



# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	DELIMITING THE FIELD.....	5
1.2	METHODOICAL APPROACH .....	6
1.3	USE OF EXTANT LITTERATURE .....	7
1.4	RESEARCH QUESTION.....	8
1.5	THESIS STRUCTURE AND PROGRESSION .....	8
<b>2</b>	<b>Theoretical framework - from creativity to experience economy .....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1	CREATIVITY .....	9
2.1.1	<i>Commodification of creativity .....</i>	<i>9</i>
2.1.2	<i>Creative organizations – what is a creative work environment? .....</i>	<i>9</i>
2.2	CREATIVE INDUSTRIES .....	10
2.2.1	<i>What are creative industries?.....</i>	<i>10</i>
2.2.2	<i>Creative agents – who are they? .....</i>	<i>11</i>
2.2.3	<i>Properties and traits of creative activities.....</i>	<i>12</i>
2.2.4	<i>Sum up on creativity and creative industries.....</i>	<i>18</i>
2.3	THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY .....	18
2.3.1	<i>How the experience economy came to be – a historical perspective.....</i>	<i>18</i>
2.3.2	<i>Three definitions of the experience economy .....</i>	<i>19</i>
2.3.2.1	The American school: an intra-organizational perspective .....	22
2.3.2.2	The English school: an intra-industrial perspective .....	22
2.3.2.3	The Danish school: an inter- organizational- and -industrial perspective .....	23
2.3.3	<i>Sum up on experience economy definitions .....</i>	<i>23</i>
2.4	IN SEARCH OF THEORY ON COUPLING PROJECTS.....	24
2.4.1	<i>Creativity and innovation studies theory.....</i>	<i>24</i>
2.4.2	<i>The problem of transferring creativity and innovation studies theory to coupling projects</i> <i>25</i>	
2.4.3	<i>Mergers and acquisitions theory .....</i>	<i>25</i>
2.4.3.1	Three select theories on mergers and acquisitions .....	26
2.4.3.2	Datta, 1991 – lack of fit between cultures is detrimental to post-merger success .....	26
2.4.3.3	Bligh, 2006 - giving recommendations to a “best practice” merger leadership.....	27
2.4.3.4	Seo & Hill, 2005 – an aggregated list of common leadership challenges in mergers .....	27
2.4.4	<i>The problem of transferring mergers and acquisitions theory to coupling projects .....</i>	<i>28</i>
2.4.4.1	Intra- or inter-industrial aspects.....	29
2.4.4.2	Organizational fit aspects.....	29
2.4.4.3	Temporal aspects .....	29
2.4.4.4	Substantiality aspects.....	29
2.5	SUM UP ON CHAPTER TWO .....	30
<b>3</b>	<b>Methodology .....</b>	<b>30</b>
3.1	QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGIES AND DATA .....	30
3.2	A PRESENTATION OF GROUNDED THEORY .....	31
3.2.1	<i>Grounded Theory – a historical overview .....</i>	<i>31</i>
3.2.2	<i>Meta-theoretical considerations of the Grounded Theory method .....</i>	<i>32</i>
3.3	PRESENTING OUR GROUNDED THEORY METHOD.....	35
3.3.1	<i>Analytical strategies – how to grapple with empirical data? .....</i>	<i>35</i>
3.3.1.1	The constant comparative method – a heritage from Glaser and Strauss .....	35
3.3.1.2	Coding.....	37
3.3.1.3	Writing memos.....	39
3.3.1.4	Categorizing – the emergence of a tentative theoretical framework .....	40
3.3.1.5	Subcategories.....	41
3.3.1.6	Theoretical concepts .....	41

3.3.1.7	Theoretical sampling .....	42
3.3.2	<i>Evaluative strategies – when is enough, enough?</i> .....	43
3.3.2.1	Saturation .....	43
3.3.3	<i>Communicative strategies – how to present the results of the research?</i> .....	44
3.3.3.1	Writing the theory .....	44
3.3.3.2	Conceptual mapping .....	44
3.3.4	<i>Our method – a visual overview</i> .....	45
3.4	DATA COLLECTION .....	47
3.4.1	<i>The qualitative interview</i> .....	47
3.4.2	<i>Transcription, translation and considerations of language</i> .....	51
<b>4</b>	<b>Empirical data – presentation .....</b>	<b>51</b>
4.1	CREATIVE AGENTS .....	52
4.1.1	AR1 .....	52
4.1.2	AR2 .....	52
4.1.3	CC1 .....	52
4.1.4	CC2 .....	52
4.2	NON-CREATIVE AGENTS .....	52
4.2.1	NC1 .....	52
4.2.2	NC2 .....	53
4.2.3	NC3 .....	53
4.2.4	NC4 .....	53
<b>5</b>	<b>Analysis .....</b>	<b>53</b>
5.1	THEORETICAL CONCEPT: “PERCEIVING FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES” .....	53
5.1.1	<i>Category “Tempo/Idea to action”</i> .....	54
5.1.2	<i>Category “Formality”</i> .....	55
5.1.3	<i>Category “Hierarchy”</i> .....	56
5.1.4	<i>Category “Dynamics/risk” (impulsive vs. conservative)</i> .....	57
5.1.5	<i>Category “Logic”</i> .....	59
5.1.6	<i>Category “Stakeholders”</i> .....	61
5.1.7	<i>Sum up on fundamental differences</i> .....	62
5.2	THEORETICAL CONCEPT - “ACTING ON PRECONCEPTIONS” .....	62
5.2.1	<i>Category “Pot of Gold”</i> .....	63
5.2.1.1	Subcategory: “Who asks who?” .....	64
5.2.2	<i>Category “Art for art’s sake”</i> .....	65
5.2.3	<i>Category “Coupling without collaborating”</i> .....	66
5.2.4	<i>Sum up: “Acting on preconceptions”</i> .....	68
5.3	THEORETICAL CONCEPT – “DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR CONVERGENCE” .....	69
5.3.1	<i>Category “Ensuring understanding”</i> .....	69
5.3.1.1	Subcategory “Basic coupling configurations” .....	70
5.3.1.2	Subcategory “Modes of understanding” .....	71
5.3.1.3	Subcategory “Being a dual insider” .....	74
5.3.2	<i>Category “The middleman”</i> .....	74
5.3.3	<i>Category “Focusing on a shared third agenda”</i> .....	77
5.3.4	<i>Sum up – “Developing strategies of convergence”</i> .....	80
<b>6</b>	<b>Presentation of our grounded theory .....</b>	<b>80</b>
6.1	WHAT IS THEORY? .....	80
6.2	A GROUNDED THEORY OF COUPLING PROJECTS .....	81
6.2.1	<i>Being fundamentally different</i> .....	82
6.2.2	<i>Acting on preconceptions</i> .....	83
6.2.2.1	Pot of gold .....	84
6.2.2.2	Art for art’s sake .....	84

6.2.2.3	Coupling without collaborating .....	84
6.2.3	<i>Developing strategies for convergence</i> .....	85
6.2.3.1	Strategy 1: Ensuring understanding.....	85
6.2.3.2	Strategy 2: The middleman .....	87
6.2.3.3	Strategy 3: Focusing on a shared third agenda.....	88
<b>7</b>	<b>Saturation, evaluation and validity in Grounded Theory research .....</b>	<b>89</b>
7.1	DEPENDABILITY .....	90
7.2	TRANSFERABILITY .....	90
7.3	CREDIBILITY .....	90
7.4	CONFORMABILITY .....	91
<b>8</b>	<b>Discussion .....</b>	<b>92</b>
8.1	A COMPARISON OF THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY LITERATURE AND OUR GROUNDED THEORY .....	92
8.2	A COMPARISON BETWEEN THEORIES ON CREATIVE INDUSTRIES, -AGENTS AND -ENVIRONMENTS AND OUR GROUNDED THEORY .....	93
8.3	A COMPARISON OF MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS THEORIES AND OUR GROUNDED THEORY .....	96
<b>9</b>	<b>Concluding remarks and prospects for the future .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Literature .....</b>	<b>101</b>
10.1.1	<i>Reports:</i> .....	103
<b>11</b>	<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>105</b>
11.1	APPENDIX 1 .....	105
11.1.1	<i>The evolution of the term creativity</i> .....	105
11.2	APPENDIX 2 .....	107
11.2.1	<i>Interview guide - Initial sampling (in Danish):</i> .....	107
11.3	APPENDIX 3 .....	109
11.3.1	<i>Interview guide - Theoretical sampling (in Danish):</i> .....	109
11.4	APPENDIX 4 .....	111
11.4.1	<i>Transcriptions, initial codes, and focused codes</i> .....	111
11.5	APPENDIX 5 .....	112
11.5.1	<i>Figure: Tempo/Idea to action</i> .....	112
11.5.2	<i>Figure: Formality</i> .....	113
11.5.3	<i>Figure: Hierarchy</i> .....	114
11.5.4	<i>Figure: Dynamics/Risk</i> .....	115
11.5.5	<i>Figure: Logic</i> .....	116
11.5.6	<i>Figure: Stakeholders</i> .....	117
11.5.7	<i>Figure: Pot of Gold</i> .....	118
11.5.8	<i>Figure: Art for art's sake</i> .....	119
11.5.9	<i>Figure: Coupling without collaborating</i> .....	120
11.5.10	<i>Figure: Ensuring understanding</i> .....	121
11.5.10.1	Basic coupling configurations .....	121
11.5.10.2	Differing modes of understanding .....	122
11.5.10.3	Being a dual insider .....	123
11.5.11	<i>Figure: The middleman</i> .....	124
11.5.12	<i>Figure: Focusing on a shared third agenda</i> .....	125
11.6	APPENDIX 6 .....	126
11.6.1	<i>Table: Datta, 1991</i> .....	126

# 1 Introduction

Since the advent of the term Experience Economy strategic use of experiences within a business context has enjoyed increasing attention not only in organizations but also in business schools and universities. The term is increasingly being put to widespread use in a variety of contexts, both in theory and in practice, and along the way its meaning has become somewhat diffuse and ambiguous. In fact one might argue that experience economy has become somewhat of a proverbial buzzword and when someone says the two words it is most likely that every peer has his own specific image of what the term covers. What is more, the term is actually extensively employed by various scholars to cover different phenomena thus making the confusion complete. But what is this animal called experience economy and what is strategic use of experiences good for then? A complete introduction to all the common interpretations of the term and their take on the experience-element is beyond the scope of this thesis, nevertheless, during the last decade three interpretations upon what the term covers, have become predominant<sup>1</sup>, among which especially one is of interest to us.

## 1.1 Delimiting the field

The three interpretations or definitions can be situated in a continuum ranging from an industry perspective focusing on intra-industrial value creation in the creative industries (DCMS, 1998; 2001) to an entirely intra-organizational perspective focusing on intra-organizational staging of products/services and creating value in an organization through use of experiences as strategic tool (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Somewhere in between lie the third inter-industrial and inter-organizational perspective where the potential for value creation lies in collaboration between industries and organizations (e.g., EBST, 2008; NESTA, 2008). Collaboration between the creative industries and organizations and industries and organizations which are not normally deemed as creative, that is.

In Europe and the Nordic countries especially the latter interpretation of the term has become prominent and the economic and innovative potential in temporary *couplings* between the creative industries and traditional industries is celebrated in a series of private and government-commissioned reports and analyses (e.g., EBST, 2008; NESTA, 2008; NyX, 2003). According to these, temporarily coupling agents or organizations from the creative industries, *creative agents*, with agents or organizations from traditional industries, *non-creative agents*, in collaborative projects increases the non-creative agents' innovative and economic potential. In other words, non-creative agents can develop their business and create value by engaging in *project-based couplings* with creative agents – they can do what we will call *experience-based business development*.

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<sup>1</sup> There is another 'branch' of Experience Economy focusing on regional development and the creative class' influence on economy on a greater scale. However, this branch is beyond the scope of this thesis. For more on that see for example the works of Richard Florida.

The above mentioned interpretation of the term as collaborative business development is what the thesis you are about read will revolve around. But how come is it, that this interpretation is particularly interesting compared to the other ones? Personally we find the inter-industrial and -organizational interpretation to be interesting since it builds on an inherent assumption that couplings between creative- and non-creative agents may result in value creation otherwise unlikely to happen. Such an assumption both indicates that there are likely to be differences between the creative- and the non-creative agents and that these differences somehow can lead to a coupling that is bigger or better than its isolated parts. However, if the potential in temporarily coupling agents from the creative industries with agents from the traditional industries is as prominent as claimed there is surprisingly little research published on- and attention toward this specific topic (Bille, 2009). It seems that the focus is mostly directed towards the *potential* value creation in couplings (i.e., pre-coupling) and towards the successful cases and value creation documented after completion of coupling projects (i.e., post-coupling). Not many, if any at all, focus on the process in between – the temporary *interaction* and *collaboration* between coupling agents and *challenges* related hereto. Simplified, one could argue that scholars and not least reports claim that couplings lead to success but fail to explain and investigate how and why. Such argumentation seems a tad archaic in a modern business world and serves little reassurance for agents and organizations that might consider engaging and investing in such coupling projects. In worst case the lack of transparency might scare off agents and organizations from future engagement in coupling projects and thus limit the overall potential of the experience economy. We believe such a development would be detrimental - hence this thesis. We believe that this underdeveloped area of study, couplings between non-creative and creative agents needs further attention since a well executed and facilitating process is utterly important if one wants to go from seeing the potential value creation of couplings to the being successful case in a government report. Thus, our motivation for doing the research project and this thesis is not only to contribute to an underdeveloped field but also a hope of contributing to the practitioners and scholars in the field with something that is useful in their everyday practices.

## **1.2 Methodical approach**

Exploring a subject about which not much theory has been developed is a dubious task. The traditional scientific methods of posing a number of hypotheses based on existing theory about the field of study and testing these is out of the question simply because there is no existing theory. If we were to follow such an approach we would have to pose a number of hypotheses of the field of study based on theory from similar and more developed fields of study. This approach, however, would be based on assumptions of similarities between fields and would also require extensive knowledge of a wider range of theories and fields than possible to become familiar with within the given time frame.

Instead, we choose to approach our field of study empirically to be able to create new theory of the subject – temporary couplings between non-creative and creative agents within the framework of experience based business development.

Consequently, our methodical approach must be an approach aimed at generating theory through empirical enquiry. For that purpose we choose a *grounded theory* methodology with qualitative interviews with coupling agents and practitioners in the field as empirical data. Grounded theory was developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss as a qualitative alternative to quantitative methods and with the specific purpose of generating theory empirically instead of testing and merely modifying existing theory (Charmaz, 2006). The main tenets of grounded theory (and also our reasons for choosing it as our methodical approach) is 1) the developed theory should be grounded in the empirical world, that is, the theory should resonate and fit with the experiences of the people from the field of study and 2) that the field should be approached without predefined theoretical assumptions which entails that extant theories and assumptions should earn their way into the grounded theory during analysis as opposed to being taken for granted (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007II). In practice this means that grounded theory method enables us to develop new theory on the subject which is of direct relevance to the everyday practices of the people and organizations contributing to the research project.

From its initial iteration in the beginning of the 1960s the grounded theory method has undergone numerous changes among which the parting of Glaser and Strauss in each their separate epistemological direction has had a tremendous impact. We build our methodology on the shoulders of the symbolic interactionist direction presently advocated for by Kathy Charmaz (2006) and initially led by Anselm Strauss together with Juliet Corbin. They offered a constructivist cast to grounded theory method. This particular approach fits our research project's focus on process and interaction between agents whilst providing us with an understanding of the developed theory as a construct of the researchers' (i.e., our) interaction with empirical data. In other words, this epistemological approach gives us an eye for our own participation in creating knowledge and developing theory and thus helps ensure validity of our research. Ultimately our preference for, and familiarity with, constructivist methodologies of course also plays a role in the choice of methodology.

### **1.3 Use of extant literature**

After having developed our own theory on the subject we wish to deepen and strengthen it further by discussing and comparing it to existing theory on the broader field of experience economy. This includes theory on the creative industries and applied creativity represented by DCMS (1998, 2001), EBST (2008), NESTA (2008), NICE (2007), NyX (2003), Pine & Gilmore (1999) Regeringen (2003), Caves (2000), Hesmondhalgh (2007) and various other literature. Further we address theory from similar fields, including mergers and acquisitions represented by Amabile et

al. (1996), Bligh (2006), Datta (1991) and Seo & Hill (2005). We have chosen this particular field because it faces some of the same challenges as coupling-projects in terms of making disparate agents work together as a team and merging different cultures successfully. It differs in some key aspects, though, making a direct transfer of theory unfeasible.

To provide a frame for our research subject the extant literature will be presented thoroughly in the beginning of the thesis. Hereafter we put it aside during the development of our own theory until it is taken up again for a contextualizing comparative discussion of our developed grounded theory in the last two chapters.

The research question guiding this project is as follows:

## **1.4 Research question**

*The aim of the project is to develop an empirically grounded theory of collaborative challenges and strategies related to project-based couplings and interaction between non-creative and creative agents within the framework of experience-based business development.*

## **1.5 Thesis structure and progression**

The thesis has a linear structure and progression in which the parts progress chronologically. However, one must be aware that a grounded theory research project is not linear and as such the linearity is for reasons of understandability. Consequently, the thesis will start out in chapter two with a literature review of theories on experience economy, the creative industries, and mergers and acquisitions. In chapter three we will present the methodology of the research project including an elaboration of our epistemological stance. Chapter four is a short presentation of our empirical data. Thereafter, in chapter five, follows the analysis which leads directly to chapter six and the construction of our grounded theory of couplings between creative and non-creative agents. A chapter on how to ensure validity of a qualitative research project, chapter seven, follows and before we end the thesis by elaborating on prospects for the future in chapter nine, we engage in a discussion of our grounded theory in the light of the theories presented in the literature review which takes place in chapter eight.

# **2 Theoretical framework - from creativity to experience economy**

Creativity and creative industries are a fundamental part of the experience economy and thus we initiate on the subject of creativity and creative industries as to answer questions such as what is creativity? Who are the creative people? How do they work?



## **2.1 Creativity**

Creativity is a word that is used in so many different contexts that one might find it difficult to clearly define what it actually means. However, the word has a long history of usage throughout the Western Civilization that contributes to the understanding of it. While different schools of thought have given accounts of the word creativity (e.g., psychology, business literature, art, etc.) we find art history to be a good source of explanation for the term creativity. The reason for this is that art history provides both an understanding of the origination of the term but also an explanation of how creativity came to be an attribute of the auteur – the creating artist<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps the biggest change through time has been that creativity (creation) was once a divine action referring to the creation of man and thus creation was a skill beyond the capabilities of humans (Tatarkiewicz, 1980). In ancient societies there was no human creation – only imitation of God’s creations. If man painted a picture of a tree the picture was worshipped for its resemblance of the God’s work – not its originality or creative output (Tatarkiewicz, 1980). Today creativity and creation is no longer reserved only for the Gods and we often read and hear about creative individuals in our everyday lives.

### **2.1.1 Commodification of creativity**

An interesting discussion lies in the commodification of creativity or the very circumstance that creativity can be economically leveraged and sold. Through history, creativity has become a skill transferable with economic wealth and today the successful creative brain can benchmark in economic value with that of other business related skills. As a result some claim that creative outputs are no longer governed by their specific artistic content but instead in relation to their realization value (Adorno, 1991). In other words creativity has been commoditized and this has had its implications: The definition of creativity has become blurred as a result of its widened usability and in the capitalist world of today creativity is both a skill one can learn to master but also a unique talent to possess. This distinction is the starting point of the ongoing debate in the western art world on creativity vs. craft. Today this debate is well exemplified in the notion of high-art (e.g., modern-art painting), vs. low-art (e.g., the creative marketing campaign) (Caves, 2000).

### **2.1.2 Creative organizations – what is a creative work environment?**

Few organizations will claim that they do not draw advantage from creativity to at least some extent. Creativity is a resource that many have learned to draw advantage from. Today the word creativity will find its way into many diverse contexts ranging from the most creative organizations to the annual report of accounting organizations, banks, stock exchanges etc. Thus the word creativity is no longer reserved for the creative ‘auteur’ – the

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<sup>2</sup> For a brief chronological presentation of the evolution of the term creativity see appendix 1.

creator of artistic works and this has the implication that today not only humans can be creative – so can organizations:

Amabile (1996) investigates the sources of creativity in organizations as to map what constitutes a creative work environment in organizations. The study is based on reviews of previous research combined with the interviewing of 120 R&D scientists and technicians (Amabile et al, 1996). By coding the interviews Amabile deducts a list of categories that affects the creative work environment in organizations both positively and negatively:

- Encouragement of creativity – creativity should be encouraged.
- Autonomy or freedom – creative individuals or teams must be allowed a degree of freedom from rules and organizational policies.
- Resources – sufficient resource allocation to a creative project is vital
- Pressures – Pressures on creative individuals or teams must be balanced. Too much pressure will impede on work quality but some degree of challenge, at the same time, facilitate creative solutions.
- Organizational Impediments to Creativity – “internal strife, conservatism, and rigid, formal management structures within organizations will impede creativity”  
(Amabile et al, 1996, p. 1162)

What is obvious from Amabile (1996) is that creative organizations can have many shapes. In other words there are no *sui generis* creative organizations but there are rules of conduct that must be accomplished and nurtured as to accommodate creativity and creative thinking in organizations (Amabile et al., 1996).

Throughout this project we nonetheless distinguish between creative and non-creative agents and organizations. A creative agent and/or organization is defined by having creativity as the main commodity and resource. In other words, creativity is what is leveraged to produce an income and the business as such is based on a creative *flow* (David & McIntosh in Pine & Gilmore, 2009). Non-creative agents and/or organizations however are defined as potentially possessing some degree of creativity but not leveraging it as a key resource or commodity. Rather these agents or organizations leverage raw materials, technical knowledge etc. to produce an income – the *economic flow* (David & McIntosh in Pine & Gilmore, 2009).

## **2.2 Creative industries**

### **2.2.1 What are creative industries?**

Having outlined the concept of creativity and framed it in the context of modern business environments and organizations we turn to a review of the field of industries known as *the creative industries*. Just like creativity has become a proverbial word in the economic world it

has also created an industry on its own and like creativity, the creative industry is a phenomenon that needs an accompanying presentation. We adhere to two scholars' definitions of the creative industries:

First, Caves (2000) uses the term creative industries to address the industries...

“[...] providing goods and services that we broadly associate with cultural, artistic, or simply entertainment value. They include book and magazine publishing, the visual arts (painting, sculpture), the performing arts (theatre, opera, concerts, and dance), sound recordings, cinema and TV films, even fashion and toys and games”. (Caves, 2000, p. 1).

An interesting point here is that Caves (2000) encompasses not only the creative agents (the artists etc.) but also include supporting organizations and agents somewhat related to the commoditization, marketing, distribution etc. of the creative goods.

