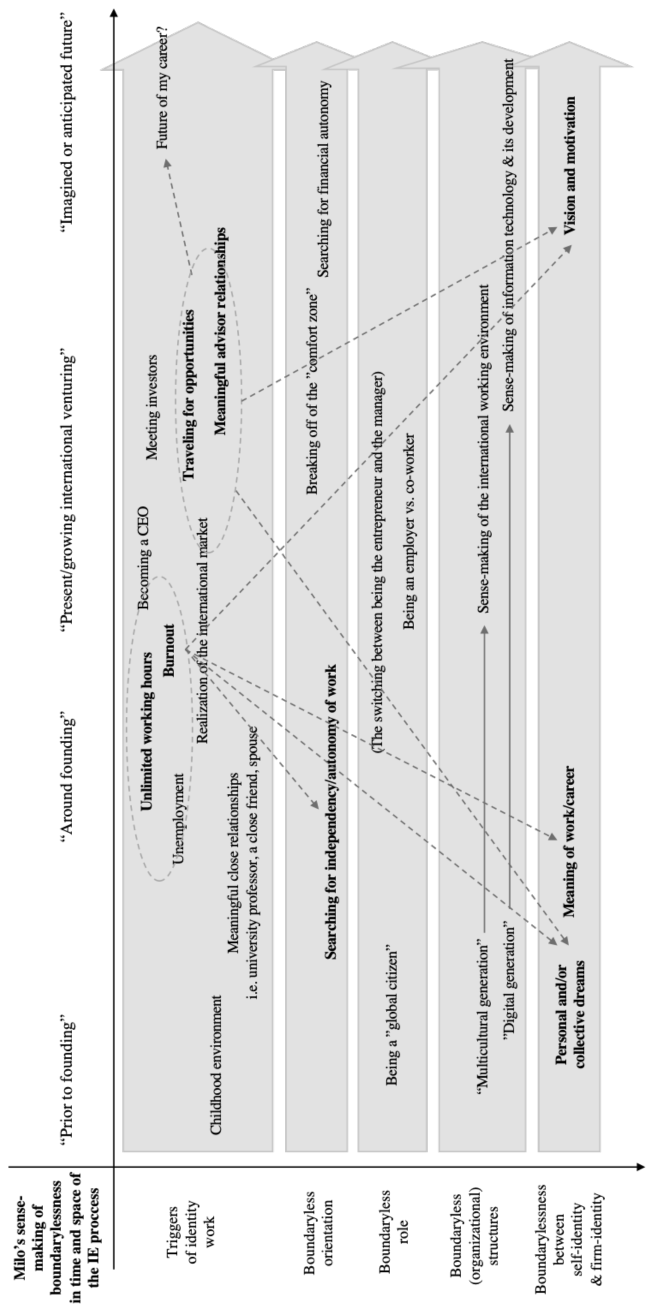


Figure 2. Milo's narrative identity work and images of boundarylessness

Boundaryless roles

The second image is related heavily to the triggers of identity work and becomes apparent in some of the founders' expressions of various roles they have had to manoeuvre while being e.g.

the promoter of the initial business idea, the fellow entrepreneur, the CEOs of an early internationalizing venture, or just the one who hires and manages new (international) staff. Kate contemplates on her learning from previous global sales manager's position and about searching for personal motivation in employees:

> Kate: *"I can't know what a country manager does somewhere. I have to make the operations… and I am not that number controller person at all, I don't know how to… For me it works like, that I get the motivation and commitment, that willingness to do. --- And I support those things, and then it flows from within that person."*

Jose tells about his shift from being "just one of the founders" into being the CEO. While this is a one-point transition, it affects for a longer period of time as a delayed adjustment to the new situation. Moreover, his experiences of having several roles extend to the international arena making it even more boundaryless, but manages the complexity by leading with data and by building trust:

> *"You have to be able to say straight, it doesn't matter if he's a friend, founding partner or whatever. --- I've had to change. Melvin [founding partner] was the guy who hired me to my previous job. He used to be my boss. --- They voted me to be the CEO. --- I was then 26, and then we had our first "really old guy", 35 years, coming to work for us, so much more experienced than I was. So, I had to give him tasks and it felt weird, and how am I an authority to anyone anyway. And I just had to grow. --- I believe in leading with data. --- Because, leading this firm, eight offices, and five countries, I don't know all the people we have working. It first felt difficult, when I didn't know anymore who worked for us. --- I intervene if I have to. --- The hardest thing I've had to learn is trust. When I started as an entrepreneur, it was so much weaker. Nowadays I trust people more. Like, I don't meet physically our sales person in Germany --- I trust he does whatever he can."*

Going a bit deeper into the case of Carol, where boundarylessness is evident in the work and roles she takes home with her. She makes sense of her role identity not only that of a founder and a CEO, but also one that is responsible for people's livelihood and wellbeing. In her interview, Carol also talks about of her previous experiences of doing her dissertation while being a "bored mother" to a new born and her dual relationship with her husband, with whom she initially established her previous company with.

Appendix II provides elaborative evidence on Carol's sense-making on the mobility between different roles identities, seen as dotted arrows and circles in the below Figure 3. In the same lengthy passage provided, she accounts for being an founder-entrepreneur and a manager of an international team, then reflecting on the false perceptions and assumed challenges of being an international entrepreneur. In the same stretch, she brings along traces of her identity work in being an entrepreneur in relation to her past in being a doctoral researcher while being a mother.

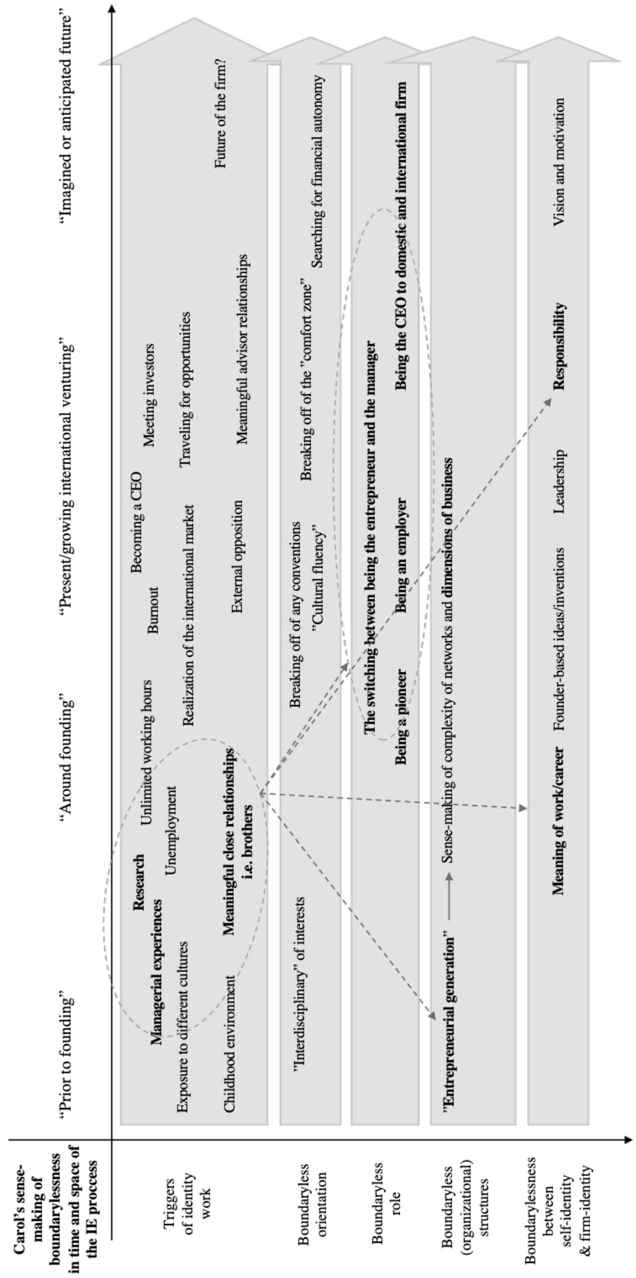


Figure 3. Example of Carol's narrative identity work and images of boundarylessness

Boundaryless (organizational) structures

The third image of boundarylessness could be said to express also the organizational, industry-related, and/or generational embeddedness of contemporary international entrepreneurial venturing. There are several expressions of the nature of the contemporary entrepreneurial career outlook of the younger founder-CEOs, both retrospective and introspective. The following passages indicate towards a decrease in norms/restrictions and organization-related support structures, and an increase in network-based organizing around work. In addition to an entrepreneurial, or generational outlook, we can see the opportunities of the digitalization and software-based industries increasing the sense of boundarylessness in the organization of firms, work and communication.

In our next example, we introduce Mark's configuration of the two-sided coin of attachment and detachment of his identity work in the context of his multicultural family background, the entrepreneurial working generation and the digitalizing industry (Figure 4; Appendix III). If looking them as interrelated, we can see that while Mark is strongly embedded in and attached to his multicultural family background, he has early on found his freedom in choosing to become an entrepreneur despite his non-entrepreneurial roots. Also, by attaching oneself to the outlook of the digitalizing age, he makes sense of the changes in the industry, opportunities in international business and boundarylessness in the nature of their work. Moreover, despite having prior experience from a specific field of study, and working at an established academic environment, with one's education and strong relationship with his professor, Mark's sense-making of a personal dream and passion highlights a notion that, at the initial stages of becoming an international entrepreneur, there is an element of "randomness", boundarylessness and freedom of doing whatever one finds fits best to the 'self'.

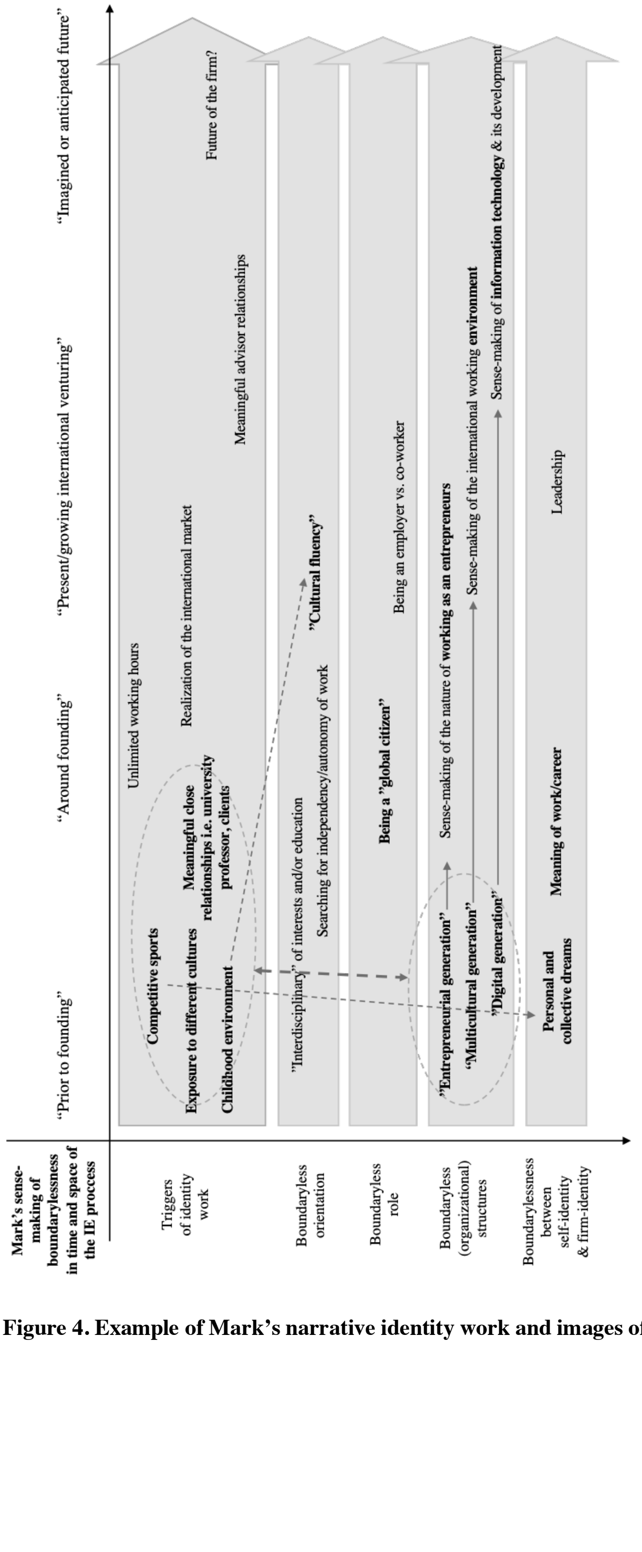


Figure 4. Example of Mark's narrative identity work and images of boundarylessness

5 Discussion

This study provides insight to the 'becoming and being' of an international entrepreneur in relation to how is the meaning of international entrepreneurship as a career journey constructed through an individual's identity work. Accordingly, we contribute to advance the understanding of how founder-CEO's identity acts as an integrated part of the international new venturing process.

The processual, dynamic perspective of IE (Jones et al., 2011) and engagement with the discourse of entrepreneurship in the evolving career discourse (Burton et al., 2016; Hytti, 2010; Tams & Arthur, 2010) served as point of departure for this study. Along the analysis process, eventually positioning IE at the intersection of human-level sense-making and career, we were enabled to a more meaningful exploration of 'identity work' in becoming and being an international entrepreneur.

In our analysis of the founder-CEOs accounts, we became increasingly aware of the psychological and physical boundarylessness in the sense-making of the IE journey as a career. Not less than coincidently, finding literature discussing the conceptualization of the 'new career' by Arthur and Rousseau (1996), we were further directed into the different meanings of a 'boundaryless career' (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Therefore, in viewing IE as a contemporary career path, we can see its boundarylessness reflecting the conceptual career mobility along the two continua – physical and psychological mobility (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Original definitions of boundaryless careers involve careers that (1) move across the boundaries of separate employers; (2) draw validation – and marketability – from outside the present employer i.e. academics or carpenters; (3) are sustained by external networks or information i.e. real-estate agents; (4) break traditional organizational assumptions about hierarchy and career advancement; (5) involve an individual rejecting existing career opportunities for personal or family reasons; and (6) are based on the interpretation of the career actor, who may perceive a boundaryless future regardless of structural constraints (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006: 20). What strikes as the most integrating element of these in relation to IE is the common factor defining the boundaryless career: the independence from traditional organizational career arrangements (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). Our findings support this view in the context of all the interviewees' IE processes. While our findings of boundarylessness as context or orientation intersects with the contemporary understanding of 'a boundaryless career' (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 2001), we could see the founders processing of identity, roles and e.g. leadership reflect also different kind of boundarylessness in the globalizing world and complex "psychophysical spaces" indicating towards one's internal (psychic) and external (physical) worlds. While 'boundarylessness' can reflect the context or sense of mobility in international entrepreneurs' careers, it offers us an approach to grasp more of the nature and significance of individuals' fragmented identity work, sense-making of actions and irrational agency despite (or because) of various physical and psychological dimensions that characterize IB and entrepreneurship.

Through our findings of these entrepreneurs' narration of their behaviour as founders and the key drivers of their international new ventures (Jones et al., 2011; Oviatt, Maksimov & McDougall, 2011; Kyvik et al., 2013; Zahra et al., 2005), resembling the process of how they make sense and draw upon their life experiences (Jones & Casulli, 2014), we become increasingly aware of their self-perception, knowledge base and social surroundings (Sarasvathy, Kumar, York, & Bhagavatula, 2014). Taking further steps into characterizing the entrepreneur as a holistic bundle and sense-maker of the IE process, we draw upon Ibarra's notions (1999) in constructing new insight of how possible selves are selected and rejected during becoming and being an international entrepreneur, that is, the IE career. According to our findings, the IE identity work relates to a multi-fold and evolving sense-making of attachment/detachment entailing the observations of what is regarded as being international or entrepreneurial, experiments with the temporary professional selves in different international and entrepreneurial contexts and evaluation of their meaning according to internal visions and motivations as much as external feedback or pressure. Introducing the idea of international entrepreneurship identity work, we do not suggest that the international entrepreneurship identity is a final outcome or the end product at the end of the line, but rather a processual continuum, gaining different "faces" in different phases of one's (life)career.

Drawing attention on the founders' narrative sense-making, the point these international entrepreneurs seem to be making is that they have become to own their international careers with their highs and lows, mistakes and successes. These individuals are managing their perceptions of themselves in respect of the global arena they play in. Either drawing validation from the emerging phenomenon such as digitalization, or simply their multicultural family background, international human resources or a never-ending hunger for adventure and new experiences, international entrepreneurship identity work is embedded in personally meaningful involvement in the IE process.

In general, our exploration of the international entrepreneurs' identity work serves as means of making sense of the sense-making of IE as a career. In general terms, recognizing identity work and its evolvement over time linked to the organizational context (Williams, 2000; Brown, 2015; Brown, Colville, & Pye, 2015; Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016), we may engage in supporting the construction of and maintaining of a meaningful 'self-perception', broadening knowledge base and healthy psychosocial understanding in both practical and theoretical firm-level processes.

Figures of the "point mapping" and sense-making "cycles" of the founders' identity work (Appendixes I-III) give us the outlook of how including the interpretation of meanings of temporal events relate them to the whole narrative (Halinen et al., 2012). In viewing the horizontal axis (Hurmerinta, Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, & Hassett, 2016), time in relation to the interview contents is spread chronologically ("prior to founding", "around founding", "present in international venturing" and "imagined or anticipated future"). Then, including the vertical axis of time, we may see how knowledge is not only transcended throughout the horizontal time, but actually created in the hermeneutic view of the interviewees' accounts. Reflecting on meaningful events of life (e.g. Milo's burnouts), related career transitions and narrating the 'self' in them (e.g. Milo's personal growth into a boundaryless orientation), integrate sense-making of related experiences in a specific context at a specific point in 'vertical time' (Appendix I) and 'horizontal time' (e.g. Figure 2).

Moreover, according to our findings, the evolving nature of sense-making of one's 'self' in time brings forth nuances in the organizing activity of recalling the past, ongoing present sense-making, and projection of future intentions (Weick, 1995; Dervin, 1998) in the IE process. It is evident that motivation and behaviour gain momentum from the continuous (re)negotiation of where the international entrepreneur is coming from, where s/he is now, and where s/he is potentially going next.

Our findings stress the notion that containing the interpretation of recurring events, actions and processes as well as their interlinkages and complexities (Hurmerinta et al., 2016) give much more meaningful interpretation of human behaviour and choices in IE. We pose that in life-narrative data such as ours, it is possible to start seeing further into the founders' sense-making of IE intertwined in their career related transitions (e.g. change of job, re-education, change from employee to employer, becoming a CEO), thus, bring in the interpretation of the most influential and meaningful events (e.g. unemployment or other life crisis) and giving personal explanation that goes beyond a plain description of an IE career or firm-history.

Linking the founder-CEOs' narrative sense-making to the boundaryless career concept guides us to explore further the public "images" international entrepreneurs and founders construct of their international entrepreneurial behaviour and their multidimensional venturing experiences. Furthermore, engaging in – though not tying ourselves to – a cross-disciplinary discussion with the compelling "framing" of a boundaryless career (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) and identity work (Ibarra (1999; 2010), we may begin to understand the multidimensional 'boundarylessness' and identity work that characterizes IE as a career and individual sense-making process. By seeing beyond the organizational structures, generation and/or one's otherwise bounded perception of engaging in possibilities for career transitions, we can be encouraging founders of INVs to freely define and enact their personal IE narratives in being key drivers in the global IE arena.

6 Conclusions

With this study, we contribute to the founder-level studies of IE (Coviello, 2015; Hannibal, 2017; Sarasvathy et al., 2014) within and across international contexts (Delios, 2017). Accordingly, we engage in discussion of entrepreneurship as a career (Burton et al., 2016; Henderson & Robertson, 1999), exploring the process of founders-CEOs' subjective sense-making of (Weick, 1995; Fletcher, 2004; Gartner, 2010; Rasmussen et al., 2009) and process of drawing meaning from (life)experiences (Jones & Casulli, 2014). Deriving from our findings, we suggest IE studies to futher acknowledge the sense of 'boundarylessness' of IE at the individual level. Going beyond the experience or identity as a variable in IE or the conceptualization of a boundaryless career simply as an organizationally bound context (Hytti, 2010), we approach a more holistic view of the individual level IE as a career identity work.

Our study suggests that IE can be analysed as an iterative career process, grounded in and influenced by founder's ongoing sense-making of self. This echoes Oviatt and McDougall's (2005) characterization of international new venturing as an evolving organizational and individual process taking place in time and space. Through discussing the 'being and becoming' in IE research, we are adding an important dimension to our knowledge of "who the entrepreneurs driving these international ventures are" (Coviello, 2015: 23). The human-led process of IE is indeed characterized by boundarylessness, dynamism and change and by explicating the embedded sense-making of IE identity work in the interviews, we invite the coming generations to hit the ground running in constructing an international entrepreneurial identity.

Conceptually, we add the concept of 'boundarylessness' and further the discussion of individual-level entrepreneurship identity complementing studies of firm-level EO that have been occupying the discussion of international entrepreneurial behaviour in the study IE. A more theoretically loaded contribution lays in the intersection of career and IE research, giving attention to "the unfolding sequence of person's work experiences over time" (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996: 30) and their meaning for an individual (Meijers, 1998) in the context of IE. By exploring the meaning founder-CEOs give to their venturing, we may start engaging more comprehensively in constructing knowledge around questions of *how* and *why* do early internationalizing firms and their networks – or such as international portfolio entrepreneurship and early decisions of exit/acquisition/merger – come about as holistic processes.

Our methodological contribution gives way of further advancing 'narrative sense-making' as a bridging element between the social and psychological aspects related to IE. By retreating from a discussion of entrepreneurial traits and the kind of “resource-based view” of the entrepreneur (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994), we suggest a ‘psychosocial’ zone (Andrews et al, 2002) by studying the evolving “narrative identity” of founder-CEOs. With a narrative approach, we are making sense of the past, present and future of IE as an evolving social construction process, which provides us flexibility in approaching e.g. the educational aspects for a fostering new IE generation. By providing potential and current entrepreneurs with images of finding short and long-term meaning in their (international) venturing characterized by complexity, we are contributing to increasing the level of socially and personally meaningful IE careers. This will eventually yield more up-to-date policies and support at the society level.

Managerial implications

Integrating physical, psychological and social dimensions of *becoming and being* an international entrepreneur, we contribute to the career perspective (Burton et al., 2016) of the international entrepreneurship phenomenon and to the broader managerial discussion of IE. Moreover, deriving from our interpretation of the narrative sense-making and images of boundarylessness, we conclude with certain ‘*boundaries’* that give structure for the boundarylessness. Table 2 below derives from the founder-CEOs accounts of finding, giving meaning to, adjusting/positioning the ‘self’ in the middle of change and complexity of international venturing and one’s different roles.

Supporting the identity work and creating boundaries between over-personification of a company international success and/or failure may help founder’s and CEOs to overcome times of hardship with less emotional load, but also let others into the celebration of success. Also, knowing oneself will contribute to knowing one’s strengths and weaknesses, hence, potential to recognize opportunities and area of development. Enabling the kind of orientation where there are no boundaries in relation to opportunities and promoting “cultural” mobility across generational (entrepreneurial, multicultural and digital) boundaries may create communities that share and learn more efficiently from each other. Acknowledgment and adjustment of one’s multiple roles in IE may contribute to more clear division of tasks within and across, and e.g. liberation from excessive micromanagement.

Sensitizing oneself for the budding themes in narrative sense-making serves as a way of deepening our knowledge of the change and complexity in international ventures and their contextual embeddedness. Providing time and space for free association of experiences, we may anticipate novel themes to emerge. Entering interviews and practise more as an apprentice rather than as an expert serves us an opportunity to touch upon something new and potential to the field.

Table 2. 'Boundaries' for the boundaryless international entrepreneurial career

Supporting identity work during the IE process in time	**Enabling a boundaryless orientation**	**Acknowledging and adjusting the various and simultaneous role identities**	**Finding means of creating boundaries between "me" and company**	**Promoting mobility across "generational boundaries"**
Supporting the processes of finding or breaking the edges of the 'self' as an international entrepreneur. Recognition of the "phases of crisis" i.e. shock phase, reaction phase, processing phase and reorientation phase.	Laying early foundations and production of a interdisciplinary mind and creativity in times of constant change. Unconventional orientation may need collective and individual processing of criticism and opposition Learning to more efficiently break off of conventions and avoiding getting stuck in personal or organizational "comfort zones"	Finding balance between preserving a sense of independency, while gaining authority over various positions and having employer's responsibility over a growing venture. Recognizing identity work in different "social spaces" helps adjusting behavior and levels of commitment.	Relevant during all the company growth phases Being aware of the tendencies to assimilate or contrast the international venture with one's identity or career/personal development e.g. to avoid the over-personification of uncontrollable issues and/or organization-level failure	Taking advantage of the "collective culture" of one's own generation while learning from other generations' "experiential wisdom" in different contexts. Bridging gaps of tacit knowledge of industries, environments, work culture/practices

References

Abbott, A. (1990). Conceptions of time and events in social science methods: Causal and narrative approaches. Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History, 23(4), 140-150.