Second, Hesmondhalgh (2007) also provides us with a definition of the creative industries. However, Hesmondhalgh uses another term 'cultural industries'<sup>3</sup>. Hesmondhalgh's (2007) outline of the creative industries falls close to the definition in Caves (2000), but there are differences. Where Caves includes 'supporting organizations' Hesmondhalgh (2007) also addresses a series of industries not found at the core of the creative industries but still encompassed by his definition. These industries he calls 'peripheral industries' (Hesmondhalgh, 2007).

The argument in Hesmondhalgh (2007) for using the term Cultural Industries has traces back to the Frankfurt school and Adorno's/Horkheimer's term 'Culture industry'<sup>4</sup>. In Adorno's view culture was originally a setting for 'utopian critique' of the society and thus something outside the capitalistic industries (Adorno, 1991; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). However as culture (and creativity) became commodified the boundaries were broken down and thus Adorno coined the term culture industry to indicate a fusion: "Culture has become openly, and defiantly, an industry obeying the same rules of production as any other producer of commodities". (Bernstein, J. M. in Adorno, 1991, p. 9). In other words, Hesmondhalgh uses the term culture industries due to its linkage to a certain tradition of thinking exemplified in Adorno's writings on the Culture Industry (Hesmondhalgh, 2007).

### **2.2.2 Creative agents – who are they?**

To fully understand the creative industries it seems reasonable to map the various agents that make up this field of interest. In other words who are they, what kind of environment do they operate in, and what do they do?

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<sup>3</sup> To avoid confusing the reader we use the words "creative industries" throughout this project.

<sup>4</sup> Indeed Adorno claim that Horkheimer and he were the fathers of the term (Adorno, 1991)

A creative agent in the theoretical framework of Hesmondhalgh (2007) is simply someone employed in the 'cultural industries' thus a producer of 'texts' and a creator of symbols<sup>5</sup>. Likewise, Caves (2000) focus on agents employed in the music- ; publishing- ; TV/radio- ; art- and movie industry. However, Caves (2000) differs from Hesmondhalgh (2007) by also focusing on the intermediaries working in and around such industries. These intermediaries are the publishers, A&R's, directors and other personalities working as gatekeepers between the talented artist and the market (Caves, 2000). The collaboration between the artist and the gatekeeper is not depicted in the stereotypical scenario of a cigar-smoking moneyman suppressing the artist by taking advantage of his talent. Rather Caves describes the collaboration as a joint venture and a collaboration of mutual interest (Caves, 2000).

Although both writers brings us closer to understanding who the creative agents are we still need to clarify under what conditions these agents work and how they are different from agents in other industries.

### 2.2.3 Properties and traits of creative activities

Caves outlines the *basic economic properties of creative activities* (Caves, 2000, p. 2). These properties not only provide us with information of the processes involved in working professionally with creativity but also provide a list of the idiosyncrasies of the creative industries and its agents. In other words, the following properties serve as an account of traits considered unique to work in the creative industries<sup>6</sup>:

- Nobody knows principle:  
It is impossible to predetermine how consumers will react to products in the creative industries. Even after a product has been launched it is difficult to assess and understand the consumers' reactions to the product. This results in a high risk factor since costs are sunk prior to product launch without ample affirmation that the costs will be recouped.
- Art for art's sake:  
The artists involved in the creative industries care deeply for their outputs and are to some extent engaged in *art for art's sake* rather than economic rewards. Caves makes a clear distinction between creative- and humdrum (in-it-for-the-money) inputs and claims these are two opposite mindsets.
- Motley crew principle:

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<sup>5</sup> For an elaborate account of the rationale behind the terms 'text' and 'symbol creator' see Hesmondhalgh (2007).

<sup>6</sup> There is an important remark to be made here: while we make the distinction between creative industries and non-creative industries we urge the reader to remember that non-creative industries may possess creativity and creative employees etc (see the introductory historical review of the word creativity).

Caves describes the creative industries as a field engaged in 'multiplicative production relationships': "In a multiplicative production relationship [...] every input must be present and do its job-or at least perform at or above some threshold level of proficiency if any commercially valuable output is to result" (Caves, 2000, p. 5). Put shortly, in the creative industries, the chain is only as strong as the weakest link.

- Infinite variety:  
Creative products can be similar but never identical. Movies, paintings, songs etc. come in infinite variety just like the consumers will have an infinite variety of preferences.
- A list/B list properties:  
Artists are ranked as a result of their performance (skill) and the ranks are important to reach success. A-list actors, for instance, will have more job offers and be in a position to demand more reward in return of their services.
- Time Flies:  
This principle covers the circumstance that time is always of the essence in the production of creative goods. Costs are sunk prior to product launch and "[...] any delay that postpones the influx of revenue is very costly". (Caves, 2000, p. 8).
- Ars longa:  
"Art is long" – meaning that many creative goods will have a long lifetime during which revenue can be collected.  
(Caves, 2000).

Caves' basic economic properties of the creative industries have been criticized in a number of accounts. They have been seen as too rigid (see for example Towse, 2002). Especially the art for art's sake principle correlates poorly with research that indicates that a large part of the artists are engaged in regular jobs outside the creative industries as to earn a living (Towse, 2002). In this way the artists are occupied both by art for art's sake projects but also by 'humdrum' activities.

Hesmondhalgh also outlines distinctive properties of the cultural industries. These properties correlate in many ways to Caves' (2000). However, Hesmondhalgh (2007) identifies the properties as 'problems' of the industries and concurrently identifies the solutions the agents in the industries use to overcome such problems:

### **Problems**

- High levels of risk.
- Very high production costs and low reproduction costs.
- Tension between creativity and commerce – selling or selling out?

- Creative products act as semi-public goods: meaning that “[...] the act of consumption by one individual does not reduce the possibility of consumption by other.” (e.g., piracy). (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, p. 21).

#### **Solutions as employed by creative agents:**

- Repertoire building:  
As a response to the high level of risk the creative agents build repertoires and thus offset misses against hits.
- Risk management:  
Companies and creative agents involved in the creative industries have several ways of managing the perceived risk of the markets:
  - Horizontal integration: Companies buy up other companies to reduce competition.
  - Vertical integration: companies buy up other companies in the value chain to gain control and income.
  - Internationalization: Companies buy up other companies in international markets to gain access to these markets.
  - Multi-sector and –media integration: Companies buy into other markets and sectors as to gain cross-promotion.
- Artificial scarcity:  
To deal with the challenge that creative goods often act as semi-public goods companies attempt to create artificial scarcity in numerous ways:
  - Vertical integration - to control release, distribution, quality etc. of creative goods.
  - Copyright - prevention of copy.
  - Limiting access - if a creative good cannot be reached it cannot be copied.
- Formatting:  
Formatting is carried out in several ways but overall with the aim to reduce risk by providing the consumer with known genres of creative products:
  - Stars - formatting by stars involves linking a person with star-quality to a given creative good and thus reducing the risk of consumers ignoring the text. Put shortly, stars attract attention and attention attracts revenue.
  - Genre - genres work as labels to attract consumers. The marketing of an album as ‘hip hop’ will help increase market reach to the ‘hip hop’ audience and fans.
  - Serial - serial releases are a way of dealing with risk. Once consumers buy into an idea it is relatively easier to market a serial release e.g., ‘Now That’s What I Call Music’, ‘Absolute Music’, ‘Absolute Xmas’ etc.  
(Hesmondhalgh, 2007)

As a final remark on the traits and qualities of the work of agents in the creative industries we draw on a study by Lampel, Lant and Shamsie (2000). These theorists present five 'balancing acts' that creative agents must manage to secure success in the creative industries:

- The balance between artistic values and economics of mass entertainment.
  - Successful formatting of products as to differentiate but at the same time secures the familiarity of categorizations.
  - The balance between catering for existing market tastes and demands while also securing innovative products that create, extend and transforms the market.
  - Securing a good balance between vertical integration and "...creative vitality through flexible specialization".
  - Individual inspiration vs. organizational creation. This polarity address the question of whether inspiration and innovation happens on the individual level (the creative individual) or due to successfully organizations and structures (the creative organization)
- (Lampel et al., 2000)

As is obvious in both the work of Caves (2000), Hesmondhalgh (2007) and Lampel et al. (2000), the features, traits and idiosyncrasies of the creative industries and the agents employed within them are to some extent correlating across literature. However, there are also some discrepancies between the authors. To provide the reader with a brief overview we have summarized some of the most important points in a matrix (see table 1, next page):

General argument	RISK (related to creative goods and industries)	The artist (art) vs. business	Genre and product differentiation	
Hesmondhalgh	"...risk derives from the fact that audiences use cultural commodities in highly volatile and unpredictable ways..." (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, p. 19)	"However dubious the romantic conception of opposing creativity or art to commerce may be, it has had the long-term effect of generating very important tensions between creativity and commerce ... it is impossible to understand the distinctive nature of cultural production without an understanding of the commerce/creativity dialectic" (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, p.20)	Hesmondhalgh makes a distinction "...between multiplicity—the sheer number of voices – and diversity – whether or not these voices are actually saying anything different from each other" (76). Thereby he claim that even though there are many <i>voices</i> producing cultural products there are not necessarily large diversity since many produce similar products (limited genres).	
Caves	"...the producers intimate knowledge of the good's production process still leaves him in the dark about whether customer will like it: nobody knows"  (Caves, 2000, p. 3)"	The artist posses 'humdrum' skills that will make it possible to earn a higher payment in other industries but choose the artistic work due to "...prevalence and strength of tastes that affect the qualities and quantity of creative effort" (4).	"Creative products generally exhibit some mixture of vertical and horizontal differentiation" (Caves, 2000, p.6). When products are vertically integrated consumers might agree that product A is better than product B. However in vertical integration there are more dimensions to value the product from such as style, sound, color etc. Such multiplicity results in some people preferring product A and some people preferring product B.	
Lampel et al	"Opinions about quality can diverge so strongly that producers find it hard to figure out why some products do well while others do not", (Lampel et al, 2000, p.264)	"Cultural industries strive to remain loyal to artistic values, but they must also deal with market economics" "Which one of these imperatives should drive decision making?" (Lampel et al, 2000, p.266)	N/A	
Comparison	The arguments are somewhat identical: The success of creative goods is difficult to predict and producers and stakeholders must accept a risk when investing time or money in such products.	Caves see a polarity (art as distinct of humdrum activities); Hesmondhalgh argue that art and commerce is a continuum (one is understood in the context of the other); while Lampel et al argue that it is a 'balancing act' that can be optimal. Thereby all scholars agree that there is a difference between art and business and that managing these opposing forces is part of being a professional artist. In other words artists must both produce art but also secure a living.	Both Caves and Hesmondhalgh address the point that creative products are produced and consumed in a pattern of genre. Products are sold and bought as belonging to genres and while some might prefer genre A others will prefer genre B. This of course links to the high degree of risk and uncertainty with creative products.	

(continues)

Table 1:



Formatting		On longevity of creative goods		The role of creative actors and collaborators	
<p><b>Stars:</b> Creative products (especially movies) are often starring the same stars as these attract attention. Thereby creative products become formatted.</p> <p><b>Genres:</b> Producing a creative product in a special genre results in formatting.</p> <p><b>Serials:</b> When one creative product is a hit sequels are often produced as to leverage this success. (Hesmondhalgh, 2007)</p>	<p>“Cultural commodities are rarely destroyed in use. They tend to act like public ‘goods’ – goods where the act of consumption by one individual does not reduce the possibility of consumption by others” “...this means that firms have to achieve the scarcity that gives value to goods by limiting access to cultural goods by artificial means”. (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, p. 21)</p>	<p>Hesmondhalgh argues that artist and creative collaborators (e.g. publishers, record companies etc.) are intertwined and ‘two sides of the same coin’. However their working styles are different: in the creation phase formality is loose (creative autonomy) to maximize creativity but in later phases (reproduction and circulation) the formalization and control is tightened to ensure maximum exploitation of the creative good. (Hesmondhalgh: 2007)</p>			
<p>A list/B list actors: A list actors find most jobs and requires the highest salaries. Using an A list actor increases the potential for success of a creative product. The use of the same ‘stars’ results in formatting of the creative products. (Caves, 2000)</p>	<p>The legal duration of the copyright determines how long he original creator or performer can collect these royalties, which are rents to the original creator. The durability is the Ars Longa property. (Caves, 2000)</p>	<p>Caves see the businesses living off creativity (e.g. publishers, record companies etc.) as mediators between the artist and the market. They are different from the artists. (Caves, 2000)</p>			
<p>Novelty vs. category:</p> <p>Culture suffers damage when it is planned or administrated. When it is left to itself, however, everything cultural threatens not only to lose its possibility of effect, but its very existence as well 108. In other words producers of creative products must secure some degree of formatting but simultaneously make sure not to overdo the formatting. (Lampel et al, 2000)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Lampel et al discuss primarily the role of the creative collaborator and focus on tensions between vertical integration and flexible specialization. Companies must find the optimal balance between being vertically integrated (maximum exploitation of economic potential) and flexible in specialization (maximum freedom to nurture creativity). (Lampel et al, 2000)</p>			
<p>The three scholars all agree that a degree of formatting in inevitably part of creative products.</p>	<p>Caves principle of ars longa is primarily described in its relation to copyright (durable rents) and the controlling of these rents. Hesmondhalgh’s principle of semi-public goods, however, points toward strategic measures as to create artificial scarcity and thereby have a return on investment.</p>	<p>Even though all authors have different focal points they revolve around the idea that maximum creativity does not coexist with maximum economic exploitation. The two milieus are fundamentally different.</p>			

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## **2.2.4 Sum up on creativity and creative industries**

By now we have defined the subject of creativity, presented it in a commercial context, and outlined a theoretical framework on the creative industries and the agents herein. We have seen that the creative industries are different from other industries in the way they engage and manage work and we have seen that the creative agents act accordingly. Thus we have laid the theoretical foundation for a presentation of the experience economy.

## **2.3 *The experience economy***

Before outlining the three prominent definitions of the experience economy we shortly present its historical background.

### **2.3.1 How the experience economy came to be – a historical perspective**

Over the years the World's markets have changed and globalization has influenced nearly every sector of the economy of today. To pinpoint where this globalization has its out spring is impossible but one of the important factors for the globalization of the world economy was the opening of the three big economies of Russia, India and China in the 1990s (Jensen, 2006). With these huge economies competing on a global scale change is inevitable. But also the capabilities of the Internet and our ever-changing ways of expanding our use of its websites have given rise to an increase in competition (Erhvervs- og Byggestyrelsen (EBST), 2008; Erhvervsministeriet og Kulturministeriet (EM & KUM), 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2007; Jensen, 2006; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Today most goods and services we buy are available or accessible online and we can find the best price with only a few clicks. To the Nordic region and the Western World in general the increasing globalization and growing IT infrastructure in industrialized regions of the world pose a challenge since 3<sup>rd</sup> World countries and other evolving regions are able to combine inexpensive labor with increasing knowledge and skills and a globalized marketing apparatus (the Internet). Thus there is always a competitor who is capable of producing 'your good' in an equivalent quality just cheaper (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2000; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). To overcome this challenge many Western companies of today must compete not only on price and quality but on added customer value – enter 'experiences'. The winner of the market in the experience economy is the organization that not only has a good product at a good price but also presents and sells that product in a way so the customer is entertained. Experiences become an added intangible value (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2000; NESTA, 2008; Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

Even though the variety of articles, books, reports etc. dealt with in this thesis do not always agree on the 'name' of the new economy there seems to be consensus about one thing: The customers of today and tomorrow will not only expect the best product at the best price, but increasingly look for added value in relation to how they receive and perceive their product (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2000; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Jensen, 2006). This tendency is expressed in the following 'equation' for market value of products or services in the new economy:

“Function + quality + experience<sup>7</sup> = market value of products or services” (EBST, 2008)

Thus the experience is a key factor in value creation in the economies of today. However this leaves us short of an actual definition of the area of experience economy. We therefore turn to an outline of some of the definitions of the experience economy.

### **2.3.2 Three definitions of the experience economy**

There is no easy way to define the experience economy (Bille, 2010). Much of the discussion about the experience economy takes place not only on a business school research level but also on a more policy based governmental level. This has the implication that in order to grasp the width of the concept of the experience economy one must look beyond business school academia and include a selection of government reports and policy papers. To create an overview of the reports we provide the reader with a summed up table briefly presenting the most prominent papers and reports (see table 2, next page):

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<sup>7</sup> For the sake of simplicity we use the verbatim translation here. However the word experience could be replaced with any other proverbial name for the added value in the new economy e.g., ‘dream’ (Jensen, 2006).

Report/paper:	NESTA: Creating Innovation			Ministry of culture, & –commerce: Danmarks Kreative Potentiale	The Danish Government: Danmark i Kultur og Oplevelsesøkonomien
Year of release:	2008	2000	2003	(Continues)	
Method of analysis:	The NESTA measures interaction between industries and cross-reference patterns of interaction with degree of innovativeness.	A comprehensive collection of journals, articles, books and selected analyses of statistical material.	The report draws on a variety of different reports and literature but does not provide empirically based results on its own.		
Main argument (very brief...)	The creative industries have a higher rate of innovation than other industries. Supply chain linkages (applied creative services) between creative industries and other industries facilitate higher rates of innovation in the other industries. (Nesta, 2008)	“A closer collaboration between the two worlds [culture & commerce] can result in dynamism in the society which can empower the production of Danish art and culture, offer the Culture new development opportunities and provide additional push towards a further development of the economy influenced by innovation, creativity and idea-richness”. (EM & KUM, 2000, p.110)	By coupling cultural organizations with the industry dynamism is created which ultimately leads to an increase in the Danish experience economy. This results in monetary value creation. (Regeringen, 2003)		
(Main) aim of the report:	Policy paper	Celebrates and encourage collaboration between art and business.	Presentation of 5 initiatives from the government.		
Comments and/or reservations	Difficulties of clearly determining what the creative industries are. Uses Office for National Statistics numbers.		Since the report does not provide any accounts of the method for calculations etc. it is impossible to test or further evaluate the claims presented in the report.		

Table 2

Danish Enterprise and Construction Agency: Vækst via Oplevelser		NYX, Ministry of Culture and Danish Enterprise and Construction Agency Kulturpartner	Nordic Innovation Centre (NICE): A Creative Economy Green Paper for the Nordic Region	Creative Industries Mapping Document. Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
2008	The effect of the couplings are based on the NESTA report and a survey conducted by Gallup in 2008	2003	2007	1998; 2001
The report argues that the coupling of creative industries with additional industries results in a higher degree of innovation in (building on the NESTA report). Furthermore couplings – resulting in experiences – are an important driving force behind business expansions. Finally the report argues that the more an organization embraces experiences (measured in number of value chain 'links') the more prominent the positive results of these experiences will be. (EBST, 2008)	Couplings are feasible because creative industries can learn the additional industries to communicate and propagate experiences (which ultimately leads to ability to compete and increasing performance). Likewise the creative industries can benefit from couplings due to an increase in business activities. The report defines collaboration between businesses and artists as Donation, Sponsorship or partnership depending on the degree to which the organizations collaborate. (NYX, 2003)	The NICE report is a substantial report with many various methods of analysis including statistics, SWOT-analysis and case analysis.	The DCMS report is a mapping document mainly focused on statistical measurement of the growth and feasibility of the Creative industries in the UK	The DCMS reports (both the 1998 and the 2007 version) claim that the Creative industries are growing throughout the UK. Furthermore the creativity is emphasized as the skill and asset most likely to drive the economy in the UK in the twenty first century. (DCMS, 1998; DCMS 2001)
None clearly stated	Policy paper	Policy paper (green paper)	Policy paper (green paper)	
The report has several remarks on the subject of the plurality of possible delimitations of the creative industries. However the report appears transparent by adding a comparative matrix which shows the report's delimitation compared to other reports.	The NYX report addresses the issue of collaboration between creative agents and non-creative agents. However the report offers very little recommendations in regards of how such collaborations are managed.	The NICE report is a substantial report with far too many points to summarize here. For more information we advice our readers to read the full report.	Both the 1998 and the 2007 report is based on figures and statistics that bear with them some degree of insecurity. This insecurity stems from the difficulties of pinpointing exactly what industries and businesses are part of the Creative Industries and which are not	

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A consolidated argument of all the reports can be summarized as being twofold:

Argument 1: The creative industries are flourishing and should be supported to improve this positive development.

Argument 2: Couplings between creative industries and non-creative industries (often referred to as experience economy) result in a range of positive outputs, but mainly improves innovativeness and competitiveness, and value creation.

However, almost every report also has a comment on the unpredictability of the field and the many subjective choices and adjustments that must take place in order to quantitatively measure the effect of the experience economy. Consequently, the many idiosyncratic approaches to analysis of data, makes it nearly impossible to compare the results across reports (see also Bille, 2010). However, by combining the existing theoretical framework on the experience economy with the reports and policy papers presented in table 2 we are able to deduct and present three predominant ‘schools of thought’<sup>8</sup> within the experience economy:

### **2.3.2.1 The American school: an intra-organizational perspective**

This ‘school of thought’ is based on the work of two American writers, Joseph Pine & James Gilmore. In their influential book “The Experience Economy - Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage” (1999), they address the issue of experience economy from an intra-organizational perspective. Their main argument is that businesses should creatively ‘stage’ their products (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). ‘Staging’ means adding experiences to ones products or services to out-compete rivals. Simply because offering unique experiences enables charging a higher price for your product and which leads to a higher profit margin (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Their argument does not invoke couplings with the creative industries or tapping into the creativity of these industries. Rather, they claim that many non-creative organizations already latently possess the skills that enables staging of products through strategic use of experiences.

### **2.3.2.2 The English school: an intra-industrial perspective**

The second ‘school of thought’ is primarily based on an industry mapping report commissioned by the UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport (also referred to as the ‘DCMS tradition’ – see Bille, 2010). This report defines experience economy as “[...] focused value creation in the experience areas.” (Bille, 2010, p. 11). The ‘experience areas’ are primarily constituted by printed media, photography, music industry, amusement parks etc., restaurants etc., design, architecture, computer games, fashion and advertising (Bille, 2010; DCMS, 1998 & 2001). In other words, the DCMS report tracks value creation throughout businesses that belong to the creative industries as depicted in Hesmondhalgh (2007) and Caves (2000). Ultimately, the DCMS report is primarily

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<sup>8</sup> Please note that by school we mean a group of scholars and writers sharing the same idea of the subject. We choose to apply such a categorization in order for the reader not necessarily familiar with the subject of the experience economy to obtain a brief overview of some of the most prominent definitions.

focused on presenting the positive economic development within the experience areas and thus advocates for an increasing focus on these industries (DCMS, 1998 & 2001).