Adams, G. R., & Marshall, S. K. (1996). A developmental social psychology of identity: understanding the person-in-context. *Journal of Adolescence*, *19*, 429–442. Retrieved from https://ac.els-cdn.com/S014019719690041X/1-s2.0-S014019719690041X-main.pdf?_tid=9efa9044-6c77-47f7-ae73-5b0072e3f4f9&acdnat=1524486280_39d9ba5d61e4c99254ac26d002d2e5b9

Alvesson, M. (2010). Self-doubters, strugglers, storytellers, surfers and others: Images of self-identities in organization studies. *Human Relations*, *63*(2), 193–217. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726709350372

Andersson, S. (2000). The Internationalization of the Firm from an Entrepreneurial Perspective. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, *30*(1), 63–92. https://doi.org/10.1080/00208825.2000.11656783

Andersson, S. (2002). Suppliers' international strategies. *European Journal of Marketing*, *36*(1/2), 86–110. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560210412719

Arthur, M. B. (1994). The boundaryless career: A new perspective for organizational inquiry. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *15*(15), 295–306.

Arthur, M. B. (2014). The boundaryless career at 20: where do we stand, and where can we go? *Career Development International*, *19*(6), 627–640. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-05-2014-0068

Arthur, M. B., & Rousseau, D. M. (1996). A Career Lexicon for the 21st Century. *Academy of Management Executive*, *10*(4). Retrieved from http://content.ebscohost.com/ContentServer.asp?T=P&P=AN&K=3145317&S=R&D=bsh&EbscoContent=dGJyMNLr40Sep7U4v%2BbwOLCmr1CeprNSr6e4S7KWxWXS&ContentCustomer=dGJyMPGqtU%2B3prFJuePfgeyx43zx

Baruch, Y., & Reis, C. (2016). How Global Are Boundaryless Careers and How Boundaryless Are Global Careers? Challenges and a Theoretical Perspective. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *58*(1), 13–27. https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.21712

Brown, A. D. (2015). Identities and identity work in organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *17*(1), 20–40. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12035

Brown, A. D., Colville, I., & Pye, A. (2015). Making Sense of Sensemaking in Organization Studies. *Organization Studies*, *36*(2), 265–277. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840614559259

Burton, M. D., Sørensen, J. B., & Dobrev, S. D. (2016). A Careers Perspective on Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *40*(2), 237–247. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12230

Coombs, J. E., Sadrieh, F., & Annavarjula, M. (2009). Two Decades of International Entrepreneurship Research: What Have We Learned - Where Do We Go from Here? *International Journal of Entrepreneurship*, *13*(1), 23–64.

Coviello, N. (2015). Re-thinking research on born globals. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *46*(1), 17–26. https://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2014.59

Coviello, N., & Coviello, N. (2015). Re-thinking research on born globals. *Journal of International Business Studies Journal of International Business Studies Journal of International Business Studies*, *46*(46), 586–599. https://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2014.59

Coviello, N. E. (2006). The network dynamics of international new ventures. *Journal of*

International Business Studies, *37*, 713–731. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8400219

Coviello, N. E., & Jones, M. V. (2004). Methodological issues in international entrepreneurship research. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *19*(4), 485–508. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2003.06.001

Coviello, N., & Tanev, S. (2017). Initiating a New Research Phase in the Field of International Entrepreneurship: An Interview with Professor Nicole Coviello. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, *7*(5). Retrieved from https://timreview.ca/sites/default/files/article_PDF/CovielloTanev_TIMReview_May2017.pdf

Covin, J. G., & Miller, D. (2014). International Entrepreneurial Orientation: Conceptual Considerations, Research Themes, Measurement Issues, and Future Research Directions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 11–44. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12027

Defillippi, R. J., & Arthur, M. B. (1994). The Boundaryless Career: A Competency-Based Perspective The boundaryless career: a competency- based perspective. *Source Journal of Organizational Behavior JOURNAL OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR*, *15*(15), 307–324. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2488429

Delios, A. (2017). The Death and Rebirth (?) of International Business Research. *Journal of Management Studies*. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12222

Dervin, B. (1998). Sense-making theory and practice: an overview of user interests in knowledge seeking and use. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, *2*(2), 36–46. https://doi.org/10.1108/13673279810249369

Down, S., & Warren, L. (2008). Constructing narratives of enterprise: clichés and entrepreneurial self-identity. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, *14*(1), 4–23. https://doi.org/10.1108/13552550810852802

Fletcher, D. (2004). International entrepreneurship and the small business. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *16*(4), 289–305. https://doi.org/10.1080/0898562042000263267

Gabrielsson, P., & Gabrielsson, M. (2013). A dynamic model of growth phases and survival in international business-to-business new ventures: The moderating effect of decision-making logic. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *42*(8), 1357–1373. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2013.07.011

Gartner, W. B. (2007). Entrepreneurial narrative and a science of the imagination. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *22*(5), 613–627. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2006.10.003

Gartner, W. B. (2010). A new path to the waterfall: A narrative on a use of entrepreneurial narrative. *International Small Business Journal*, *28*(1), 6–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242609351448

Gupta, V., & Fernandez, C. (2009). Cross-cultural similarities and differences in characteristics attributed to entrepreneurs: A three-nation study. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, *15*(3), 304–318. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051808326036

Halinen, A., Medlin, C. J., & Törnroos, J.-Å. (2012). Time and process in business network research. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *41*, 215–223. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2012.01.006

Hannibal, M. (2017). Enacted identities in the university spin-off process—bridging an imaginative gap. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *15*(3), 239–265. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-016-0168-x

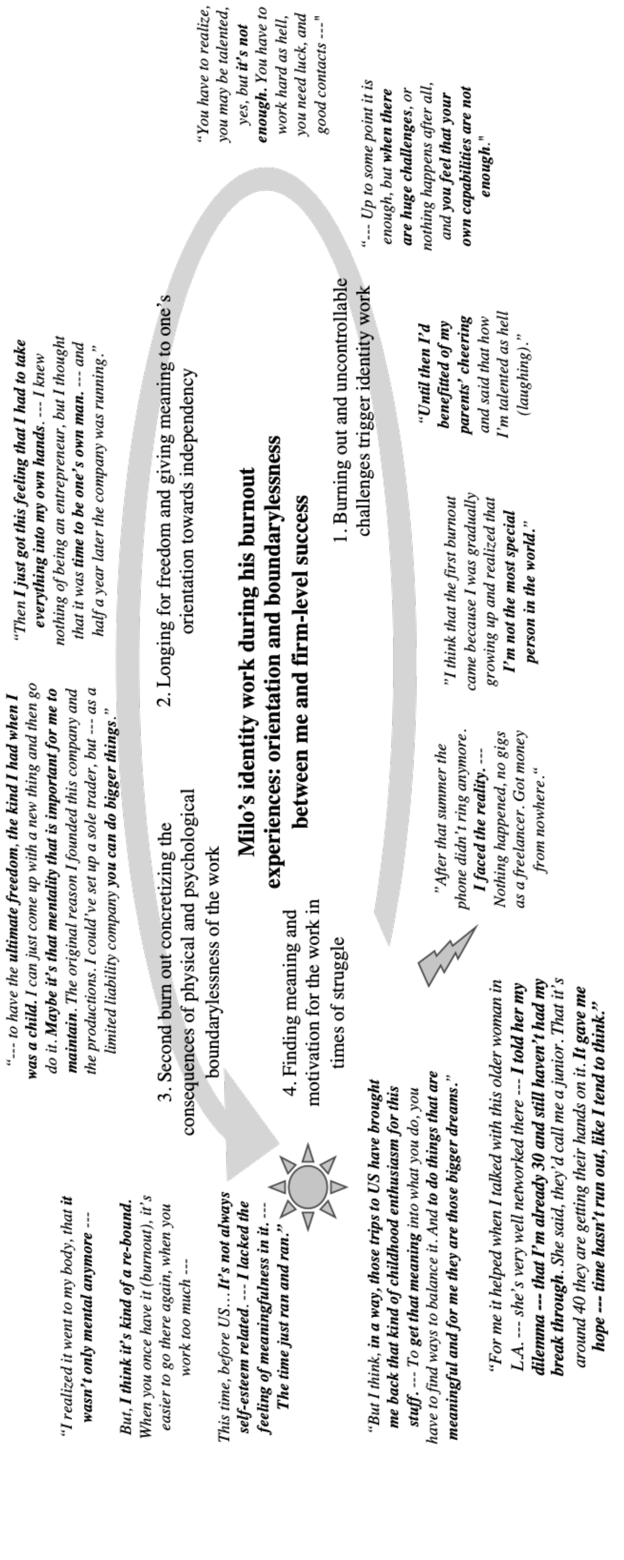
Hannibal, M., Evers, N., & Servais, P. (2016). Opportunity recognition and international new venture creation in university spin-offs—Cases from Denmark and Ireland. *Journal of*

International Entrepreneurship, *14*(3), 345–372. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-016-0181-0
Henderson, R., & Robertson, M. (1999). Who wants to be an entrepreneur? Young adult attitudes to entrepreneurship as a career. *Education + Training*, *41*(5), 236–245. https://doi.org/10.1108/00400919910279973
Hurmerinta, L., Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E., & Hassett, M. E. (2016). TEMPUS FUGIT: A Hermeneutic Approach to the Internationalisation Process. *Management International Review*, *56*(6), 805–825. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11575-016-0303-x
Hutchinson, K., Alexander, N., Quinn, B., & Doherty, A. M. (2007). Internationalization Motives and Facilitating Factors: Qualitative Evidence from Smaller Specialist Retailers. *Journal of International Marketing*, *15*(3), 96–122. Retrieved from http://content.ebscohost.com/ContentServer.asp?T=P&P=AN&K=26169033&S=R&D=bsh&EbscoContent=dGJyMNXb4kSeqa44y9f3OLCmr1CeprNSs6m4Ta%2BWxWXS&ContentCustomer=dGJyMPGqtU%2B3prFJuePfgeyx44Dt6fIA
Hytti, U. (2010). Contextualizing entrepreneurship in the boundaryless career. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, *25*(1), 64–81. https://doi.org/10.1108/17542411011019931
Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional Selves: Experimenting with Image and Identity in Professional Adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *44*(4), 764. https://doi.org/10.2307/2667055
Ibarra, H., & Barbulescu, R. (2010). Identity As Narrative : Prevalence , Effectiveness , and Consequences of Narrative Identity Work in Macro Work Role Transitions. *Source: The Academy of Management Review Academy of Management Review*, *35*(1), 135–154. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/27760044
Johansson, A. W. (2004). Narrating the entrepreneur. *International Small Business Journal*, *22*(3), 273–293. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242604042379
Jones, M. V., Coviello, N., & Tang, Y. K. (2011). International Entrepreneurship research (1989-2009): A domain ontology and thematic analysis. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *26*(6), 632–659. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2011.04.001
Jones, M. V, & Casulli, L. (2014). International Entrepreneurship: Exploring the Logic and Utility of Individual Experience Through Comparative Reasoning Approaches. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 45–69. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12060
Karp, T. (2006). The inner entrepreneur: A constructivistic view of entrepreneurial reality construction. *Journal of Change Management*, *6*(3), 291–304. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697010600876864
Keupp, M. M., & Gassmann, O. (2009). The Past and the Future of International Entrepreneurship: A Review and Suggestions for Developing the Field. *Journal of Management*. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308330558
Knight, G. A., & Liesch, P. W. (2015). Internationalization: From incremental to born global. *Journal of World Business*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2015.08.011
Kyvik, O., Saris, W., Bonet, E., & Felício, J. A. (2013). The internationalization of small firms: The relationship between the global mindset and firms' internationalization behavior. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *11*(2), 172–195. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-013-0105-1
Leitch, C. M., & Harrison, R. T. (2016). Identity, identity formation and identity work in entrepreneurship: conceptual developments and empirical applications. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *28*(3–4), 177–190.

https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1155740
Madsen, T. K., & Servais, P. (1997). The internationalization of Born Globals: An evolutionary process? *International Business Review*, *6*(6), 561–583. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0969-5931(97)00032-2
Mathews, J. A., & Zander, I. (2007). The International Entrepreneurial Dynamics of Accelerated Internationalisation. *Source Journal of International Business Studies*, *38*(3), 387–403. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4540430%0Ahttp://about.jstor.org/terms%0Awww.jibs.net
McAdams, D. P., & McLean, K. C. (2013). Narrative Identity. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *22*(3), 233–238. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721413475622
McDougall, P. P., & Oviatt, B. M. (2000). International Entrepreneurship: the Intersection of Two Research Paths. *Academy of Management Journal*, *43*(5), 902–906. https://doi.org/10.2307/1556418
McGaughey, S. L. (2007). Hidden ties in international new venturing: The case of portfolio entrepreneurship. *Journal of World Business*, *42*(3), 307–321. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2007.04.011
Meijers, F. (1998). The development of a career identity. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, *20*, 191–207. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005399417256
Nielsen, S. L., & Lassen, A. H. (2012). Identity in entrepreneurship effectuation theory: A supplementary framework. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, *8*(3), 373–389. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-011-0180-5
Nummela, N., & Welch, C. (2006). Qualitative research methods in international entrepreneurship: Introduction to the special issue. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *4*(4), 133–136. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-007-0009-z
Ochs, E., & Capps, L. (1996). Narrating the Self. *Source: Annual Review of Anthropology Annu. Rev. Anthropol*, *25*(25), 19–4319. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2155816
Oparaocha, G. O. (2015). SMEs and international entrepreneurship: An institutional network perspective. *International Business Review*, *24*(5), 861–873. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2015.03.007
Oviatt, B. M., & McDougall, P. P. (1994). Toward a Theory of International New Ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *25*(1), 45–64. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/154851
Oviatt, B. M., & McDougall, P. P. (2005). The Internationalization of Entrepreneurship. *Source Journal of International Business Studies*, *36*(1), 2–8.
Oviatt, B., & McDougall, P. (1994). Toward a theory of international new ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *25*(1), 45–64. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490193
Pentland, B. T. (1999). Building process theory with narrative: From description to explaination. *Academy of Management Review*, *24*(4), 711–724. https://doi.org/10.2307/259350
Perks, K. J., & Hughes, M. (2008). Entrepreneurial decision-making in internationalization: Propositions from mid-size firms. *International Business Review*, *17*(3), 310–330. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2007.10.001
Ruzzier, M., Antoncic, B., Hisrich, R. D., & Konecnik, M. (2007). Human capital and SME internationalization: A structural equation modeling study. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, *24*(1), 15–29. https://doi.org/10.1002/cjas.3
Sarasvathy, S. D. (2001). Causation and Effectuation: Toward a theoretcal shift from

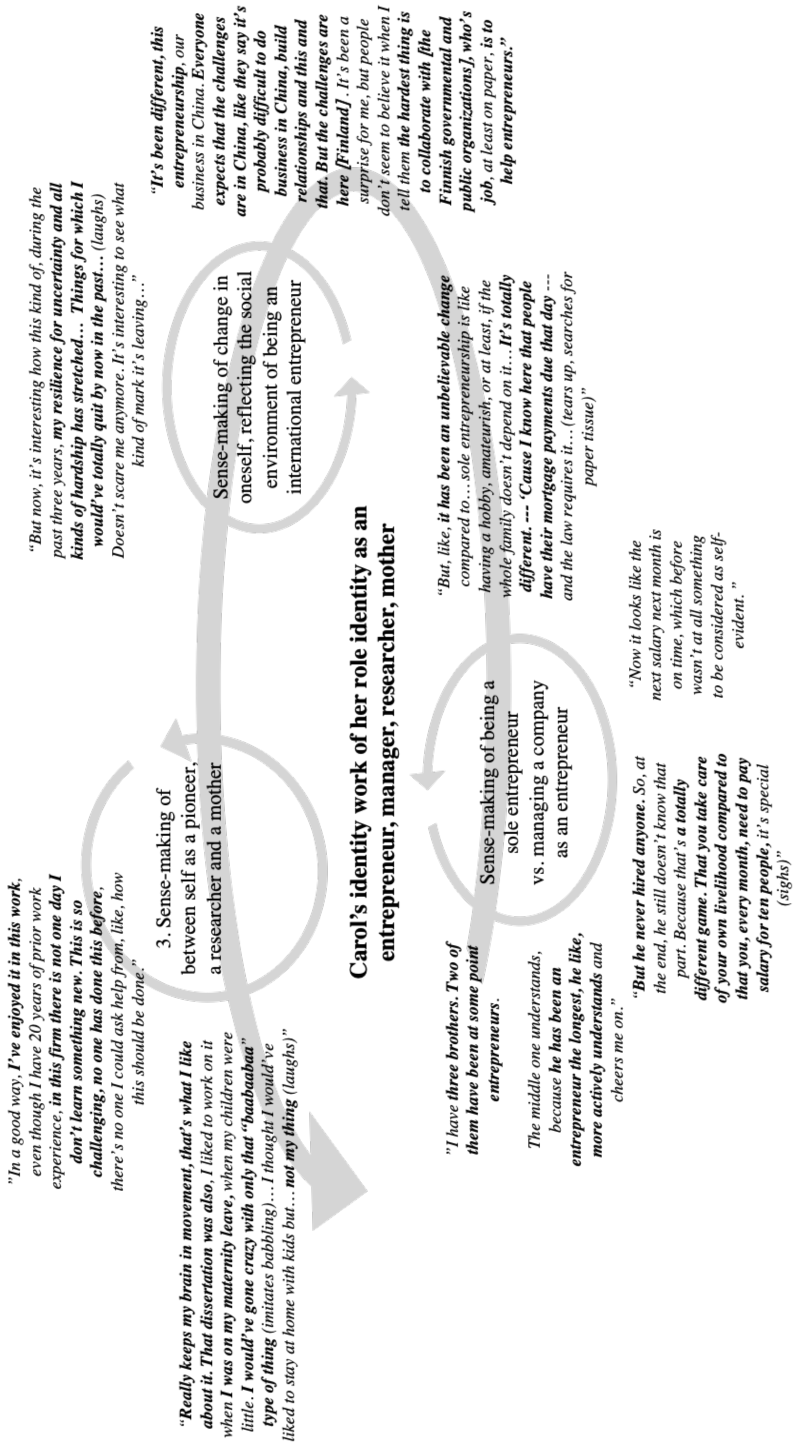
economic inevitability to entreprenurial contigency. *Academy of Management Review*, *26*(2), 243–263. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/259121
Sarasvathy, S. D. (2004). Making It Happen: Beyond Theories of the Firm to Theories of Firm Design. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *28*(6), 519–531.
Sarasvathy, S., Kumar, K., York, J. G., & Bhagavatula, S. (2014). An Effectual Approach to International Entrepreneurship: Overlaps, Challenges, and Provocative Possibilities. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 71–93. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12088
Shane, S. (2000). Prior Knowledge and the Discovery of Entrepreneurial Opportunities. *Organization Science*, *11*(4), 448–469. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.11.4.448.14602
Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The Promise of Entrepreneurship as a Field of Research. *Source: The Academy of Management Review*, *25*(1), 217–226. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/259271
Stewart, W. H., Watson, W. E., Carland, J. C., & Carland, J. W. (1999). A proclivity for entrepreneurship: A comparison of entrepreneurs, small business owners, and corporate managers. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *14*(2), 189–214. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026(97)00070-0
Sullivan, S. E., & Arthur, M. B. (2006). The evolution of the boundaryless career concept: Examining physical and psychological mobility. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *69*(1), 19–29. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2005.09.001
Tams, S., & Arthur, M. B. (2010). New directions for boundaryless careers: Agency and interdependence in a changing world. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *31*(5), 629–646. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.712
Terry, D. J., Hogg, M. A., & White, K. M. (1999). The Theory of Planned Behaviour: Self-identity, Social Identity and Group Norms. *The British Journal of Social Psychology*, *38*, 225–244.
Warren, L. (2006). Book Review: Narratives of Enterprise: Crafting Entrepreneurial Self-Identity in a Small Firm. *International Small Business Journal*, *24*(6), 666–667. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242606069852
Welch, C., & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E. (2014). Putting Process (Back) In: Research on the Internationalization Process of the Firm. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *16*(1), 2–23. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12006
Williams, C. C., & Nadin, S. J. (2013). Beyond the entrepreneur as a heroic figurehead of capitalism: Re-representing the lived practices of entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *25*(7–8), 552–568. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2013.814715
Yitshaki, R., & Kropp, F. (2016). Motivations and Opportunity Recognition of Social Entrepreneurs. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *54*(2), 546–565. https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12157
Zahra, S. A., Korri, J. S., & Yu, J. F. (2005). Cognition and international entrepreneurship: Implications for research on international opportunity recognition and exploitation. *International Business Review*, *14*(2), 129–146. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2004.04.005

Appendix I

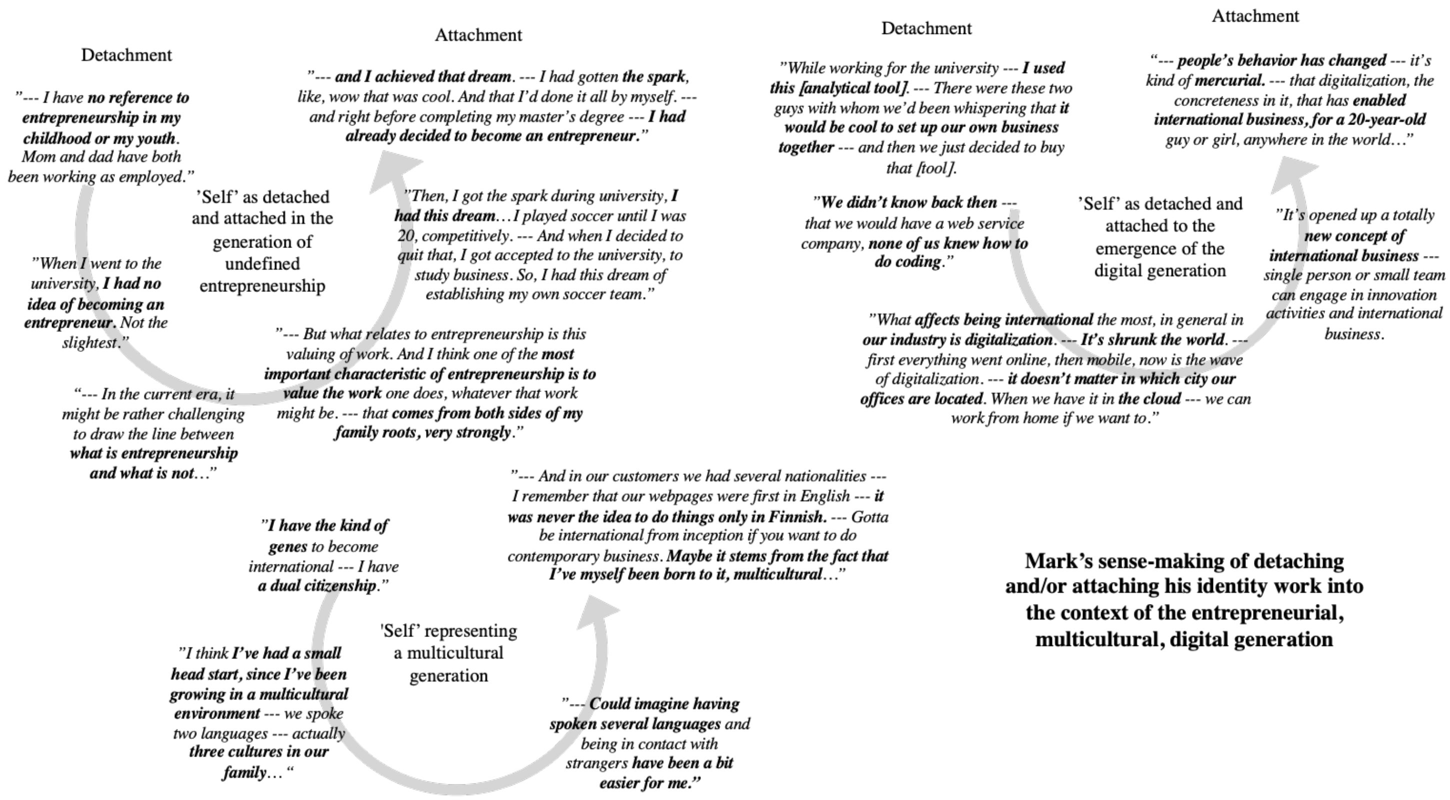


Milo's identity work during his burnout experiences: orientation and boundarylessness between me and firm-level success
1. Burning out and uncontrollable challenges trigger identity work
2. Longing for freedom and giving meaning to one's orientation towards independency
3. Second burn out concretizing the consequences of physical and psychological boundarylessness of the work
4. Finding meaning and motivation for the work in times of struggle
"You have to realize, you may be talented, yes, but it's not enough. You have to work hard as hell, you need luck, and good contacts ---"
"--- Up to some point it is enough, but when there are huge challenges, or nothing happens after all, and you feel that your own capabilities are not enough."
"Until then I'd benefitted of my parents' cheering and said that how I'm talented as hell (laughing)."
"I think that the first burnout came because I was gradually growing up and realized that I'm not the most special person in the world."
"After that summer the phone didn't ring anymore. I faced the reality. --- Nothing happened, no gigs as a freelancer. Got money from nowhere."
"Then I just got this feeling that I had to take everything into my own hands. --- I knew nothing of being an entrepreneur, but I thought that it was time to be one's own man. --- and half a year later the company was running."
"--- to have the ultimate freedom, the kind I had when I was a child. I can just come up with a new thing and then go do it. Maybe it's that mentality that is important for me to maintain. The original reason I founded this company and the productions. I could've set up a sole trader, but --- as a limited liability company you can do bigger things."
"I realized it went to my body, that it wasn't only mental anymore ---
But, I think it's kind of a re-bound. When you once have it (burnout), it's easier to go there again, when you work too much ---
This time, before US… It's not always self-esteem related. --- I lacked the feeling of meaningfulness in it. --- The time just ran and ran."
"But I think, in a way, those trips to US have brought me back that kind of childhood enthusiasm for this stuff. --- To get that meaning into what you do, you have to find ways to balance it. And to do things that are meaningful and for me they are those bigger dreams."
"For me it helped when I talked with this older woman in L.A. --- she's very well networked there --- I told her my dilemma --- that I'm already 30 and still haven't had my break through. She said, they'd call me a junior. That it's around 40 they are getting their hands on it. It gave me hope --- time hasn't run out, like I tend to think."