### 2.3.2.3 The Danish school: an inter- organizational- and -industrial perspective

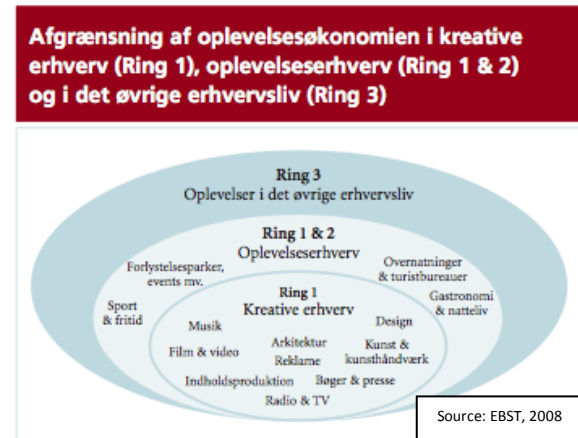
The third and last ‘school of thought’ within the area of experience economy is primarily based on a series of reports including NESTA (2008), EBST (2008), EM & KUM (2000), Regeringen (2003), NyX (2003), and NICE (2007). This school of thought focuses on inter-organizational and inter-industrial couplings. To clarify this definition we turn to a model presented by the Danish Enterprise & Construction Authority (EBST)<sup>9</sup> (see picture).

Presented in the inner circle (Ring 1) are businesses associated to the creative industries.

Presented in the second circle, but also

encompassing the inner circle, is the experience industry on a broader scale, that is, businesses directly involved with selling experiences (sports, hotel business, amusement parks etc.).

Presented in the third circle are the additional industries in the Danish economy (everything not specifically focused on creative products and/or experiences). According to EBST experience economy is “[...] economic value creation where experiences represent a share of the value of the product or applied service.” (EBST, 2008, p. 8) Especially coupling creative skills from ring one and two with businesses operating in the additional, non-creative, industries (ring three) shows great potential (EBST, 2008).



### 2.3.3 Sum up on experience economy definitions

There is no unanimous definition of the phenomenon experience economy. Exemplified as a continuum we argue that the DCMS tradition (the intra-industrial perspective) is in one end while the Pine & Gilmore (1999) (intra-organizational perspective) is in the other end. In the middle we find the Danish tradition (both inter-organizational as well as inter-industrial perspective) which encourages bringing together creative- and non-creative agents to create value through coupling projects. Since the aim of this project is to investigate these couplings between creative- and non-creative agents we situate our research within the Danish school throughout this project.

Accordingly, we now turn towards presenting theories that can possibly inform us in the subject of coupling projects in the experience economy. Given the large role the subject of coupling projects play in this thesis we wish to ensure that the reader has a solid definition of such coupling

<sup>9</sup> While this particular figure is from the EBST (2008) report we find both figures and arguments identical of the figure in the various reports that constitute the Danish school of thought of experience economy. See NESTA (2008), EM & KUM (2000), Regeringen (2003), NYX (2003), NICE (2007).

projects. Drawing on the Danish School of thought we define coupling projects as temporary projects aimed at generating value by coupling a creative- and a non-creative agent.

## **2.4 In search of theory on coupling projects**

The subject of coupling projects in the experience economy is theoretically underdeveloped. To our knowledge and experience, there are no theories that directly address the issue of how coupling projects are carried out in the experience economy or what challenges they impose on the coupling agents. In order to investigate whether other theories can be applied to this subject we now present a theoretical framework consisting of theories that are peripherally connected to coupling projects or from similar fields of study. Our aim is twofold: *first*, we wish to investigate whether these theories can potentially be transferred to fit the subject of coupling projects in the experience economy. *Secondly*, we wish to provide a theoretical framework to which we can later comparatively discuss our own grounded theory to investigate how the theories correlate, differ and supplement each other.

### **2.4.1 Creativity and innovation studies theory**

In a study presented in the journal 'Creativity and Innovation Management' Hill and Johnson (2003) empirically investigates situations where creative organizations/agents are hired by non-creative organizations to carry out a task that requires creative skills not already present in the non-creative organization – *applied creativity*. While at first this sounds similar to a coupling project there is however a fundamental difference: Coupling projects are based on a shared process where the creative- and non-creative agent has equal power of decision and right to shape the project. The goal is to produce something new for the benefit of both coupling agents. Applied creativity, however, merely entails that the non-creative agent is a customer paying a creative agent to carry out an assignment within the non-creative organization. Accordingly, the process is not shared and the creative agent is prone to obey the rules and guidelines provided by the non-creative agent. Applied creativity correlates to any other consultancy service, only the service is based on application of creative skills.

There are three important points in the findings of Hill & Johnson (2003):

- 1) The non-creative organization collaborates closely with the creative agent/organization: "Applied creativity occurs via an extended interactive process in an act of creation that is truly SHARED." (Hill & Johnson, 2003, p. 227).
- 2) Non-creative organizations find the creative services and skills to be distinctive compared to other applied services from non-creative partners (e.g., accountants etc.). The non-creative organizations point towards the *centrality of creativity to product core*, meaning that the creativity employed by the non-creative organization is more vital to the final product development than other applied services (e.g., good accounting services will not increase quality of an organization's products etc.) (Hill & Johnson, 2003).



- 3) The non-creative organizations find the projects where creative agents apply their creativity more risky than other projects due to difficulties of evaluating the service: “It will be very difficult to evaluate the service confidently even immediately after receipt of the service (e.g., via a series of storyboards or a draft building plan). Experience attributes, especially those that can be evaluated during the service process, may therefore assume enormous importance to the advertiser in its accept/reject decisions on work presented.” (Hill & Johnson, 2003. P. 222).

The theory of Hill & Johnson (2003) is interesting in relation to coupling projects since it not only encourages the notion that creative- and non-creative agents can- and do interact but also that the collaboration increases value creation (Hill & Johnson, 2003). Furthermore, we learn that the non-creative organizations find the creative services to be distinct and difficult to evaluate and handle (Hill & Johnson, 2003). This supports the claim set out by Caves (2000) and Hesmondhalgh (2007) that the creative industries and the agents employed herein are inherently different than other industries.

#### **2.4.2 The problem of transferring creativity and innovation studies theory to coupling projects**

While Hill & Johnson (2003) propose some interesting points that potentially could be of value to coupling projects in the experience economy we nonetheless withdraw from applying the theories. The reason for this is a fundamental difference between coupling projects and projects of applied creativity: Coupling projects are shared in all ways – from planning to exploitation of the outcome. It is probable to expect that such shared projects may produce different patterns of collaboration, since both agents are equal stakeholders in the project. Consequently a direct transfer of theory in Hill & Johnson (2003) seems forced and unsuitable.

Instead we turn our focus to another body of theory known as mergers and acquisitions theory as to investigate whether such theory on inter-organizational coupling and collaboration can supply knowledge transferrable to the field of coupling projects in the experience economy.

#### **2.4.3 Mergers and acquisitions theory**

Before outlining select theories of mergers and acquisitions (from now on M&A) we wish to address the question of why we at all propose applying M&A theory in a thesis on coupling projects in the experience economy. In the theories presented up until now we have been able to identify traits of the creative industries and investigate the experience economy. Furthermore Hill & Johnson (2003) addressed issues of collaboration but the scope was somewhat different than ours. In other words none of the theories about creative industries, creativity, collaboration or experience economy provides us with any in depth information about how creative- and non-creative agents cooperate, how coupling projects in the experience economy are carried out, or what the challenges are related to such couplings. There are however theories in other areas of research that potentially can be transferred and applied. While we could have applied many areas

of study (e.g., from psychology, anthropology etc.) we find M&A theory to be the best applicable due to its relation to the field of business and its focus on achieving an economically feasible result. This correlates very well with our focus on coupling projects that, as we argue, are projects designed and carried out with mutual value creation as the primary goal.

The field of M&A is vast and includes many assets of which some are uninteresting to our project. However a branch of M&A theory focuses on what strategies can be applied to secure a successful merger of two different cultures (including Datta, 1991; Bligh, 2006; Riad, 2005; Buono, 1985; Mirvis & Marks, 1992). Such a perspective is of potential interest to coupling projects since, as we argue, the two parts of such projects conceive of each other as somewhat different.

#### **2.4.3.1 Three select theories on mergers and acquisitions**

The field of M&A is vast and multifaceted covering everything from effect on employees to financial and valuating challenges. Especially the subject of post-merger cultural clashes has received a lot of attention (Datta, 1991; Bligh, 2006; Riad, 2005). The subject of organizational 'fit', the amount to which two organizations' cultures are alike, arose in the mid 1980's and evolved over the next decade into being perhaps the single most discussed issue of the human side of M&A today (Riad, 2005; Deal & Kennedy, 1983). But what is organizational culture? Much M&A theory on cultures builds on a definition by Buono et al. in the early 1980's (see for instance Riad, 2005).

Buono et al. describes culture in organizations as the 'normative glue' that makes the organizations 'stick together' (Buono et al, 1985). This glue consists of two components, the subjective and objective cultures in organizations. The subjective cultures are the "[...]shared patterns of beliefs, assumptions, and expectations held by organizational members, and the group's characteristic way of perceiving the organization's environment and its norms, roles, and values as they exist outside the individual" (Buono et al, 1985, p. 480). In other words the subjective culture is the intangible elements such as the rites and rituals, shared stories of the organization etc. that exist between the staff. Objective organizational culture on the other hand "[...] refers to the artifacts created by an organization. For instance, [...] open-office configuration, the comfortable rest break areas on the assembly line [...] and the chassis assembly team bays [...] are objective (material) reflections of each organization's culture" (Buono et al, 1985, p. 481).

#### **2.4.3.2 Datta, 1991 – lack of fit between cultures is detrimental to post-merger success**

There has been a tendency to approach the issue of cultural clashes in M&A by focusing on the leadership in the organizations and the differing management styles of the organizations (Datta, 1991). One of the reasons for this is that the top executives and directors carry out M&A and thus the mindset and approaches of these individuals affect, influence and shape the overall merger (Mirvis and Marks, 1992). Datta (1991) presents a survey measuring the post-merger success of organizations within the U.S. manufacturing industries. The success is measured in relation to

differences of management styles (“fit”) by using a questionnaire comprised of 17 questions on the subjects of *formality* (of work tasks and hierarchical divisions in the organization), *risk* (the overall ability to cope with risk in relation to business activities), *participation* (measured as the degree of involvement and interacting of top-management in business activities and decisions), *self reliance* (a measure of the organizations dependability on external borrowings and funding)<sup>10</sup>. Drawing on the completed questionnaires of 191 merging organizations Datta’s research concludes that different management styles, and thus and organizational cultures in the acquisitioning- and the acquisitioned organization, is detrimental to post-merger success (1991). Other studies also back up this notion and as noted by Mirvis & Marks “many of today’s leading texts on mergers and acquisitions trace success to the fit between combining companies” (Mirvis & Marks, 1992, p. 1).

#### **2.4.3.3 Bligh, 2006 - giving recommendations to a “best practice” merger leadership**

Another study from 2006 focuses on best-practice managerial strategies to cope with post-merger challenges. The study is based on interviews with employees on what challenges they have faced after business mergers and what kind of leaders and styles of leadership they felt would be best suited to overcome those challenges (Bligh, 2006). The findings witness a longing within the staff for leadership that integrates the two cultures and creates a sense of coherence and integrated team spirit (Bligh, 2006). Furthermore the research identified three traits of such leadership based on the empirical data:

According to Bligh the integrative leader

- “actively team builds across previous site memberships”;
- “Utilizes employee input into post-merger changes”;
- “Communicates informally about cultural differences”

(Bligh, 2006, p. 11).

#### **2.4.3.4 Seo & Hill, 2005 – an aggregated list of common leadership challenges in mergers**

The final set of theory on mergers we wish to address here is a theoretical framework aggregated on the basis of a review of the most prominent theories of staff reactions to M&A (Seo & Hill, 2005). The study summarizes six underlying theories that combined form a complete theory of challenges in M&A situations. In other words Seo & Hill (2005) provide us with understanding of the most prominent challenges. The six theories are:

- Anxiety theory:

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<sup>10</sup> The questionnaire is included in the appendices (see appendix 6)

The uncertainty of a pre-merger period results in anxiety amongst the staff; lower productivity; staff acting self-centered; lack of motivation and increased mental and physical illness.

- Social identity theory:  
Theories of social identity in M&A address the issue that employees risk losing their workplace identities when merged into a new organizational configuration.
- Acculturation theory:  
“Originally from anthropology, acculturation is defined as changes in both groups that occur as a result of contact between cultural groups” (Seo & Hill, 2005, p. 428). Especially theories of acculturation deals with the degree to which the subgroups in the new merged organization ‘let go’ of their old culture and embrace the new. Some subgroups will be more likely to cling to the culture of the old organization even after the merger has been completed.
- Role conflict theory:  
“M&A integration processes involve disrupting the existing cultural, structural, and job arrangements and creating new arrangements. However, the transitions are typically neither clear-cut nor short term, often meaning a long period of organizational drift [...], which results in role conflict and ambiguity” (Seo & Hill, 2005, p. 430)
- Job characteristics theory:  
There is tendency to a decline in job satisfaction and organizational commitment amongst staff in a post-merger period.
- Organizational justice theory:  
M&A often result in letting employees go and the way the new merged organization carry out the firing of staff influences the overall work environment. If the remaining employees feel that their fired colleagues were not treated fairly it will be detrimental to the work culture and effectiveness of the organization.  
(Seo & Hill, 2005)

These challenges are unique to mergers according to Seo & Hill (2005), but like the challenges described in the other theories presented in this chapter they could also potentially be found in coupling projects.

#### **2.4.4 The problem of transferring mergers and acquisitions theory to coupling projects**

We now turn to a discussion of the applicability of the theories presented herein to coupling projects as to show that even though there are correlations between merger situations and coupling project situations there are a number of fundamental differences that make a direct transfer of merger theory to coupling projects unfeasible:

#### **2.4.4.1 Intra- or inter-industrial aspects**

The theory on M&A presented is, like much M&A theory, based on research within intra-industrial mergers. What this means is that the merged organizations are operating within the same industry and thus share traits, values, interests etc common to the industry. In coupling projects, however, the coupling agents come from two totally different industries with very limited, if any, similarity. In other words coupling projects are based on inter-industrial collaboration and thus diverts from one of the basic premises of the merger theories here presented.

#### **2.4.4.2 Organizational fit aspects**

One of the main focuses in M&A theory is the degree of fit between the organizations subjective- and objective cultures (Buono, 1985; Datta, 1991; Bligh, 2006; Riad, 2005). In other words, the chance of succeeding with a merger is a result of how well the two organizational cultures fit. However, all the theories and reports presented on coupling projects in the experience economy support the notion that value is created by coupling two different organizations from different industries and leveraging these differences (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2003; NESTA, 2007; NICE, 2007; NyX, 2003; Regeringen, 2003). Furthermore, as we have seen, the creative industries are per se different from other industries (Caves, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). They differ from non-creative industries and are therefore not suitable for successfully merging with these industries according to the theoretical framework just presented (see for instance Datta, 2001). However, drawing on the reports that constitute the Danish school of the experience economy, successful couplings do occur despite differences between the industries (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2003; NESTA, 2007; NICE, 2007; NyX, 2003; Regeringen, 2003).

#### **2.4.4.3 Temporal aspects**

Also in relation to temporal aspects of M&A and coupling projects we find some fundamental differences between the two:

- M&A often last several years (Datta, 1991; Bligh, 2006) while coupling projects sometimes last as little as a day or a week. All merger theory here presented focus on long periods of time and thus offers little help to short-term, changing projects lasting only a few days or weeks.
- Once a merger is completed the new situation is permanent (Datta, 1991; Bligh, 2006) while coupling projects are temporary

#### **2.4.4.4 Substantiality aspects**

M&A affect the entirety of both merging organizations (Bligh, 2006). However coupling projects are often carried out in smaller isolated project teams and thus, while M&A will influence everyone in an organization a coupling project needs not encompass entire organizations but can be carried out in smaller teams.

## **2.5 Sum up on chapter two**

Throughout this first chapter we have laid out a theoretical framework through which we may understand the concept of experience economy as coupling-driven experience-based business development including all its parts such as creativity, creative industries etc. We have seen that creative industries play a large role in the Danish school of experience economy (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2003; NESTA, 2007; NICE, 2007; NyX, 2003; Regeringen, 2003). We have also seen that the creative industries organize and manage work in different ways than other industries and we have seen that there are special traits of the creative agents that shape how they engage work and everyday activities (Caves, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). Furthermore we have argued that there is no directly applicable theoretical framework on the subject of coupling projects between creative- and non-creative agents within the framework of experience-based business development. Consequently, we have broadened our scope to include both creativity and innovation studies and M&A theory. While these theories appear to exhibit some correlation with coupling projects there are considerable discrepancies as well. A direct transfer of these theories to our research project would, therefore, in worst case, result in unjustified claims and inadequate accounts of coupling projects. Instead we leave these theories for a while only to come back to them in the final discussion of our own grounded theory of coupling projects in the experience economy.

Thus, we now turn towards constructing a grounded theory of coupling projects in the experience economy to provide a theory specifically designed for this field.

## **3 Methodology**

### **3.1 Qualitative methodologies and data**

On a general level we can distinguish between two types of empirical data and methodologies – quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative methodologies and data may be the appropriate approach if the research area is predisposed to quantification or if one seeks to verify a set of already defined variables of established or untested theories (Thomson, 2004). Conversely, qualitative methodologies tend to be of a more exploratory nature concerned with the quality and texture of experience, and discovering rather than testing variables (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Thomson, 2004; Willig, 2001). Consequently, when we choose methodology for this thesis we must not only look at our problem statement but also at our research area and the purpose of our study. And as argued one of the main reasons for engaging in the research area around which this thesis revolves is the seeming lack of qualitative empirical exploration of it. Therefore the decision is rather straightforward - A qualitative methodology and qualitative empirical data is well suited for the purpose of our thesis.

## 3.2 A presentation of Grounded Theory

### 3.2.1 Grounded Theory – a historical overview

The use of the term Grounded Theory in literature may lead to confusion since the term ambiguously refers to the product or result of a research process, that is, a grounded theory, but in many cases also to the method used in generating that product, that is, a grounded theory method (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Willig, 2001). For the purpose of avoiding that ambiguity we have chosen to adopt Bryant & Charmaz' (2007) distinction between Grounded Theory (from now on GT) and Grounded Theory Method (from now on GTM)<sup>11</sup>.

GTM first became a part of researchers' methodological inventory in 1965 with the publication *Awareness of Dying* by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Two years later followed the work *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, which today is regarded as one of the seminal works on this approach to creating scientific knowledge (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). One of the basic tenets of GTM is that it contends the hierarchy of theory-verification over theory-generation. Glaser & Strauss contends the institutionalized sociology departments of "theoretical capitalist[s]" and their "proletariat testers" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 10) where theories of the great men of sociology, Weber, Durkheim, Marx, Mead, etc., were found sufficient to account for social life for a long time and where scholars were merely taught to test and verify their teachers' work – not to generate new theory of their own (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Concurrently, Glaser and Strauss contend contemporary social science's focus on logical deduction from a priori assumptions by proposing instead a systematic discovery<sup>12</sup> of theory from data, hence the name of their seminal work (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007II; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Glaser & Strauss emphasize going into the field to gather data without predefined theoretical assumptions about it and by those means generating novel theories instead of verifying existing ones (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007II).

The development of GTM did not, however, stop with the publication of *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Eventually Glaser and Strauss separated and a yearlong and still present discussion of what constitutes GTM and GT was born. To understand better the separation of the two scholars we address their backgrounds. Glaser had a background at Columbia University characterized by rigorous quantitative training and a positivist heritage. Conversely, Strauss had his academic upbringing with the Chicago school and thus had a background with a pragmatist, symbolic interactionist and ethnographic cast (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007II). The two academic backgrounds managed to meet, however, in the shared quest for developing a clear basis for qualitative research capable of producing qualitative results that did not fall prone to the

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<sup>11</sup> This distinction, however, is not employed in all works on GT and quotes will therefore use the original authors' own terms.

<sup>12</sup> The term "discovery" implicitly adheres to an objectivist epistemology

objectivistic ideals of reliability and validity (Bryant & Charmaz: 2007). The result was *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, and a method with a positivist and objectivist flavor, hence the word *discovery*<sup>13</sup> (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). At the time, the positivist cast made GTM the *commodil* fault of qualitative research methods due to its clearly defined procedures and processes and overall aim of being *visible, comprehensible and replicable* (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007II). However, the following years the gap between Glaser and Strauss' approaches to science became too large. This led to their separation and both of them developing the method further within their respective epistemological stances and consequently to a symbolic interactionist GTM as well as further development of the initial positivist GTM (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007II). During the years, even a third constructivist version evolved from the symbolic interactionist version thus leaving us today with three main streams of GTM – a positivist, a symbolic interactionist and a constructivist.

### **3.2.2 Meta-theoretical considerations of the Grounded Theory method**

#### ***The epistemology in “Discovery of Grounded theory”***

Bryant and Charmaz notes that “[...] the title of Glaser and Strauss's methods manual, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, attests a clear epistemological orientation that assumes that reality can be discovered, explored and understood. From this perspective, reality is unitary, knowable, and waiting to be discovered.” (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 34). The idea that reality is ‘out there’ to be discovered is a positivistic trait (Birkler, 2009; Karpatschhof & Katzenelson, 2007). This was also the way Glaser and Strauss' GTM was perceived (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). However while there are traits of positivism in the early writings of Glaser and Strauss there are also more constructionist traits to be found. Especially it is interesting to note how Glaser and Strauss suggest that agents in the field of study influence and shape each other (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1969). In other words Glaser and Strauss see the data as being influenced by concepts of constructivism (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Hall & Callery, 2001). However Glaser and Strauss refrain from focusing on the relationship between interviewer and interviewee: “[...] this silence implies that the researcher is immune from this process of constructing and re-constructing.” (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 34).

#### ***The conceivment and academic reactions to GTM***

The difficulties in pinpointing the epistemological foundation for the early works of Glaser and Strauss perhaps relate to the time of discovery: In the same period that *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* was written and released Thomas Kuhn released his groundbreaking work on paradigmatic thinking and “[...] by the early 1970's, within the general domain of the social sciences, the issues of epistemology, science versus non-science, and the relationship between knowledge and knower(s) had emerged as central concerns”. (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 38). In other words the conceivment of GTM precedes, or coincides, with contemporary science theory and must be seen in that light.



The positivistic traits of early GTM are also contingent of the academic environment of that time. Quantifiable analysis of hard data was the main sociological method at the time GTM was conceived and subsidiaries and research funding was predominately granted to quantitative (positivistic) studies (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). So while the subsequent writings of both Glaser and Strauss have sought to nuance their epistemological foundation the immediate reception of their method as being positivistic was not eagerly contested by the two writers (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

In later years Glaser and Strauss writings still bear traits of positivistic thinking and while “[...] their scientific position may well have been at odds with what they each actually sought to advocate, [...] in the ensuing decades the inherent positivism in [their] statements [...] came to efface much of the rich profundity of their early writings”. (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 44).

### ***Reasoning in GTM - Inductive, deductive or abductive methods?***

Glaser and Strauss in their collective GTM works have been eager to claim that GTM is an inductive method. This should first and foremost be seen as a sign of their overall aim of distinguishing GTM from contemporary sociological methods that predominately relied on deduction (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Andersen, 2004; Andersen & Kaspersen, 2000). There are two problems, or questions, to be raised to the inductive method which sees knowledge as derived from experience (Birkler, 2009). One is its failure to acknowledge the possible existence of exceptions (Birkler, 2009). The oft-used example is an observer that sees a hundred white swans go by on the lake and thus concludes that all swans are white (the observer leaves the lake and fails to see the one black swan that falsifies his theory). The second ‘shortcoming’ of induction is the failure to acknowledge that the observer mediates all observations. In other words observations of *similarity* (e.g., of the swans) is in the eye of the beholder and thus subjective (Birkler, 2009; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

As mentioned above Glaser and Strauss claimed the GTM to be an inductive method. However some of Strauss individual works witness an awareness of the limitations of the inductive method as he instead advocates the abductive method (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Abduction is a circular process involved with raising a hypothesis based on preexisting knowledge about a subject of study and afterwards ‘creatively’ testing that hypothesis. The ‘testing’ of the hypothesis may result in new knowledge that is then again affecting the hypothesis etc. The study ends when the researcher has the best possible answer to fit the object of study (Birkler, 2009). Abduction does not claim to reach a universal truth but rather to have found the best possible solution or answer. In other words, abduction leaves a door open for future study (Birkler, 2009).

### ***Sum up – why do we choose GTM?***

As should be evident by now there is no universal truth or ‘recipe’ for conducting GTM. It is impossible to sum up all the different actions, developments and evolvments of GTM in one chapter but we have now identified some of the major differences and subjects of disputes in the

field today. One of the frequent critiques of the early work of Glaser and Strauss is their failure to make a clear stand (at least to communicate it) (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). There are many 'loose ends' in regards of epistemology, ontology etc. in their works (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Therefore, simply to adopt GTM without some degree of clarification is ambiguous. Such clarification will be dealt with below, but before addressing this issue we address the straightforward question: *Why choose GTM?*

As stated in the problem formulation our project is focused on theory building in relation to the subject of coupling projects in experience-based business development. The existing theoretical foundation on the subject is limited to appraising couplings but very limited material has been released on the subject of how to actively couple and generate value. Consequently we choose GTM since: "Grounded theory serves as a way to learn about the worlds we study and a method for developing theories to understand them" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 10). Following this point is also the challenge of *planning* a study in an unknown field such as ours. We are challenged with limited possibilities of shaping the data collection due to initial questions such as who should we talk to, what should we ask them and why? However, GTM analysis "shapes the conceptual content and direction of the study; the emerging analysis may lead to adopting multiple methods of data collection and to pursuing inquiry in several sites" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 178). By adopting GTM we are able to build knowledge and apply that knowledge to the ongoing analysis.

On a more conceptual level an approach built on interactionism (grounded theory) serves our research well. Ultimately we are interested in the interactions amongst the agents of the experience economy field of *coupling projects* and we are keen to learn more about how the agents react to- and perceive of each other. We claim that a GTM, rooted in symbolic interactionism, provides us with a method capable of focusing on the *processes* in coupling projects by allowing us to approach "[...] human beings as active agents in their lives and in their worlds rather than as passive recipients of larger social forces" (Charmaz, 2007, p. 7). A key point in symbolic interactionism is exactly that the structures are a result of the process of human interaction. \_Thus by understanding the processes inherent in coupling projects within the experience economy we approach a broader and better understanding of such couplings.

### ***The implications of our methodological approach***

The major distinction between our approach to GTM and the original approach is our foundation in constructivism. As mentioned earlier the original GTM texts by Glaser & Strauss acknowledged the objects of analysis' influence on each others' worlds (construction) but saw the researcher as exterior of this construction (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Instead we engage in data collection with a constant focus on our own interaction with the data and thus our own role in shaping it. The discussion whether GTM should incorporate a constructivist approach is an ongoing debate. As Charmaz has been one of the pioneers of constructivist GTM we adopt her framework and thus, in some ways, distance our method from the more orthodox GTM which does not approve of this 'mix' - As Glaser, in a recent article laconically state about Charmaz' attempt to incorporate

constructivism in GTM: “Her constructivist position is totally irrelevant to GT methodology” (Glaser, 2002, N/A).

### **3.3 Presenting our Grounded Theory method**

In the following section we will elaborate on the concrete analytical steps of our GTM. To ease the understanding the different steps of our method will be presented chronologically in the order in which they are most logically applied. However, GTM is not conducted chronologically:

“Although this method of generating theory is a continuously growing process – each stage after a time is transformed into the next – earlier stages do remain in operation simultaneously throughout the analysis and each provides continuous development to its successive stage until the analysis is terminated “. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 105).

The methodical building blocks we are about to explore are as follows:

- I. Analytical strategies – how to grapple with empirical data?
  - Coding
  - Memo writing
  - Categorizing
  - Theoretical concepts
  - Theoretical sampling
- II. Evaluative strategies – when is enough, enough?
  - Saturation
- III. Communicative strategies – how to present the results of the research?
  - Conceptual mapping
  - Writing the theory

#### **3.3.1 Analytical strategies – how to grapple with empirical data?**

##### **3.3.1.1 The constant comparative method – a heritage from Glaser and Strauss**

One of the key components of GTM as elaborated by Glaser and Straus is the concept of constant comparison of data with data. *The constant comparative method* (hereafter CCM) demands further presentation as it today remains a part of the GTM apparatus, albeit implicitly and integrated in other analytical strategies.

According to Glaser and Strauss CCM is a merger of the two prevailing methods of qualitative analysis at the time of the development of GTM – 1) rigorous coding of data into a quantifiable form with the purpose of hypotheses testing and 2) theory generation through constant “redesigning and reintegrating [the] theoretical notions” as the material is reviewed (Glaser &

Strauss, 1967, p. 101). What they propose is a method characterized by a combination of the former's explicit analytic and coding procedures and the latter's simultaneous coding and analysis. The purpose of this joint method is to generate theory more systematically than allowed by the latter method while curbing the former's inflexibility and tendency to focus on hypothesis testing rather than theory generation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). "The constant comparative method is concerned with generating and plausibly suggesting (but not provisionally testing) many categories, properties and hypotheses about general problems" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 104). CCM makes it possible to develop a complex theory corresponding closely to the data under scrutiny since the constant comparisons force the analyst to deal with much diversity in the data while keeping close to it (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The four steps of CCM are 1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, 2) integrating categories and their properties, 3) delimiting the theory, and 4) writing the theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In the following the parentheses below the headlines indicate in which parts of our methodical framework the CCM step is an integral part:

### **Comparing incidents applicable to each category**

#### **(Coding, Categorizing, Writing memos)**

This step entails coding each incident in the data into as many categories as possible as categories emerge and as data that fit an existing category emerge. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The basic defining rule for this stage is: "while coding an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 106). The constant comparison soon starts to generate theoretical properties of the category. The second rule following is that when the analyst begins to ponder on the theoretical construct emerging, eventual conflicts in the data and new ways of coding and integrating incidents he should: "stop coding and record a memo on his ideas" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 107). This procedure ensures tapping the freshness of the analyst's theoretical notions and relieves him from conflicts in data and having to remember every thought (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Eventual theoretical notions can be retrieved later on from the memos recorded.

### **Integrating categories and their properties**

#### **(Writing memos, categorizing, theoretical sampling)**

- Entails comparison of incident with incident to infer possible theoretical differences in these and later on the comparison of incidents and properties of the emerging categories. The purpose is that the accumulated knowledge of properties of a category start to become integrated, that is related and connected in many different ways resulting in a unified whole (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Further, the diverse properties start to become integrated as well resulting in a theoretical category (a collection of related properties) which again becomes integrated with other categories of analysis leading to a theoretical construct – The GT (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

## **Delimiting the Theory**

### **(Saturation)**

As the analysis progresses and the theoretical construct starts to grow in sheer size procedures to curb what could otherwise turn into an overwhelming task must be employed. One must delimit the theory. Delimiting occurs on the level of the theory and the categories, with the key theme being reduction (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In other words, the analyst searches for underlying uniformities in the set of categories and/or properties and may then formulate the theory with a reduced set of higher level concepts (Glaser & Strauss, 1967 – see also figure in 3.3.1.6).

## **Writing the theory**

### **(Writing the theory, conceptual mapping)**

“At this stage the analyst possesses coded data, a series of memos and a theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 113). Thus the time has come to put the final theory down on paper. The discussions in the memos provide the basis and the content behind the categories which form the major themes of the theory as presented in the thesis. “When the researcher is convinced that his analytic framework forms a systematic substantive theory, that it is a reasonably accurate statement of the matters studied, and that it is couched in a form that others going into the same field could use – then he can publish his results with confidence”. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 113)

The above-mentioned analytic maneuvers form the core of our GTM. We now turn to explain in more detail how each step is carried out in our GTM.

### **3.3.1.2 Coding**

The first analytic step we employ in the process of developing a GT is coding our empirical data. According to Charmaz “Coding means categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data” (2006, p. 43). Coding is the first step in grasping and defining what the data is about and is consequently the key link between data collection and the development of a theory to explain these data (Charmaz, 2006). However, coding is not only a way of grounding our emerging theory to the data we have already gathered. Simultaneously it is a tool for directing our subsequent data-gathering and theoretical integration (Charmaz, 2006). Thus it makes sense to divide coding into two phases – *initial coding* and *focused coding*.

#### **Initial coding**

Initial coding is the initial encounter with empirical data and the first stepping-stone in laying a foundation for our emerging theory. When conducting initial coding it is important to remain open to the data and the coding should explore whatever theoretical possibilities the data suggests. Further initial coding should stay close to the data and must refrain from imposing preconceived ideas and codes on the data (Charmaz, 2006). The codes are created solely by

defining what is seen in the data. Any preconceived ideas should earn their way into the theory through the analysis, that is, they must be integral for understanding and interpreting our data to be included (Charmaz, 2006). Preconceived ideas may provide a starting point for looking at your data but cannot, however, provide codes for analyzing it (Charmaz, 2006).

To avoid drawing on any preconceived ideas when analyzing our data, we have chosen to code using gerunds instead of nouns and to use verbatim the words of the respondents whenever possible. Using gerunds helps us see processes and (inter)actions. Furthermore it helps us stick to the data by keeping us close to the respondents' meanings, actions and perspectives (Charmaz, 2006).

Example of initial coding

Transcript	Code
<i>We learn the method, their way of thinking, the words they use. We learn [all] that.</i>	Learning the method, the way of thinking, and the words.
<i>And at the same time, I sit there, with my other brain hemisphere asking: "What does this resemble? Does it resemble negotiation technique? Yes it does! Does it resemble sales technique, point of sale?"</i>	Putting into own frame of reference Finding similarities to own practices

When performing the initial coding one must settle on the size of the segments to analyze.

Commonly used segment sizes are: Word-by-word coding, line-by-line coding, and incident-to-incident coding (Charmaz, 2006). For the purpose of this thesis we have chosen to code in a line-by-line manner coding each line of the transcripts. Line-by-line coding works particularly well with data rich on stories and details that, when studied this way, take on vivid meanings (Charmaz, 2006). In addition line-by-line coding is a useful tool for catching ideas that might have otherwise escaped attention had the analysis been of a more thematic character or the segment size larger (Charmaz, 2006). However, given the fact that we use this line-by-line coding on verbatim interview transcripts, which are often full of incomplete sentences, lines without meaning, and sentences stretching beyond several lines in a text, we have chosen to use the segment size as more of a methodical guideline than as a rule to be strictly followed. Thus our initial codes occasionally refer to more than one line in the transcript.

Concretely initial coding is about grasping what the data is a study of, what it suggests, from whose point of view and not the least what theoretical category a specific piece may indicate. Consequently, besides utilizing CCM for our coding purposes we have employed the following questions as guidelines for how to initially inquire into our empirical data:

- What processes are at issue here?
- How does the process develop?
- When, why, and how does the process change?
- What are the consequences of the process

- How does the informant act while involved in the process?
- What may his or her observed behavior indicate?

(Charmaz, 2006, p. 51)

### Focused coding

After the initial coding follows focused coding. Focused coding is a more selective process which takes its point of departure in the most significant or frequent initial codes which are then used for synthesizing, integrating and organizing larger amounts of data (Charmaz, 2006). Thus focused coding requires that we make decisions about which of the initial codes makes most analytic sense in terms of categorizing the data (Charmaz, 2006).

Example of focused coding

Transcript	Code	Focused code
<i>We learn the method, their way of thinking, the words they use. We learn [all] that. And at the same time, I sit there, with my other brain hemisphere asking: "What does this resemble? Does it resemble negotiation technique? Yes it does! Does it resemble sales technique, point of sale?"</i>	Learning the method, the way of thinking, and the words.	Putting into own frame of reference
	Putting into own frame of reference	
	Finding similarities to own practices	

Concretely, we have performed focused coding by: Discussing which of the initial codes in our data were most significant in relation to our research question and made most analytic sense; Sifting through all our data with the chosen codes as 'filter'; Synthesizing the diverse instances from the entire body of data into memos on each code.

Further, focused coding revealed blank spots in our emerging theory which then directed our choice of informants as well as themes in the interview guides in the interviews to come, thus filling the blank spots.

### 3.3.1.3 Writing memos

Just as coding is the key link between data collection and theory development writing memos is the key link between the various types of coding we perform and writing drafts of the final GT. The memo provides us with a space for jotting down thoughts and ideas as well as it may function as a tool for structured analysis of categories and their properties - all of course depending on how far the analysis has progressed (Charmaz, 2006). In the analytical process leading to this thesis, writing memos primarily served the purpose of filling out – or elaborating on - our codes, that is, grasping them analytically. Further the memos helped making inferences of connections in data and codes, and last but not least making comparisons between data in various ways.

Example of a memo:

Memo - Unpredictability	
<i>Well, it is always exciting (...) to find out if you possess a shared language at all or whether you're able to create a shared language. Because if you are not, it's not going to work, right!?</i>	Every collaboration is a new constellation whose success cannot be predicted. Initiating a project is garnished with anticipation. Not Having or creating a shared language = failure. Shared language = succes? What about the facilitator/mediator/translator? What is his role then? Is learning between couplings not occurring or is the learning too situated to be transferrable?

However, one specific purpose deserves some extra attention due to its importance in advancing our analysis and raising its level of abstraction, that is using memos to combine and raise focused codes to categories.

#### 3.3.1.4 Categorizing – the emergence of a tentative theoretical framework

With coding comes an abundance of initial and focused codes, memos describing and tentatively integrating codes and with the memos plenty of questions and inferences on the relationships between codes and the data. Therefore, the time has come to structure and arrange the codes in some larger conceptual constructs, categories, and thereby take the first tentative steps in developing a theoretical framework. But what are categories exactly? For an answer to that question we turn to Glaser and Strauss once again: Glaser and Strauss propose that categories should be seen as “Conceptual element[s] in a theory” (1967, p. 30). They serve the purpose of developing the analytic framework and in the end comprise the themes of the theory (Charmaz, 2006). In other words, categories can be understood as abstract ‘building blocks’ knitting together several pieces of data into a whole with analytical power and complexity while remaining grounded in data. Concretely, when we raise a focused code, that is, a code<sup>14</sup> which best represents what is seen in the data, to a more conceptual level the code is given analytical meaning by making inferences of its properties and relationship to codes and other categories and is raised from being just a descriptive measure to being an analytical category (Charmaz, 2006). According to Charmaz “Categories explicate ideas, events or processes in your data [...] (2006, p. 91).

Raising certain codes to categories consequently helps us create a framework for the theory and develop the content for it and at the same time reveals gaps in the budding analysis that must be filled. Raising focused codes concretely entail five steps which all require writing our thoughts and inferences in memos:

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<sup>14</sup> While one code may be raised to a category we also use groups of related codes to develop categories.



- I. Define the category.
- II. Explicate the properties of the category.
- III. Specify the conditions under which the category arises, is maintained, and changes.
- IV. Describe its consequences.
- V. Show how this category relates to other categories.

(Charmaz, 2006, p. 92)

When choosing what focused codes to raise to categories we utilize three criteria. These have been developed to take into account the relevance to our field of research and research question as well as the relevance to the informants' everyday lives and practices.

The criteria are the following, in non-prioritized order:

- Frequency of code (in same interview as well as among interviews).
- Relevance of the code (in terms of research field and research question).
- The code's/subject's importance to the informant (indicated explicitly as well as implicitly by raising their voice etc.).

In the end, however, in line with our constructivist approach we are aware that the choice of categories is not objective. We do not claim that our choices are the only right ones. We do claim, however, that the choices made are informed choices made on the grounds of a rigorous interaction with empirical data and guided by our research field.

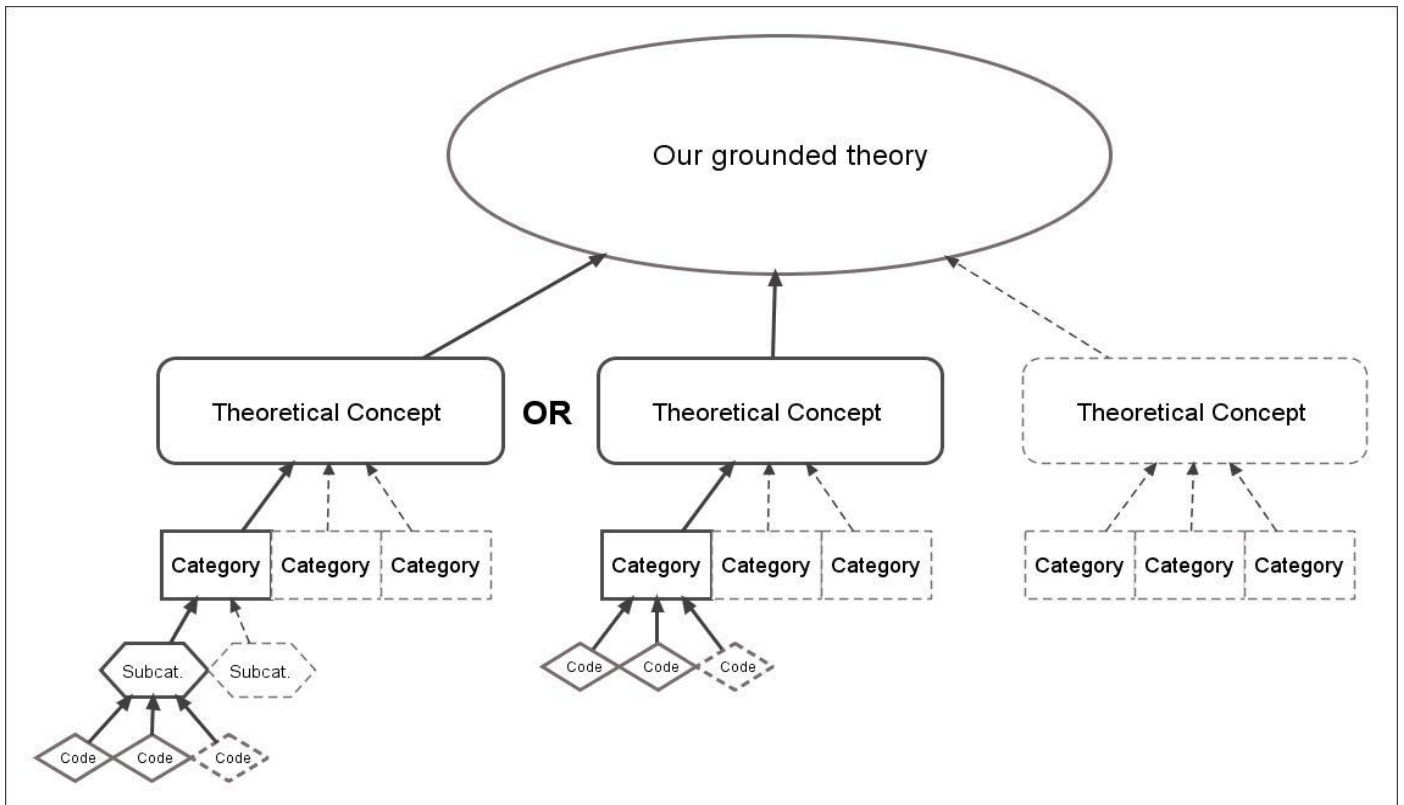
### **3.3.1.5 Subcategories**

Subcategories, like categories, are compiled codes that together create a coherent conceptual construct. However, subcategories are subordinated to categories and thus function more as an integrated element of the category. In other words, a subcategory is conceptually linked to a category and should be understood through this link since it is an integrated part of a whole. We use subcategories in those instances where a category has traits that are complex enough to be presented in its own right but where those traits do not make up for a separate category (see the criteria for categories) listed above in 3.3.1.4.

### **3.3.1.6 Theoretical concepts**

Having covered the process through which we move from raw data to codes to categories and subcategories we now present the final level of analysis – the theoretical concepts. Theoretical concepts are collections of categories and thus the highest level of analysis (See figure 1).

Fig. 1



Many of the categories are interwoven and affect each other, thus a *theoretical concept* is an abstraction created and employed to integrate and make sense of a collection of categories that are intricately connected. Using the analogy of a house we can say that the data and codes is the clay from which we produce the bricks (the categories). The bricks are laid in a number of walls (the theoretical concepts), which then again carries the entire roof (the theory). All through the process the researcher ‘designs the house’, that is decides where to put the bricks, which walls to build etc. and needless to say the same data could have resulted in many other houses had the ‘constructor’ been another person or the scope of the research different.

### 3.3.1.7 Theoretical sampling

As mentioned above, the process of raising codes to a conceptual level for analytical purposes may expose gaps in one’s analysis and budding theory. Therefore, the next logical step we employ at this point in our research is one which is a crucial trait of GTM – theoretical sampling.

Theoretical sampling means going into the field again to gather more data. However, when doing theoretical sampling the data collection is more focused and revolves around the tentative categories and theoretical framework already at hand. Theoretical sampling means seeking and collecting data relevant to developing the emerging theory (Charmaz, 2006). Often theoretical sampling is confused with sampling to address the initial research question, sampling to reflect population distributions, sampling to find negative cases and

sampling until no new data emerge which are all established and legitimate sampling methods but do not follow the iterative logic of GTM (Charmaz, 2006). Theoretical sampling does just that. This method is designed as an integral part of the ongoing analysis with the purpose of elaborating and refining one's theoretical categories and as such is strategic, specific and systematic (Charmaz, 2006). The logic of theoretical sampling is that the analyst, based on initial data, develops some tentative inferences of data and then examines and elaborates these through further empirical enquiry (Charmaz, 2006). Thus, theoretical sampling is emergent and dynamic shaped and directed by the ideas from our analysis, *during* the analysis. In concrete actions this means that performing theoretical sampling helps us to:

- Delineate and saturate the properties of our categories
- Distinguish between-, clarify hunches about-, and clarify relationships between our emerging categories
- Direct and focus further data collection

Concretely, the logic of theoretical sampling has helped us in developing not only the interview guides to each of our interviews but also in choosing which informants to interview. As a result all of our interview guides are different from each other and yield different angles on our subject and the blank spots in our emerging theory. The difference is especially predominant from our initial sampling interviews which were open structured and our focused sampling interviews which are semi-structured and designed for theoretical sampling of certain aspects in our GT.