Appendix II


"In a good way, I've enjoyed it in this work, even though I have 20 years of prior work experience, in this firm there is not one day I don't learn something new. This is so challenging, no one has done this before, there's no one I could ask help from, like, how this should be done."
"Really keeps my brain in movement, that's what I like about it. That dissertation was also, I liked to work on it when I was on my maternity leave, when my children were little. I would've gone crazy with only that "baabaabaa" type of thing (imitates babbling)…I thought I would've liked to stay at home with kids but… not my thing (laughs)"
3. Sense-making of between self as a pioneer, a researcher and a mother
"But now, it's interesting how this kind of, during the past three years, my resilience for uncertainty and all kinds of hardship has stretched… Things for which I would've totally quit by now in the past… (laughs) Doesn't scare me anymore. It's interesting to see what kind of mark it's leaving…"
Sense-making of change in oneself, reflecting the social environment of being an international entrepreneur
"It's been different, this entrepreneurship, our business in China. Everyone expects that the challenges are in China, like they say it's probably difficult to do business in China, build relationships and this and that. But the challenges are here [Finland]. It's been a surprise for me, but people don't seem to believe it when I tell them the hardest thing is to collaborate with [the Finnish governmental and public organizations], who's job, at least on paper, is to help entrepreneurs."
Carol's identity work of her role identity as an entrepreneur, manager, researcher, mother
"I have three brothers. Two of them have been at some point entrepreneurs.
The middle one understands, because he has been an entrepreneur the longest, he like, more actively understands and cheers me on."
Sense-making of being a sole entrepreneur vs. managing a company as an entrepreneur
"But, like, it has been an unbelievable change compared to… sole entrepreneurship is like having a hobby, amateurish, or at least, if the whole family doesn't depend on it… It's totally different. --- 'Cause I know here that people have their mortgage payments due that day --- and the law requires it… (tears up, searches for paper tissue)"
"But he never hired anyone. So, at the end, he still doesn't know that part. Because that's a totally different game. That you take care of your own livelihood compared to that you, every month, need to pay salary for ten people, it's special (sighs)"
"Now it looks like the next salary next month is on time, which before wasn't at all something to be considered as self-evident."

Appendix III



Publication III

Korhonen, S.

Founders, generations and the evolving dialogue of international entrepreneurship

Accepted for publication in the proceedings of the 45th European International Business Academy Conference in December 13–15, 2019, Leeds, UK, through a double-blind peer review of the full paper.

Founders, generations and the evolving dialogue of international entrepreneurship

Satu Korhonen

LUT University, School of Business and Management,
P.O. Box 20, 50381, Lappeenranta, Finland

ABSTRACT

This study serves the purpose of exploring further the different generations of individuals as (potential) international entrepreneurs (Coviello, 2015; Liu, Zhu, Serapio, & Cavusgil, 2019). It is designed to investigate qualitatively the perceptions of the international entrepreneurship (IE) phenomenon among both founders of early internationalized ventures and university students, who have embarked on a master's degree study program combining international business and entrepreneurship. It poses an initial question of 'how do (potential and current) founders of early and rapidly internationalized ventures representing different generations – the age-based cohorts sharing a common location in the social historic process (Mannheim, 1952) – reflect on the motivations and meaning of IE?' and aims to add novel insight to the historically contextual embeddedness of individuals engaged in the IE practices. Findings of the analysis suggest the subtle change in the meaning of IE through the lens of three different generations, namely 'Baby Boomers', 'Generation X' and 'Millennials'. Analysis of their narrative sense-making (indicating towards certain mental frames) suggests differences in the meaning of IE across the three generations as reflections of the differences in each generation's experience in the socio-economic environment of their working life. Based on the findings, the study provides some insights in understanding changes in IE and its trajectories. While we may have an intriguing and active Millennial generation of founders enacting the current advancements in the global economy and making sense of their venturing as making a social impact, the two previous generations, Baby Boomers and Generation X, as well as the coming one (i.e. Generation Z), add their interpretations to the dialogue of how individuals understand and engage with IE over time. In conjunction, perceptions of individuals seem to shift from being a rather lonely, pioneering type of journey towards becoming understood as a more collective and holistic phenomenon. The findings encourage us to explore further the generational 'transmission' as in the previous generations laying "ground work" for the subsequent generations and how founders construct meaning for IE in 'dialogue' with the previous and emerging generation as an inclusive and collective effort.

Keywords: *international entrepreneur; generational context; cross-generational sense-making*

INTRODUCTION

A recent review article of Liu et al. (2019) points out a critical knowledge gap in our research and theorizing on international entrepreneurship (IE): the different generations of international entrepreneurs. Furthermore, both entrepreneurship and IE scholars regard it timely to recognize entrepreneurs for their generational context (Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Liu et al., 2019), that is, to acknowledge individuals for their experiences in a common location in a historic time period and with a distinct consciousness that is the result of important events of that time (Joshi, Dencker, & Franz, 2011).

While organizational behavior studies have been theorizing on generations and the individuals in organizational contexts (i.e. employees) (Joshi et al., 2011), entrepreneurship research has a limited knowledge base on entrepreneurs in terms of their generational characteristics and experiences relative to motivation and behavior (Liu et al., 2019). In particular, there is a shortcoming of studying Millennial entrepreneurs' and their experiences relative to IE, which as such delimits us in terms of developing our theorization of the phenomenon in a more timely manner and as a dynamic phenomenon relative to the rapidly transforming global environment (Liu et al., 2019).

Over the years, as the accumulating bulk of IE research on individuals and firms has remained cross-sectional and largely focusing on the features of the firm-level phenomenon, we are encouraged to seek out more understanding of what goes on over (historical or chronological) time (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Gray & Farminer, 2014). Furthermore, the scarcity of knowledge of generational undercurrents having their influence on how we perceive the IE phenomena and relative behavior, and points out that our theorization has paid limited attention to the values, beliefs, expectations and preferences that are disseminating within and/or across generations of current international entrepreneurs and the potential future founders (i.e. entrepreneurship students).

Whereas this study regards historically and contextually-bound sense-making as relevant part of analyzing individuals and their perceptions of IE (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Rasmussen, Koed Madsen, & Evangelista, 2001), it also engages in a dialogue with certain historical underpinnings influencing our understandings of "doing" IE, in other words, how international entrepreneurs understand their work in practice. Moreover, embarking from viewing 'generations' as having agency in organizational settings and being linked through the transmission (or descent) of ideas, values, skills and knowledge (Joshi et al., 2011), this study sets out to unravel some of the experiences and sense-making of generations (namely the 'Millennials', 'Generation X' and 'Baby Boomers') and how the different interpretations may inform our evolving theorization of IE – and as such have an influence on its implications in practice. The findings in this study suggest Millennial founders as motivated by their opportunities to drive global change simultaneously with digitalization. Leveraging on their ventures founded in contexts of diverse and multidisciplinary groups of friends, they advocate sustainably designed international working culture and feature what we could perhaps characterize as "intellectual philanthropy". While we may have an intriguing and active Millennial generation of founders enacting the current advancements in the global economy and making sense of their venturing, the two previous generations, Baby Boomers and Generation X, as well as the coming one, Generation Z, add their interpretations to the "dialogue" of how individuals understand and engage with IE over time.

In light of the practical implications of the current study and the future research directions stemming from the present approach, this study points at the criticality of the generational context in IE studies. Especially, this study draws attention to the relevance of informing and engaging stakeholders of new ventures (i.e. investors, consultants, policy makers, media) in dialogues on how to approach and speak to and of founders of different generations: their varying value-compositions and expectations of their international entrepreneurial careers ought to be seen as to foster the spectrum of IE while finding intersubjective grounds of experience and sense-making across generations. Moreover, this study takes notion of the increasing internationalization and mobility of entrepreneurial careers, and advocacy of cultural and ideological diversity in various social contexts of previous age-cohorts. To build further on these insights, it may be suggested that generations of international entrepreneurs are to be studied longitudinally as well as with mixed-methods approaches: we ought to increase our knowledge of both the generalizable views and tendencies of generations as well as more fine-grained understanding of the individual and organizational level phenomena going on in and between generations of IE practitioners.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

So far in IE research, we are drawn to the multitude of questions of "what", how", "what", "when", "where" and "why" in our search for meaning in the phenomena found at the interplay between entrepreneurship and internationalization processes (Zahra & George, 2002). Whereas IE is often understood as a firm-level behavioral process, encompassing the organizing and becoming process of legal entities of organizations that internationalize early on (i.e. international new ventures and/or born-globals), it is the "who" that has served as the primary interest for studying the founding and emergence of the IE phenomenon (Coviello, 2015; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994).

Nevertheless, according to Gartner (1988) "who is the entrepreneur?" has been the wrong question. Instead, the interest ought to be found in the "role they play", or their behavior in context, which enables organizations (the firm-level "who") to come into existence (e.g. Jenks, 1950; Van de Ven, 1980). Such perspective on individuals' interaction with their surrounding environment, which over time enables organizations to come into existence, contests especially the traits and characteristics view of entrepreneurs – a research stream that has perhaps slowly been drying out of content (Gartner, 1988). Furthermore, making sense of entrepreneurs and their behavior requires understanding of how they make sense of themselves and their conduct in their context (Drakopoulou Dodd, 2002; Hytti, 2010). This notion in contemporary entrepreneurship research has encouraged to further study also the IE phenomenon from the entrepreneurs' sense-making perspective (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Rasmussen et al., 2001). Accordingly, approaching the sense-making by which international entrepreneurs themselves integrate different, possibly disparate elements of their past and present (Weick, 1995) in their international (new) venturing process and their subjective perceptions of the phenomenon, ought to lead us towards understanding more of the processes and contexts where IE organizations emerge and come into existence in one form or the other (Hannibal, 2017; Korhonen & Leppäaho, 2019; Rasmussen et al., 2001).

In line with the quest of understanding the sense-making of (international) entrepreneurs, and the acknowledgement that international entrepreneurial opportunities and processes are fundamentally human-led processes, while rooted in the external environment and unfolding over time, IE research has been investigated through two intrinsically related streams – cognitive characteristics and mechanisms, and behavioral characteristics and mechanisms (Liu et al., 2019; McDougall-Covin, Jones, & Serapio, 2014). Such approaches have allowed researchers to start exploring e.g. entrepreneurs' motivations to internationalize and furthermore capture their mental models (Zahra, Korri, & Yu, 2005) and pursuit of international opportunities relative to their social contexts (Mainela, Puhakka, & Servais, 2014; Sarasvathy, Kumar, York, & Bhagavatula, 2014). Furthermore, when positioning entrepreneurs as actors embedded in their social environment (Thornton, 1999; Zahra et al., 2005), we are on the way to advance more comprehensive understanding of the international entrepreneurs' cognitions and behavior for their reflections of their experiences, environment (McDougall-Covin et al., 2014) as well as one's interaction with it (Weick, 1995). Whereas the (social) environment of international entrepreneurs continue to shape their cognitive processes (Zahra et al., 2005), where such developments may eventually lead to behavioral patterns (Liu et al., 2019), we ought to hold that entrepreneurs' cognitions also remain somewhat environment-constrained (Oyson & Whittaker, 2015).

Acknowledging the generational context of international entrepreneurs' experiences

As a phenomenon, entrepreneurship as a process unfolds on various contexts (Welter, 2011), and the impact of the socio-cultural, political and economic environment is recognized as an enabler or constrain to entrepreneurial behavior (e.g. Bowen & De Clercq, 2008; Hayton, George, & Zahra, 2002; Jafari Sadeghi, Nkongolo-Bakenda, Anderson, & Dana, 2019). Previous research holds that managerial cognition and behaviour is influenced by managers' experiences and environmental conditions (March & Simon, 1958; Weick, 1995; Wood & Bandura, 1989). In entrepreneurs' cognitive processing, or in other words, sense-making, the external cultural, institutional, political, and technological environments play their critical role (Thomas & Mueller, 2000). Moreover, one's education, expertise and past experiences of success and failures shape perceptions of the future approaches such as internationalization strategies (Kropp, Lindsay, & Shoham, 2008; Zahra et al., 2005). As such, contextually-bound experiences are important resources for managers in the internationalization process (Cavusgil, 1980), though they also "condition entrepreneurs to gather and analyze certain types of information" (Zahra et al., 2005: 136). Furthermore, seeking to explain why an international entrepreneur focuses on particular ideas or opportunities in an international market and ignores others, requires us to appreciate entrepreneurs' history as well as their interactions and experiences with other (social) environments (Zahra et al., 2005).

The above discussions in IE literature on entrepreneurial behavior can be further linked to the way individuals (and their firms) make sense of, process and use information (Acedo & Jones, 2007). Furthermore, entrepreneurs' behaviors are governed by one's cognitions, motivations, and perceptions (Wood & Bandura), which are then further determining their responses to their external (social) environments (Gersick, 1991) as well as their definition of entrepreneurial opportunities (Zahra et al., 2005). Moreover, related (managerial) cognitions and capabilities have long been observed from the individual demographic profile (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), recently also indicating towards the notion of age (Kropp et al., 2008) and generation as an important element of and background for cognitive approaches and behavioral studies of (potential) international entrepreneurs (Coviello, 2015; Coviello & Tanev, 2017; Liu et al., 2019).

Furthermore, studies align with founders of early and rapidly internationalized new ventures (and/or these ventures) to be both produce of and active agents in their (national) socio-economic environments (Etemad, 2018; Lubinski & Wadhwani, 2019; Zahra, Newey, & Li, 2014). Derived from above and from a constructivist point of view, we could say that founders gain their cognitive frames (Krueger, 2007) and become entrepreneurial actors as culture-historically embedded social agents (Mainela, Puhakka, & Sipola, 2018) in the stream of their experiences (Jones & Casulli, 2014; Morris, Kuratko, Schindehutte, & Spivack, 2012), as they keep making subjective sense of life-events, episodes and activities they have engaged in over time and across borders (Korhonen & Leppäaho, 2019). Nevertheless, related to such "becoming and being" processes of international entrepreneurs, we are still very limited in terms of understanding how their *generational contexts* matter in IE and are related to individual level processes, namely the behavioural developments of founders' and their sense-making based on their experiences in more the long term (Liu et al., 2019).

In application of a sociological perspective, and building on a more longitudinally oriented view of the IE phenomenon (Coviello & Jones, 2004), this study sets out to further acknowledge the individuals' (i.e. founders') 'generational locations', which is initially suggested to explain difference in one's modes of behavior, feelings and thoughts (Mannheim, 1952). Furthermore, an individual's generational context is seen to influence one's perceptions of who they are and what they do in the stream of chronological time (Gelderen & Masurel, 2012). Especially the formative experiences during the time of youth would be highlighted as the key period in which social generations are formed (Pilcher, 1994; 483). In a way or another, such context also limits them to "a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them for a certain historically relevant action" (Mannheim, 1952: 291).

Just as any individual's interpretations of one's surroundings and embedded phenomena (i.e. IE) stem from one's sense-making of past and present experiences and "future images" in a historically unfolding time context (Burke, Joseph, Pasick, & Barker, 2009; Weber & Glynn, 2006), also the "knowledge domains and new theories emerge iteratively through succeeding generations of scholarly dialogue" (McDougall-Covin, Jones, & Serapio, 2014: 3). As such, the 'practice' of IE (which scholars of the field assumedly more or less seek to understand) becomes negotiated and interpreted by the individual agents engaged in the everyday activities (i.e. IE processes) through the lens of their own generation, providing its temporal contexts and dialogues (Liu et al., 2019).

METHOD

The initial research question of this study – 'how do (potential and current) founders of early and rapidly internationalized ventures representing different generations – the age-based cohorts sharing a common location in the social historic process (Mannheim, 1952) – reflect on the motivations and meaning of IE?' – aims to add novel insight to the historically contextual embeddedness of individuals engaged in the IE practices. Moreover, to advance our understanding of the generational embeddedness of both practical and theoretical discourses of IE, this study adopts an initially historical point of view (Vaara & Lamberg, 2016). The novel and explorative nature of the study ask for a qualitative approach to investigate the experiences and relative sense-making of the key individuals (Coviello, 2015) engaged in the IE process currently (founder-CEO) and the one's perceiving IE as an option for their career context (students).

Data

The main data consists of the narrative sense-making of both current (founder-CEOs) and potential international entrepreneurs (i.e. university students). The qualitative data onto which this study is based on consists of two complementary elements. Firstly, 19 founder-CEOs were interviewed for their personal journey in close engagement with the assumedly dynamic process of new venture creation and simultaneous internationalization (Rasmussen et al., 2001; Hurmerinta, Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, & Hassett, 2016). All of the interviewees were of the same nationality, sharing a similar country context, i.e., the small open economy in Scandinavia from which they initially set out to venture internationally. To receive the personal accounts of the international entrepreneurs' experiences and first-hand sense-making regarding the years prior to and early into their venturing, the data was generated through open-ended narrative interviews (Riessman, 1993). Each of the interviews was conducted on a one-on-one basis by the same interviewer. The interviews were audiotaped, duration of each ranging from 50 minutes to 2 hours and 26 minutes. This data makes up the core part of our analysis and was to capture the individual level narration and sense-making (Johansson, 2004; Riessman, 1993) of the IE phenomenon and relative career transitions (LaPointe, 2010). Table 1 gives a brief overview of the interviewees.

Secondly, 33 master's level students between ages 21 and 33 (enrolled in a degree programme in International Business and Entrepreneurship in the same country context as the interviewees) were asked to write about their paths to studies in the field of entrepreneurship and international business, and to provide their personal experiences and definitions of the IE phenomenon. This literary data was gathered with the aim to shed light over the "pre-IE" perceptions, where one is not yet fully engaged in the processes, yet, has assumedly gained some preliminary ideas or experience of the concept "in theory". This complementary student data, totaling 24 pages of their insights, was of a diverse group of individuals in terms of their national background, hence, we cannot as such compare these individuals for their generational profile (e.g. for their different cultural, political etc. settings of growing up). Yet, the responses across the data point out the initially global outlook of their mindsets and careers, thus worth having a preliminary exploration of students relevant to international entrepreneurial education.

Seeing international entrepreneurs as well as students in our data for their "membership" in their own "age-cohorts" – their generation – the preliminary analysis would position them into groups of people born and raised in similar general chronological, social and historical contexts (Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2009).

Table 1: Interviewees by generation

Founder	Generation	Education	Core are of business
Catherine	Baby Boomer	Economics	Software
Isaiah	Baby Boomer	Engineering	Management consulting
Theodore	Baby Boomer	Engineering	Industrial machine manufacturing
Calvin	Baby Boomer	Physics	Industrial services
Edward	Baby Boomer	Engineering	Hardware and software
Richard	Baby Boomer	Engineering	Industrial machine manufacturing
Morgan	Baby Boomer	Engineering	Industrial technology manufacturing
Irma	Generation X	Economics	Tourism
Ricky	Generation X	Economics	Software
Adam	Generation X	Engineering	Industrial technology manufacturing
Michael	Generation X	Physics	Industrial technology manufacturing
Kevin	Generation X	Economics	Information technology development
Jay	Millennial	Economics	Software
Malcom	Millennial	Media	Media production
Levi	Millennial	Natural sciences	Software
Seth	Millennial	Engineering	Software
Elena	Millennial	High school	Consumer goods production
Ronny	Millennial	Economics	Marketing
Vivian	Millennial	Chemistry	Package manufacturing

The so-called 'Baby Boomers' (born between 1946 and 1964) and 'Generation Xers' (born between 1965 and 1980) are the most prominent generational cohorts in the second half of the 20th century (Kropp, Lindsay, & Shoham, 2008; see also O'Bannon, 2001). To keep with the recent terminology chosen in IE literature (Liu et al., 2019), we call the generational cohort born in the 1980s and 1990s, following the Generation X, the Millennials. As in the ongoing discussion in generations research, this study acknowledges that "*generational cutoff points aren't an exact science. They should be viewed primarily as tools --- But their boundaries are not arbitrary. Generations are often considered by their span, but again there is no agreed upon formula for how long that span should be"* (pewresearchcenter.org, 2019). Hence, the year spans of the generations used in this study align with the select source and in agree on a relatively general view of generations defined in the 20th and the turn of 21st century.

Analysis

The preliminary analysis of the interview data was done to gain a comprehensive overview of the "narrative", or retrospective sense-making (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005) in each individual interview. The sense-making in the accounts were viewed in relation to the background and social context in which one had initially engaged in founding and internationalizing one's own company or one's international career path. Furthermore, the analysis traced down the individuals' motivations and reasoning that had led one to become an international entrepreneur or, in the case of students, to study international business and entrepreneurship.

With the specific interest of this study, the analytical process would further look into the individual's generational context – their differences and similarities – across their narrative sense-making. The analysis was done to find more of the experience and positioning of oneself among peers of similar age and people representing another generation i.e. around the time of realizing more clearly one's career aspirations, future objectives, and/or more specifically actualizing the founding and internationalizing of one's company. The analysis of the narrative data picked up on the meaningful socio-cultural and/or political (temporal) contexts and content around certain (life-)events and experiences relative to the venturing processes. This could become more apparent when one was referring to the overall social "atmosphere" of work and business (Järvensivu, Nikkanen, & Syrjä, 2014) or certain international work or entrepreneurship related norm through idiomatic expressions and so forth, which indicated towards a culturally coloured "stock of narratives" (Hänninen, 1999). The analysis of the student data furthermore aimed to break down different motivations for IE related education, talk of values as well as one's sense-making of the features of IE from a "non-experienced" perspective.

FINDINGS

Findings of this study are spread out in a generational spectrum and indicate towards the variety of experiences, motivations as well as interpretations of the phenomenon in different generational context. By contrasting the interviews on each other with a generational lens, findings suggest both subtle transmissions as much as transformations of certain meanings of these international entrepreneurial experiences in "long run". In this section, the first part will go about with the findings derived from the interview data of founders belonging to the different generations. The latter part of findings will embark on an initial 'dialogue' of features of IE found across the different age-cohorts taking into consideration the findings of both the interview data and student data.

Founder-CEOs in the stream of generational experiences

In exploring the interviews with the founders as representing their generations, the focus was on the sense-making of events, experiences, motivations and behavioral orientations related to their international venturing that seemed relevant in the light of their age and the context they placed the narration into (i.e. societal and/or political developments, (sub)culture, working career etc.), and could be further interpreted as meaningful generation-related themes. Based on the analysis, certain interesting features emerged from their accounts that seemed to be indicative to some shared or common perceptions of the IE phenomenon when categorizing the founders according to their age-cohorts – the Millennials, Generation X and Baby Boomers. A summary of these features can be found in Appendix 1.

The legacy of the lonely riding Baby Boomer founders

According to the findings of the interviews of the Baby Boomer founders (born between 1946 and 1964, founded their ventures around the 70s or after), IE seems to translate into practically oriented "career moves" and perhaps quite individual learning-by-doing processes of finding the right ways to promote and grow international business both within an established company (as an employee) and as an entrepreneur. In the case of the interviewed international entrepreneurs of this generation, all seemed to have from early adulthood established an 'intrapreneurial' attitude towards working life. Such attitude was intertwined with increasing work-related international tasks in their early career employments. These features were then further grounding their worldview of business (and life in general) into a global one. Together with their innate respect for good education, substance knowledge was the starting point for these founders when they begin talking about their journey of becoming an international entrepreneur.

As a different generational context from today's digitalized on with the access to all the information in the world, these founders had started their early careers in a time of little or no advantage from the internet. For example, traveling without the continuous support from advanced information technology and their home organizations (or even families), these entrepreneurs developed perhaps a more independent way of exploring the possibilities pre-conditioning their international entrepreneurial venturing in the future. While developing as professionals, these founders had their share of experiences of employer corporations that began to internationalize through sales. Catherine's expatriation tells a story of a determined "international intrapreneur" of her own time, though not yet being one as in the definition we may be applying today:

Catherine: *So, when I was abroad the first time, in Germany or Canada, it was letters that we were writing. And it took one, two weeks before it reached home, and my parents of course didn't know for weeks where I was or what was going on. It was a totally different time. --- And then phones started to come, mobile phones were only in the 80s. --- at that time there were no internet --- So in the host country, they hadn't of course heard of us before. --- We had no expatriation program, no expertise. I was given two weeks to stay in a hotel and then I was to find myself an apartment.*

For most of these individuals, exporting and/or international sales management had had their influence on how these individuals viewed their journey to set up their own venture that had an international orientation from more or less inception. "Learning through experience" had become a meaningful practice early in their internationalizing careers and hence marked their values, such as being humble to learn. In his experience, Morgan had learned to adjust and communicate in foreign languages as to complement his expertise when necessary:

Morgan: *I couldn't speak one word in a foreign language --- and then I started at an international company. I was working at the domestic market. And one beautiful day they said there was demand in the neighboring country and I was going to be put there. --- I said I couldn't speak the language at all. 'Hell, you'll learn it.' – There I learned the languages and… we travelled like devils, but it was only fun.*

While these founders did not completely discard education and training on culture and languages as useless, many of them criticized a particular well-known media influencer and entrepreneur of their generation lecturing on entrepreneurship and international business.

Isaiah: *Like they would've let me go abroad before they had put me into this culture training. --- it opened up a little, --- but it wasn't the book, it was the experience.*

Morgan: *--- the generation that is now working has been travelling and been abroad in a totally different way than in when I started in the beginning of 90s, or late 80s. No internet, nothing, so back then these nonsense courses… If you hadn't taken one, you weren't supposed to leave the airport.*

More emphasis was put on the real and tough experiences – including the learning they had had themselves or testified in the past – rather than someone telling them what to do or how to behave exactly. Such had also its effect in the current leadership these international entrepreneurs were practicing and their experience in the line of generations.

Morgan: *They said they would send the project engineer to Alaska, to the rough circumstances to assemble the product with the client. He'll surely internationalize there [laughs] I've had the same kind of mindset.*

Theodore: *And these sort of courses [mentions the same consultant's name as three other interviewees of the same generation] should be banned from entrepreneurs --- those speeches only make the listener depressed. While they should be talking how you could easily compensate you deficiencies like language skills or other kinds with the younger generation or other things by outsourcing and purchasing external resources.*

From this generation's kind of perspective, self-initiative and the underlying work ethics seemed to have been very meaningful for these entrepreneurs (comes through for example their idiomatic expressions on persistency), demonstrating perhaps also the legacy of hard-working, experience-based and persistent attitude demanded from the children of families still recovering from the rather recent wars in the country.

Generation X and the globalizing working context of entrepreneurship

From the interviews with international entrepreneurs representing the so-called Generation X (born between 1965-1980 and founded their ventures around the 90s or after), we can see a similar education-driven career outlook as the previous generation. Yet, this group seems to make sense of the internationalization journey more as a pursuit to "see the world" and an increasingly network-influenced endeavor. These founders seemed to have had either a personal, internal drive to expand their working environment internationally, or their international experts and colleagues in their business environment had more externally inspired them to pursue farther seas for work and market growth opportunities. In addition to this kind of pull from the "market" (i.e. the increasingly accessible global arena of work), their venturing process would early on acquire external international expertise and keep in value the knowledge of e.g. consultants, board members of extensive international experience or even the more current knowledge of students or fresh graduates of the younger generation:

Irma: *--- and in 2014, I met this guy, it was this kind of a networking event. And he seemed like a really good representative of his own generation, the kind you want to get to know. And we went to have coffee and thirty minutes into listening to me, he said, 'if you know all you say you do, you should set up this*

> *internet-based platform…' --- and my jaw dropped like 'of course, how did I not think of that, it's obvious!'. And like after half an hour he could point out such opportunity. --- I asked him to join, and he said 'sure' --- and then I persuaded a Chinese girl with a residence to join us.*

Rather critical points to note in this generations world of experience were their early and mid-career was the time of economic recessions in the small country. Irma, unlike many of her age, was lucky to start her career just before the worst times in the 90s: *"Fortunately, I applied and got a job just before the recession in the 90s. I went to work with the foreign trade association. --- I've got an exceptionally long working experience, many from my age group did not find a job for a very long time."* Later on, coming to the 21st century and another economic downturn, the downsizing of a large technology company (will call it Corporation X) – a significant employer in the country affected by the disruptive developments in the global market – left a severe number of experienced and competent people of the same generation without a job: *" --- it created a horrible situation here. Suddenly the labor market was an ungodly number of professional people --- the meaning of Corporation X for this country, in good and bad, couldn't be understood in any other country. --- Though I wasn't personally involved --- the connections spread everywhere."*

In the interviews, this prolonged time period becomes a point of sense-making of a shared experience in the network of this generation, and perhaps the values expressing both solidarity – the kind of "never leave a buddy behind" attitude – and a budding intergenerational respect in their venturing culture:

Adam: *And from the start I began to hire people I could really look up to. I trust into people's experience. The first one I hired was a sales manager, he also invested into the company. He was 57 years old, very international, half French, knew Chinese, French, Italian, German what not. --- and then another guy, very experienced, had his background in Corporation X. Corporation X had quite a rough time going, and stuff happened, and freed up so many experiences guys.*

Kevin had a personal experience from the same company, yet before its downsizing period. With his own narration, he makes a point of the generation's shared experiences – the preference of certain leading-edge companies as employees which, as a phenomenon, can perhaps be detected throughout our business history:

Kevin: *[After business school], I already knew I will become an entrepreneur. But I went to work for Corporation X. --- I ended up there, [Corporation X] was then, in the 90s, by far the best employer in the country you wanted to be employed by. --- I was there for a bit over two years before I left and founded my start-up.*

These founders had early on found their IE motivation from the developing cross-border oriented networks, which sets out a generational context of the developing international business environment. In their narration, there are traces of acknowledging cultural diversity as a value in their venturing and promoting integration in their business environment. Related to the need for such integrative mindset, we may note the historical time period of establishing the European Union (though not touched upon in the interviews). In the interview accounts, either related to personal or more organizational interests to understand more of different cultures and their underlying value-compositions in international business contexts, it seemed to have meant a more profound reflective process than for the previous generation of founders.

Another feature worth pointing out in this generation's venturing are times of a deeper realization of what it would mean to work in and with developing countries – perhaps seen as the trendy new markets – and its broader implications to doing business in the globalizing world. Irma's personal IE journey points out the increasing interest and meaning of cultural sensitivity during the beginning of 2000s, which in her eyes, was not yet acknowledged seriously enough in the discussion of international business in her home country. Hence, she found her own personal values, endeavors for self-development and expertise, as the guiding influences in her international entrepreneurial journey.

Irma: *I was interested in this [old East Asian cultural phenomenon] and went to Asia in 2005. --- these kind of things were labeled as nonsense. --- there I realized how these things must have their influence in doing business as well. I had followed the developments in the world economy and new China was going to be the next "ruler". – In a short time, we were to know a lot about a culture which we then knew almost nothing about.*

To these founders, their IE journey has been paved with learning of the dimensions of the new internationalizing working context, and as such there seems to be common takeaways what it needs to be an entrepreneur in the current globalizing and digitalizing world. Whereas the pace is ever-increasing yet very uncertain, one cannot resort to only previous knowledge and experience. These founders, like Ricky and Irma below, express explicitly their interest in self-development and personal growth in terms of their dynamic and changing working environment:

Ricky: *I don't leave things half-way very easily. Related to behavior, one of my favorite phrases I use, describing a technology firm, is 'you got to keep running to even keep still'. --- and also 'contentment in present state disables development'. --- I used to write a motivational journal, sometimes still, --- never was it money --- but to go to an event, learn something new, or to finalize something.*

Irma: *--- though I have over 20 years of experience working, I haven't had one day leading this firm when I didn't learn something new. This is so challenging, no one has ever done this before, there's no one I could ask from 'how should I do this?'.*

Perhaps Irma, as a member of the Generation X, also quite well describes the ever-deepening feeling of the next generation(s).

Millennials and the budding sense of intellectual philanthropy in IE

The Millennials (born between 1981-1996, founded their ventures after 2000) have undoubtedly enjoyed the advantage of being born into a time, when the globalizing media has enabled the kind of "education" and development of one's international orientation through different (social) media. Whereas it is perhaps already taken for granted that the Millennials as well as the subsequent generations represent the "digi-native" generations (at least the members of the developed countries) and therefore perhaps more agile and savvy in exploring and exploiting technology, we ought to dig a little deeper into what are the possible meanings of these developments for the individual international entrepreneurs.

Across the interviews, the digitalization of "everything" in the context of being an international entrepreneurship is made sense in various ways. Ronny make sense of the increasingly globalized media in the 1990s and early 2000s having raised them towards a global orientation from inception, whereas the previous generations were much more limited in the content and knowledge they would have access to:

Ronny: *Because, after all, I've grown up under the influence of the global media. And followed music, or movies, or culture, almost more of that international kind than domestic. It's (international business) been the only option. Actually, I have one rule. I don't assume any business as if it was domestic. I wouldn't make any sense to me. It's good things here (domestic market), but it's not that interesting actually. ---- My parents didn't speak English, basically. From there (family) I haven't gotten anything, we didn't travel much either. No real examples from there, if we don't count the influence of media.*

While the developments and applications of different globalized and social digital platforms have become perhaps the norm in terms of firm-level development, it seems to also have its implications for a founder to find one's international venturing meaningful. It seems that these Millennials were emphasizing the possibilities of self-actualization as a profound motivational aspect of their international venturing. In addition to these motivations of doing something meaningful or related to self-actualization, there seems to be also a shared motivation to develop one's international leadership and ability to take initiative. For example, Seth's venturing reflects the rapidly changing and dynamic environment of going IE in the 21st century: his internal drive is to keeping moving and all the time finding new, personally interesting things to do, and one instance has the impulsive expansion of the firm into a new international location. Furthermore, his personal approach to leadership is in the "numbers", which then adds another layer into his generational IE profile:

Seth: *And the feeling of getting bored has always driven me further. --- usually it is two three years and something will be changed. Like, when one of the partners were sent to abroad and not the whole sales operations are led from there. He was in that room across the hall couple of months ago, but now he's there. --- I absolutely believe in leading with data. I like to work with numbers, I look at all kinds of silly graphs and see if there are correlations between things. --- which group is doing this and that, and what should be changed, and is it perhaps a leadership issue, less motivated employees in one unit or unsatisfied people. And I try to find the root causes based on that numerical data.*

Moreover, linked to the global digital resources this generation has been grown into at the time of launching their businesses, Ronny talks about another way – video on demand and subscription-based streaming – to increase possibilities to get "personal coaching" from international entrepreneurs of different industries – the various global thought leaders of today. In a way, such has perhaps begun to disrupt the traditional idea of support for entrepreneurs and their professional development, such as business consultants, public advisors etc.

Like Ronny, Levi also raises up the influence of the real time role models (i.e. Elon Musk, Richard Brandson etc.) as well as the unknown founders in world-wide reality-TV shows (i.e. Shark Tank), whose practices and approaches reported and speculated in media are largely beginning to define the millennials and the next generation's idea of global entrepreneurship and leadership in the global start-up context. The current generation's role models of IE and the idolization of their behavior is influential with the rapid dissemination of digital content and the masses moving any kind of information, such as certain ideological or political agendas, as fast as it is now. While individual's may not "idolize" the same people, the message is clear: they have both their positive but also negative impact in and over time on our views of IE. Below, Levi's experiences speak for his take on the rapid and profound changes in the globally arching perception of entrepreneurship that can happen.

Levi: *It was the end of 2012, when [a founder-CEO of a world leading mobile gaming company] was giving a speech --- it's important to note how much influence these kinds of stories of entrepreneurship have. --- and many of these [globally recognized entrepreneurs of current and earlier generations] have for example dyslexia --- how to maintain this belief that it'll work out someday, sooner or later. --- nowadays you can create a global brand within a second, if you understand the logic of social media and how people behave. We succeeded in that, we could combine our own message with this [globally spreading ideological phenomenon].*

Related to motivations for their venturing, this founder generation share values such as sustainability (not only environmental or "green" values, but also in terms of business culture and working life) and inclusiveness, which seems to integrate different "worlds of thought". Leveraging on their multi-discipline approaches and teams (across industries and other contexts) while building a relatable story for the company, the Millennial generation seems to encompass a shared drive to have a positive global impact and the people behind the cause.

Levi: *You have an opportunity to make an impact. I had the same feeling, when I understood that we could build this kind of business… I could be a teacher, positively influence the worldview of the younger generation, or I could build a vision that will have an impact on the views of hundreds of millions or billions of people. Do I have the moral obligation to do that? --- then, I realized, people don't listen to firms, they always listen to people. --- people want to know who's behind it all.*

This feature was visible also in the "technology oriented" and younger members of Generation X, for example Kevin has a strong attitude towards pursuing social change through his entrepreneurial efforts. Furthermore, it seems to be the digitalization that enables not only change and knowledge transfer but also a bridge between sharing motivations, values, visions and missions across generations:

Kevin: *I wanted to utilize my previous ventures for positive change and it's also the aim in the current venture, I try to use the same mechanisms that are used in the current social networks and games --- it's kind of like the theme of me* *doing this. --- Facebook and Google and these do it, and that's why they're in such a huge role in this. In the game, there needs to be players who are interested in creating a positive future outlook. Because if we don't have those, we miss the chance to make a better future for our children.*

Other findings which seem to separate the Millennial generation from the previous two seems to relate to the kind of "social orientation" at founding (and international entrepreneurial venturing in general) as well as their underlying values related to their internationalization. What appears more prevalent in the Millennials' narration than in the Generation X and Baby Boomers narration is the desire to be a co-entrepreneur instead of doing something completely on their own – or for their selves. These entrepreneurs stress the fact they had founded their company either with or got encouraged by one or more friends, clients, former colleagues, or their spouses. Jay had the joy of meeting his future business partners during working for his previous employer:

Jay: *--- and at a client firm I had two guys with whom I had been buzzing how awesome it would be to set up a firm. Our collaboration had been… there was something unique in the way we worked together.*

This indicates us towards their desire to pursue and do entrepreneurship meaningfully both personally as much as collectively. Also, without setting up too many boundaries between "me" and "them", their collective talk shows also through their sense-making of their work in cooperation with other ventures in their network that had been established by their former university mates and peers from (social and private) other contexts. In some of the cases, we could even talk about "friend-preneurship". For Malcom, his entrepreneurial path started emerging from a long-term friendship and co-creative playing in early childhood:

Malcom: *Since childhood, during primary school --- with a friend, Paul, with whom I've known since I was four… He's a partner in the company at the very moment. With him, we used to come up with these [role games with self-composed music and scripts].*

Perhaps such long-term friendships, mutually growing and deepening interests along with sufficient time and room for play – a privilege of certain generations? – have created an unjudging context for fostering less bounded entrepreneurial mindsets. While seeing the added value of multi-disciplinary relationship (either due to business or free time activities) that cross both national, cultural, knowledge and generational borders, in their narration, IE begins to construct of the blurred boundaries of organization, individuals' personal lives and their various relational contexts. Overall, the Millennial founders were looking into having teams around them which would have a diverse outset. Not only would it gather the composition of certain competence and capabilities, but to push for what we could call their "mental growth":

Elena: *--- I find it absolutely good that we have such a diverse team. --- Everyone's not these extroverted marketing people, but we also have these analytic and very detail-oriented ones… And then we have these creatives, who paint with a big brush. And people of different age. A very large range so that we get good* *conversations and so many different opinions. We don't rule anyone out of it. It helps when your team is so diverse.*

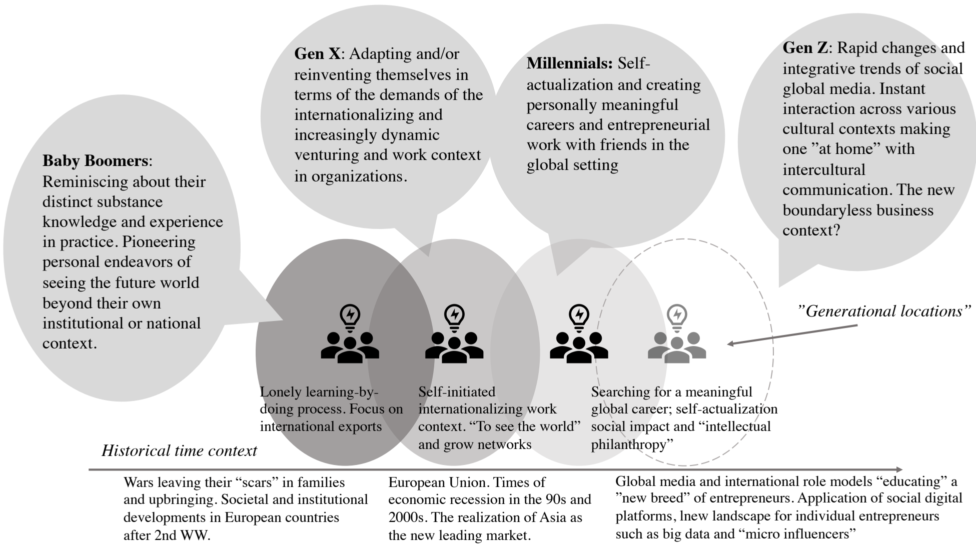


Figure 1. Reflections of the 'transmission' of motivations and meaning of IE across the generations

<u>The past and the future of international entrepreneurship (education) – towards a cross-generational sense-making of the phenomenon</u>

The above findings may indicate us further towards the willingness to transmit values and the sort of "better practices" across generations as well as processes of re-thinking them. To get a better sense of this, we ought to further trace founders' past experiences when both the individual-level and organization-level team processes have triggered profound and sometimes intense self-reflection and learning from cross-generational contexts (see Figure 2). Not only does it happen from former generations to the next, but also from the younger generations to the previous ones:

Vivian (Millennial): *It's a huge asset. Haven't crossed swords though we have been fighting over things and extensively disagreed… And, as they are, innovation developers are never in mutual agreement, they're always disagreeing. --- disagreement means we take all the perspectives into account. Super important. --- Self-reflection is important, should be to everyone. All entrepreneurs, all who are in leadership positions.*

Irma (Gen X): *And I thought to myself --- the world is digitalizing and my own age group is like thinking of getting retired, they don't even all agree on going to Facebook* *or… whatever it was back then. Back in the days, my ex-partner announced he wouldn't start using email, said, they could call him on the phone if they had something important to say. --- But it was fascinating how extensive the change was. No one could have imagined how it would change our world… And I thought to myself, no, I'm not going to start thinking of retirement yet. Somehow, I needed to get into this digital life. And then I began networking with people much younger than my own age.*

Moreover, the student data analyzed for comparison adds insight to how these transmissions of "practices" and subtle change of meaning of IE may become relevant in terms of educating next generations to obtain skills and capabilities for international entrepreneurial careers.

The data suggests that individuals *potentially* pursuing a career engaged in IE, or individuals currently seeking to find their own path in the globalized working life in 2010s see importance in studying more in order to gain both general as well as more specific substance knowledge in both international business and entrepreneurship. Not surprisingly, the student's had gained their motivation to pursue a master's degree in international business and entrepreneurship in order to possess a higher degree that was perceived to have value in the current globalized job market. The international master's degree they had chosen was generally seen as a valid path to both the theoretical base, good networks and further experience in their pursue of a career in either an international company or an entrepreneurial journey of their own. What comes to their perceptions to IE in particular, the most prevalent way the student's defined what IE was, was done in terms of exports and imports as we see in Will's definition. Others, like Ollie, defined it primarily as entrepreneurial actions and behavior crossing or exchanging between cultural and national contexts:

Will: *I define international entrepreneurship as business which includes operations across borders. It can be importing, exporting or both. Nowadays a business can be international, via internet, without stepping even one foot outside the national borders.*

Ollie: *International entrepreneurship is about entrepreneurial actions taken in more than one country or between one or more nationalities. It takes place in any international context, geographical or cultural, where business can be conducted.*

While such perceptions do not add to our interpretation of the phenomenon, they ground the other attempts taken to define IE from a more holistic perspective. Some of the students were expressing their awareness of the dynamism of the phenomenon as well as the implications of the contextual forces to the individuals conduct of business in the complex social, cultural and institutional environments. While Siri acknowledges that "*international entrepreneurship is a subject that links many disciplines together such as psychology and sociology ---"*, Alex defines IE in terms of the interpersonal aspects of the phenomenon:

Alex: *International entrepreneurship in my opinion is first of all collaboration and cooperation within various cultural contexts. Being successful in the field should mean that one has a good understanding of intercultural communication and is able to create important connection with people around the world. Understanding global language of economics and talking same* *language to business players around the world increases the chance to get successful in international business.*

Hence, it is not only about the content one gains and/or studies but the environment in which such content is provided and especially the social interaction within the learning environment, which puts one's expanding knowledge into practice already during one's studies:

Pepe: *--- this can help me maneuver through international markets and lay a foundation on how to expand globally whilst being an entrepreneur. --- I was quite confident that I could contribute my experience to fellow peers and also learn from their experiences and insights and until date the experience has been a very good one, I see things very differently compared to before.*

Jill: *International entrepreneurship is about understanding, making compromises and sometimes you need to adjust your mind set to totally different level. You need to be very emphatic, but you still need to keep in mind who you are and what do you are and where are you from because national identity shouldn't be lost in process of internalization and globalization. People [of my own country] are still quite reserved and not aware about other cultures and they have lot of prejudices. I can see this in everyday life and I would like to change that because I think that we need to be more open to the world if we want to succeed in the future.*

Moreover, perceiving IE more holistically and considering more of the dynamic individual–context relationship (in which generational context plays a role), we see perhaps more than ever how we are to cultivate international entrepreneurship with people-to-people skills and facilitate change processes through intersubjectivity.

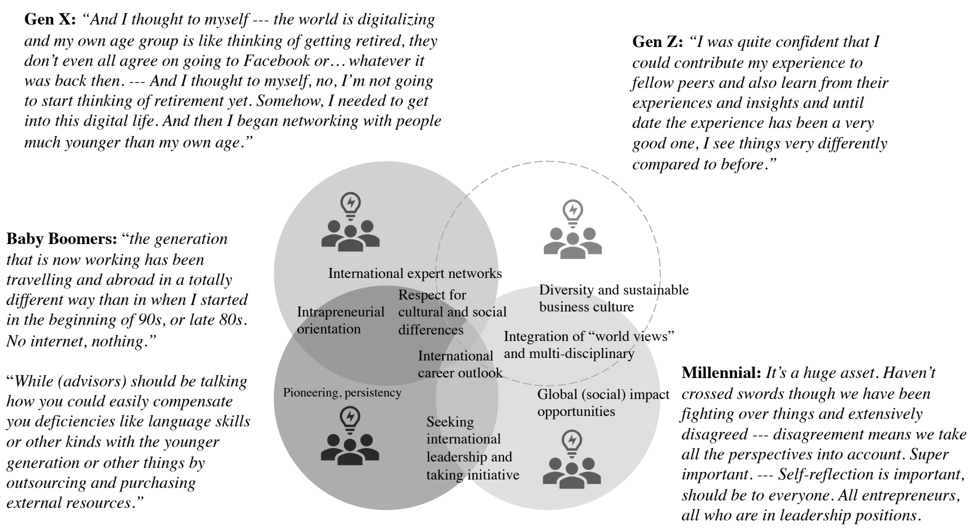


Figure 2. A 'dialogue' across different generations of (potential) international entrepreneurs

In the light of the whole dataset, findings take us into a more generation-related discussion and viewing of what, why and how students, workers and/or entrepreneurs need prior to and during international entrepreneurial processes, both individual and firm-level. For example, knowledge of the generational shifts in values, perceptions and motivations promoting either education-based or experience-based learning should perhaps start to inform us better on how we design of education programs as well as what is provided in public advisory and support organizations.

Ann: *International entrepreneurship should be a default mindset when you become an entrepreneur in this country. It's not enough to do domestic business if one aims to maintain such a well-fare state. I keep internationalization in high value and as something that in our current time of the internet is at least possible.*

Theodore: *And this I would say, this mental growth, being a good objective as it is, but to develop in alignment with the demands of the company's growth. It's another thing what these supporting organizations and advisors say --- they talk too much about growth, whereas growth shouldn't be an end in itself, nor exporting.*

Like above, contrasting e.g. a Millennial student's view of IE as a phenomenon relevant to the whole society with a Baby Boomer founder's contemplation of IE as firm growth through internationalization, we may gain a better perception of how to navigate and explore more openly the variety of presumptions as well as narrow-to-wide perceptions of IE across different practitioners and stakeholders of the phenomenon.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Like in any other research domain, both theories and perceptions of international business (Perchard, MacKenzie, Decker, & Favero, 2017), as much as those of entrepreneurship have emerged and developed in the course of history (e.g. Schumpeter, 1934; Smith, 1776). Descending from its "parent disciplines" international business (Cantwell, Dunning, & Lundan, 2010; Jones & Khanna, 2006) and entrepreneurship (Baker & Welter, 2018; Welter, 2011), also IE is an inherently historically contextual phenomenon (Mollan, 2018). Now, coming to the current century, our understanding of IE has become framed by a more or less behavioral oriented view of the phenomenon. Moreover, as the "…the discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities—across national borders—to create future goods and services" (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005: 540), the definition of IE has become to implicitly express the dimension of *sense-making as an integrated element of the phenomenon* – a point of departure taken in this study.