Further our choice of informants was shaped in a way where focus gradually moved from interviewing intermediaries of coupling projects to interviewing coupling agents of varying background both industrially and artistically.

### **3.3.2 Evaluative strategies – when is enough, enough?**

#### **3.3.2.1 Saturation**

When one's method is characterized by ongoing data analysis and data collection how do you know when data collection should stop? In other words, when is enough, enough? The concept of saturation gives us the answer.

Saturation is the state reached when gathering fresh data no longer creates new theoretical insights nor reveals new properties of the categories. Saturation, however, should not be confused with witnessing the same patterns in data. Instead saturation is a conceptualization of the action of comparing the incidents which comprise different properties of the pattern until no new properties emerge (Charmaz, 2006). In other words, saturation is not achieved when seeing the same patterns in data. It is the state a category reaches, when comparing the different incidents that make this category, no longer reveals new properties. When we reach this point, ideally that is, we should stop collecting data and

move on to other categories. We use the term 'ideally' here because saturation is a contested concept and in many ways functions more as a guiding goal than as an obtainable state. This is due to the fact that even though we strive for saturation of our theoretical categories, modification of the categories or changes in our perspective is always possible which will lead to new angles to pursue (Willig, 2001). Further Charmaz argues that "saturation is incongruent with a procedure that 'stops short of coding all the data'" (2006, p.114). Instead she proposes to employ a concept of theoretical sufficiency. To steer clear of the abovementioned pitfalls, and following Charmaz, we do not adopt the concept in its original cast but instead as a guide for obtaining theoretical sufficiency of our categories. Further we use it as a 'guiding star' which motivates us to push the envelope in terms of developing our categories as thoroughly as possible under the given time frame.

### **3.3.3 Communicative strategies – how to present the results of the research?**

How to communicate the 'results' of one's research is a step often overlooked in the methods literature and left to the researcher to figure out. This is not the case with GTM where communication of the resulting theory is equally as important as producing it. Hence this small section on what communicative strategies we employ and how.

#### **3.3.3.1 Writing the theory**

The primary goal of a GT project is to develop a theory that can be presented and discussed. Therefore the chapter where the theory is presented is very important since ultimately this is where the results of the research and analysis are presented (Charmaz, 2006). In the analysis we develop a series of categories. These categories all cover little areas of larger conceptual fields - theoretical concepts. The aim of our final theory is to encompass all these categories in a large unified argument tying the theoretical concepts, categories and subcategories together. Thus, the final theory is written with the theoretical concepts as cornerstones and by linking the categories together and showing how they relate and influence each other.

#### **3.3.3.2 Conceptual mapping**

The second communicative strategy we employ is one which we have also fruitfully employed during the writing of our tentative categories and provisional GT – conceptual mapping. Conceptual mapping means supplementing one's written effort with visual understanding aids. Common to all of them is that they "[...] offer concrete images of our ideas" (Charmaz, 2006, p.117). They may provide us with a relatively easily understandable visual representation of matters from the analysis otherwise highly complex and hard to comprehend. Conceptual mapping, however, should not be mistaken for being a tool for reducing complexity as if in accordance with a more objectivist and quantitative approach.

The maps or diagrams you see in this thesis are not supposed to be an exact representation of the empirical world. Instead they are supposed to help visualize and make more tangible the relative power, scope and direction of our categories and their properties as a supplement to the written theory which is our main communication tool.<sup>15</sup>

### **3.3.4 Our method – a visual overview**

As has been mentioned during this chapter GTM is an iterative method consisting of various steps or analytical strategies. These and their progression vary from project to project and thus we find it appropriate to provide a visual overview of our method as a recapitulation of the content in this chapter. The flow diagram (figure 2, next page) depicts the synthesis of analytical and communicative strategies that we employ and should be read from below and upwards. For comparison the steps of Glaser and Strauss' version of GTM is included and so is their relation to the steps of our method<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> To accommodate more text please find many of these conceptual mappings in the appendix.

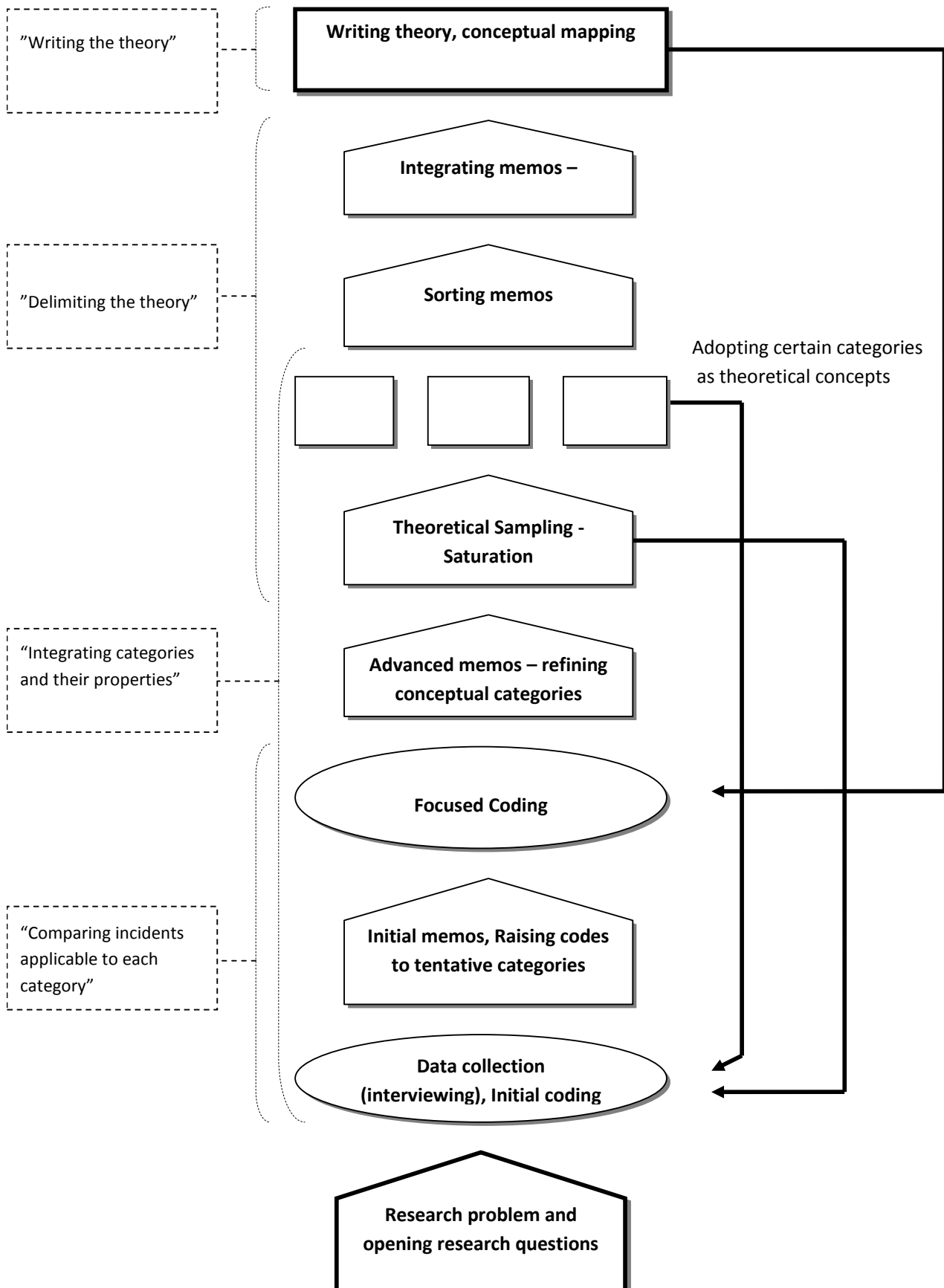
<sup>16</sup> It should be noted here, though, that such a delimitation of the methodical reach of the original steps is only an approximation, since the steps to a larger or lesser degree is inherent in every step of our method.

Figure 2:

**Glaser & Strauss 1967**

**What we do**

(Modified from Charmaz 2006, p. 11)



### **3.4 Data collection**

When in the budding beginning of an empirical research project important choices regarding what data to collect and how to do it arise. The choices one must make are multiple but the initial one, at least in terms of data collection, is: What type(s) of empirical data do I need?

#### **3.4.1 The qualitative interview**

First of all one of the factors which contribute the most to the quality of an analysis is the quality of the material analyzed (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). And to think that one can go out into the field and observe, interview or in other ways gather data without preparation and training is optimistic at best. Observing and Interviewing require a certain amount of skill and practice to produce more than sparse data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Goulding, 2005). Therefore, the first cornerstone in arguing for our choice is one of pragmatism – we are more trained and experienced in interviewing than in other methods and we anticipate higher quality data using this method than we would through other methods in which we are not equally experienced. Second cornerstone is accessibility and time restraints. Observations would also make a good way of collecting data of the couplings and interactions which are of our interest. However, in line with Corbin and Strauss (2008) we find that doing observations is relatively time consuming and this method would also only allow us access to projects taking place right now and not to already completed projects. Third cornerstone is one of immediacy or the possibility, in the midst of the interview conversation, to prompt for more detail or explanation, to stop for exploration of a statement or topic, to ask about the informant's feelings and/or actions etc. (Charmaz, 2006). Data collection, in other words, becomes more dynamic and flexible. Last but not least is the fourth cornerstone of suitability. Qualitative interviews, unstructured as well as semi-structured, are sources which suit the different phases of a GTM research project very well (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As mentioned in the *Grounded Theory* chapter an important attribute of GTM is the iterative process where one moves from initial open sampling to more focused theoretical sampling and further back and forth between data collection and analysis during the process. Therefore, one needs data sources that can provide both rich data not influenced by the researcher's preconceptions of the field of enquiry and sources that can provide focused data for elaborating the theory. Interviewing in different shapes – unstructured and semi-structured – provides both.

#### ***Unstructured and/or semi-structured interviewing – appropriate interview method***

If it is imperative to gather focused data on a certain subject an unstructured interview may not be the best option since this method is characterized by an open agenda and absence of predetermined questions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Thus, it becomes a matter of luck whether the informant touches upon what the researcher needs data about. Conversely, structured interviewing may not be the best approach if one wishes to approach the field of enquiry without preconceived ideas of what to find. For that purpose the structured interview is too focused and

narrow due to its fixed agenda and scheduled structure (Jennings, 2005). In between the two sides of the continuum we find the semi-structured interview that is characterized by the unstructured interview's emergent character while having an interview agenda (Willig, 2001). Our purpose of interviewing is twofold. Initially our purpose is to get into the field with an open mind to gather rich data without preconceived ideas of the field and its properties. Subsequently, the purpose is to elaborate and strengthen the emerging theory by more focused enquiry while still retaining space for emergence of new ideas. Thus, the two purposes require different degrees of structure of the interview. The initial sampling fits better with an unstructured approach while the focused, or theoretical sampling, fits better with a semi-structured approach. Therefore we have used different interview guides depending on the situation<sup>17</sup>.

### **The interview guide**

Our interview guides do not entail a predefined interview structure or contain predetermined questions. Rather they contain examples of how to ask questions within the given methodology and scientific paradigm that may facilitate the development of rich data, which is the goal of the interview (Charmaz, 2006). Consequently, we have sought to formulate questions that are not conversation-bound or topic specific, but open-ended and engaging. Developing our interview guides for theoretical sampling is complex, since we have a more set idea of what we want to talk about. Consequently, we elaborate the guides iteratively around the categories and themes that are of interest.

To keep the interviews as close to a normal engaged conversation we have formulated easily understandable questions which facilitates gathering of rich data while preserving the interview as dynamic interaction at the same time (Kvale, 1997). Further, as a help to the interviewer, and following Gilham (2005), we have divided our interview guides into phases denoting the nature of the questions therein.

### **Choosing informants and sample size**

How many interviews or observations are necessary is a typical question posited within qualitative research. The answer "[...] as many as is necessary to find out all you need to know." (Translation of Kvale, 1997, p. 108) is just as typical. However as simple as it may sound it does encapsulate the iterative process of qualitative research and GTM very well. Interviews and observations may lead to new insights which again may lead to subsequent interviews/observations thus completing the circle. But, given that we do not wish to adhere to neither this rather diffuse guideline nor the quantitative notion of representativeness, how do we then decide on what constitutes an adequate amount of empirical data? We find our answer in the concept *theoretical saturation* which has already been thoroughly presented in chapter 3.3.2.1. Thus, after having conducted eight interviews and one double interview we decided to stop interviewing because the interviews gradually elicited less and less properties of our categories. We may have continued,

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<sup>17</sup> Examples of interview guides for both purposes can be found in appendices 2 and 3.



however the decreasing rate of new insights combined with time restraints lead to a point where we could confidently stop gathering new data.

Similarly, choosing informants is not driven by an inherent demand for representativeness.

Instead the process of selecting informants is based on the patterns and categories emerging from the data. In other words, the researcher seeks out informants that may provide a deeper understanding of these emerging categories (Thomson, 2004). By interviewing these 'experts', that is, informants that have actually experienced the phenomena under study, the researcher can increase the quality of data gathered in each interview. However, to be able to direct the search for informants in that fashion one needs a sample to begin with – the initial sample. As our initial sample we chose to conduct four interviews with diverse actors from our field of enquiry. And since this revolves around project based couplings between heterogeneous actors we chose to interview agents from each segment – A CEO of an industrial firm and a theatre instructor both involved in project based couplings. Further we interviewed three agents who take on the role as facilitator in such projects. These four<sup>18</sup> interviews constitute our initial sample, which covers great width of the field and provides a stepping-stone for further directed informant-search. Due to the predominance of intermediaries' views in our initial sample and following a need for more coupling agents' views our focused sampling was directed towards non-creative and creative coupling agents primarily. Thus, our focused samples ended up being interviews with one intermediary, a CEO of and industrial firm, a marketing manager from an industrial firm, a theatre director, and a painting artist.

### **Ethics of the interview**

Following Kvale (1997) we have chosen to grapple with the ethical issues of the interview by developing the following code of ethical obligations to guide the research for this thesis:

#### **Ethical Obligations:**

##### **Purpose**

The purpose of the thesis should not only be judged by scientific standards but also by its usefulness for the persons/organizations in question.

##### **The Interview**

- The informants' comfort level has higher priority than obtaining juicy data
- Transcripts must be loyal representations of informants' verbal accounts.

##### **The Report**

- A copy of the report, without transcripts, will be provided to the participants should they be interested.

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<sup>18</sup> One was a double interview

- The report may not be of a character that incurs disfavor to the individual informant.

### **Confidentiality**

- Anonymity of the informants should be ensured by:
  - Non-disclosure of entire transcripts.
  - Depersonalization of informants' accounts included in the thesis.

Adapted and inspired from Kvale (1997, pp. 116-128.), Charmaz (2006, p. 30), Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 31)

### **Concerns related to conducting the interviews**

Conducting the interview also entails certain concerns that need due attention.

The phrase "Respect your subjects" (Blumer in Charmaz, 2006, p. 19) accurately describes our concern when entering the informants' worlds. It is crucial to preserve the informants' human dignity even if one engages in questioning their perspectives or practices (Charmaz, 2006). We have chosen to live up to this dictum by putting an effort into building rapport before, during and after the interviews through elaborating a code of ethical obligations, being transparent to our informants about how we intend to use interviews, offering informants to see transcripts of their interviews before including these in the thesis, and by showing genuine interest in informants' views and actions.

### **Interviewing and validity**

Evaluating qualitative research is something that should take place during the entire process and not something that is postponed until the end of the research project (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). However, since we have an entire chapter<sup>19</sup> on evaluating the validity of our thesis we will only mention some brief remarks here specifically regarding data collection, interviewing and validity.

A concept often given special emphasis in qualitative research is that of *reflexivity*. Charmaz (2006) describes reflexivity as

"[...] the researcher's scrutiny of his or her research experience, decisions, and interpretations in ways that bring the researcher into the process and allow the reader to assess how and to what extent the researcher's interests, positions, and assumptions influenced inquiry". (p. 188)

The concept thus prompts the researcher to reflect upon the role that his actions, choices and inclinations play in the construction of knowledge. Especially when collecting data via qualitative interviews the question of the researcher's own role becomes important. As mentioned in the chapters on ethics of the interview and conducting the interview the qualitative interview is a human interaction with which follows reciprocal influence (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In other

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<sup>19</sup> See chapter 7

words, when interviewing, we inevitably influence the informant and vice versa -the research is in a way co-constructed. Therefore it is imperative for us to...

- ...stay close to the informants' wording of events (to remain grounded in informants' reality),
  - ...refrain from imposing own terms on informants' experiences during the interview (still to remain grounded),
  - ...remain unjudgmental (to keep rapport), and
  - ...show genuine interest in informants' lives and experiences to facilitate rich narration.
- (Charmaz, 2006)

### 3.4.2 Transcription, translation and considerations of language

In general no method of transcription is ideal for every purpose and before engaging in this rather humdrum activity one should therefore consider the purpose of doing the transcription. Overall, the detail of our transcriptions should correspond to the purpose of its use (Kvale, 1997). Since our interviews are the very foundation from which we build our GT we have chosen to transcribe verbatim the entire audio recordings<sup>20</sup>.

The details we include are:

- Everything that is said including repetitions.
- Pauses in speech, indicated with “(...)”.
- Unfinished sentences, indicated with “...”.
- Strong intonations, indicated with capital letters.
- Non-verbal sounds, indicated in parentheses.
- Interruptions by other part indicated in square brackets.

*Translation* and considerations on language play an equally important role for a project where different languages are employed. Due to the inductive nature of our methodology, and in order to secure good data, we have chosen to conduct the interviews in Danish, which is the mother tongue of the informants. To remain as inductive as possible whilst at the same time developing drafts for the report we have chosen to conduct the analysis (for example coding and memo writing) in English. The actual translation of transcriptions is employed only on excerpts and pieces presented in the thesis itself and not on transcriptions as a whole.

## 4 Empirical data – presentation

In the following we provide a list of informants grouped in non-creative agents and creative agents. A creative agent is either an artist, someone employed in the creative industries or someone working with creativity as an integral part of his/her job. A non-creative agent is

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<sup>20</sup> Complete transcriptions can be found in appendix 11.4.1

someone not employed in the Creative Industries and not working with creativity as an integral part of daily activities. Creative Consultants are persons who work with creativity as an integral part of their daily activities but are not necessarily artists. We have replaced names with a code (NC=Non- creative agent; CC=Creative consultant; AR=Artist) and a number.

## **4.1 *Creative agents***

### **4.1.1 AR1**

AR1 is a painting artist and has participated in several coupling projects with private companies as well as the public sector. Currently AR1 is part of a coupling project with a larger partner from the public sector.

### **4.1.2 AR2**

AR2 is head of a theatre that during the last couple of years has undertaken several coupling projects with private companies as well as the public sector. AR2 has a business school background and is autodidact in theatre. Currently the theatre is engaged in a coupling project with a large national company from the food industry. (AR2 is not affiliated with NC4).

### **4.1.3 CC1**

CC1 is currently working as a consultant in his own firm. He has got a university degree in literature, an MBA, and is a certified coach. Prior to establishing his own consulting firm he co-founded a successful innovation company. Currently, he is engaged as facilitator in a coupling project between traditional B2B production companies and a large national cultural institution.

### **4.1.4 CC2**

CC2 is a creative firm that primarily focuses its activities on experience-based business development. The firm consists of two persons, one with a business school background and one with a creative background in graphic design. In coupling projects CC2 assumes both the role of the creative as well as the role as facilitator depending on the project. Currently they are working on a number of coupling projects involving diverse agents from industry as well as the public sector.

## **4.2 *Non-creative agents***

### **4.2.1 NC1**

NC1 works in a managing position within the public sector and has a field of responsibility covering outdoor events and related experience-activities. He has a university background. A part of NC1's job is to interact and collaborate with non-creative as well as creative agents and make these cooperate.

#### 4.2.2 NC2

NC2 is the CEO of a national production company primarily engaged in B2B activities. The company has built a facility specifically designed to facilitate coupling projects between the company itself and creative agents in the coming years. Currently the facility is providing the physical space for short-term coupling projects between the firm and creative agents.

#### 4.2.3 NC3

NC3 is the marketing manager of a division in a large International firm engaged in B2B and B2C production and sales. Currently the division is engaged in a coupling project with a creative company from the software industry.

#### 4.2.4 NC4

NC4 is the CEO of a National B2B production firm from a traditional industry. Currently his firm is part of a coupling project with a theatre and a facilitating part from the advertising sector. (NC4 is not involved with AR2).

## 5 Analysis

Having presented our method we now turn to the analysis of the data. The analysis is comprised of three *theoretical concepts* that consist of a series of *categories* and *subcategories* and ultimately *codes*. To enable our reader to trace our analytical steps back to raw data we include detailed figures of the codes constituting each category in the appendices (see appendix 5), provide in-text references to our coding documents, and include significant quotes where necessary.

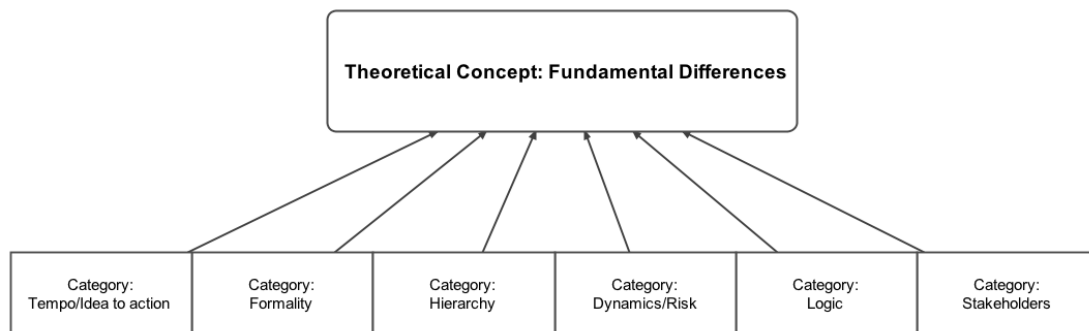
We initiate by presenting a theoretical concept entitled “Perceiving fundamental differences”. This theoretical concept outlines how the creative- and non-creative agents perceive of each other as being fundamentally different in a series of ways. Following this we turn to analyze how the perceived fundamental differences affect agents and their coupling projects in a negative way. This part of the analysis consists of the theoretical concept of “Acting on preconceptions”. It becomes obvious that the way the coupling agents act is shaped by their ideas of being different from each other. Finally we turn to address a theoretical concept entitled “Strategies for convergence”. This theoretical concept focus on the strategies coupling agents employ as to overcome the challenges that arise as a result of the perceived fundamental differences.

### 5.1 Theoretical concept: “Perceiving fundamental differences”

The theoretical concept entitled “fundamental differences” addresses the issues of idiosyncrasies pertaining to the individual agents and their industries and the following ways of managing work. There is an explicit ‘us and them’ mindset in the statements of both the creative and the non-creative agents relating to a broad array of issues – from the ways of organizing business, to work formalization etc. The agents perceive of themselves as fundamentally different from ‘the other’

part of the coupling project and they act, react and engage in coupling projects with preconceptions of how ‘the other’ part will act. The theoretical concept of *fundamental differences* is defined from a series of categories (See fig.3).