The findings of this study suggest how the (subsequent) generations of IE practitioners are in an implicit 'dialogue', pointing out the importance of understanding our globalizing and digitalizing world of entrepreneurial agency and the key actors' (here: founders) sense-making as embedded in their generational contexts. As such, practitioners' intertwined generation-related sense-making feeds into our theorizing as one of the "pre-conditions" that ought to be taken into consideration in our study of IE. Furthermore, if seen as a socially constructed context for IE, the dialogue within and across different generations enact the transmission, disruption and re-thinking of the meaning of IE and the sense-making of individuals as members of their own age-cohort occur. Based on our data, the individuals' perceptions indicate towards the generational "baton-passing" and subsequent changes in understanding the process of becoming and being an entrepreneur in the globalizing world. E.g. over time, former stressing on the importance of education may feed into the more self-initiated developmental paths of international entrepreneurial careers and vice versa. While Baby Boomers have perhaps been internalizing the increasing importance of international education and work experience while they started off their careers, Generation X – and now, perhaps even more so, the Millennials – have already grown into taking the 'international' aspects of their entrepreneurial careers more for granted. In the future though, we may need different forms of "international education" or even interpretations of "international experience" in order to stress issues that rise from the increasingly boundaryless IE context where country-borders seem to have less and less relevance and in which business cultures merge into new common understandings and social goals at the level of individuals and organizations.

Looking at different interpretations practitioners as well as individuals not (yet) international entrepreneurs themselves, we may start to recognize how (potential) international entrepreneurial individuals also transcend beyond current conceptualization of IE as an organizational phenomenon. In light of the findings, we can see how Millennial founders talk about self-actualization, personally meaningful careers and entrepreneurial work with friends in the global setting, whereas Generation X founders describe and adapt and/or reinvent themselves in terms of the demands of the internationalizing and increasingly dynamic venturing context. Baby Boomers on the other hand "reminisce" about their experiences as the ones starting off the kind of pioneering paths of IE and personal endeavors of seeing the future world beyond their own institutional or national context.

By offering novel insight on how individual level sense-making of generational contexts intertwine and matter when interpreting IE phenomenon, this study also advances our intersubjective-level understanding between individuals (Sarasvathy et al., 2014) who act upon their experiences of different historical and generational "locations" in time. Accordingly, this explorative study serves importance for founder-CEOs as well as potential entrepreneurs embarking into their careers with more understanding of different generations holding different motivations, values and orientations in their daily work engagements and/or e.g. taking agency in their networks. As such, the current study provides insight for educators, policy makers, organizations and their managers, as well as consultants with new means of taking into consideration the transmission and transformation of knowledge between and across international entrepreneurial generations. In addition, this study sets out to encourage deeper search into the trends emerging in the global context and developments (i.e. social, cultural, technological and ideological) that now implicitly influence generation-related sense-making, as some of them blurs the former operational boundaries between individual people, their firms as much as nations. For example, acknowledging of the meaning of social media in IE practices, it seems timely to explore further e.g. the age of "micro influencers" – those entrepreneurial individuals (e.g. on Instagram or Twitter) who have access to a vast number of people globally. These international entrepreneurial individuals can be assumedly enacting both the generational context as well as the global context in how international and entrepreneurial work and related aspects of it are thought of in the subsequent generations. Relatedly, perhaps studying the "polarization" or "bubble like" worldviews within and/or across generations of international entrepreneurs enhanced by e.g. different social media platforms (and the relevancy algorithm) or other forums gathering "like-minded" people would provide an interesting context for studying and understanding globally arching (social and/or institutional) entrepreneurship.

Through extending our theoretical approach to the IE phenomenon with a generational lens, we set out a launchpad for more thorough longitudinal and historical studies to explore the IE phenomenon both in time and over time (Hurmerinta-Peltomäki, 2003; Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014), interpreted by different generations (of individuals) and agents (i.e. founders, academia, country-specific institutions) enacting IE. From the suggested perspective, it is perhaps also timely to look further into the meanings different demographically bound international entrepreneurial "profiles" and/or identities constructed as embedded in the historically unfolding circumstances across both developed and more emergent economies. Accordingly, it is perhaps suggestable that generations of international entrepreneurs are to be studied with mixed-methods approaches to increase our knowledge of both the generalizable views and tendencies of generations as well as the more fine-grained nature of the individual and organizational level phenomena going on in and between generations of IE practitioners.

To summarize the above, the major contribution of this study stems from taking further the emergent discussion of how the generational context influences and transcends both theoretical interpretations and practical implications in our views of the IE phenomenon (Liu et al., 2019). As such, it is a novel exploration of generation-related sense-making of international entrepreneurs. Whether or not aware of one's agency embedded in one's generation and (critically) conscious of one's own location in a historic time period, new generations (i.e. entrepreneurs, CEOs, policy makers, educators, what not) are trying to "fit into existing traditions and social patterns and, in doing so, bringing about social change" (Joshi et al., 2011). Therefore, not only do practitioners need to become aware of their generation-related assumptions and world-views influencing their international venturing, arguably also we as a community of IE scholars should account this as a point of further reflexivity into our work and interpretations. Accordingly, in consideration of a "generational lens" in making sense of IE as a historically-bound and contextual phenomenon, the findings of this explorative study are an invitation to contribute further into the evolving "dialogue" between different historical contexts of theorizing of IE and to our cross-generational body of knowledge of IE in enactment of the course of our future theorization.

REFERENCES

Acedo, F. J., & Jones, M. V. (2007). Speed of internationalization and entrepreneurial cognition: Insights and a comparison between international new ventures, exporters and domestic firms. *Journal of World Business*, *42*(3), 236–252.

Baker, T., & Welter, F. (2018). Contextual Entrepreneurship: An Interdisciplinary Perspective. *Foundations and Trends® in Entrepreneurship*, *14*(4), 357–426.

Bowen, H. P., & De Clercq, D. (2008). Institutional context and the allocation of entrepreneurial effort. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *39*(4), 747–767.

Burke, N. J., Joseph, G., Pasick, R. J., & Barker, J. C. (2009). Theorizing Social Context: Rethinking Behavioral Theory. *Health Education & Behavior*, *36*(5_suppl), 55S-70S.

Cantwell, J., Dunning, J. H., & Lundan, S. M. (2010). An evolutionary approach to understanding international business activity: The co-evolution of MNEs and the

institutional environment. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *41*(4), 567–586.
Cavusgil, S. T. (1980). On the internationalization process of the firm. *European Research*, *6*, 273–281.
Coviello, N. E. (2015). Re-thinking research on born globals. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *46*(1), 17–26.
Coviello, N. E., & Jones, M. V. (2004). Methodological issues in international entrepreneurship research. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *19*(4), 485–508.
Coviello, N. E., & Tanev, S. (2017). Initiating a New Research Phase in the Field of International Entrepreneurship: An Interview with Professor Nicole Coviello. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, *7*(5).
Drakopoulou Dodd, S. (2002). Metaphors and meaning a grounded cultural model of us entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *17*(5), 519–535.
Etemad, H. (2018). The essence of entrepreneurial internationalization: Managing the dynamic complexity of interactive relationship and reflective adaptations. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*.
Gartner, W. B. (1988). “Who Is an Entrepreneur?” Is the Wrong Question. *American Journal of Small Business*, *12*(4), 11–32.
Gelderen, V. M., & Masurel, E. (2012). *Entrepreneurship in context* (Vol. 3.). Routledge.
Gersick, C. J. G. (1991). Revolutionary Change Theories: A Multilevel Exploration of the Punctuated Equilibrium Paradigm. *Academy of Managent Review*, *16*(1), 10–36.
Gibson, J., Greenwood, R., & Murphy, E. (2009). Generational differences in the workplace. *Journal of Diversity Management*, *4*(3), 1–8.
Gray, B., & Farminer, A. (2014). And no birds sing-reviving the romance with international entrepreneurship. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *12*(2), 115–128.
Hambrick, D. C., & Mason, P. A. (1984). Upper Echelons: The Organization as a Reflection of Its Top Managers. *Source: The Academy of Management Review*, *9*(2), 193–206.
Hannibal, M. (2017). Enacted identities in the university spin-off process—bridging an imaginative gap. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *15*(3), 239–265.
Hänninen, V. (1999). *Sisäinen tarina, elämä ja muutos*. Tampere: Tampereen Yliopistopaino Oy – Juvenes Print.
Hayton, J. C., George, G., & Zahra, S. A. (2002). National Culture and Entrepreneurship : A Review of Behavioral Research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *26*(4), 33–52.
Hurmerinta-Peltomäki, L. (2003). Time and internationalisation: Theoretical challenges set by rapid internationalisation. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *1*(2), 217–236.
Hurmerinta, L., Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E., & Hassett, M. E. (2016). TEMPUS FUGIT: A Hermeneutic Approach to the Internationalisation Process. *Management International Review*, *56*(6), 805–825. Hytti, U. (2010). Contextualizing entrepreneurship in the boundaryless career. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, *25*(1), 64–81.
Jafari Sadeghi, V., Nkongolo-Bakenda, J.-M., Anderson, R. B., & Dana, L.-P. (2019). An institution-based view of international entrepreneurship: A comparison of context-based and universal determinants in developing and economically advanced countries. *International Business Review*, *28*(6), 101588.
Järvensivu, A., Nikkanen, R., & Syrjä, S. (2014). *Työelämän sukupolvet ja muutoksissa pärjäämisen strategiat*. Tampere: Tampere University Press.
Jenks, L. H. (1950). Approaches to entrepreneurial personality. *Explorations in Economic History*, *2*(2).
Johansson, A. W. (2004). Narrating the Entrepreneur. *International Small Business Journal*, *22*(3), 273–293.

Jones, G., & Khanna, T. (2006). Bringing History (Back) into International Business. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *37*(4), 453–468.

Jones, M. V., & Casulli, L. (2014). International Entrepreneurship: Exploring the Logic and Utility of Individual Experience Through Comparative Reasoning Approaches. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 45–69.

Jones, M. V., & Coviello, N. E. (2005). Internationalisation: conceptualising an entrepreneurial process of behaviour in time. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *36*(3), 284–303.

Joshi, A., Dencker, J. C., & Franz, G. (2011). Generations in organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *31*, 177–205. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2011.10.002

Korhonen, S., & Leppäaho, T. (2019). Well-trodden highways and roads less traveled: Entrepreneurial-oriented behavior and identity construction in international entrepreneurship narratives. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*.

Kropp, F., Lindsay, N. J., & Shoham, A. (2008). Entrepreneurial orientation and international entrepreneurial business venture startup. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, *14*(2), 102–117.

Krueger, N. F. (2007). What Lies Beneath? The Experiential Essence of Entrepreneurial Thinking. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *31*(1), 123–138. Retrieved from

LaPointe, K. (2010). Narrating career, positioning identity: Career identity as a narrative practice. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *77*(1), 1–9.

Liu, J., Zhu, Y., Serapio, M., & Cavusgil, S. T. (2019). The new generation of millennial entrepreneurs: A review and call for research. *International Business Review*, 1–10.

Lubinski, C., & Wadhwani, R. D. (2019). *International entrepreneurship and business history*. (T. da S. Lopes, C. Lubinski, & H. J. S. Tworek, Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to the Makers of Global Business*. Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge.

Mainela, T., Puhakka, V., & Servais, P. (2014). The Concept of International Opportunity in International Entrepreneurship: A Review and a Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *16*(1), 105–129.

Mainela, T., Puhakka, V., & Sipola, S. (2018). International entrepreneurship beyond individuals and firms: On the systemic nature of international opportunities. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *33*(4), 534–550.

Mannheim, K. (1952). The problem of a sociology of knowledge. *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, 134–190.

March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (1958). *Organization*. Oxford: Wiley

McDougall-Covin, P., Jones, M. V, & Serapio, M. G. (2014). High-Potential Concepts, Phenomena, and Theories for the Advancement of International Entrepreneurship Research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 1–10.

Mollan, S. (2018). The Free-Standing Company: a "zombie" theory of international business history? *Journal of Management History*, *24*(2), 156–173.

Morris, M. H., Kuratko, D. F., Schindehutte, M., & Spivack, A. J. (2012). Framing the Entrepreneurial Experience. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *36*(1), 11–40.

O'Bannon, G. (2001). The Generation X Factor. *Public Personnel Management*, *30*(1), 95–110.

Oviatt, B. M., & McDougall, P. P. (1994). Toward a Theory of International New ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *25*(1), 45–64.

Oviatt, B. M., & McDougall, P. P. (2005). Defining International Entrepreneurship and Modeling the Speed of Internationalization. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *29*(5), 537–554.

Oyson, M. J., & Whittaker, H. (2015). Entrepreneurial cognition and behavior in the discovery and creation of international opportunities. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, *13*(3), 303–336.

Perchard, A., MacKenzie, N. G., Decker, S., & Favero, G. (2017). Clio in the business school: Historical approaches in strategy, international business and entrepreneurship. *Business History*, *59*(6), 904–927.

Pilcher, J. (1994). Mannheim's Sociology of Generations: An Undervalued Legacy. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *45*(3), 481–495.

Rasmussen, E. S., Koed Madsen, T., & Evangelista, F. (2001). The founding of the Born Global company in Denmark and Australia: sensemaking and networking. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, *13*(3), 75–107.

Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis (Vol. 30)*. Sage.

Sarasvathy, S. D., Kumar, K., York, J. G., & Bhagavatula, S. (2014). An Effectual Approach to International Entrepreneurship: Overlaps, Challenges, and Provocative Possibilities. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 71–93.

Schumpeter, J. A. (1934). Change and the Entrepreneur. *Essays of J. A. Schumpeter*.

Smith, A. (1776). *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. London.

Thomas, A. S., & Mueller, S. L. (2000). A Case for Comparative Entrepreneurship: Assessing the Relevance of Culture. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *31*(2), 287–301.

Thornton, P. H. (1999). The sociology of entrepreneurship. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *25*(1), 19–46.

Vaara, E., & Lamberg, J. A. (2016). Taking historical embeddedness seriously: Three historical approaches to advance strategy process and practice research. *Academy of Management Review*.

Van de Ven, A. H. (1980). Early planning, implementation and performance of new organizations. *The Organizational Life Cycle*, (83), 83–133.

Weber, K., & Glynn, M. A. (2006). Making Sense with Institutions: Context, Thought and Action in Karl Weick's Theory. *Organization Studies*, *27*(11), 1639–1660.

Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. Sage.

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the Process of Sensemaking. *Organization Science*, *16*(4), 409–421.

Welch, C., & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E. (2014). Putting Process (Back) In: Research on the Internationalization Process of the Firm. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *16*(1), 2–23.

Welter, F. (2011). Contextualizing Entrepreneurship—Conceptual Challenges and Ways Forward. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *35*(1), 165–184.

Wood, R., & Bandura, A. (1989). Social Cognitive Theory of Organizational Management University of New South Wales, *14*(3), 361–384.

Zahra, S. A., & George, G. (2002). International entrepreneurship: The current status of the field and future research agenda. *Strategic Entrepreneurship: Creating a New Mindset*, 255–288.

Zahra, S. A., Korri, J. S., & Yu, J. (2005). Cognition and international entrepreneurship: implications for research on international opportunity recognition and exploitation. *International Business Review*, *14*(2), 129–146. Zahra, S. A., Newey, L. R., & Li, Y. (2014). On the Frontiers: The Implications of Social Entrepreneurship for International Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *38*(1), 137–158.

Appendix 1. Findings of the generational features emerging in the interviews with the founder-CEOs

Features found across generations	Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964*)	Generation X (born between 1965-1980)	Millennials (born between 1981-1996)
Emerging (shared) experiences motivating one to pursue IE venturing	Substance knowledge and practice Work related short and long-term experiences abroad International sales	Education Self-initiated travelling "to see the world" International expert networks Market growth; added value	Search for a meaningful career; self-actualization International career outlook Seeking international leadership and taking initiative Global (social) impact opportunities
Emerging (shared) values underpinning IE venturing	Hard work, persistency Intrapreneurial orientation Respect for cultural and social differences	Cultural sensitivity and integration Solidarity Self-development	Diversity and sustainable business culture Inclusiveness Integration of "world views" and multi-disciplinary
"Social orientation" at time of founding and further	Sole-entrepreneurship	Sole or co-entrepreneurship; partnerships	Co-entrepreneurship
Historically-bound events, developments, turning points	The recent wars leaving their "scars" in families and upbringing Societal and institutional developments in European countries	European Union Times of economic recession in the 90s and 2000s Realization of Asia as the new leading market	Global media and the role models contributing to "education" of the generation The development and application of social digital platforms Big data vs. "micro influencers"

*) Years based on general categorization of Pew Research Center, https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/ft_19-01-17_generations_2019

Publication IV

Korhonen, S., Leppäaho, T., Amdam, R. and Jack, S.
The "Unwritten Will" in Interpersonal Network Ties: Founder Legacy and International Networking of Family Firms in History

Reprinted with permission from Palgrave Macmillan.
Accepted for publication in Palgrave Handbook on Family Firm Internationalization.
Forthcoming in Spring 2021, Palgrave Macmillan.

The "Unwritten Will" in Interpersonal Network Ties: Founder Legacy and International Networking of Family Firms in History

Korhonen, Satu*
Leppäaho, Tanja*
Amdam, Rolv**
Jack, Sarah***

*LUT University, School of Business and Management, P.O. Box 20, 50381, Lappeenranta, Finland; **BI Norwegian Business School, Nydalsveien 37, 0484, Oslo, Norway; *** Stockholm School of Economics, P.O. Box 650, SE-113 83, Stockholm, Sweden

Abstract

In this study, we explore the role of interpersonal network ties in the context of internationalizing family firms. Through two historical cases—Alhström and Serlachius—we study how the founder-entrepreneurs' domestic and international identity-based and calculative ties emerged and further evolved within and across country borders in the transitional incumbent–successor context. By using a longitudinal qualitative approach, we were able to build on the notions of "social legacy" of founders in family firms in conjunction with their interpersonal networks and the cultivation or disruption of the more or less embedded ties by their successors over an intergenerational period of time. Our contribution is found in illustrating how the different types of interpersonal network ties of the two founder-entrepreneurs embedded in historical contingencies together worked as the mechanism endorsing the founders' "social legacies" in the successor generations' international networking. On the basis of our findings, we introduce the concept of *"international networking legacy"*, which becomes considered by the next generation either as an advantage or a disadvantage for their own approaches to international networking.

Keywords: *interpersonal network ties; family firm internationalization; international networking; founder legacy*

Introduction

Interpersonal network ties, both domestic and international (Harris & Wheeler, 2005; Arregle et al. , 2007; Salvato & Melin, 2008; Zellweger et al., 2019), are important for providing guidance and support for family firms' internationalization processes (Arregle et al., 2012; Graves & Thomas, 2008; Kontinen & Ojala, 2012). Illustrative of this, the international networking activities of family firms (Kampouri et al., 2017; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014) are typically characterised by their embeddedness in an extended family context and network ties with high levels of trust, closeness and long-term commitment (Arregle et al., 2007; Roessl, 2005; Salvato & Melin, 2008; Zellweger et al., 2019). Such interpersonal ties take time and effort to develop into interorganizational ones (Greve & Salaff, 2003; Larson & Starr, 1993) and can be seen as either assets for or constraints on the firm's development (Kampouri et al., 2017)—when embedded in both domestic and international networks during the internationalization process (Leppäaho et al., 2018). There is, however, an emergent yet limited understanding about how these interpersonal ties emerge (Kontinen & Ojala, 2010) at the founder-level, how they take shape (Kampouri et al., 2017) and how they transition to the next generation (Shi et al., 2019).

As a further matter, recent literature addresses an underexplored connection between intergenerational succession patterns, including incumbent-successor dynamics, and internationalization of family firms in terms of the next-generation's utilization of the prior interpersonal networks in internationalization and their attitudinal commitment to it (Shi et al., 2019). Paying attention to the embeddedness of different network ties (Arregle et al., 2015) in conjunction with the continuity (Konopaski et al., 2015) and the "founder effect" in family firm evolution (Kelly et al., 2000; Hammond et al., 2016) when taking the business "from local to global" (Baù et al., 2017) highlights some underexplored aspects to consider.

Regarding the centrality of the individual actor, i.e., the founder-entrepreneur, in a venture's emerging and evolving networks (Hite & Hesterly, 2001; Coviello, 2006), this study embarks from prior notions that the founder-generation's "legacy" is an important grounding dimension in furthering the understanding of a firm's long-term behaviour and strategy (e.g., Ogbonna & Harris, 2001; Baù et al., 2017; Ahn, 2018). "Founder legacy" can be considered as what the founder-entrepreneur leaves behind and how he or she is remembered when no longer working in the family business (Baker & Wiseman, 1998; Harris & Ogbonna, 1999; Hunter & Rowles, 2005), whereas cultivating a "social legacy" of the founder often reflects the maintenance of strong social ties to the community (Hammond et al., 2016) and interest in certain noneconomic goals (Miller et al., 2003; McKenny et al., 2011). To our knowledge, founders' "social legacy" has not been previously discussed in the context of family firm internationalization and networks, though embeddedness of ties between individuals developing in emotional intensity and intimacy, and through reciprocal services (Granovetter, 1973) often mark family firm international networks (Arregle et al., 2007). A "legacy" perspective aligns with our longitudinal research context in which the family firms we study have been managed and developed into international ones over the course of multiple generations and can be seen as cultivating certain social identities within the family firm and their evolving networks (e.g., Jones & Volpe, 2011).

In this study, we examined the social network ties for the internationalization of family firms by focusing on how interpersonal ties (e.g., Hite & Hesterly, 2001) emerged and evolved in the transitional incumbent–successor context of international networking prior to our modern world international business context (Coviello et al., 2017) in a time when communication was limited to slow postal systems, travelling, face-to-face visits and interactions and, later, the telegraph. The research questions we pose are: 1) "Looking back in history, how did founders' interpersonal ties for internationalization emerge, evolve (and transition) to the next generation?" and 2) "How did the social legacy of the founder become manifested in the succeeding generation's networking?" We draw from the two historical cases—of two founders and their successors—of Ahlström and Serlachius, currently known as the two successful global firms Ahlstrom-Munksjö and the Metsä Group, respectively. Both firms have over time grown into large multinationals. The longitudinal qualitative data we draw on has been generated from public and private archives as well as secondary literary sources.

The contribution of this study lies at the intersection of the literature on family firm internationalization (see, e.g., Arregle et al., 2019; De Massis et al., 2018; Zellweger et al., 2019), international networking (see, e.g., Kampouri et al., 2017; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014), "founder legacy" (see, e.g., Harris & Ogbonna, 1999; Hammond et al., 2016; Baù et al., 2017) and the historical contextualization of internationalization and its micro-foundations including interpersonal network ties (Coviello et al., 2017; Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014). By exploring the emergence of international networking in family firms (Kampouri et al., 2017; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014) and the founder-entrepreneurs' interpersonal network ties within and beyond family and national borders (Leppäaho et al., 2018; Baù et al., 2019), we explicate their emergence and evolvement as both interpersonal identity-based vs. calculative (Hite & Hesterly, 2001; Larson & Starr, 1993) and domestic vs. international network ties (Kontinen & Ojala, 2010) and their influential role (Coviello, 2006; Elfring & Hulsink, 2007) for the family firms' early internationalization. Our findings highlight how these interpersonal network ties of the founders, embedded in the context of historical contingencies, serve as means to attract like-minded people, i.e., ties across industries, societal "elite" and ideological social circles, in addition to business opportunities i.e., new technology and finance. Furthermore, the multi-industry relationships they tied through acquisitions of new estates and factories domestically, established their positions nationally as well as internationally, through which they could draw new technology and machinery providers. Hence, these acquisitions and investments across industry borders through the individual's amalgam of interpersonal ties laid new groundwork for internationalizing the venture.

Then, we add to the understanding of how these interpersonal network ties evolve over time (Kampouri et al., 2017; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014), and contribute to the embedded continuity and evolution of family firms (Konopaski et al., 2015; Kelly et al., 2000; Hammond et al., 2016). With our longitudinal qualitative historical approach, we could pay attention to the intergenerational embeddedness of the family firms, which as a context has barely been discussed in the literature thus far (De Massis et al., 2018; Arregle et al., 2015). This allows us to see how the nature of both domestic and international interpersonal ties of the central actors over time evolved in the internationalization process of the family firms (Shi et al., 2019). With the acknowledgment of human relations as subject to historical contingencies, our historical approach adds to the longitudinal contextualization internationalization phenomena (Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014). Related to our "comparison" of the founders' and successors' ties and prevalent networking efforts, we highlight the manifestation and meaning of the founder's "social legacy" (Hammond et al., 2016; Harris & Ogbonna, 1999) in the incumbent–successor context of the Ahlström and Serlachius cases. As an advantage or disadvantage for the successor's international networking (Ellis, 2011; Kellermanns et al., 2012; Shi et al., 2015) and the family firms' internationalization (Hennart et al., 2019; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014), we suggest that the cases manifest founders' *international networking legacy*—a mechanism for developing a social legacy of internationalizing family firms.