Fig. 3:



### 5.1.1 Category “Tempo/Idea to action”

#### *Description of the category:*

When engaging in coupling projects the overall tempo of the project is perceived by some creative agents to be slower than they would normally engage work with. The creative agents feel that they are faster at moving from an idea to actually producing a product or experience. While the non-creative agents recognize that their projects and work tasks do take longer time it is, according to them, not a matter of them working slower or less efficient. Rather there are a number of issues in the way the non-creative agents manage and facilitate work that makes their processes different from the creative agents. In other words the creative agents are not necessarily working better or more efficient, they are just working differently. (AR1: 115-134; 359-388; AR2 244-263; NC1 544-564; NC4: 381-385; NC2: 124-135; 136-147; 268-280; NC3: 197-208)

#### *Properties of the category:*

A creative agent expresses his experience with working with non-creative agents:

*AR2: Well, (...) maybe it is that we are used to moving from idea to decision a little faster than they are in the business life. (...) From idea to action, right. Where you might think that it is a bit slow or futile when you are working with the business life and thinking “god it is such a huge business I thought they would be more on the beat”. Not because they are not smart or ... it is just slow... It is just another way of working. MUCH more organized, and much, much more futile and well formal, maybe, in the structure and the organization, than we are used to. (AR2: 244-263)*

Another creative agent also feels that the process is slower when working with non-creative agents, but at the same time underline the importance of moving at a pace that suits all parts of the project:

*Well it is all about the process taking more TIME. (...) There are more meetings, you have to talk some more, bring more models and discuss it more. And I want to say that the project constantly changes as we go along THROUGH these conversations. "What is it that we want? What are we doing with this? What do we have, what do we need to be able to do?" All these conversations they are very important to... What you do becomes FOCUSED towards exactly this institution or exactly this business. (AR1: 129-135)*

She further elaborates:

*Maybe it takes twenty meetings, well then that is it. Nice and easy right. Because you (...) well, you circle in on it slowly one might say, right? (AR1: 373-374)*

The non-creative agents on the other hand do not perceive of their tempo as slow but they indicate that their planning is overtly of longer durations and more extensive (NC1 545; NC4: 381-385).

Some non-creative agents try to accommodate the tempo of the creative agents by employing initiatives in the coupling projects: A non-creative agent has designed a special model for collaboration that allows the creative agents to move faster from idea to action while collaborating with the non-creative agent. He has physically made some alterations to his R&D facilities that make it possible for the creative agent to feel capable of moving from idea to action fast (NC2: 145-147). In other words, the non-creative agent achieves a commercial advantage by supplying the creative agent with a model of collaboration that lets the creative move quickly from idea to action.

Also related to the category of tempo/idea to action, we find incidents indicating how non-creative agents primarily focus on the economic feasibility of a new idea. Right after the idea has come up follows the rationale of 'who is going to pay'? (NC1: 585). Such rational considerations and deeper levels of analysis are often what make the non-creative agents stand out as being slow in moving from idea to action.

### **5.1.2 Category "Formality"**

#### ***Description of the category:***

The second category belonging to the theoretical concept of "perceiving fundamental differences" is concerned with formality in the way work is carried out and managed. The perceived formality in the work tasks of the creative- and the non-creative agents varies. The work structure of the creative agents is perceived by both the creative agents and the non-creative agents as being loose and free of formality while the non-creative agents' work stands out as being more formalized and governed by rules and regulations. This has the implication that the creative- and non-creative agents perceive of each other as working differently. (AR2: 256-261; CC1: 597-606,

768-790; NC1: 373-379; CC2: 147-150; NC4: 386-392; NC2: 56-62; 69-72; 380-390; NC3: 88-96; 145-152; 161-169; 291-298).

***Properties of the category:***

The creative agents are generally perceived as being free and floating above rules, regulations and formality. Furthermore they can think and act unregulated:

*Some of the stuff they [the creative agents] exhibit when they are giving presentations is DARNED ILLEGAL (...), but the idea is good though (laughs) so, well (...) eh, so of course they have a bigger freedom to act. (NC1 380-384)*

Meanwhile the non-creative agents perceive of themselves as more tied to rules and regulations and formalized work structures. They are expected to act and work in a certain way – dictated by the organization or the formality in their workspaces – and they are not allowed to think too much out of the box:

*Well, (...) \*\*\* (a creative consultancy business) have the great big advantage compared to us (his own organization) that they are not TIED UP by municipality proxy and laws and rules and that sort of thing. And that has the effect that they simply have a much more innovative way of thinking - they can think some thoughts that I do not DARE to think, that I am NOT ALLOWED to think for my boss. (NC1: 373-379)*

The high degree of formality is not a problem to the non-creative agents. Rather the non-creative agents will seek formality in creative processes since the feasibility of the non-creative field of work is affected by the ability to apply formal work structures to their ideas:

*[...] that is basically what we live from in the industry. It is to get all the creatives down there in some boxes and repeat them [ed: The processes]. (NC4: 385-388)*

In other words, formality is a fundamental part of the daily lives of non-creative agents but at the same time the non-creative agents acknowledge the importance of good ideas that comes from environment s not necessarily governed by formality. The category of “Formality” is closely connected to the category of “hierarchy”.

### **5.1.3 Category “Hierarchy”**

***Description of the category:***

The creative agents point towards the hierarchy of the non-creative organizations as one of the fundamental differences between their own creative background and the non-creative agents whom appear to be more ‘corporate’. The hierarchy is perceived by the creative agents as one of the issues limiting the non-creative organizations and their employees’ ability to act and engage in creative work and idea generation. (AR1: 221-238; 427-438; AR2: 271-277; 307-310; NC1: 467-479; NC3 284-291; 158-169)

***Properties of the category:***



When asked what makes the non-creative agents' organizations work slower than the creative agents' one creative agent notes:

*It seems to me that it is that organization, where things must be brought up (...) for evaluation other places and (...) where there are many people that must be consulted. In this project there have been UNBELIEVEABLY many people that had to be consulted. (AR2 306-310)*

The various levels of the hierarchy also result in plans and ideas being overruled by higher levels of the hierarchy. This is unusual to the creative agents who are used to being free and individual in their work and not restricted by bosses or employees higher in the hierarchy:

*[...] there were many chefs involved in it. Where suddenly there was a thing we could agree on, suddenly it was overruled by a higher PR-manager right. And we are not used to that at all, working that way. (AR2: 271-277)*

Another creative agent has also experienced that higher authorities in the non-creative organization cancel projects before they even evolve fully:

*Mmmm well, I want to say that I have not experienced that we have made it far with an idea, but I can see many ideas and many suggestions has never been realized because of that (ed. Executive opposition). (AR1: 427-429)*

It is important to notice that the top management can also play a facilitating role in coupling projects. In other words the hierarchy is not necessarily just a limiting factor. However, persons high in the organizational hierarchy must embrace the project fully to be an asset of the project:

*Well, often there is a CEO, who WANTS to do this. That is the best. If it is a CEO who WANTS, DARES and TAKES ACTION (...) without, well, caring about what the others say. THAT is the best. Because then you do not have to listen to all these perfidious people who have their own meanings about one thing and the other and... You know then they are to sit there and decide what THEY like and what kind of taste THEY have and so on and then the project will never get realized will it. (AR1: 220-227)*

#### **5.1.4 Category “Dynamics/risk” (impulsive vs. conservative)**

##### ***Description of category:***

The creative agents are perceived as being more impulsive and dynamic than the non-creative agents. Creative agents will engage in a project without long term planning and forehand analysis of the risks involved while the non-creative agents are perceived as being more conservative and less impulsive. The non-creative agents will analyze, strategize, consult with different levels of the organization to plan ahead, and thus appear more conservative in the eyes of the creative agents. (AR2: 292-297; CC1: 308-314, 672-687; NC1: 310-316, 695-704; CC2: 133-140, 678-688, 716-731; AR1: 78-88; 379-387; NC4: 352-363, 445-450, 516-519, 545-555; NC2: 69-72; 150-160; NC3: 221-233; 251-269).

### ***Properties of the category:***

Some creative agents feel that the lack of dynamics in the non-creative agents work limits the degree of creativity the creative agents can deliver in couplings projects:

*GL: How does it feel to suddenly be in a project where things ARE moving a little more slowly?*

*AR1: Well, it can be both good and bad. One might say it will be a little more thorough. Maybe there are some processes that will be more thoroughly considered than when we normally do it. (...) But I also think that there is some creativity lost in such (...) somewhat slow processes because there will be more time spent on organization and structure right than on sparring - idea development. (AR2 287-299)*

In other words the creative agents feel restrained by the non-creative agents and their less dynamic way of engaging work. To overcome this challenge the creative agents feel that they must provide *safe surroundings* for the non-creative agents and thus make them feel more “at home” or aligned with the project. By providing safe surroundings the non-creative agents are more willing to trust the project and the skills of the creative coupling partners:

*Our most prominent role, in reality, is to give them, safe surroundings so that they will dare try a little more than they normally would, right. And that is also what is usually the largest barrier... If things get a little bit too (...) [ed: outrageous] then they're not as courageous and willing to go that way, right. (CC2 133-139)*

Another creative agent shares this view:

*It means that (...) typically the businesses, institutions will be much more careful that I AM. I do not care about... Well, I know where the boundaries are, you might say, to what I can and cannot do. My boundaries are so much wider than theirs. Not that I am going out to make a fuss such places (...) It is a BAD place to start a revolt (laughs), if you get such a project. But you always want to try to push everybody's limits a TINY bit so the conformity and the habitual thinking is challenged a bit. (AR1: 77-88)*

The non-creative agents and their organizations acknowledge the value of the more dynamic work of the creative agents but since the creative agents are often not present in the non-creative organizations the non-creative agents must hire these talents by addressing the creative agents. A creative agent tells us of his experiences with being contacted by non-creative organizations:

*Why do they even hire me? Well, they will do it in order to get a bit of that something that they should have people doing within the organization, but cannot manage to have. Then they hire me and to walk around and make a fuss for a while and hopefully start a lot of things... (CC1 307-313)*

However, while the non-creative agents need creativity and dynamics of work they are not comfortable with a totally free creativity or too much dynamics. Instead they will look for ways of controlling the creativity within a given 'frame' (NC4: 445-450).

It is interesting to note that the non-creative agents recognize that their ways of organizing work is not as dynamic as the creative agents. We learn from a non-creative agent (a producer of building equipment) that...

*[...] We are probably a bit more pragmatic and a little more (...) technical than the architects [ed: the creative agents]. We are perhaps also a bit too subjective and conservative in our mindset, where the architects can manage to throw the ball up in the air in a new way and then catch it in yet a new way, when they have to sit down and come up with new ideas during a whole new project. In those situations, sometimes, I KNOW that we have stuck to the same pipe-profiles, the same steel-pipes that will be used instead of maybe saying (...) "But could we use another dimension than this?" and thereby get a new kind of design. (NC2: 150-160)*

At the same time one of the non-creative agents express a sense of envy towards the creative agents' way of being free in their work:

*There has always been a fascination of the arts perhaps exactly because it has got a more free form (...) than the very heavy industrial process. So in reality I think it is a FASCINATION. (NC4: 516-519)*

An interesting question arises in relation to why the creative agents are more dynamic in their work. A creative agent links the dynamics in the creative agents work to the fast life cycles of the creative products. The argument seems to be that creative agents are used to reacting to fast changing environments:

*If we take a computer game: It will take a long time to develop, but how long is the lifespan really? A shooting game. If you are not already working on generation 3-4-5-6 and release a new one each year for Christmas, then it is going to be dead within a year. Then somebody else will have produced something whereas, if you have an industrial process, making \*\*\*\*\* (their product) or something else, then the products will have... The very short lifecycle raises a completely different demand for creativity and for responsiveness than the traditional industry has done. (NC4: 545-555)*

### **5.1.5 Category "Logic"**

#### ***Description of the category:***

The category of "logic" deals with the mindset of the different agents. What triggers them and what are their incentives to carry out the work they do? The creative agents will be likely to focus on the creativity and creative potential in a project while the non-creative agents will often be more focused on the economic potential of the project. In other words, the coupling agents appear to act from two separate logics or 'raison d'être' and this constitutes a perceived

difference between them. (NC1 326-334; CC2 60-67; 320-332; CC1: 1049-1057; AR1: 54-77; 292-302; 505-518).

***Properties of the category:***

The creative agents seem to be driven by something larger than economy, profits etc. Often they claim to create for the sake of it without first thinking about the economic potential in/of their creations. Thus, instead of focusing on delivering a product that will fit a need in the market or have a high ROI the creative agents often focus on their own need for being *creative*:

*The way we do it is that often we will not go out and see a NEED in the market and then convert our ideas to THAT - The product to that. We want to do that some MORE, which is obvious, but the way we work now it is to say "WOW that thing here could be interesting, could we do like this and this", and from some kind of creative core, you can call it, develop something. (CC2: 60-67)*

The non-creative agents, on the other hand, will focus on the economic potential of an idea before doing anything else. If an idea is not feasible they will discard it no matter how creative it might seem:

*Well my impression is that people think it is a lot of fun and positive, but (...) maybe it is also... Often, I can also hear that people are thinking or saying "but where should the money come from, who is paying for this"? And, "I am not paying" and (...) the city should typically not either. So, well, (...) it is DIFFERENT and (...) the big problem that WE have right now is that a lot of people can see the IDEAS, but there are not as many who can see the financial bottom line in it. (NC1 326-334)*

The different logics or mindsets of the creative agents and the non-creative agents are also reflected in the roles the different agents play in the interactions. One creative agent explains how she will never focus on 'numbers' (financial aspects) of a coupling project:

*Well, my job is NEVER to translate into numbers. THAT does not interest me AT ALL. THAT has to be done by somebody else. I can translate into positive, well positive effects. I can translate into (...) well, exactly experience-value and (...) what can we say, a good political agenda and... I can translate into things like that, but I will not translate it into numbers. That does not interest me. I do not BOTHER because someone is much better at that than me. It is better that I use my power to try to translate into what it gives in terms of clean, human and social and... all KINDS [ed: of value], to invest in these cultural initiatives right. That is better I think, I am better at talking about that. (AR1: 505-518).*

While there is a tendency for the creative agents to avoid the subject of economic feasibility there are however also exceptions. One of the creative agents explains how he is concerned with economic questions. However this is more in relation to funding the creative idea. The focus on economic feasibility thus relates more to the fact that the creative agent will have difficulties carrying out the project if sufficient funding cannot be raised:

*There is a difference between the projects. There are some of the projects where (...) the client in principle could be (...) just be (...) It is anonymous now, right? [yes, yes]. Where the client in reality is just a hurdle that must be overcome because what it is really about is that they must pay something so that we can realize this great idea we have right. There are projects like that (laughs). And then there are others where (...) basically, my personal drive in it, what I think is interesting, is to create things, to MAKE something. It is not to do commercials for someone or to receive funds. That really does not matter, (...) or it does, but then that is just how it is made possible one might say. (CC2: 320-332)*

### **5.1.6 Category “Stakeholders”**

#### ***Description of the category:***

The non-creative agents often have a responsibility towards a broad array of stakeholders external of the organization. They must make sure that their products, marketing events etc. are aligned with the expectations of these stakeholders and thus they are restrained by the limits set by these stakeholders. The creative agents on the other hand have a different perception of their own role. They want to be a provocateur or a mover of boundaries. Their stakeholders are fewer and they expect such behavior from the creative agents and thus they feel free of restraints. Therefore the creative agents are perceived as more free to act than the non-creative agents. (AR1: 70-88; AR2: 306-313; 320-326; 332-343; NC2: 22-30; NC3: 175-181; 123-127)

#### ***Properties of the category:***

One creative tells about his experience with working together with a large Danish non-creative organization on a marketing event:

*In this project there have been UNBELIEVABLY many people, who had to be consulted. Because they (the non-creative organization) have to talk to farmers about this, they have talked to the organic union, and \*\*\*\*\* (the non-creative organization) need to be careful that they do not bully anybody, when they enter as the big one. (AR2: 308-313)*

He continues:

*They need to be careful not to market this project too much (...) and at the same time they also have to market it (laughs). So there are a lot of concerns for them. That is one thing I have learned (...) a big business like that has a harder time when acting on a market than we do. (AR2: 320-324)*

Another creative agent has the same experience of the non-creative agents being more careful:

*It means that (...) typically the businesses, institutions will be much more careful than I AM. I do not care about... Well, I know where the boundaries are, you might say, to what I can and cannot do. My boundaries are so much wider than theirs. (AR1: 77-82)*

However, while the creative agents see the non-creative agents as being tied to their stakeholders they are not free of stakeholders interests themselves. However the stakeholders of the creative organizations expect the creative agents to break boundaries and be provoking:

*GL: You cannot just act like it suits you can you?*

*AR2: No, no, no, no, no certainly not. Well, there are, without a doubt, some correlations, but on the contrary we live from being PROVOKING (laughs) for example right, or from being ostentatious. So there are many instances where we can totally relax and think that the bigger the scandal the better and it will NEVER be like that to them. It is about money and if a scandal arises then suddenly it will damage the entire business. In that respect we are a little more (...) well, FREE in a way you might say. (AR2: 335-343)*

### **5.1.7 Sum up on fundamental differences**

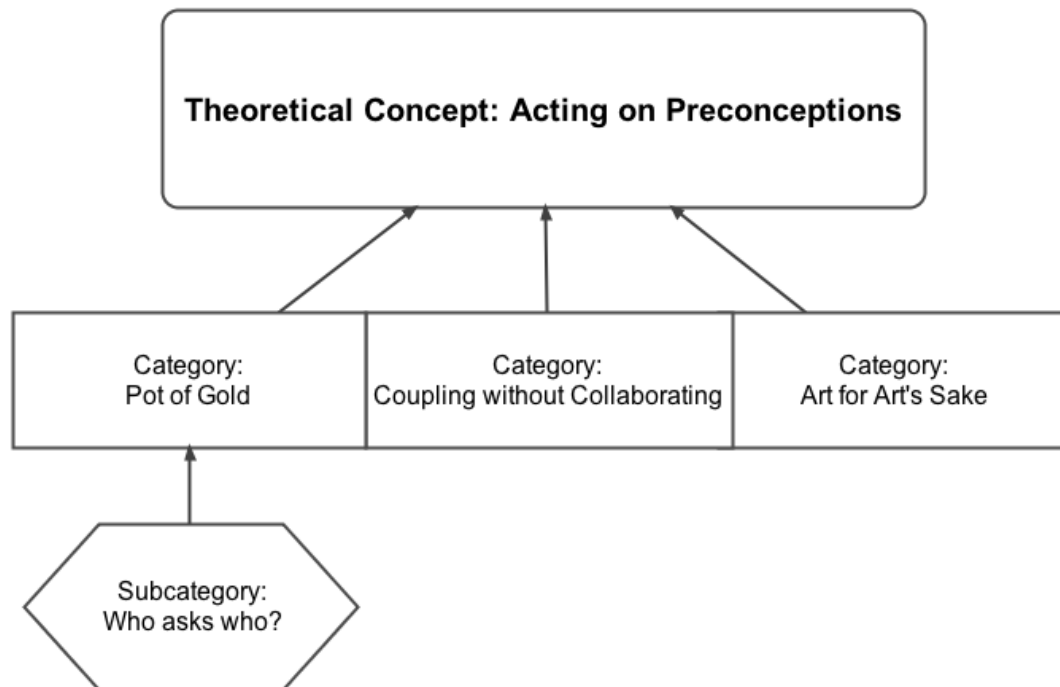
Through our data we have been able to identify six categories that each represent a subject through which the creative- and the non-creative agents experience a sense of perceived fundamental difference from 'the other'. These are: tempo/idea to action; formality; hierarchy; dynamics/risk; logic and stakeholders. It is important to note that the list is not an exhaustive list of categories in coupling projects. Potentially there are other categories that could be found should we decide to broaden our scope and include more interviewees. However our goal is not to provide a complete mapping of perceived differences between creative- and non-creative agents but instead to exemplify that such perceived differences exist in our data. By doing this we are able to investigate how such perceived differences affect coupling projects in the experience economy.

Having shown that creative- and non-creative agents perceive of each other as being different we now turn to address the second and third theoretical concepts "Acting on preconceptions" and "Developing Strategies for Convergence". This also involves a shift of focus: In the first theoretical concept we have juxtaposed the agents and sought to learn how they perceive of "the others". In the two following theoretical concept, however, our focus is less on the individual agents and more on their collaboration. Therefore our analytical focus will be less individually orientated and more focused on the actual coupling.

## **5.2 Theoretical concept - "Acting on Preconceptions"**

Having addressed the issue of perceived differences between the creative agents and the non-creative agents we now turn to analyze how these perceived differences unfolds negatively in coupling projects. As we shall see, the perceived differences shape the agents' interactions and influence their collaboration. The coupling agents act towards each other according to their preconceptions of each other and this causes situations to occur through which the success of coupling projects is challenged. We present three categories: "Pot of Gold", "Art for Art's sake" and "Coupling without collaborating" (see figure 4).

Fig. 4



### 5.2.1 Category “Pot of Gold”

#### ***Description of the category:***

The category of ‘Pot of Gold’ revolves around the issue of pricing creative products and services. In general some creative agents are uncomfortable about the issue of pricing their skills, products and services. Furthermore, many creative agents will differentiate their prices and wages depending on who is buying (especially, is it a creative- or non-creative agent who is customer) and they will demand higher amounts from commercial non-creative agents. They tend to see the non-creative agents and their organizations as an exhaustible ‘pot of gold’ and thus feel like they can demand higher rewards and monetary incentives for creative skills.

#### ***Properties of the category:***

Creative agents are likely to demand higher wages and funding when working with non-creative agents. Also they are likely to perceive of a project as being highly commercial just because a commercial partner is involved. A coordinator talks about his experience with working with creative agents in a coupling project:

*[...] there you have to be careful that - for example we had to hire some actors to record a speak for this project - you are able to keep the budget because (...) when doing it with \*\*\*\* [ed: the non-creative organization], “then it is a commercial and then I should be paid ten thousand to record the speak for this” (impersonating an actor). But there are ten other actors who also has to take part in it, right, and well (...) there is only this budget - it IS NOT a commercial it is an event, a concept you are making – which makes it difficult to talk to the actors about the limits. (AR2: 409-419)*

A non-creative agent has a similar experience:

*Well, sometimes somebody comes here and tries to pitch a project and literally expect that I will dish out three hundred thousand from our own pockets from which they can then pay their own salaries during the next six months, and then MAYBE there is a product which, in the other end, can be implemented for an extra half million. That (...) is not the way our (the non-creative organization) economy works. (NC1: 241-245)*

An employee in a non-creative organization tells about his experience with working with creative agents – in this case creative consultants:

*Well, if a private business (the creative consultants) can get something out of making something together with us (the non-creative organization) without us having to pay an insane amount for it, then it good for us because we do not have a lot of money. We really want to do a lot of things, but we do not have the money to hire CONSULTANTS to the extent that most consultants believe we can. (NC1: 259-265)*

On a general note the creative agents have a special attitude towards the pricing and selling of their skills, services and products. Some creative agents like to outsource every action related to pricing and selling their products and services to professionals. By doing this the creative agents can be spared the haggling over prices:

*Well, therefore they are also happy about people like us (mediating consultants) because if we can sell their creative services, without them having to do it themselves, and do it in a context, where they do not get a foul taste in their mouths or a pain in the ass about it. (...) Those are our most prominent roles - this thing about making it fit and making everybody happy AFTERWARDS, right. And it is sometimes a fine balance between, how much can we demand... Well, what are they buying right? Are they buying decoration of some kind of wall or are they buying the person's name and CV and permission to use that actively in their commercials or... (CC2: 420-429)*

#### **5.2.1.1 Subcategory: "Who asks who?"**

As a subcategory to the category "Pot of Gold" we find "Who asks who". This category is less developed than the other categories but nonetheless gives further elaboration to some of the dynamics present in the pricing dilemmas of the creative agents. It seems it is of some importance who contacts who in order to initiate a coupling project:

A creative artist tells about how her prices will be affected, not only in relation to the commercial nature of a future client, but also on the subject of who initiates contact:

*GL: Does it matter who takes the initiative (to engage in couplings)? Does it have a say in the process?*



*AR1: It has something to say about the economy in it I will say. Because the economy is SOMEWHAT easier if it is the business that approaches you because then they already kind of... Then it is a bit easier to get the money out of their pockets right. If I approach them, then I REALLY have to bring... Well then I HAVE TO bring some money in some way to get it started. (AR1: 244-255)*

In general the subject of who approaches who seems to be of some concern to especially the creative agents (AR1: 244-255; 275-289; AR2: 9-10; 33-38).

### **5.2.2 Category “Art for art’s sake”**

#### ***Description of the category:***

Equivalent to the creative agents preconceptions about the non-creative agents in regards of pricing services (see category “pot of gold”) there is also a category pertaining to non-creative agents preconceptions of the creative agents and how much the non-creative agents should pay for creative skills. From the data we learn that the non-creative agents have a tendency to preconceive the artist as a person who will do art for art’s sake and thus not demand monetary reward for his/her creativity. In coupling projects this may result in misunderstandings and potential barriers since the creative agents often feel that their services are being devalued and taken for granted by the non-creative agents. (NC1: 247-261; CC2: 400-416; 570-587; 608-611; 625-635; AR2: 43-46)

#### ***Properties of the category:***

The creative agents acknowledge that they sometimes will do art for art’s sake and thus care more for the artistic outcome than for monetary reward (see the category of “logic”). However one creative agent expresses his view on doing art for art’s sake in coupling projects with commercial organizations:

*First of all there is this impression of the real artist as sitting and starving a bit while creating fantastic works of art and stuff like that and that he is really only just burning to create. And there ARE many like that, but they will not do it for a company or... Well, then you would rather starve and paint your OWN picture rather than having to relate to somebody else. (CC2: 625-635)*

This does not indicate however that creative agents will never engage in coupling projects with non-creative partners. Rather the category “art for Art’s sake” teach us that in order to make the creative agents interested in engaging in coupling projects the non-creative agents will have to pay a certain amount equivalent to what we choose to call the *motivation threshold*<sup>21</sup>. If the monetary reward of the creative service does not exceed the motivation threshold the creative agent will not be interested in collaborating. However the motivation threshold is not the same for all artists and the non-creative agents will try to draw advantage of this by collaborating with lesser known creative agents who are more eager to

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<sup>21</sup> The threshold that must be overcome (in terms of monetary reward) in order to make a creative agent interested in a coupling project.

build a name for them self and thus more willing to sell their skills and creativity at lower prices (lower motivation thresholds).

The differences in the motivation threshold between the creative agents also cause the problem of creative agents being removed from coupling projects and replaced with cheaper creative agents. For instance a creative agent explains how he has taken part in developing a marketing campaign through collaborating with non-creative agents who afterwards fails to understand why they need to reward the creative agent for his services (CC2 424-441).

Rather than providing the reward the non-creative agents use the idea the two parts have come up with through collaboration but replace the creative agents with cheaper creative agents who are up and coming artists or under education. They are willing to deliver the creative input at lesser rates if not for free (CC2: 424-441). By doing this, the creative agents who has taken part in developing the campaign loses revenue and the non-creative agents risks getting lesser talented artists and thus reach an outcome which is not the best possible.

### **5.2.3 Category "Coupling without collaborating"**

#### ***Description of the category:***

In the data we find incidents and statements about coupling situations where the two parts have not been collaborating efficiently: The creative- and a non-creative agents may have decided on coupling through a project but instead of embracing the collaboration by opening up to "the other" they become mutually detached and try to collaborate at arm's length. The reason for such detachment is to be found in the perceived differences already presented in the above. The agents are not comfortable working with other agents who act and behave differently and the detachment thus becomes something like a defense mechanism. When the agents try to collaborate at arm's length or without fully embracing the collaboration in the coupling project the outcome is of limited success. Limited success is to be understood in two ways: *firstly* the project might have some degree of value creation but since it does not meet the expectations of the coupling agents it becomes a one-off project and the value creation on the longer run is lost. *Secondly*, the project might result in no value creation at all. In these incidents the coupling project is carried out 'for the sake of it' and the goal becomes 'surviving the process' rather than securing a feasible outcome. Projects with limited success result in disappointments that then again might have the effect that agents become reluctant to engage in coupling projects again (AR1: 6-10, 233-237; NC3: 407-415; NC4: 346-348, 510-513, 217-220; CC1: 681-686, 1519-1526, 222-224, 151-159; CC2: 475-480).

#### ***Properties of the category:***

The tendency to distance oneself from the other agent is already present before the actual collaboration begins:

*And it is not because the parts are not motivated or not interested in talking together. Because you ARE, and therefore you engage in this collaboration. But you just have some totally different perspectives on the subject at hand. (AR1: 6-10)*

Furthermore, even though the collaboration has not even begun there can still be strong reactions to the news of an approaching coupling project.

*Well, but then I will say that now we have to work together with a computer game producer and then people get that special image in their heads of us making a splatter, or us making some kind of tacky game. But, that image can quickly be changed. However, it is funny to see the reaction of people when you say that it is a game-producer we are working with. (NC3: 407-415)*

Another agent sums up the reason for the agent's reluctance to collaborate with other agents:

*Yes, they are a bit afraid of us and we are a bit scared of them one might say. We are afraid that we will not understand them. (NC4: 346-348)*

The anxiety about embracing a coupling project is a result of the tendency for both individuals and organizations to seek 'sameness' and familiarity:

*We seek sameness with the same people - our friends all have the same socioeconomic background as us. We hang out with the same type. It is a matter of feeling comfortable, I think it is very biological, very elementary and it is the same on an organizational level. (CC1: 681-686)*

In other words the coupling with someone who is different challenges the agents and calls for some degree of embracement of the situation. Without such embracement the coupling becomes problematic. The perceived differences also have a say once the project is launched. The agents risk isolating themselves due to the negative preconceptions about the other and the different ways of managing work, perceiving the world etc. (NC2: 290-301; CC2 359-365). A creative agent tells about an incident where he was managing a coupling project for a non-creative client. Even though the non-creative clients appreciated all the creativity they still experienced isolation and felt out of reach with the creative agents:

*It was like I was standing in a big triangle where I was up here and talking to the client (pointing to a fictitious drawing) and everybody else was in a bubble of creativity, that they (the non-creative agents) were looking at and finding fantastic and pleasing to them but which they could not really figure out how to interact with and talk with. (CC2: 475-480)*

When coupling projects are too heavily influenced by preconceptions the success is limited. A creative agent explains how coupling projects are sometimes carried out 'for the sake of it' and without any ambitions to open up and embracing the collaboration. The result becomes a one-off project where the potential is lost:

*Well they do not really know each other, they have too much fear of involvement to really dare to ENGAGE in this clinch. So it is like “well okay so he is doing this, okay, well fine, then I must do this for this one time”. However, they fail to understand why it should be done but, “now we do it and it looks okay and then afterwards we will continue with our own things as we used to”.*  
(CC1: 1519-1526)

Such an experience is not unique but has been witnessed by other agents as well (AR1: 233-237).

The question of why some agents engage in couplings if they are not comfortable with opening up to the other agent is an interesting one. We find two reasons for this:

*Firstly*, there is a tendency to overeagerly adopting what a creative consultant calls ‘the wet dream’ of value through couplings (CC1: 222-224): Two individual agents explain how there has always been a fascination between the art and business. (CC1: 151-159; NC4: 510-513). Such fascinations are now being converted to strategies of innovation that applaud couplings between creative agents and non-creative agents and thus some agents are likely to ‘jump the gun’ and engage coupling projects without further considerations of the implications of collaborating with ‘the others’. *Secondly*, ambitions for coupling projects are often not explicit (NC4: 217-220). The coupling partners do not agree on a desired outcome in advance and thus engage in couplings without a clearly defined goal. While there is no guarantee that such undefined projects cannot succeed, however, the haphazard approach makes it too easy for the coupling partners to abandon the collaboration (not the coupling project) at the first sign of disagreements or barriers. Instead of admitting the problem that collaboration is challenging the coupling agents will rather carry out a less ambitious project and thus ends up doing the coupling ‘for the sake of it’. The result is that some coupling projects are carried out despite a limited chance for success or value creation.

#### **5.2.4 Sum up: “Acting on preconceptions”**

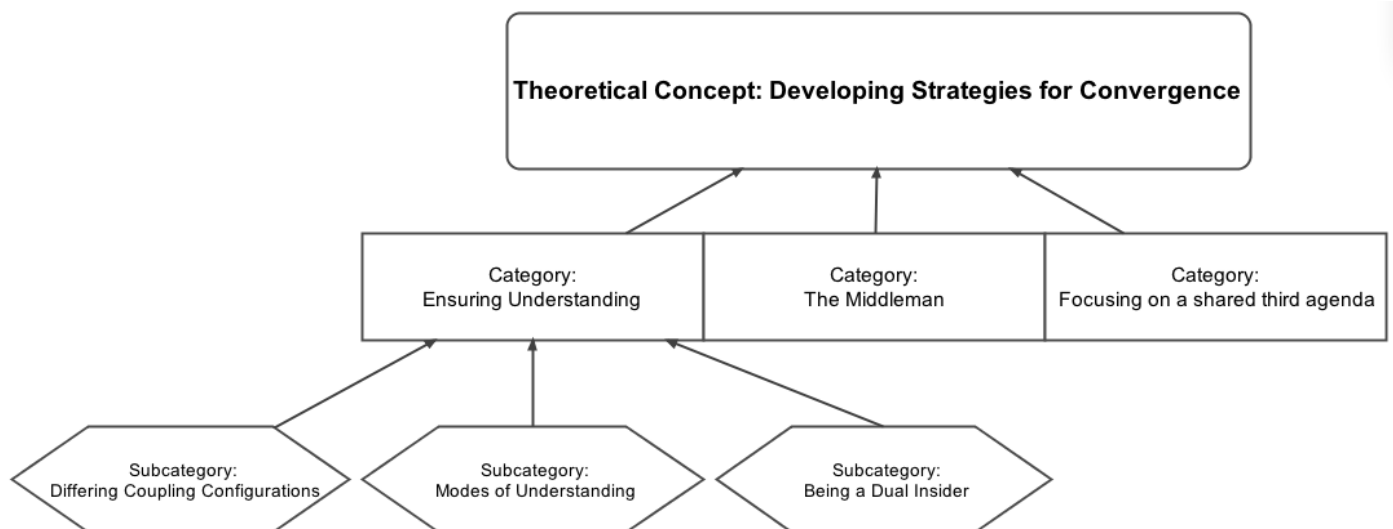
Through the categories and subcategories that make up the theoretical concept of “Acting on preconceptions” we are able to identify some of the explicit problems that may arise during coupling projects in the experience economy as a consequence of the perceived differences between the agents. Again, the challenges and problems here explained are not an exhaustive list. Many other problems might arise in other projects beyond the scope of this research. However, the challenges and problems addressed herein are interesting due to their more generic traits: The creative agents’ perception of the non-creative agents and their organizations makes these organizations stand out as inexhaustible ‘pots of gold’. Therefore the creative agents demand higher wages and bigger amounts of funding for their skills and services. On the other hand the non-creative agents’ perception of the creative agents result in the misconception that creative agents do art for art’s sake. Consequently non-creative agents believe the skills of the creative agents are free or inexpensive and thus, there is a tendency for mutual price adjusting that in worst cases can limit the success of a coupling project. Furthermore we have seen that coupling

projects will sometimes be based on little actual collaboration. We learn that doing a coupling project together is not necessarily a guarantee that the coupling agents embrace the project fully and thereby create a maximum value creation. Often, as we have seen, the coupling agents will engage collaboration at arm's length and thus fail to leverage the full potential of the project. The result is often one-off projects with little real value creation.

### 5.3 Theoretical concept – “Developing strategies for convergence”

In the following section we will elaborate on different strategies which coupling agents employ to overcome their perceived fundamental differences (theoretical concept one) and thereby avoid acting on preconceptions (theoretical concept two)<sup>22</sup>. We will focus on three categories, or rather strategies, which our informants employ in coupling projects between creative and non-creative agents. The strategies are of course not the only ones employed and neither are they mutually exclusive. They are, however, predominant in the empirical data and work as basic or fundamental interaction-strategies designed for the specific purpose of overcoming differences between the agents. The strategies being developed are “Ensuring understanding,” “The middleman” and “Focusing on a third agenda” (see figure 5).

Fig. 5



#### 5.3.1 Category “Ensuring understanding”

Among the strategies for convergence which coupling agents employ to circumvent the perceived fundamental differences between them is that of *Ensuring understanding*.

<sup>22</sup> Please note: The strategies are not always explicitly outlined by the various agents. While the first two theoretical concepts are to a large extent taken from verbatim quotes that exemplify the conditions of coupling projects the third and last theoretical concept is more based on multiple instances in the data. Therefore the presentation of this last theoretical concept varies a bit from theoretical concept one and two by being less based on verbatim quotes and more on references to instances in the data (codes).

Ensuring understanding is the concept of establishing a basis for communication between the agents in the coupling project making sure that they become able to communicate and collaborate. One would think that since the coupling agents share the same mother tongue, the basis for communication should already be established. However, as we have explored there are numerous differences or perceived differences between creative and non-creative agents - differences in ways of working but also in rationales, motivation and language. Differences that make having or establishing a shared basis for communication necessary for harnessing the full potential of the coupling project or even just for making the coupling possible. Hence this category of ensuring understanding.

The category is comprised by three *subcategories*, one explaining the basic coupling configurations, one explaining different modes of understanding and the last one focusing on a particular mode of understanding which is of special importance and which plays a significant role to the employment of the other two strategies for convergence.

### **5.3.1.1 Subcategory “Basic coupling configurations”**

#### ***Description of subcategory:***

To be able to comprehend the different ways of ensuring understanding we must first know of the different *basic coupling configurations* – that is, ways of coupling creative and non-creative agents. In the data we find three basic ways of coupling creative and non-creative agents in coupling projects presented here as *Bilateral*-, *trilateral*-, and *hybrid configurations* (see figure 6).

#### **Bilateral configuration**

This configuration is comprised by just the creative and the non-creative agent<sup>23</sup>.

(NC4: 46-52, 407-11, CC1 1516-26; AR1: 315-25)

#### **Trilateral configuration**

In the trilateral configuration an extra part is included in the coupling. This third part assumes the role of the middleman in the interaction and may act as: a match maker, translator, mediator or deliverer of creative potential<sup>24</sup> depending on the activeness of his role and which stage of the project he is involved in. (NC1: 272-91; AR2: 451-62; CC1: 615-24, 812-19; AR1: 2-6, 9-16, 95-114; CC2: 357-61, 473-79)

#### **Hybrid configuration**

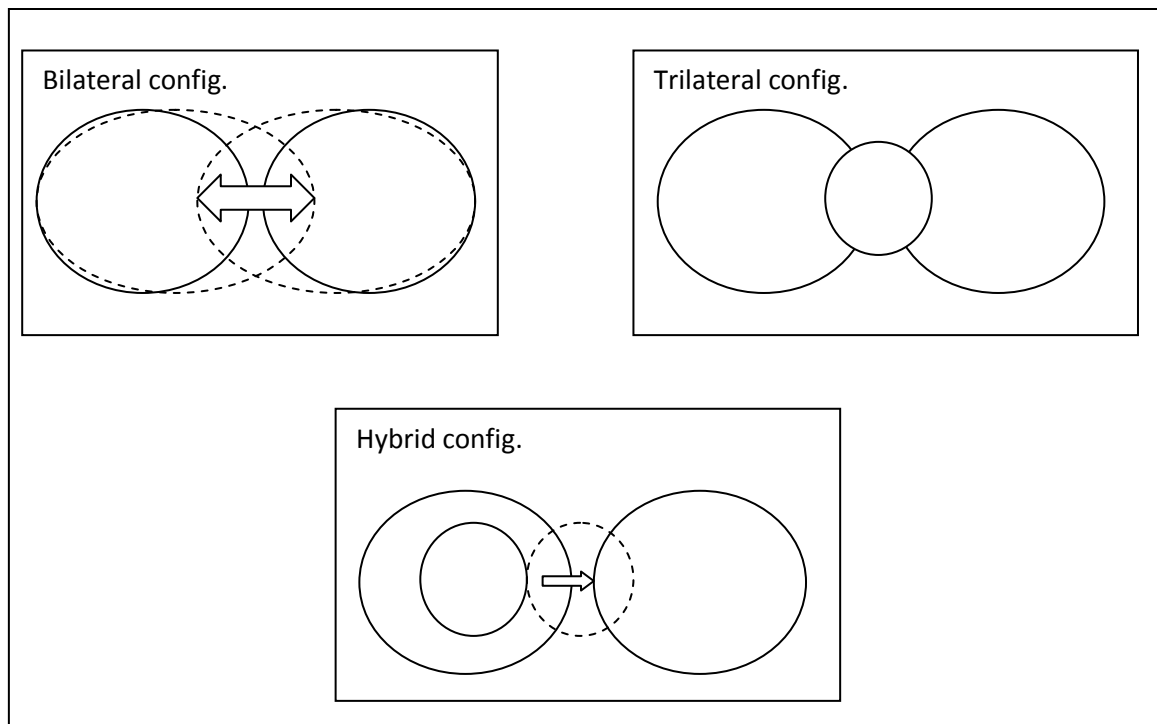
In the hybrid configuration one of the coupling parts has an agent ‘inside’ with the characteristics and abilities of the middleman – a dual insider. This person or group may then switch back and forth from acting as middleman or not which leads to a dynamic hybrid configuration. (NC1: 766-68; NC4: 356-63; AR2: 363-65, 451-62; AR1: 151-53, 181-85, 227-32; CC2: 268-74, 504-08)

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<sup>23</sup> The term agent may refer to individuals as well as organizations/groups working as a unitary element.

<sup>24</sup> For more on these roles of the middleman see section on being a dual insider (5.3.1.3)

Fig. 6:



The number of circles is not to be understood as an indication of the number of agents in the coupling project. Instead the circles function as a conceptual depiction of the interaction and meaning exchange within the coupling projects. That is, do the coupling agents interact directly or are there one or more intermediaries involved in the exchange of meaning. Consequently, the coupling configurations do not take into account eventual subcontractors on either of the sides since, even though these may be present, they are considered an integral part of the coupling agent.

### 5.3.1.2 Subcategory “Modes of understanding”

Having outlined the different coupling configurations we now turn to address the issue of how understanding and information is exchanged between the agents once the coupling has been made. In other words the subcategory of ‘modes of understanding’ addresses the issue of creating understanding between the agents:

#### ***Description of subcategory:***

There are different *modes of understanding* each other. The degree or depth of understanding ranges on a scale from: No connection → Outsider understanding → Partial insider understanding → Dual insider understanding. These, describe the deepness of the coupling agent’s understanding of the other coupling agent:

#### **No connection**

Sometimes creative agents are so lively and unruly (“spændende”) that it is impossible for the non-creative agent to connect with them, that is, making things work through creating or utilizing

a shared language. Without this connection couplings are very hardly completed if at all. Further, couplings completed without connection tend to be one-off projects because none of the coupling agents find it to be a good process and are thus reluctant to engage in coupling projects again. (NC4: 28-34, 36-44, 381-85; CC1: 597-607, 1516-26)

*I was filled with a degree of awe because I think creative people are really fascinating [ed: "spændende"]. But sometimes they are also (...) so unruly [Ed: "spændende"] that it's simply impossible to connect with them. They are simply impossible to connect with. (NC4: 381-85)*

### **Outsider understanding**

This type of understanding is something that the coupling agents learn along the way and thus it has a temporal aspect. However, what is learned is not an insider understanding of the other coupling agent's conceptual universe. Rather, the outsider understanding is based on understanding through analogies and resemblances *between* conceptual universes. To understand the other agent one simply asks himself: what do the actions that define this word resemble of actions in my own *conceptual universe* and/or vocabulary?:

*We learn the method. We learn the way they think and the words they use. And all along I am sitting there thinking with my other brain hemisphere: "What does this resemble? Does it resemble negotiation technique? Yes it does. (NC4: 294-97)*

As such this way of understanding does not provide insider knowledge since the understanding created does not imply understanding of rationales etc. Though, this form of understanding does provide some communicative basis for collaboration and may also provide a stepping stone for further learning and eventual partial insider- or insider understanding. (NC4: 294-97, 322-29)

### **Partial insider understanding**

Partial insider understanding is characterized by only a degree of shared language and shared conceptual universe. What is shared is points of convergence between agents' conceptual universes and the part of the agents' conceptual universes which the 'other' is able to tap into.

*Well you get that by being adept, right. We must be adept at explaining what we are actually doing. And they must be adept at explaining what it is they are thinking. And if we are able to overlap each other and see the points of convergence, then we can do things. (NC4: 46-52)*

However, what is shared may also be some middle grounds. That is, when coupling agents meet in the middle metaphorically and define together a shared language and conceptual universe by laying out terms and concepts important for the coupling project and then deciding and agreeing on a shared meaning of these. Imagine in this case two circles connected by a third circle in



between, the third circle being the shared language and conceptual universe. However, there is also a more spatial element of meeting in the middle grounds. The middle grounds may actually be a physical location designed to facilitate both agents' interests and work processes (e.g., a workshop designed to cater for architects' visual and hands on work-process as well as the engineers' numbers and spreadsheet oriented workflow). To obtain a shared language and conceptual universe some basic premises are significant for a successful effort: A desire to learn to understand - if you want to learn you will learn, eventually. Further, seeing other professionals' terms as black boxes which need exploration and in general being curious/investigative about the meaning of otherwise taken for granted terms and expressions helps building a shared understanding significantly.