Theoretical Framework

Interpersonal networks in family firm internationalization

The international business and international entrepreneurship research on networks (e.g., Coviello & Munro, 1997; Harris & Wheeler, 2005; Mustafa & Chen, 2010; Wright & Nasierowski, 1994) has recognised and conceptualised the important role of relationships—or ties—in the firm internationalization phenomenon (Ellis, 2000; Harris & Wheeler, 2005), as it is essentially a social process, not least in its early stages (e.g., Brydon & Dana, 2011; Byrom

& Lehman, 2009; Crick et al., 2006). A network, defined as *"a set of actors and some set of relationships that link them"* (Hoang & Antoncic, 2003, p. 167), develops according to the interactions taking place between an individual and others to whom he or she is connected. Whereas inter-organizational networks indicate the firm as the actor, in interpersonal networks the individual is the actor (Chetty & Agndal, 2008). From prior research we can see that interpersonal network ties emerge and develop both as formal and informal relationships in various contexts (Chetty & Agndal, 2008), and involve individuals embedding, i.e., increasing trust and commitment with each other, within a given network.

Internationalization literature finds that with regards to networks, interpersonal ties often *"offer access to their own network of relationships in other countries, from simple contacts to deeply trusted relationships"* (Harris & Wheeler, 2005, p. 189). In addition, such interpersonal relationships can be transformed into inter-organizational relationships, and vice versa (Hite & Hesterley, 2001; Chetty & Agndal, 2008). Prior literature has also pointed out that family firms in particular are able to compensate for most of their weaknesses—e.g., lacking financial resources and competence—with respect to internationalization through networks and derived social capital as family-specific resources, which can be categorized as both inter-organizational and interpersonal (e.g., Zahra, 2003; Arregle et al., 2007; Arregle et al., 2019; Calabrò & Mussolino, 2013). In addition, formation of non-kin relationships serves as an important dimension in the internationalization processes of family firms (Arregle et al., 2012; Graves & Thomas, 2008; Kontinen & Ojala, 2012). Overall, when discussing their international networking activities (Kampouri et al., 2017; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014), family firms are typically seen to obtain strong network ties with high levels of trust, closeness and long-term commitment (Arregle et al., 2007; Roessl, 2005; Salvato & Melin, 2008; Zellweger et al., 2019). The stronger ties are perceived to develop over time with respect to their emotional intensity and intimacy, and reciprocal services (Granovetter, 1973). On the contrary, weak ties would be those remaining as superficial, where *"the parties do not know each other well and are not emotionally close to each other"* (Söderqvist & Chetty, 2013, p. 539).

Founders and their interpersonal ties in identity-based and calculative networks

Generally, in the initial formation of a new venture's network relationships, the role of the founder-entrepreneur is regarded as central (e.g., Hite & Hesterly, 2001). The networks of the founder-entrepreneur at the interpersonal level are often seen as *"virtually synonymous with the firm's network"* (Hite & Hesterly, 2001), where *"the history of network ties shapes [the firm's] future"* (Sharma & Blomstermo, 2003, p. 749; Coviello, 2006), and consequently, its embedding in the networks between individuals (Granovetter, 1973). In general, embeddedness would describe the extent, nature, and depth of the entrepreneur's ties to the venturing environment (Anderson & Jack, 2002).

The nature of the founder-entrepreneur's initial relationships (or ties) may be generally broad, spanning informal and more formal situations (Anderson & Jack, 2002; Ellis, 2011; Harris & Wheeler, 2005). As they rarely have all the resources, experience, or full capabilities to create and facilitate their entrepreneurial activities, or develop their ventures, entrepreneurs must often rely on their interpersonal, usually social, networks (e.g., Anderson & Jack, 2002; Granovetter, 1985; Greve & Salaff, 2003). Therefore, embedding themselves in networks through various actions such as fundraising for community projects, membership in social clubs or attendance at social functions provides individual entrepreneurial actors with access to previously unattainable resources and assists them in building new networks (Anderson & Jack, 2002; Chetty & Agndal, 2008). Furthermore, the embedded ties (i.e., strong ties) developed over time are those with whom the entrepreneur more regularly discusses his or her business and where the relationships are tightly coupled amalgams of the personal and the professional (Uzzi, 1996; Jack, 2005).

As an assumption, founder-entrepreneurs choose their collaborators and develop interpersonal ties with them to gain access to external knowledge and learning, among other things, in assembling the resources to form and develop their firms (Hervas-Oliver et al., 2017). When looked at from an "egocentric network" perspective (Hite & Hesterly, 2001; Jones & Volpe, 2011), the founder-entrepreneurs' ties are motivated by different things, and—as we will see in family firms—not always only by the expected (economic) benefits. In this vein of the literature, "identity-based" networks are *"networks that have a high proportion of ties where some type of personal or social identification with the other actor motivates or influences economic actions*"(Hite & Hesterly, 2001, p. 278; see also Uzzi, 1996). These interpersonally unfolding networks are seen to be composed of stronger social ties high in closure and cohesion and stemming from pre-existing relationships with social, family or historically long-held sources (Larson & Starr, 1993; Walker et al., 1997). Such suggests that the identity of the ties—*who* are the ties?—matters more to the individual entrepreneur than the specific economic functions or resources that certain interpersonal relationships can provide to his or her firm. By contrast, calculative networks and ties suggest that the potential purpose and function of a network tie (*for what* is the tie?) is more important than the "identity" of the tie, and these are said to have the *"advantage of providing greater resource availability and mitigating more environmental uncertainty"* (Hite & Hesterly, 2001, p. 278; see Williamson, 1993). Unlike identity-based networks, calculative networks are said to be characterised by the dominance of weaker ties (i.e., more market-like than socially embedded), involving a larger and more diverse set of "work-based" ties (Hite & Hesterly, 2001, p. 279).

In contrast to the founder-entrepreneur's role in a family firm and its early stages, taking on a family business as a successor could be seen as a less uncertain task, one reason being the established network relations of the family in the focal industry and local community (Pearson et al., 2008) together with a sounder resource base (Sirmon & Hitt, 2003; Zellweger et al., 2011). However, despite prior acknowledgements of the importance of (interpersonal) networks in the international growth of family firms from one generation to the next (Shi et al., 2019) in conjunction with the centrality of founders' network ties in the internationalization process of ventures in general, more nuanced understanding of the role and formation of interpersonal ties and networks over time especially in family firms' internationalization appears limited (Kontinen & Ojala, 2011, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014). Therefore, we now turn to the literature on "founder legacy" as a basic element for a family firm's "social legacy" (Hammond et al., 2016) in order to explore the meaning of founder-entrepreneurs and their evolving interpersonal network ties in the context of family firms' international networking over time.

Legacy – From founders to family firms

Legacy, in terms suggested by Baker and Wiseman (1998), is what the founder-entrepreneurs leave behind and how they are remembered when no longer working in the business. When viewed as an individual-level construct, *founder legacy* can be traced back through psychology and literature on psychosocial development of the individual to a "generativity stage" (i.e., how to "make life count" through one's work career) during one's adult life (Erikson, 1963; see an integrative discussion in Hammond et al., 2016). Such a life stage is featured by one's desire to make a positive contribution to others in the future, whereas stagnation at this stage would lead to a lack of interest in leaving anything to subsequent generations (Hammond et al., 2016).

Furthermore, legacy is what an individual, family or firm stands for (Hunter & Rowles, 2005), and in family-firm context, may influence the long-term survival of a firm (Ahn, 2018). As a theoretical concept, legacy has frequently been proposed (if not tested) to be linked to important family-firm behaviours and described both as an antecedent and outcome of practices in such firms (Hammond et al., 2016). Moreover, in studies of family firms, there is evidence of the "founder effect" that succeeding generations mirror out of respect to the founders' visions and principles as they lead the firm and make key strategic decisions even long after the original founder is gone (Hammond et al., 2016; Kelly et al., 2000). At a strategy level, studies suggest that founder legacy exhibits an *"enduring influence of the initial strategic practice or ideology of the founder of an organisation over the actions of successive strategic decision makers following"* (Ahn, 2018, p. 2; see also Ogbonna & Harris, 2001) and is key to cultivating socio-emotional wealth—the family-oriented nonfinancial goals and value of the firm (Miller et al., 2003)—which often distinguishes family firms from other types of businesses (Cennamo et al., 2012).

Furthermore, a family legacy *"represents an emergent state whereby important features, values, and perceptions regarding the family, likely introduced originally by the founder or imposed by external conditions, have become 'imprinted' on family members"* (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1214; see also Jaskiewicz et al., 2015). The sum of certain *"valued accomplishments, traditions, assets, histories, experiences, lives, places, and memories that flow from the past through the present into the future"* (Taraday, 2013, p. 200) becomes transmitted across generations, for example, by storytelling and family narratives, and conditioned by shared patterns of understanding and collective behavioural norms (see e.g., Kellas, 2005). In their recent and more nuanced discussion of the elusive family legacy concept, Hammond et al. (2016) indicate different legacy orientations, through which we may first identify *"the unique characteristics of a shared legacy"* within a family and further the *"conditions that arise when the family is involved with the management and operation of a firm"* (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1214). Furthermore, related to how social networks may generate meaning and identities that underpin identification processes (Jones & Volpe, 2011), the formation of a family firm's *social legacy* orientation reflects *"the network of meanings associated with the family transferred through the use of stories or broader social tactics (e.g., community involvement)"* (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1215). In preference for deep and long-lasting social ties within the broader community and identification with shared histories and certain beliefs (Hammond et al., 2016), such a social legacy may also become a motivating form of socio-emotional wealth (Chrisman et al., 2005; Miller et al., 2003), which operates at *"a deep psychological level among family members whose identity is integrally connected to their membership in the family firm"* (Debicki et al., 2016, p. 47). Furthermore, founders should be seen for their influence on future generations as the ones making the "initial endorsement" of the social legacy orientation of the family firm (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1220), as well as building the social identity of the family firm and its networks (e.g., Jones & Volpe, 2011).

Research Design

In its treatment of the internationalization of family firms, this study appreciates the evolutionary nature of the phenomenon (Coviello & McAuley, 1999). As it seeks the ability to see patterns and changes in a processual phenomenon within an underexplored research context, our research design aligns with longitudinal qualitative approaches (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Jones & Khanna, 2006; Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014), in which we see historically oriented analysis playing an important role in order to operate between the historian's particular generalisations and the reductionist's general particularisations (Burgelman, 2011).

To explore the interpersonal network ties for internationalization of family firms and focus on how those ties emerge and evolve in a transitional incumbent–successor context, we studied historical cases (Welch et al., 2011). Our narrative qualitative approach (Welch et al., 2011) enabled us to contextualize the internationalization of family firms in two generations and account for actions being situated in "social time" and "social place" (Abbott, 1998). Family firms tend to endure over time (Konopaski et al., 2015) and two successfully internationalized ones offered us information-rich historical data to investigate. Initially, criterion sampling, which is a strategy of purposeful sampling, was applied (Patton, 2002) through which we selected the cases: (i) the firm was at least 100 years old; (ii) the firm has grown successfully into one of the leading forest companies in Finland, allowing us to study the early phases of long-enduring, successful firms; (iii) the firm originally operated in the forest industry and was established prior to 1900; (iv) the firm exported more than 25% of its production abroad within three years of its actual inception, fulfilling the criteria of an early internationalizing venture (see e.g., Kuivalainen et al., 2007); (v) the firm was at least 90% family-owned until at least the first decades of the 20th century; (vi) there is good archival data available on the firm and that time period, allowing us access to detailed stories of the cases.

According to our initial sampling, we investigated the two Finnish family firms originating from the ventures launched by Antti Ahlström and Gustaf Serlachius that have since evolved into global multinationals (currently known as Alhstrom-Munksjö and Metsä Group, respectively). The selected cases—Ahlström and Serlachius—were embedded in the forest business of the Nordic countries, the key industry of Finland at the time (Sajasalo, 2002). Consequently, the international venturing of the individuals is investigated with the backdrop of a historical time period of intensified economic activity of a remote and still developing country benefitting from the international expansion of its forest industry at the end of the 1800s and early 1900s (Lamberg et al., 2012). With access to the authentic company documents, archival data were collected from the Central Archives for Finnish Business Records (ELKA) and the Ahlström archives in Noormarkku. In the archives, we prioritised the collection of information from files in the form of international letter correspondence, diaries and meeting minutes, after having consulted existing literature for critical events and years in their international venturing. In addition, we drew on existing history books, research publications and biographies written on the histories of these firms and their entrepreneurs to contextualize our analysis further. The timelines in Figures 1 and 2 below provide an overview of the firms' internationalizing business in conjunction with the macro-context between the mid-1800s and the first World War.

In order to explore the emergence and evolvement of interpersonal networks in these cases over time, both our data and analysis cover the timeline from the founders' births to the first decades of the next generation leadership of the family firms. Our analysis makes use of a historical "biographical approach" (Jones, 1998; Fillis, 2015), which, as a type of qualitative narrative approach, constructs analytical narratives describing human action in social and other contexts (Roberts, 2002). Followed by comprehensive and holistic interpretation of events, we initially focused on the biographical data of the founder-entrepreneurs and their domestic and international ties during the ventures' pre-launch phases and their overall early internationalizing orientation (from 1850s to the turn of 1900s). Constitutive of both business and life documents, such as business correspondence, personal letters and notes, and other material, we explored the biographical data in order to understand the individuals'—both founders' and their successors'—life events and interpersonal ties both "holistically" and “categorically” (Polkinghorne, 1988; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998) as their human relations were subject to historical contingencies. In addition, we traced the “formal” and “informal” relationships and influences (Fernhaber & Li, 2013) on their internationally oriented action at play during the extended intergenerational period of time in its historical setting.

First, to get a picture of their early orientation for internationalization “within” the cases, we explored the role of the founder-entrepreneurs’ and the next-generation leaders’ interpersonal network ties (e.g., their type, location and strength) in the domestic to international context as categorical-content of the literary data. Then, we sought a holistic-content understanding of the international networking (hi)stories and social legacy of these family firms—the “whole story” in hindsight—by interpreting the meaning of more particular ties and the change in them in light of the overall internationalization process (still very much on the shoulders of the new leader appointed by the family) and the succession. Furthermore, as a “cross-case” type of analysis, comparing these two case narratives pointed us towards the different application of the “founder legacy” as emergent in the next generations’ networking. Such notions guided us to interpret manifestations of the founders’ *social* legacy in connection to the individuals’ embedding to identity-based and/or calculative networks abroad and domestically over time.

Figure 1. Case Ahlström

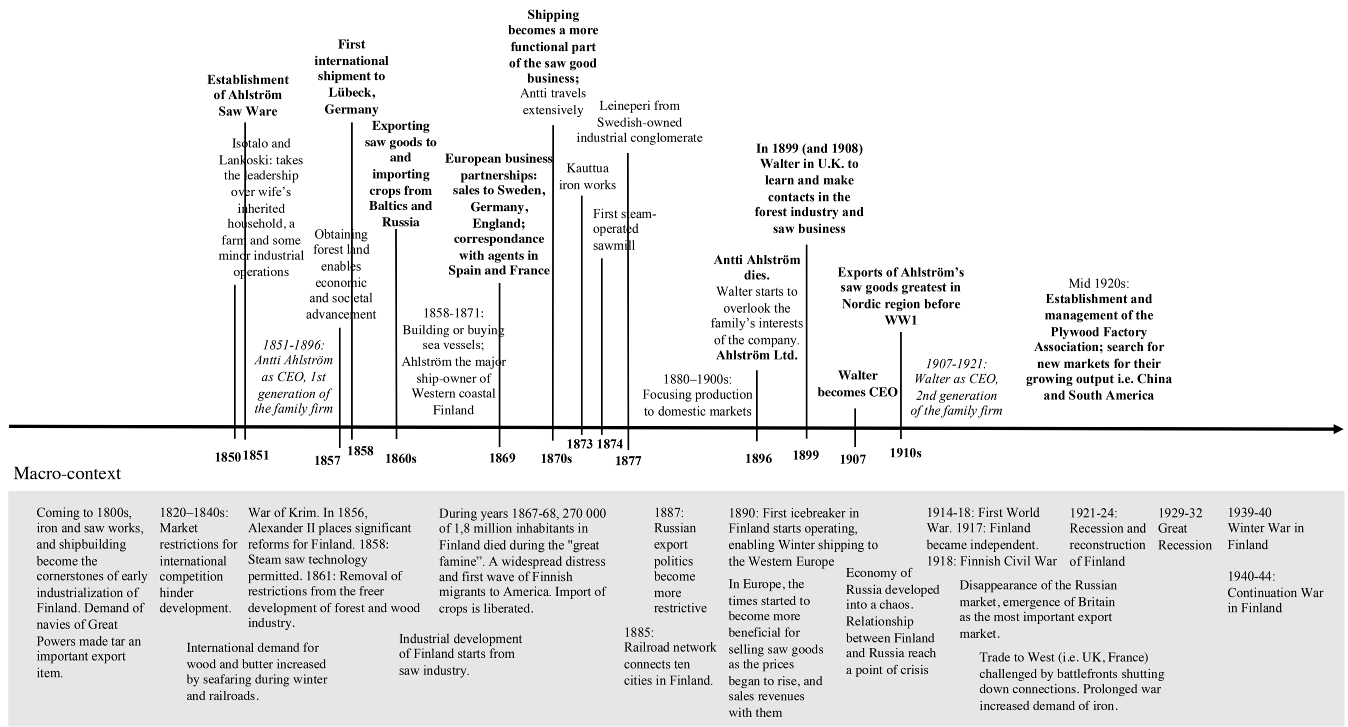
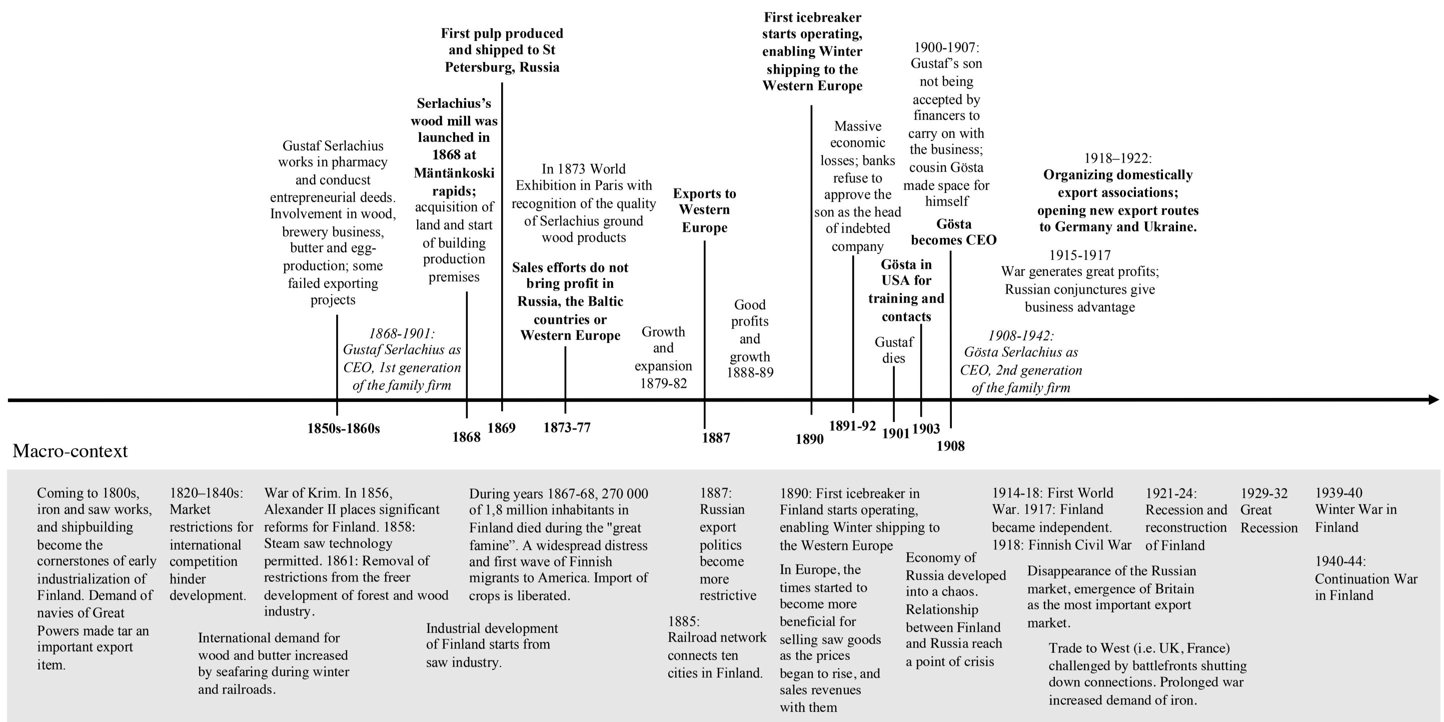


Figure 2. Case Serlachius



Findings

The first part of our findings elaborates on the international networking of the founder and their successors through their interpersonal identity-based and calculative ties within and across country borders. As such, we illustrate the amalgam of the groundwork for the family firms' internationalization in their network ties. Then, by comparing the two historical cases, the latter part of our findings explicates how the founder-entrepreneurs' "social legacy" becomes manifested in the transitional incumbent–successor context.

Emergence of the interpersonal identity-based and calculative ties in the founder and successor generations

Case Ahlström. Ahlström as an effort seems largely related to the family background and social identity of *Antti Ahlström*, stemming from his immediate family and marriage context, embedding his persona and inter-personal network ties accordingly. Antti was born and raised in a Western coastal town of Finland as the sixth child of Erkki, a former seaman, and Anna Ahlström. Before his twenties, Antti quit grammar school highly motivated to start his own business career. Helped by his early exposure to wood trading from his father, Antti was quickly immersed in the forestry field, developing a career as a businessman and developing network relationships through exporting saw goods from the coast's harbours (Aho, 1927b, 1927a).

Antti's emerging business venture and the resulting interpersonal network ties could be characterised largely as identity-based ties, emerging initially from his own father's "legacy" of trading internationally, and later from his first wife's legal estate situation and from Antti's strong sense of regional identity (see Table 1 below). From his experience casually networking and selling his own goods (e.g., cigarettes and potatoes) in the harbours since his early teens, in addition to his exposure to the wood trading context of his father's business and his own process of becoming strongly embedded into the regional networks, he established personally meaningful networks among his family and friends, from whom would also come the initial financiers. Hence, prior to his first marriage with an affluent widow, Greta, and the official fluent start of his saw business, Antti had a good overview of the forestry business and export situation of the western coastal cities. Having roots rather tightly knit in a bilingual region, Antti's informal social ties and more formal business ties were embedded in the countryside and Finnish-speaking population in Finland (Aho, 1927a). In 1871, after his first wife died, Antti remarried the daughter of a tradesman. Through this second marriage to Eva and Antti's resultant exposure to her extant social circle of family and friends, Antti's active participation in the politics of his home region as well as the whole country developed into identity-based ties (e.g., with Edvin Avellan, a municipal councillor), which also served as a launchpad for more calculative ties in advocating the development of equal education for the poorer population and the development of the community around the growing business (Schybergson, 1992). With his prolonged presence in parliament and maintenance of a strong position in Western Finland, Ahlström became very well connected domestically (Schybergson, 1992).

In the later stages of his life, he tied multi-industry relationships through acquisitions of new estates and factories and became established nationally as well as internationally, drawing from his networks of technology and machinery providers. As he increased his exports while keeping his relations honest, Antti kept in constant correspondence by post with his European business partners (Aho, 1927b). As an example, one letter from a long-term trusted agent in London reads:

Brother Ahlström!

In my yesterday's letter, I forgot to answer your question regarding H. Clarkson Co., but will do it here. You can securely draw bills on them, the sum in question, as the firm is solid and wealthy. Without further remarks from today,

Your true friend,
Henry Caston[1]

Across national borders, Antti eventually cultivated long-term relationships with his key employees (e.g., trusted captains sailing abroad) and long-term agents, especially in the UK. Along with his expanding forestry venture, his reputation as a just and generous man grew, as propelled by his relations both domestically and within the context of international trading. In the 1860s, Antti's ship-building business made him the biggest ship-owner of his Western coastal region, through which his growing exporting efforts to faraway locations (e.g., the Mediterranean and Caribbean), using both his own and others' vessels, soon expanded and turned him into a central player at the intersection of the nation's shipbuilding and export industries.

During the last years of his life, Antti Ahlström travelled extensively, as he wanted to be personally involved in the decision-making of his growing firm. Overall, his domestic ties seem to have become an excellent ground from which to build a sound reputation and fair way of doing business in his national and international networks. While very much involved in his family and regional context, he gradually became more enmeshed in the interpersonal level networks of the coastal wood-processing business, having initially been exposed to these people during and even before grammar school. He soon knew the business from "the roots of the tree", from unloading goods and selling to the export harbours to shipping the goods to the rest of the world.

[1] Correspondence between Antti Ahlström and Johnsson & Caston (London); 23rd July 1873. Brev 1872–1874. Box 5. Ahlström Noormarkku Central Office Archives.

Table 1. Antti's domestic and international identity-based and calculative ties

	Domestic network ties	International network ties
Identity-based ties	***Family and extended family*** - *Antti's father and brothers played a role in the early phases of his venture becoming internationally oriented.* - *Antti's first wife was influential as her properties were invested into the business. His second wife was a trustee, advisor and partner in his social-welfare efforts.* ***Friends and friends of friends*** - *Supported Antti's personal and business causes.* ***Politics*** - *Beneficial from his mid-career. Was himself a member of the Finnish Parliament and an active spokesperson for the Finnish language and the needs of women and children. During the famine in the 1860s, Antti donated to the neediest people in Finland.* ***Financiers*** - *Support for the business developments was initially enabled by the finances of his first wife; strong ties from the beginning.*	***Key employees (e.g., captains) abroad*** - *Long-term masters of his sea vessels who later on enabled extended access to international networks.* ***Long-term agents and other international shareholders*** - *Formed ties from the beginning of his exports; Antti was committed to the ones in whom he invested time, money and heart; learned about the needs and nature of domestic and international customers at Finnish west coast harbours; some of his agents schooled him in the business culture of foreign buyers, e.g., the Norwegian agent Hamre in Paris and Johnsson & Caston in London.*
Calculative ties	***Multi-industry domestic relationships*** - *New knowledge and equity through acquisitions.*	***Providers of technology and machinery*** - *International and natural since the early phases of his business phase. Actively renewed technology within his factories, buying technology from abroad.*

Walter Ahlström was about 30 years old when he finalised his control over the Ahlström family business. After Antti's sudden death, Walter began practical training in the central office of Ahlström in Noormarkku iron works (Grahn, 2014). Already as a child, Walter had a reputation for being very keen on technical things and was said to be extremely systematic in his deeds (Grahn, 2014; Norrmén, 1927). At the time of the transition from the founder to the successor generation, Eva, Antti's second wife and Walter's mother, controlled the most shares and decision-making power of the company, though in many situations, Walter's opinions were already supported by his mother before becoming CEO, and he was put in charge of critical decisions, as the authorised signatories recognised Walter's knowledge and judgement in technical matters (Schybergson, 1997). Throughout his leadership, his family members, especially his sisters, maintained a clear commitment to ensuring that ownership stayed in the family (Aho, 1927b, p. 36; Grahn, 2014).

With our analysis of Walter's interpersonal network ties, both domestic and international (see Table 2 below), his ties relative to the family firm's internationalization appear more calculative than his father's. When Walter took over the family firm, the business was already well-embedded in the national (both identity-based and calculative) networks established by his father, predominantly consisting of saw operations across Finland: for example, regions covering Southern Western and Central Finland, Southern Eastern Finland and Carelia (Schybergson, 1997), but also from his father's involvement in national politics. In 1899 and again in 1908, Walter travelled to the UK in order to study and learn the business.

During his time abroad, Walter presumably developed both social (more informal and identity-based) and business ties (more formal and calculative). In 1900, Walter married Hildur "Lilli" Newander, the daughter of Johan Ferdinand Newander, a pharmacist and director of a bank office (Kansallis-Osake-Pankki) in his home region, the Western coast of Finland. This connection provided Walter with useful access to the Swedish-speaking trader elite (Grahn, 2014). The Newander family also had roots in Norway (Grahn, 2014). This marriage, as an identity-based domestic tie with an international dimension, also became beneficial for Walter in terms of a "calculative tie" to his father-in-law, as it would enable both Walter's personal recognition in the region as well as better access to knowledge of international trade. This could be interpreted as sublimating his identity-based ties into calculative network ties in the country as much as broadening his reputation internationally.

What is significant about his networking and his contribution to the international business operations of the firm was that during the 1920s, Walter developed friendly ties with the vice chancellor and CEO of a wood-processing factory, Jacob von Julin (1881–1942), and other members of the country's forest elite. Together, the three were key in developing the forestry business environment in Finland and the country's export environment by participating in different networks and organising various cooperatives supporting the industry's development and competitiveness. Von Julin has been called Walter's close friend, as they interacted and worked intimately to set up and control the plywood cartel in the later 1920s. Walter's desire for the members of the cartel to remain transparent and communicative about their actions, expeditions and travels in order to decrease misinterpretations within the cartel (Helanne, 2019) speaks to the dual meaning of these ties to him as both identity-based and calculative. Both the extent and effect of Walter and von Julin's international ties are evidenced by the number of contracts they were able to make around Europe over the short period of a couple of months in 1926 (Helanne, 2019).

While Walter's domestic interpersonal ties were a resource for sourcing international knowledge and expertise, he also had extensive personal experience in international sales and in forming trade relationships in the British market. Together with von Julin, Gösta Serlachius and other elite members of the country's forest industry, Walter had an influential voice and power in the establishment and management of the Plywood Factory Association, an effort to support the nation's exports to the West during the mid-1820s.[2] The Association's role was to oversee the member companies' sales of plywood both domestically and abroad, and, for example, search for new markets for their growing output through expeditions, including to China and South America, with varying success.

Walter's time in charge of the company deepened the importance of the family firm's place in the industry's and nation's development, but with a seemingly different mindset and orientation than that of his father. Various sources make it evident that his intention was to build "a strong, financially sound and diverse corporation", which also reflected the legacy of his father as an ideological and entrepreneurial man during a favourable time (Grahn, 2014, p. 96).

[2] Suomen paperi- ja puutavaralehti, 15.1.1919. The National Library of Finland: Digital Collection. Retrieved November 27, 2019 from https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/search.

Table 2. Walter's domestic and international identity-based and calculative ties

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Domestic ties</th><th>International ties</th></tr>
<tr><td>Identity-based ties</td><td>Family and extended family
- Siblings and mother wanted to maintain transparency, but disagreed with family members.
- Wife and her family had Norwegian heritage and Swedish-speaking network.</td><td>Ties from educational trips
- Especially United Kingdom.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Calculative ties</td><td>Extended family
- Wife's father and his "elite" connections.
Key industry people
- Forest elite: formed a cartel with, e.g., Jacob von Julin and others, to strengthen international trade endeavours.
Multi-industry relationships
- e.g., factory acquisitions; glass industry, water power plant.</td><td>Ties from business travels
- Especially United Kingdom.
Multi-industry relationships: e.g., providers of technology and machinery
- Imports of new technology and knowledge from abroad; extensive investments to modernise, e.g., old iron works and saw production and build better infrastructure for the domestic industrial development.</td></tr>
</table>

Case Serlachius. *Gustaf Serlachius,* born in 1830, was the second child of Gustaf and Sophia Serlachius. The standard of living of the family was good until the father, in 1843, died of pneumonia, leaving the family with little economic status. Gustaf had started school in Eastern Central Finland but soon needed to quit to support the family financially. With the help of his mother, Gustaf found a position as an assistant in a pharmacy (Keskisarja, 2010).

At age 20, Gustaf travelled to St Petersburg to look for opportunities and learn about business life in a global city, after which he bought his pharmacy in Tampere, Southern Central Finland. This sparked Gustaf's international outlook, also affecting his future businesses. Through his early engagement in Finnish pharmacies, Gustaf had extensive access to domestic businesspeople (for details on his ties, see Table 3). After buying the pharmacy, Gustaf interacted with a wide range of different stakeholders in his pharmacy, as well as within the retail and other fields. Gustaf acted as an intermediary, buying and selling anything, like a one-man chamber of commerce, which extended his network to all the apothecaries of Finland.

Gustaf's key mentor in international business life was *Georg Franz Stockmann,* a German businessman, who imported liqueurs and chemicals, among other things, for Gustaf. Eventually, via Stockmann, Gustaf formed contacts in Lübeck and Hamburg and began to learn that mutual trust was the most important payment in exports and imports (Keskisarja, 2010). Via Stockmann's beneficial contacts, Gustaf was able to export various goods to Lübeck, Manchester and St Petersburg. Then, in mid-1860s, a notable Finnish businessman Fredrik Idestam appointed Serlachius as the representative of his ground wood mill in Tampere (Keskisarja, 2010), and through Idestam's network, Gustaf became familiar with the manufacturing process at the mill. On the basis of his earlier experience and knowledge networks, and recognising the rural area of Mänttä in Central Finland for its quality work force, Gustaf began to build a ground wood mill there. Since establishing the firm, exports had come to represent the vast majority of its output. Serlachius had prospective international intermediaries from his earlier jointly-held business (paper production from lump). Serlachius shipped mainly to St Petersburg, Tartu and Riga, but also to the UK and Belgium, depending on the political situation, market prices and war.

Gustaf had an innovative, risk-taking personality (Ahvanainen, 1997). Based on our analysis, his approach to networking seemed in general to be rather impulsive and calculating, as seen through his interaction with individual domestic and international businesspeople, financiers, providers of technology and machinery, agents, politicians and media. Gustaf persuaded the best people from his earlier internationally oriented networks in Tampere to work for him. For example, a technical manager of the machine factory with German roots and an engineering background, along with another international technician, advised Gustaf on the process of setting up the ground wood mill. Still, their first successful collaboration ended quickly due to disagreements and Gustaf's violent behaviour (Keskisarja, 2010). Whereas Gustaf persuaded the very best experts, as well as financer after financer (e.g., Sanmark and C. W. I. Sundman) to invest in his endeavours, his actions and mistreatment soon cost him these ties. It seems that Gustaf's financial problems were not related to debt itself but to his tendency to destroy his networks and have short-term bills of exchange (Keskisarja, 2010). Nevertheless, Stockmann, one of his first international contacts, introduced him to Wilhelm Burjam, a Lübeck-born manager of another bank, Pohjoispankki. He soon recognised that Gustaf conducted business they did not want to finance, but it was too late. When another investor, Sneckenström, withdrew in 1877, the banks concluded that Serlachius's business was worthless, leading Serlachius to tell his financers melodramatically that he was telling his children about the very poor treatment he had received. Interestingly, both Sneckenström and Sanmark cancelled the determination of bankruptcy, and Gustaf Serlachius carried on with his business (Keskisarja, 2010).

Though Gustaf was rather manipulative in his ways of forming new network relations, which also contributed to his disruptive approach to those outside his family, he treated his family ties with unfailing respect. His correspondence with his family seems caring, also in difficult times, which indicates their identity-based quality throughout his life. Still, at the end of his life, being very ill and paralysed, he was unable to manage them well. Gustaf's sickness, together with his short temper, led to worsening relations with some in the family, especially with Axel. In relation to this, the account of Gustaf's will and the future of the firm remained unclear for a while after his death in 1901. Some of his other identity-based ties stemmed from his personal interests, such as his political endeavours, and with respect to his writing to newspapers and interacting with the "noble class" and ideological influencers, who had an effect on the societal and business environment in Finland of that time. Moreover, Gustaf had a great personal interest in fine arts and made close friendships with several artists (e.g., Gallén and Wikström), whom he would also support financially, sometimes on a monthly basis. These identity-based ties also took him abroad, for example, to Paris, where he made acquaintances within the international social circles of arts. After some years, his ties to domestic artists were also broken, though eventually, he would start ordering paintings from them again.

Table 3. Gustaf's domestic and international identity-based and calculative ties

	Domestic ties	**International ties**

Identity-based ties	***Family members*** - *Close and important for Gustaf.* ***Artists*** - *Personal interest and taking him on international exhibitions. After some years, these ties were also broken, but after some time he again ordered paintings from Gallén.*	***International business people in Finland*** - *Especially Stockman and his extensive international business network. Had long worked in the pharmacy industry before launching the firm and was able to use them both for domestic and international purposes at different turning points of the firm.*
Calculative ties	***Domestic businesspeople*** - *Wide range of businesspeople; shareholders in pharmacy, retail and other fields.* ***Financiers*** - *Mainly domestic, from pre-launch period onwards.* ***Providers of technology and machinery*** - *Attracted the very best technicians in the country, but usually lost them very quickly because of his mistreatment of them.* ***Politicians and media; the "noble class"*** - *Domestically active strong ties; able to write in newspapers about issues of interest to readers and for the business: e.g., building a railway to Mänttä groundwood mill, building the first Finnish ice-breaker and improving the status of the Finnish language.*	***Investors*** ***Expertise and providers of technology and machinery*** - *Was able to attract the very best technicians from abroad, one after another, but usually lost them very quickly because of his mistreatment of them.* ***Agents*** - *Fluctuating between strong and weak since establishment of the firm (80% international). Knew some prospective international intermediaries from his earlier jointly-held business, where they had made paper from lump; Serlachius shipped mainly to St Petersburg, Tartu and Riga, but also to the UK and Belgium, depending on the political situation in the market and war.*

Gösta Serlachius represented the successor generation of the business his uncle Gustaf Serlachius had established. Gösta grew up speaking Swedish in Northern Western Finland and learned the Finnish language through visits to his uncle's estate in Mänttä in Central Finland. Gösta joined Gustaf's firm in the late 1890s, when he interrupted his law studies to pursue a more practically oriented career and become a trainee for Gustaf at the age of 21. In the beginning of his work at Serlachius, Gösta was sent to an agent of the firm in the UK. Upon his return, Gustaf assigned him to improve lagging UK exports: Gösta's return to Manchester resulted in a better agreement through a demanding process of negotiations (Silvennoinen, 2012).

With great enthusiasm for his traineeship and successful completion of educational and business trips abroad, Gösta rather quickly mastered the international paper industry and shipping business and oriented his mindset towards the company's international business dealings (for details on Gösta's interpersonal network ties, see Table 4). Early in the 1900s, while studying in Austria, Gösta travelled to the United States to visit its large paper factories. He funded his trips by serving as a representative for foreign machinery, evidence not only of Gösta's personal eagerness to invest in developing his international connections but also his professional competence as an international businessman. During his trips, Gösta acquired personal industrial excellence (e.g., steam and paper technology) by visiting factories and reselling their equipment to other Finnish industrial firms (Silvennoinen, 2012). Upon his arrival in Finland he had new foreign companies between which to mediate. Furthermore, his positions representing foreign technology and his other trips abroad provided him with personal connections, especially in the UK, where Gösta met his future business agent for the UK market, H. Reeve Angel. Over the years, Reeve Angel became a close business partner when the temporarily closed route to Western Europe reopened.

Before Gustaf's death, Gösta married Gustaf's daughter Sigrid "Sissi" Serlachius. It was this marriage, an identity-based tie, that can be said to have sealed him the position not only as the potential and probable successor to the family firm but also as an important potential "change-maker" in his father-in-law's and uncle's networks of both identity-based and calculative ties. Moreover, Gösta was personally well-networked with the domestic paper industry elite on his own, which would later set the direction for the long-term development of the country's international business. Prior to taking the mantle from his uncle, Gösta gained leadership experience in Central Finland at the Kangas mill and on the Southern coast at the Kymi mill, the only paper mill shipping large quantities of newspaper to the UK at the time, and he was already domestically recognised as having the skill to lead firms in challenging situations.

By navigating the firms' challenging situations (e.g., financial crises and problems with the Russian market), Gösta had gained experience, learned about rationalisation, good paper production, renewed technology and power outlets, as well as become familiar with the peculiarities of the industry's international business in both the Eastern and Western paper markets (Silvennoinen, 2012). Later, along with other influential industry managers, especially Rudolf Walden, Gösta sought new opportunities in Germany—a market that had been closed since the beginning of first World War. In alignment with a long discussion within the industry network, Gösta was there to suggest the establishment of a price cartel (Silvennoinen, 2012).

Like his peers and other patrons prior to him, Gösta began to improve the social well-being around the factory communities of his firm: for example, by building housing for his employees, giving them land and improving the safety of their work conditions (Vesikansa, 1997). During the war, Gösta held a central leadership title; one result of the successful completion of his duty was the good relationship he formed with Marshal Carl G. E. Mannerheim, the future sixth president of Finland, who had a cosmopolitan background (Vesikansa, 1997). In 1918, Gösta served as the consul of Finland in Odessa, Ukraine. Though he did not care for politics, he had good relations with the influential people of the country. Moreover, during his career, Gösta served as a member of several committees (e.g., Red Cross Finland, in which he served along with Marshal Mannerheim) in order to take part in the country's development (both pre- and post-war), which also proved beneficial in solidifying his business ties (Vesikansa, 1997). During the last year of his life, the Ministry of Defence sent Gösta to the UK to use his network to solicit financial help for Finland.

During his own active years in domestic and international identity-based and more calculative network ties, Gösta had also become well-known as a "patron of the arts" and eventually founded the Gösta Serlachius Fine Arts Foundation in 1933 in order to maintain the art collection curated by himself and his uncle (Vesikansa, 1997).

Table 4. Gösta's domestic and international identity-based and calculative ties

	Domestic ties	**International ties**
Identity-based ti…	***Family and extended family*** - *E.g., first wife is the daughter of Gustaf Sissi, extending his reach in domestic networks but also causing challenges with her mental and alcohol problems.* - *Brother Birger and mother.* ***Industry ties***	***Educational networks*** - *Becoming an "expert"; studies in Austria and trips to the UK and US.* - *Enthusiasm for being part of the international paper industry.* ***Agents***

	- *E.g., Rudolf Walden, Per Schauman, the latter also being part of the government.* - *Finnish-American corporation, trying to expand shipping lines to South America.* - *Development of the human resource aspects of the business.* ***War acquaintances and friends*** - *E.g., Marshal Mannerheim.* - *Development of the country after war.* ***People in culture life and fine arts*** - *E.g., Architect Valter Thomé.*	- *British agents Felber and Jucker: Gösta worked with in the very beginning of his career.* - *Reeve Angel; important for developing his early professional identity?*
Calculative ties	***Domestic Swedish-speaking elite*** ***Industry ties*** - *Managers of other companies in the cartel.* - *Reputation for his network and ability to lead problematic businesses.*	***Agents*** ***Industry people*** - *Swedish engineer Sölve Thunström: got to know in Vienna, helped with production technology.* - *Austrian machinery company he represented in Finland after his study trip.* - *US machinery companies he represented in Finland after his study trip.*

Manifestation of the founders' "international networking legacy" in the successors' approach

By comparing the founders' and successors' network ties and taking into consideration the transitional incumbent–successor context, here we provide an account of how the two relevant dimensions—identity-based vs. calculative ties and national vs. international ties—work as the mechanism endorsing the founders' "social legacy" in the successor generations' own international networking approaches. Their approaches indicate both maintenance of family and regional identity-based ties, as well as an application of the founders' social and industrial legacy (i.e., "elite" position, personal characteristics) in the border-crossing inter-personal networks and more calculative ties with "insider" groups (i.e., agent relations, investors and industry people). According to our findings, we introduce and suggest the founders' interpersonal network ties manifest an *"international networking legacy"*, which is either considered by successors as more of an advantage or a disadvantage for the successor's own approach to international networking. Our findings suggest that Antti Ahlström's legacy of identity-based domestic ties transformed into a more calculative approach in Walter's domestic and international ties and that Gustaf's legacy of rather scattered networks and disruptive approach to them as calculative ties transformed into the more sound approach of Gösta, who began to "nurture" both the ties he inherited from his uncle (e.g., in the UK) and his own ties, leading them to become more coherent over time.

In comparing *Antti and Walter Ahlström,* we can see that the founder generation's domestic and international ties left behind not only monetary wealth from its steady internal and then expanding international growth but also a strong sense of embedding in the identity-based national and regional ties and strategic international industry networks. Both were determined, independent and strong-willed individuals taking up new opportunities as leaders of the firm, but Antti and Walter participated differently in their networks in different areas of both the domestic and exporting business (e.g., farming, saw/forest industry, politics) (Schybergson, 1992).

Antti's identity-based domestic ties would become cultivated as his first "legacy" as Eva took over the ideological leadership of the family, which was also made visible through Walter's personal interests and deeds within the country. For example, Walter's investments and schemes went beyond his factories, production and expansion exports. In keeping with the "social legacy" of his father, Walter continued, perhaps more calculatedly and strategically, to develop the surrounding communities, for example, in Varkaus in Eastern Finland (Schybergson, 1997); its architectural influence on the particular cities centred on wood exports remains visible to this day. Having been entrusted with a variety of positions of responsibility like his father (or perhaps partially because of him), Walter was well-networked in a rather small but tight internal circle of the international industry.

Antti seems to have been more family-oriented in his endeavours than Walter and placed more emphasis than Walter did on the cultivation of friend and family ties and embedding in his "root" networks that also connected him with international networks. He was committed to ongoing actions, in the form of both business and social activities (both formal and informal), which lead him to befriend the (often Swedish-speaking) elite in the harbour cities. By comparison, Walter's approach to his family ties appears reserved, as his position as a CEO of the family firm may have demanded that he maintained the emotional distance from his siblings. By further looking into the dimensions of their ties, we can see that from the security Antti had ensured through his domestic ties, Walter Ahlström as his successor would have the advantage of a more strategic approach to and extension of his own networks abroad. Hence, we see that Antti's identity-based national and international interpersonal networking enabled Walter to incorporate such ties into his more calculative national and international networks that would begin to shape his more strategic internationalization of the firm (e.g., later in the "price cartel").

Moreover, as a kind of social entrepreneur, Antti was highly appreciated by people of different statuses and backgrounds despite his own high-level status in the community and country (Aho, 1927a, 1927b), whereas Walter was more socialised into the "elite" and therefore also more oriented towards a luxurious life from the start (Grahn, 2014). Furthermore, based on Walter's character and orientation to developing the firm's operations, we may assume that what Antti had become, Walter had to or wanted to be. In a way, we may detect in Walter's networking behaviour the manifestation of a more calculative way of conducting international business, yet one that was becoming more entangled with his social identity as a leader of his growing "empire" than of a family firm.

What was transferred from Antti to Walter was the respectful and open approach to intra- and inter-organisational relationships, as well as among family and friends. They both valued trust and transparency in their strategic and calculative relationships. Whereas Antti had been loyal to his executive-level employees and long-term friends with whom he shared his business endeavours while home and abroad, Walter maintained open and close relations with those individuals with whom he aimed to cooperate over the long term. While both of them were active in regional development and politics, associations and cooperatives, and advocated an ideology of "Finnishness", for Antti these actions reflected his identity, whereas for Walter they appeared as a strategic choice and task for cultivating his own and his parents' legacy. Walter developed his father's business into a family firm with a sound domestic and international status as a diverse wood-processing business. What then became his own visible legacy was the Walter Ahlström Foundation, which was developed to educate engineers for the Finnish industry and develop exporting industries nationally.

In looking into the case of *Gustaf and Gösta Serlachius*, we detect that Gustaf's legacy of a calculative approach to his domestic and international ties became transformed by Gösta, who from early on developed more sound identity-based ties. Initially, both had a proactive orientation to developing the business both domestically and internationally, where financial returns were not the only motivation (e.g., interest in investing into fine arts). This orientation resulted in their strong local and domestic influence on their political and social environment. Both the founder and successor had on their own behalf gained international exposure, in terms of regular long business trips and receiving education as well as taking personal holidays abroad. In the case of Serlachius, Gösta exploited the "disrupted" and "weakening ties", as he appeared able to use his personal international networking skills to nurture his networks: for example, the vestiges of Gustaf's international network legacy in the form of his UK agency or financers. This appears to have been made possible partly because Gösta had been sent abroad early on but especially because of his personal identity-based network ties.

Whereas Gustaf had a disruptive approach to his networks, both identity-based and calculative ties, Gösta took a more long-term approach to his. Both were advocates for the development of exports in the country but participated in the process differently. Gustaf was known for his radical involvement in political discussions and provision of propaganda to newspapers to advance his own business endeavours, while Gösta generally did not want to go into politics, but would help advance Finnish exports and the status of the country's global competitiveness. Hence, the case reveals perhaps more clearly the critical importance of personality in the initial stage of forming ties and the unconscious way these ties can be handled. The reputation (or legacy) of the earlier entrepreneur—as with Gustaf being rather reckless in his international networking—in the later stages of the family firm becomes managed by the successor within his or her own approach to forming ties. Altogether, our findings on Gustaf and Gösta show how the drivers of and approaches to interpersonal networks were based on their personal characteristics and manifested the "problems" attached to the social legacy of the founder-entrepreneur. For example, perhaps Gustaf's provocative real-time involvement in politics took the form under Gösta's leadership of his more discrete "lobbying" within tighter circles in the industry, grounded in his identity-based ties.

Concluding Discussion

This study has looked into the interpersonal network ties and international networking of two historical family firms in order to better understand how the founder-entrepreneurs' network ties—both identity-based and calculative—for internationalization emerge and further evolve in the transitional incumbent–successor context. From this point of departure, our study elaborates on how the interpersonal ties of the founder-generations seem to work as the mechanism for forming a "social legacy" in the firm's border-crossing networks and, more specifically, manifest in the succeeding generation as the founder-entrepreneur's "international networking legacy".

Firstly, our study adds to the extant literature on the international networking of family firms (Kampouri et al., 2017; Kontinen & Ojala, 2010, 2012; Pukall & Calabrò, 2014) by explicating the emergence of both domestic and international interpersonal network ties (Kontinen & Ojala, 2010) and their role (Elfring & Hulsink, 2007) for the family firms' internationalizing venturing by highlighting the importance of domestic ties for the internationalization process, which is barely discussed in the literature to date. We discovered that the interpersonal *domestic* ties via earlier jobs, personal and family interests, societal commitments, and in border-crossing networks (to the family-like captains of ships, international agents and technology providers, extended family) were necessary not only to identify opportunities, but also to attract like-minded people to advance their internationalizing business. While we see how the founder-entrepreneurs' interpersonal network ties were "as their most valuable asset to provide resources" (Hite & Hesterly, 2001, p. 278; Larson & Starr, 1993), we could recognise the importance of domestic investments and acquisitions across industry borders through interpersonal networks as they laid an important new groundwork for the family firm's internationalization.

Secondly, we add to the literature on family firm internationalization and networking by revealing insights about the continuum of the intergenerational internationalization process (e.g., Shi et al., 2019). We found that the founder-entrepreneurs' interpersonal network ties were meaningful and in different ways influential in regards to the successors' networking. The Ahlström case indicates that both domestic and international ties evolved from identity-based ties of Antti, where calculative ties seemed to have become more emphasised in later stages in the firm (Hite & Hesterly, 2001), especially after the transition to the next generation and Walter's networking. This shows us the business ties with a personal dimension (i.e., Antti's agents in London) becoming more formalized (Chetty & Agndal, 2008) in the next generation and over the course of the firm's internationalization. On the contrary, the Serlachius case represents calculative economic ties as more apparent in the early phase, but either manipulated or managed, as both personal and economic/business ties in the evolvement of the network (Larson & Starr, 1993). Serlachius' approach to his domestic and international ties may have been more "manipulative" than "managerial", but this was over time manoeuvred by his successor, adopting an approach that allowed both identity-based (i.e., Reeve Angelin UK) and new calculative ties to emerge, increasing the scope of his own international networks while nurturing existing ones. This supplements our notions of how the identity-based network ties, i.e., through political interests and societal involvement of the founder-entrepreneurs, did not become less "strong" or influential in the successor's hands (e.g., Greve & Salaff, 2003) but actually served as something like an internationalizing "network identity" of the firm (Coviello, 2006), elevating its ideological reputation both in the region and abroad, and becoming more intentionally managed by the successor (i.e., Gustaf's work for the Finnish political reform and Gösta's ties with Marshal Mannerheim and development of the country's competitive state after war).

Third, we add to the understanding of both the continuity (Konopaski et al., 2015) and the "founder effect" in family firm evolution beyond national borders (Kelly et al., 2000; Hammond et al., 2016). Our findings illustrate how the "social legacy" (McKenny et al., 2011; Hammond et al., 2016) of the founder through his interpersonal network ties seems to manifest and transfer to the next generation (Shi et al., 2019). In a sense, the cases illustrate how a founder's more or less socially embedded ties (Anderson & Jack, 2002) become the "initial endorsement" (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1220) of the family firm's internationalizing network behaviour (Arregle et al., 2015). We see how the founder's "unwritten will" manifests in the international networking of the next generation. We may interpret the social legacy of the founder becoming considered by the next generation either as an advantage or a disadvantage—the "dark side" of the embedded ties (Gulati et al., 2000)—for their own approaches to international networking. As such, we could suggest the *"international networking legacy"* to be the successors' treatment of interpersonal ties in the networks (Jack, 2005) and further elaborate and contextualize a mechanism that either promotes or inhibits subsequent internationalization (Ellis, 2011; Kellermanns et al., 2012; Shi et al., 2015). As identity-based "outcomes" of the founders' interpersonal ties and international networking, including beneficial marriages into "elite" spheres of money and new ideologies, their evolving social legacy could either enable or hinder positive wealth and status of the family firm (i.e., socioemotional and economic) (Hammond et al., 2016; Hunter & Rowles, 2005), even the cultural legacy of a whole region (Grahn, 2014).

Fourthly, with our methodological approach to the history of interpersonal network ties of internationalizing firms, we contribute to international business and international entrepreneurship literature by embracing both macro-context and micro-foundations of internationalization (Coviello et al., 2017). For example, the establishment of the Finnish Paper Mills' Association with the mutually calculative but strong interpersonal network ties in an inter- and after-war period (beginning of 1900s) ramped up the border-crossing negotiations and agreements of these two family firms, when experiencing a time of more restricted international business. With an acknowledgment of human relations—be it personal or business ties—as subject to historical contingencies, we suggest that these ties as "microfoundations" (Foss & Pedersen, 2016) of our two historical family firms' as well as their modern counterparts' strategic trajectories enact the historical chronology of their industrial and societal surroundings and opportunities (Zahra, Newey & Li, 2014).

We have shown two cases of international networking against a different backdrop of historical contingencies than the modern world. Whereas contemporary firms may represent more knowledge-intense and service-oriented business with perhaps less limitations in terms of network(ing) and resources for internationalization (Ojala, Evers & Rialp, 2018), generating meaningful interpersonal ties are still imperative in international venturing and strategies (Coviello, 2006; Ellis, 2011). Moreover, today family businesses still form the core of most national economies and are passed from generation to generation (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015). Therefore, old and new generations ought to find ways to cultivate constructive approaches to their networking strategies, which can further endorse and promote a desired social legacy of the family firm when taking the business "from local to global" (Baù et al., 2017).

Internationalization and networking of family firms are not straightforward processes, but historically contingent, for example, due to societal crisis, economic fluctuation, political objectives, wars, and industries and foreign markets sometimes disappearing and reappearing. This study highlights the need for better understanding of and more research based on the historical contextualization of family firm internationalization (Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014), especially analysis of international networks, networking and their evolvement in earlier waves of globalisation. With both qualitative and quantitative approaches, we may begin to build a broader and deeper understanding of the historical time context of (international) networking and other micro-foundational mechanisms steering firms' internationalization trajectories.

References

Abbott, A. (1998). The causal devolution. *Sociological Methods Research*, *27*(2), 148–181.

Ahn, S-Y. (2018). Founder succession, the imprint of founders' legacies, and long-term corporate survival. *Sustainability*, *10*(5), 1–15.

Aho, J. (1927a). *Antti Ahlström 1827–1896. Hänen elämänsä ja työnsä I. Muisto-kirjoitus.* Noormarkku: A. Ahlström Osakeyhtiö.

Aho, J. (1927b). *Antti Ahlström 1827–1896. Hänen elämänsä ja työnsä II. Muisto-kirjoitus*. Noormarkku: A. Ahlström Osakeyhtiö.

Ahvanainen, J. (1997). Serlachius, Gustaf Adolf. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Anderson, A. R., & Jack, S. L. (2002). The articulation of social capital in entrepreneurial networks: A glue or a lubricant? *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *14*(3), 193–210.

Arregle, J. L., Batjargal, B., Hitt, M. A., Webb, J. W., Miller, T., & Tsui, A. S. (2015). Family ties in entrepreneurs' social networks and new venture growth. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *39*(2), 313–344.

Arregle, J. L., Hitt, M. A., & Mari, I. (2019). A missing link in family firms' internationalization research: Family structures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *50*(5), 809–825.

Arregle, J. L., Hitt, M. A., Sirmon, D. G., & Very, P. (2007). The development of organizational social capital: Attributes of family firms. *Journal of Management Studies*, *44*(1), 73–95.

Arregle, J. L., Naldi, L., Nordqvist, M., & Hitt, M. A. (2012). Internationalization of family-controlled firms: A study of the effects of external involvement in governance. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *36*(6), 1115–1143.

Baker, K. G., & Wiseman, K. K. (1998). Leadership, legacy, and emotional process in family business. *Family Business Review*, *11*(3), 207–213.

Baù, M., Block, J. H., Discua Cruz, A., & Naldi, L. (2017). Locality and internationalization of family firms. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *29*(5–6), 570–574.

Baù, M., Chirico, F., Pittino, D., Backman, M., & Klaesson, J. (2019). Roots to grow: Family firms and local embeddedness in rural and urban contexts. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *43*(2), 360–385.

Brydon, K., & Dana, L. P. (2011). Globalisation and firm structure: Comparing a family-business and a corporate block holder in the New Zealand seafood industry. *International Journal of Globalisation and Small Business*, *4*(2), 206.

Burgelman, R. (2011). Bridging history and reductionism: A key for longitudinal qualitative research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *42*(5), 591–601.

Byrom, J., & Lehman, K. (2009). Coopers Brewery: Heritage and innovation within a family firm. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, *27*(4), 516–523.

Calabrò, A., & Mussolino, D. (2013). How do boards of directors contribute to family SME export intensity? The role of formal and informal governance mechanisms. *Journal of Management & Governance*, *17*(2), 363–403.

Cennamo, C., Berrone, P., Cruz, C., & Gomez-Mejia, L. (2012). Socioemotional wealth and proactive stakeholder engagement: Why family-controlled firms care more about their stakeholders. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *36*(6), 1153–1173.

Chetty, S., & Agndal, H. (2008). Role of inter-organizational networks and interpersonal networks in an industrial district. *Regional Studies, 42*(2), 175–87.

Chrisman, J. J., Chua, J. H., & Sharma, P. (2005). Trends and directions in the development of a strategic management theory of the family firm. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *29*(5), 555–576.

Coviello, N. E. (2006). The network dynamics of international new ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *37*, 713–731.

Coviello, N. E., & Jones, M. V. (2004). Methodological issues in international entrepreneurship research. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *19*(4), 485–508.

Coviello, N. E., Kano, L., and Liesch, P. W. (2017). Adapting the Uppsala model to a modern world: Macro-context and microfoundations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *48*(9), 1151–64.

Coviello, N. E., & McAuley, A. (1999). Internationalisation and the smaller firm: A review of contemporary empirical research. *Management International Review*, *39*(2), 223–57.

Coviello, N. E., & Munro, H. (1997). Network relationships and the internationalisation process of small software firms. *International Business Review*, *6*(4), 361–386.

Crick, D., Bradshaw, R., & Chaudhry, S. (2006). "Successful" internationalising UK family and non-family-owned firms: A comparative study. *Journal of Small Business and*

Enterprise Development, *13*(4), 498–512.
De Massis, A., Frattini, F., Majocchi, A., & Piscitello, L. (2018). Family firms in the global economy: Toward a deeper understanding of internationalization determinants, processes, and outcomes. *Global Strategy Journal*, *8*(1), 3–21.
Debicki, B. J., Kellermanns, F. W., Chrisman, J. J., Pearson, A. W., & Spencer, B. A. (2016). Development of a socioemotional wealth importance (SEWi) scale for family firm research. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, *7*(1), 47–57.
Elfring, T., & Hulsink, W. (2007). Networking by entrepreneurs: Patterns of tie-formation in emerging organizations. *Organization Studies*, *28*(12), 1849–1872.
Ellis, P. D. (2000). Social ties and foreign market entry. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *31*(3), 443–469.
Ellis, P. D. (2011). Social ties and international entrepreneurship: Opportunities and constraints affecting firm internationalization. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *42*(1), 99–127.
Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and society* (2nd ed.). New York: Norton.
Fernhaber, S., & Li, D. (2013). International exposure through network relationships: Implications for new venture internationalization. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *28*(2), 316–34.
Fillis, I. (2015). Biographical Research as a Methodology for Understanding Entrepreneurial Marketing. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, *21*(3), 429–47.
Foss, N. J., & Pedersen, T. (2016). Microfoundations in strategy research. *Strategic Management Journal*, 37(13): E22–E34.
Grahn, M. (2014). *Perheyhtiö ja paikallisuus: A. Ahlström Osakeyhtiön historian perintö Noormarkussa*. Turun yliopisto.
Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, *78*(6), 1360–1380.
Granovetter, M. (1985). Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology* (Vol. 91).
Graves, C., & Thomas, J. (2008). Determinants of the internationalization pathways of family firms: An examination of family influence. *Family Business Review*, *21*(2), 151–167.
Greve, A., & Salaff, J. W. (2003). Social networks and entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *28*(1), 1–22.
Gulati, R., Nohria, N., & Zaheer, A. (2000). Strategic networks. *Strategic Management Journal*, 21(3), 203–215.
Hammond, N. L., Pearson, A. W., & Holt, D. T. (2016). The quagmire of legacy in family firms: Definition and implications of family and family firm legacy orientations. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *40*(6), 1209–1231.
Harris, L. C., & Ogbonna, E. (1999). The strategic legacy of company founders. *Long Range Planning*, *32*(3), 333–343.
Harris, S., & Wheeler, C. (2005). Entrepreneurs' relationships for internationalization: Functions, origins and strategies. *International Business Review*, *14*(2), 187–207.
Helanne, H. (2019). *Yhdessä vai yksittäin? Suomalainen vanerikartelli 1926 – 1927*. Univeristy of Helsinki.
Hennart, J. F., Majocchi, A., & Forlani, E. (2019). The myth of the stay-at-home family firm: How family-managed SMEs can overcome their internationalization limitations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *50*(5), 758–782.
Hervas-Oliver, J.-L., Lleo, M., & Cervello, R. (2017). The dynamics of cluster

entrepreneurship: Knowledge legacy from parents or agglomeration effects? The case of the Castellon ceramic tile district. *Research Policy*, *46*(1), 73–92.

Hite, J. M., & Hesterly, W. S. (2001). The evolution of firm networks: From emergence to early growth of the firm. *Strategic Management Journal*, *22*(3), 275–286.

Hoang, H., & Antoncic, B. (2003). Network-based research in entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *18*(2), 165–187.

Hunter, E. G., & Rowles, G. D. (2005). Leaving a legacy: Toward a typology. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *19*(3), 327–347.

Jack, S. L. (2005). The role, use and activation of strong and weak network ties: A qualitative analysis. *Journal of Management Studies, 42*(6), 1233–50.

Jaskiewicz, P., Combs, J. G., & Rau, S. B. (2015). Entrepreneurial legacy: Toward a theory of how some family firms nurture transgenerational entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *30*(1), 29–49.

Jones, D., G., B. (1998). Biography as a methodology for studying the history of marketing ideas. *Psychology and Marketing*, *15*(2), 161–73.

Jones, C., & Volpe, E. H. (2011). Organizational identification: Extending our understanding of social identities through social networks. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *32*(3), 413–434.

Jones, G., & Khanna, T. (2006). Bringing history (back) into international business. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *37*(4), 453–468.

Kampouri, K., Plakoyiannaki, E., & Leppäaho, T. (2017). Family business internationalisation and networks: Emerging pathways. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *32*(3), 357–370.

Kellas, J. K. (2005). Family ties: Communicating identity through jointly told family stories. Family Communication Division at the National Communication Association Conventio. *Communication Monographs*, *72*(4), 365–389.

Kellermanns, F. W., Eddleston, K. A., and Zellweger, T. M. (2012). Extending the socioemotional wealth perspective: A look at the dark side. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 36*(6), 1175–82.

Kelly, L. M., Athanassiou, N., & Crittenden, W. F. (2000). Founder centrality and strategic behavior in the family-owned firm. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *25*(2), 27–42.

Keskisarja, T. (2010). *Vihreän kullan kirous. G.A. Serlachiuksen elämä ja afäärit*. Helsinki: Siltala.

Konopaski, M., Jack, S., & Hamilton, E. (2015). How family business members learn about continuity. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *14*(3), 347–364.

Kontinen, T., & Ojala, A. (2010). The internationalization of family businesses: A review of extant research. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, *1*(2), 97–107.

Kontinen, T., & Ojala, A. (2011). Network ties in the international opportunity recognition of family SMEs. *International Business Review*, *20*(4), 440–453.

Kontinen, T., & Ojala, A. (2012). Social capital in the international operations of family SMEs. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, *19*(1), 39–55.

Kuivalainen, O., Sundqvist, S. & Servais, P. (2007). Firms' degree of born-globalness, international entrepreneurial orientation and export performance, *Journal of World Business*, *42*(3), 253–67.

Lamberg, J. A., Ojala, J., Peltoniemi, M., & Särkkä, T. (2012). *The Evolution of Global Paper Industry 1800¬–2050: A Comparative Analysis* (Vol 17). Springer Science & Business Media.

Larson, A., & Starr, J. A. (1993). A network model of organization formation. *Entrepreneurship*

Theory and Practice, *17*(2), 5–15.
Leppäaho, T., Chetty, S., & Dimitratos, P. (2018). Network embeddedness in the internationalization of biotechnology entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *30*(5–6), 562–584.
Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative Research: Reading, Analysis, and Interpretation*, Vol 47. Sage.
McKenny, A.F., Short, J.C., Zachary, M.A., & Payne, G.T. (2011). Assessing espoused goals in private family firms using content analysis. *Family Business Review*, *24*(4), 298–317.
Miller, D., Steier, L., & Le Breton-Miller, I. (2003). Lost in time: Intergenerational succession, change, and failure in family business. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *18*(4), 513–531.
Mustafa, M., & Chen, S. (2010). The strength of family networks in transnational immigrant entrepreneurship. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *52*(2), 97–106.
Norrmén, P. H. (1927). *Toiminimi Ahlström 1896–1927. Muistokirjoitus.* Noormarkku: A. Ahlström Osakeyhtiö.
Ogbonna, E., & Harris, L. C. (2001). The founder's legacy: Hangover or inheritance? *British Journal of Management*, *12*(1), 13–31.
Ojala, A., Evers, N., & Rialp, A. (2018). Extending the International New Venture Phenomenon to Digital Platform Providers: A Longitudinal Case Study. *Journal of World Business*, 53(5), 725–39.
Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Pearson, A. W., Carr, J. C., & Shaw, J. C. (2008). Toward a theory of familiness: A social capital perspective. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *32*(6), 949–969.
Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Suny Press.
Pukall, T. J., & Calabrò, A. (2014). The internationalization of family firms. *Family Business Review*, *27*(2), 103–125.
Roberts, B. (2002). *Biographical Research*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
Roessl, D. (2005). Family businesses and interfirm cooperation. *Family Business Review*, *18*(3), 203–214.
Sajasalo, P. (2002). Internationalization of a key industry: Implications for a business and society relationship's development – Case Finland. *Journal of International Business Research, 8*(1), 45–62.
Salvato, C., & Melin, L. (2008). Creating value across generations in family-controlled businesses: The role of family social capital. *Family Business Review*, *XXI*(3), 259–276.
Schybergson, P. (1997). Ahlström, Antti. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
Schybergson, P. (1992). *Työt ja päivät. Ahlströmin historia 1851–1981*. Helsinki: A. Ahlström.
Sharma, D. D., & Blomstermo, A. 2003. The internationalization process of Born Globals: A network view. *International Business Review 12*(6), 739–53.
Shi, H. X., Graves, C., & Barbera, F. (2019). Intergenerational succession and internationalisation strategy of family SMEs: Evidence from China. *Long Range Planning*, *52*(4), 101838.
Shi, H. X., Shepherd, D. M., & Schmidts, T. (2015). Social capital in entrepreneurial family businesses: The role of trust. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, *21*(6), 814–841.
Silvennoinen, O. (2012). *Paperisydän: Gösta Serlachiuksen elämä*. Helsinki: Siltala.
Sirmon, D., & Hitt, M. (2003). Managing resources: Linking unique resources, management, and wealth creation in family firms. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 339–358.
Söderqvist, A., & Chetty, S. (2013). Strength of ties involved in international new ventures.

European Business Review, *25*(6), 536–552.
Taraday, H. (2013). Book review: Family legacy and leadership: Preserving true family wealth in chal- lenging times. *Family Business Review*, *26*(2), 200–202.
Uzzi, B. (1996). The sources and consequences of embeddedness for the economic performance of organizations: The network effect. *American Sociological Review*, 674–698.
Vesikansa, J. (1997). Serlachius, Gösta. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
Walker, G., Kogut, B., & Shan, W. (1997). Social capital, structural holes and the formation of an industry network. In *Organization Science* (Vol. 8, pp. 109–125). Elsevier.
Welch, C., & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E. (2014). Putting process (back) in: Research on the internationalization process of the firm. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *16*(1), 2–23.
Welch, C., Piekkari, R., Plakoyiannaki, E., & Paavilainen, E. (2011). Theorising from case studies: Towards a pluralist future for international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies 42*(5), 740–62.
Williamson, O. (1993). Calculativeness, trust, and economic organization. *Journal of Law and Economics*, *36*(1 part 2), 453–486.
Wright, P. C., & Nasierowski, W. (1994). The expatriate family firm and cross-cultural management training: A conceptual framework. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *5*(2), 153–167.
Zahra, S. A. (2003). International expansion of U.S. manufacturing family businesses: The effect of ownership and involvement. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *18*(4), 495–512.
Zahra, S. A., Newey, L., R., & Li, Y. (2014). On the frontiers: The implications of social entrepreneurship for international entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice, 38*(1), 137–58.
Zellweger, T. M., Chrisman, J. J., Chua, J. H., & Steier, L. P. (2019). Social structures, social relationships, and family firms. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *43*(2), 207–223.
Zellweger, T. M., Sieger, P., & Halter, F. (2011). Should I stay or should I go? Career choice intentions of students with family business background. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *26*(5), 521–536.

ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LAPPEENRANTAENSIS

884. TUOMISALO, TEEMU. Learning and entrepreneurial opportunity development within a Finnish telecommunication International Venture. 2019. Diss.

885. OYEDEJI, SHOLA. Software sustainability by design. 2019. Diss.

886. HUTTUNEN, MANU. Optimizing the specific energy consumption of vacuum filtration. 2019. Diss.

887. LIIKANEN, MIIA. Identifying the influence of an operational environment on environmental impacts of waste management. 2019. Diss.

888. RANTALA, TERO. Operational level performance measurement in university-industry collaboration. 2019. Diss.

889. LAUKKANEN, MINTTU. Sustainable business models for advancing system-level sustainability. 2019. Diss.

890. LOHRMANN, CHRISTOPH. Heuristic similarity- and distance-based supervised feature selection methods. 2019. Diss.

891. ABDULLAH, UMMI. Novel methods for assessing and improving usability of a remote-operated off-road vehicle interface. 2019. Diss.

892. PÖLLÄNEN, ILKKA. The efficiency and damage control of a recovery boiler. 2019. Diss.

893. HEKMATMANESH, AMIN. Investigation of EEG signal processing for rehabilitation robot control. 2019. Diss.

894. HARMOKIVI-SALORANTA, PAULA. Käyttäjät liikuntapalvelujen kehittäjinä - Käyttäjälähtöisessä palveluinnovaatioprosessissa käyttäjien tuottama tieto tutkimuksen kohteena. 2020. Diss.

895. BERGMAN, JUKKA-PEKKA. Managerial cognitive structures, strategy frames, collective strategy frame and their implications for the firms. 2020. Diss.

896. POLUEKTOV, ANTON. Application of software-defined radio for power-line-communication-based monitoring. 2020. Diss.

897. JÄRVISALO, HEIKKI. Applicability of GaN high electron mobility transistors in a high-speed drive system. 2020. Diss.

898. KOPONEN, JOONAS. Energy efficient hydrogen production by water electrolysis. 2020. Diss.

899. MAMELKINA, MARIA. Treatment of mining waters by electrocoagulation. 2020. Diss.

900. AMBAT, INDU. Application of diverse feedstocks for biodiesel production using catalytic technology. 2020. Diss.

901. LAAPIO-RAPI, EMILIA. Sairaanhoitajien rajatun lääkkeenmääräämistoiminnan tuottavuuden, tehokkuuden ja kustannusvaikuttavuuden arviointi perusterveydenhuollon avohoidon palveluprosessissa. 2020. Diss.

902. DI, CHONG. Modeling and analysis of a high-speed solid-rotor induction machine. 2020. Diss.

903. AROLA, KIMMO. Enhanced micropollutant removal and nutrient recovery in municipal wastewater treatment. 2020. Diss.

904. RAHIMPOUR GOLROUDBARY, SAEED. Sustainable recycling of critical materials. 2020. Diss.

905. BURGOS CASTILLO, RUTELY CONCEPCION. Fenton chemistry beyond remediating wastewater and producing cleaner water. 2020. Diss.

906. JOHN, MIIA. Separation efficiencies of freeze crystallization in wastewater purification. 2020. Diss.

907. VUOJOLAINEN, JOUNI. Identification of magnetically levitated machines. 2020. Diss.

908. KC, RAGHU. The role of efficient forest biomass logistics on optimisation of environmental sustainability of bioenergy. 2020. Diss.

909. NEISI, NEDA. Dynamic and thermal modeling of touch-down bearings considering bearing non-idealities. 2020. Diss.

910. YAN, FANGPING. The deposition and light absorption property of carbonaceous matter in the Himalayas and Tibetan Plateau. 2020. Diss.

911. NJOCK BAYOCK, FRANCOIS MITERAND. Thermal analysis of dissimilar weld joints of high-strength and ultra-high-strength steels. 2020. Diss.

912. KINNUNEN, SINI-KAISU. Modelling the value of fleet data in the ecosystems of asset management. 2020. Diss.

913. MUSIKKA, TATU. Usability and limitations of behavioural component models in IGBT short-circuit modelling. 2020. Diss.

914. SHNAI, IULIIA. The technology of flipped classroom: assessments, resources and systematic design. 2020. Diss.

915. SAFAEI, ZAHRA. Application of differential ion mobility spectrometry for detection of water pollutants. 2020. Diss.

916. FILIMONOV, ROMAN. Computational fluid dynamics as a tool for process engineering. 2020. Diss.

917. VIRTANEN, TIINA. Real-time monitoring of membrane fouling caused by phenolic compounds. 2020. Diss.

918. AZZUNI, ABDELRAHMAN. Energy security evaluation for the present and the future on a global level. 2020. Diss.

919. NOKELAINEN, JOHANNES. Interplay of local moments and itinerant electrons. 2020. Diss.

920. HONKANEN, JARI. Control design issues in grid-connected single-phase converters, with the focus on power factor correction. 2020. Diss.

921. KEMPPINEN, JUHA. The development and implementation of the clinical decision support system for integrated mental and addiction care. 2020. Diss.

LAPPEENRANTA-LAHTI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY LUT

LUT University

ISBN 978-952-335-557-6
ISBN 978-952-335-558-3 (PDF)
ISSN-L 1456-4491
ISSN 1456-4491
Lappeenranta 2020