What is more learning as a temporal aspect seems to have a significant influence on the creation of shared language – both in terms of learning by doing, that is, tapping in and creating by actively interacting; and learning in terms of accumulated adeptness from having participated in similar couplings prior to the current project. In other words, if you have collaborated in such projects before it will be easier for every new time. If not, it does take a certain amount of interaction in the current project to reach the goal of partially understanding the other. (NC4: 28-34, 36-44, 46-52, 66-69, 407-11, 419-26, 493-508; CC1: 1039-49; NC3: 174-76; NC2: 94-108, 120-34)

*If they are able to both listen and communicate, and we are able to understand what they are saying. Then we can make something together. If we do not reach that shared language (...), then it is impossible. (NC4: 39-43)*

A pitfall relating to this way of understanding is that of having the *perception* of a shared language. When coupling agents have a perception of sharing a language misunderstandings and wasting time are much more prone to happen than if the coupling agents know beforehand that they do not share languages and need to work on that particular challenge:

*They THINK they speak the same language. "We are both building houses". And then they sit there and have a hard time understanding why the architects don't... (CC1: 755-58).*

### **Dual insider understanding**

The final mode of understanding we call the dual insider understanding. Dual insider understanding is the most in-depth understanding that coupling agents can achieve. A *Dual insider* understands not only the language of both parts but also their way of thinking and rationales. Thus the dual insider is not only capable of translating terms between coupling agents or talking the language of the other. He is also capable of mediating between coupling agents, capable of catering for both parts' interests and ultimately of potentially harnessing the full creative and value-creating potential of the coupling. This particular deep understanding of both coupling agents is one of great importance to the two other strategies for convergence and thus we devote the next section to develop this

phenomenon to a subcategory of itself. Consequently, the subcategory “being a dual insider”, as opposed to the mode of understanding just presented, embodies the traits of this type of understanding in a person - a person who can be a valuable asset to a coupling consortium (see references and incidents in section *Being a dual insider* - 5.3.1.3).

### 5.3.1.3 Subcategory “Being a dual insider”

#### *Description*

As mentioned earlier the understanding the coupling agents can obtain of each other can be roughly divided into different levels depicting its yield and deepness. Among these especially one form of understanding is predominant and deemed important for successfully engaging in and completing coupling projects between creative and non-creative agents. It is that of having a dual insider understanding, that is, being an insider in both coupling agents’ worlds and having an understanding of these.

*Being a dual insider* enables one not only to translate and mediate terms and meanings between the coupling agents. It also enables one to do something that is of even greater importance to the success of the coupling project – to cater for both coupling agents’ interests. Due to the dual insiders’ intricate knowledge of both worlds the dual insider is capable of ensuring that both coupling agents get something out of the coupling project. In other words, he is capable of harnessing the full potential of the coupling.

‘Dual insiderness’ is something which is tightly connected to learning over time, growing a large body of experiences within the different worlds, and not the least growing up – that be professionally or in a literal sense – in the ‘right’ milieu:

*Yes that is it. And also the milieu. She may have chosen to be creative and in the world of creative endeavour. But her surroundings, her family and the people she has surrounded herself with, belong to the professional business world. That way she has experienced both sides. (NC4: 373-78)*

In other words, becoming a dual insider is a process occurring over a longer period by accumulating experiences and/or by being socialized into the different worlds and conceptual universes (NC4: 97-101, 356-63, 367-71, 373-78; AR2: 363-65, 503-07; CC1: 842-53, 862-67, 869-79, 1486-97; NC3: 330-39; CC2: 270-81, 382-400, 410-15, 368-74, 504-08, 551-52; ).

### 5.3.2 Category “The middleman”

The category of “The Middleman” is focused on the subject of being in the middle of a coupling project.

#### *Description*

When trying to ensure collaboration between non-creative and creative agents utilizing coupling configurations with an intermediary is an effective way of circumventing potential inability to

understand the other coupling agent. For some coupling projects the strategy of having a middleman as intermediary between the creative- and the non-creative agents can be the factor that makes a coupling work. Without the intermediary such projects risk breaking down due to misunderstandings and preconceptions about 'the others'. As presented in the section on coupling configurations there are two configurations involving intermediaries – the *trilateral* and the *hybrid* configuration. What distinguishes the two is how and with whom the configuration is expanded from a bilateral state. The project consortium may start out from the beginning with a middleman besides the coupling agents, for example, a consultant with middleman skills. However, just as common is the hybrid configuration where the middleman is not present from the beginning but evolves from the bilateral configuration making it a hybrid configuration:

*Well, now I'll have to think a little because I actually think that there will always EVOLVE some kind of middleman. (AR1:151-77)*

And she further elaborates:

*I think you always find a partner for sparring in some way. I actually think it is pretty normal that you... That someone or somebody in those constellations become messengers between the parts in some way or another. (AR1: 181-85)*

The middleman may adopt different roles in the collaboration but all roles share the same prerequisite: To be able to take on the role of middleman one must possess the characteristics of a *Dual Insider*. There are four different metaphors for the role of being in the middle (these are not mutually exclusive):

### **The matchmaker**

One role of the middleman is that of matchmaking – of knowing who to bring in as partners in the collaboration. This role in its purest form is supposedly less active than the other roles since it is about matching parts and then exiting the project and becoming a passive observer/stakeholder. (CC2: 357-61; NC1: 272-91):

*I also think that in the future we will need to focus more on the jobs where we are really just facilitators. You know, where we are matching the customer with somebody else. (CC2: 357-61)*

### **The Translator and/or mediator**

The translator is a person able to speak and understand the language of both sides and to translate terms between them. Creative- and non-creative agents often find it very difficult to understand each other due to linguistic differences:

*[...] but there is also all this about being some kind of a TRANSLATOR, you could call it. Because we are also the quality control, right. If things does not work it backfires on us. Take for example a graphic design, if it really doesn't work we*

*have to stop it before the customer gets to see it. Also we need to make the graphic designer realize that. If the customer is very unhappy with it they might express it one way, which from the other end may be understood another way than intended, right. Then it's up to us to convert their language to make it understandable. (CC2: 270-81)*

With no translating intermediary (or a dual insider within one of the coupling agents) in a coupling project, the coupling agents' lack of knowledge of the other and the inability to partially or fully understand him/her can lead to misunderstandings and acting on preconceptions.

The mediator is the more refined version of the translator. The mediator's role is similar to that of the translator but besides translating terms between agents he is also able to mediate messages and meanings. In other words, due to his knowledge of the coupling agents' languages, rationales and motivations the mediator is able to ensure that the communicative foundation is as facilitating as possible. An example of the necessity of translating *and* mediating communication is that of protecting the seemingly frail artist from the harsh language and intentions of business and to circumvent a potential feeling of 'selling out' one's values as an artist. (CC1: 716-27, 812-18; AR1: 181-85; CC2: 270-81, 382-400, 410-15):

*Sometimes it's also just a way to (...). "This green color doesn't match our blue logo at all", is maybe not the coolest message to send to a person who has spent the last three days making it. Well okay, how can you translate that, right. To a great extent it's... Yes it is very concretely about translating. (CC2: 410-15)*

#### **"The Director" or deliverer of creative potential**

The third role often played by the middleman is one encompassing many of the traits from the other roles. It is the role of the director or deliverer of creative potential. What this role adds to the equation is an ability to keep focus on value creation, to understand the two parts *and* at the same keeping an eye for the big picture. That way the total creative potential of the coupling can be harnessed:

*What really gets things going is putting somebody in the middle. People like you (addressing the interviewers) or people who understand how to do the translation and how to keep focus on creating value. Somebody who understand the artists, understand the entire apparatus, the big picture, actually. That is CRUCIAL to the value creation. (CC1: 615-24)*

What is interesting is that the director does not produce any of the elements in the big picture himself. Instead he is the one connecting and orchestrating the coupling's resources and competences to a working whole that is more than the sum of its individual parts. The director is a person who has the abilities of the other roles: He knows how to translate and mediate between disparate agents and to make them understand each other; he knows who to couple and/or who to go to if extra competences are necessary for the completion of a project, for example by employing subcontractors for delivering creative content:

*It's the directing role. It is the most vital role which is exactly WHY there is a director at a film set. It's because the lighting crew and the actors really don't understand each other. Neither do the costume designer and the lighting crew. And they're even raised in the same industry. The director's role is to make them understand each other, making THAT costume look great in THAT light. (CC1: 812-19)*

In other words, - and continuing the analogy of CC1 - it is not about being able to play the actors' roles or to compose the music score of the film yourself. Rather, it is about knowing these roles enough to be able to make them communicate and get the best out of them and further to know who to hire to get the right 'cast and the right musical ambiance of the film' (AR2: 451-62; CC1: 615-24, 640-58, 1130-36; CC2: 187-92):

*THAT is the competence, the crucial competence needed to make these people work together, needed to deliver the creative potential among all of them. (CC1: 665-68)*

### **5.3.3 Category “Focusing on a shared third agenda”**

#### ***Description***

The third strategy for reaching convergence between coupling agents is one drawing to a large extent on the other strategies presented in this chapter. It is a strategy that goes well together with-, and to a certain extent depends upon, either ensuring a basis for communication and/or introducing an intermediary to the equation. It is the strategy of *focusing on a shared third agenda* – that is, a shared agenda besides the coupling agents' respective agendas.

Focusing on a shared third agenda necessitates certain actions taken by the coupling agents to become an effective strategy. The first component of this strategy is establishing and agreeing on the third agenda itself. However, an equally important component is that of negotiating one's own agendas and those of one's stakeholders accordingly. Not always but sometimes one's agendas or one's stakeholders' agendas are incompatible with the third and shared agenda thus making a fit between these impossible without a certain degree of negotiation. Negotiation understood in the sense that one negotiates the third agenda explicitly with the other coupling agent(s) and one's stakeholders with the purpose of settling on an acceptable shared goal or vision. But also negotiation of one's personal agenda and this agenda's compatibility with the shared third agenda. In some instances, as we will see, coupling agents simply have to deviate from their regular agendas to successfully collaborate.

The coupling agents must be willing and able to put their own agendas in the background (at least to some extent) for the benefit of the new shared agenda, which is of course established for the benefit of all coupling agents. (CC2: 286-87).

*Well, everyone has to sort of look at some of their normal agendas and then acknowledge that, well, now we have a third agenda here, right. (AR1: 476-77)*

*Well of course it is, but it is also about acknowledging the differences and UTILIZE them I think. My point of view is that by all means let A1 and A2 [the other coupling agents] challenge us as much as they can. Then we'll just have to ensure that in the end we can answer for the result, and then it may be that they thereby force us a little bit further than we would have gone ourselves. To some extent I hope they do. It just has to be in a way that DD [the Company] can answer for communicatively and in that respect we do have some boundaries that we will eventually stay within and that we will maybe also challenge. However, then it will be in a way where we take things through our corporate communication department [...]. Just because we are participating in this coupling project does not mean that we engage in things that are in direct conflict with our communication strategy, however, we do challenge it and it does enable us to do things more ingeniously than we could have otherwise. And that is a giant leap for us in itself. (NC3: 276-99)*

As we have seen there are differences between the creative- and non-creative agents and therefore also differences between their respective agendas. The agendas are, on the creative side, agendas of unrestrained creativity and holding on to the artist's right to be provocative and challenging. On the other hand the agendas of the non-creative agents to be negotiated are agendas of traditionalism and always choosing the safe and traditional solutions and agendas of spreadsheet logic; that is, of letting numbers rule in terms of restraining innovativeness and creativity because of predefined measurements and established processes and in terms of reluctance to spend resources on something which cannot necessarily be measured instantly or directly in profit. Thus, an important ability in establishing a shared agenda is that of compromise, of accepting certain restraints on creativity or of giving more room than usual for experimentation and untraditional solutions. (AR1: 80-83, 113-14, 395-403, 412-16, 435-37; CC2: 680-86; AR2: 280-96)

*I've had another project where we experienced some clashes the first time we were to collaborate with an external partner, one who needed help for communication. We discussed whether it was okay to use the word FUCK in this dramatic play and we hadn't actually informed the playwright that the concept was supposed to be for the benefit of a law firm. The playwright got REALLY angry because he believed that he was entitled to artistic freedom and to write whatever he wanted, and it simply couldn't be true that he should be censored that way. That's a prime example of how it is. Of course we have become better*

*at informing the artists we work with that what we are doing is NOT THEATRE-theatre. (AR2: 280-96)*

*And when we're down there in the facility, they [the creative coupling agents] also have a lot of questions to why it is things are not doable like this. And sometimes it's really useful that they ask, because why is it we can't do it? And then we think upon it differently. Other times, we simply say "well we can't because [...]". (NC2: 221-26)*

If agents are reluctant to negotiate their agendas accordingly, stubbornness may form an inhibiting obstacle to the collaborative process:

*Often what disturbs meetings is when people stand their ground too firmly. When they're being protectionist, "I've got mine and you've got yours and I will not budge no matter what", right. "I am sure as hell not going to compromise on my ideas", right. That is often what happens, right. (AR1: 331-36)*

### **The dual insider's role**

Focusing on a third and shared agenda is something not easily done since moving out of or to the border of one's comfort zone can be awe-filling. Having a middleman in the shape of a dual insider can be a great help by ensuring a secure environment and room for experimentation and untraditional solutions (CC2: 133-39).

*Our most prominent role, in reality, is to give them, safe surroundings so that they will dare try a little more than they normally would, right. And that is also what is usually the largest barrier... If things get a little bit too (...) [ed: outrageous] then they're not as courageous and willing to go that way, right. (CC2: 133-39)*

What is more the dual insider is able to impose a shared agenda on the coupling project (AR1: 2-20). This is particularly useful in projects with a trilateral configuration and with the understanding between the coupling agents being shallow, for example when there is no partial insider understanding or maybe even no communicative connection. In those cases, the individual coupling agents are not capable of establishing or negotiating a shared agenda because there is no basis for understanding the other agent's agendas and no ability to look further than one's own nose and interests:

*I suppose I do several things. One being that I try to establish some kind of flag which everybody can understand and chase after, strategic visioning you might say. And when doing that it is extremely important to create some sort of understanding that is... It's no good believing that it pays off to be provocative, provoking the artists by saying "You have to remember it's supposed to be good BUSINESS" blah blah blah. It's not because they don't think it's supposed to be good business, it's just that it doesn't really interest them.*

*And that is what BOTH OF THEM do. They're all planning from their own point of view, and if any of them are to plant the flag then.... None of them knows how to plant a flag that the others can chase after. Then it is important that YOU plant it. (CC1: 1044-62)*

Having established the basic properties of establishing the third agenda the obvious question appearing is: What kind of thing is this third agenda? What does it contain? As highly concrete this question is, the answer is conversely vague – the third agenda can be a lot of things. There is, however, one property that the third agenda must yield – a focus on value creation. It may or may not be a directly measurable value, but the agents must see a potential for generating value in a potential project for the coupling to become reality:

*It has to be SOMETHING about which you can say, if there should be any sense in this "it has to be to the benefit of the industrial world". We're not doing this for the sake of the theatre. It is not for the sake of art. We're trying to learn something from the arts and integrate that into the industrial world, you can say. (NC4: 415-23)*

### **5.3.4 Sum up – “Developing strategies of convergence”**

In the third and final theoretical concept we have seen how the coupling agents develop strategies for convergence in order to overcome the challenges arising as a consequence of the perceived differences between the agents. As we have seen there are different ways of coupling, different roles that apply to such couplings and an explicit need for focusing on a common ground, a shared third agenda.

Thereby we have also completed our analysis by presenting both collaborative challenges and strategies in coupling projects. Consequently, we now turn to sum up on the points presented throughout this analysis as to develop a grounded theory on *project-based couplings and interaction between non-creative and creative agents within the framework of experience-based business development*.

## **6 Presentation of our grounded theory**

### **6.1 What is theory?**

Before endeavoring on our journey of theorizing and creating our GT of couplings brief reflections upon what theory actually is are appropriate. Theories come in many shapes and adhere to a diverse range of epistemological stances. However, since this thesis is located within a constructivist and ultimately interpretivist approach, the following will focus on that particular realm.

Contemporary understanding of what constitutes a theory owes much to the development of the natural sciences in which a theory has come to possess the following four characteristics:

- Theory is about concepts – theories are made up of abstract representations of reality.



- Theory is about the relationships between the concepts – theorizing is about suggesting possible relationships between concepts.
- Theory seeks to explain why concepts fit together the way they do – provide explanations of why one affects the other.
- Theory identifies the broader context in which it works – explicating the conditions under which two concepts relate.

(Spicer, 2009)

Offering explanations of reality, and on top of that, predictions about it, belongs, however, to a more positivist take on theory (Charmaz, 2006). Interpretivist theories go beyond describing cause and effect relationships and reducing complexity, that is, striving for universality (Charmaz, 2006). Interpretivist theory does seek to conceptualize the phenomenon and to articulate theoretical claims about it in terms of scope and power but adds to that the notion of subjectivity in theorizing and the notion of creating understanding rather than explaining. Instead of offering an objective explanation of data detached from the researcher, as the positivist theory does, interpretivist theory offers one out of many possible interpretations of data. Interpretation of how reality comes to existence through actions, practices and continuous interaction and interpretation among informants as well as researchers (Charmaz, 2006).

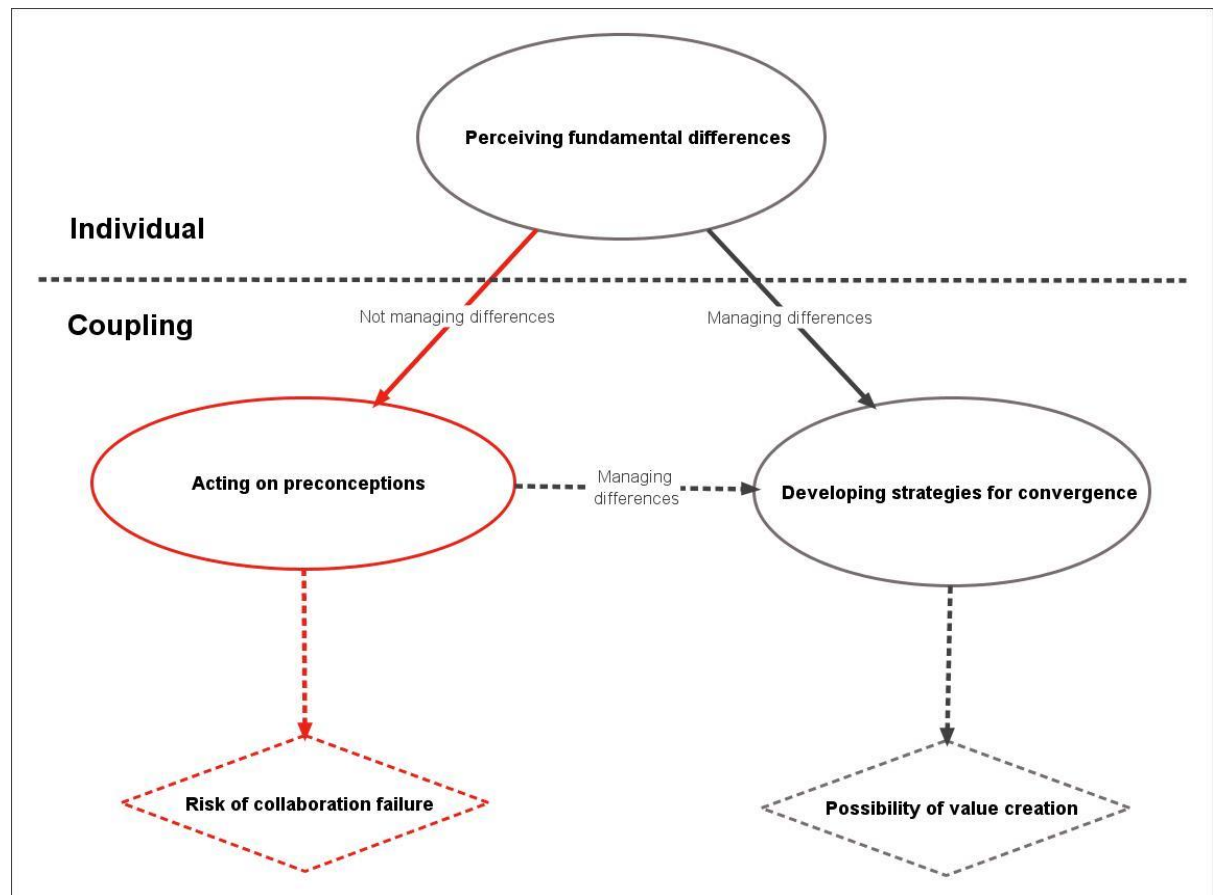
The theory we are about to present has a cast of both. It does explain, theorize and to a certain extent provide a basis for prediction. However, what it does not aim for is a reductionist universal account of coupling projects. It merely tries to offer an understanding of complex matters based on our interpretive interaction with empirical data.

## ***6.2 A grounded theory of coupling projects***

In the following pages the puzzle will come together. On the next pages we will present a GT of collaborative challenges in couplings between creative and non-creative agents, and of strategies developed to overcome the challenges. You will find a theory of fundamental differences, a theory of not managing these and having nothing but preconceptions and an illusion of the other to act on and what follows from that. But also a theory of commitment, interest, and successfully employing strategies for overcoming the differences and making the best possible result from the coupling project. Consequently, this section is to be regarded as an integral part of the conclusion of the thesis, since developing a grounded theory of coupling projects is what we set out to do. In between this section and the final concluding remarks there will be a comparative discussion of our developed theory laying the foundation for the final concluding remarks.

To give an overview of the different elements of the theory and their relationship we have developed the figure below (see figure 7) depicting the elements and likely outcomes of choosing to either manage or not manage differences. The figure is divided into an individual and descriptive level where agents are viewed isolated from each other, and a coupling level focusing on action and interaction between agents in which agents logically cannot be isolated.

Fig. 7:



The following theory is of course solely created from our empirical data and interpretation of that. To underline the connection with the analysis our GT is structured around the analytically developed theoretical concepts that figure as headlines in the theory, and the categories, and subcategories, which are put in *italics* in the theory. Further there will be in-text references to the relevant sections of the analysis. This way, the reader can follow how our GT evolves to a unified whole from the more fragmentally structured analysis.

### 6.2.1 Being fundamentally different

Perceived fundamental differences between coupling agents are an ever present trait of coupling projects involving both creative and non-creative agents. These agents perceive the other as being fundamentally different from themselves and regardless of whether they are really different, this perception becomes reality simply because they believe that the other is different and interact accordingly. In other words, whether there are differences or not is irrelevant as long as agents believe they are different, because the belief is what is acted and created meaning upon. As many differences as there may be, some are of special interest since these potentially affect the outcome of the coupling project greatly. These differences seem to position the non-creative and creative agent as opposites, which in some instances lead to clashes or misunderstandings. The first differences are the organizations' *hierarchy* (See section 5.1.3 – Hierarchy) and degree of *formality* (See section 5.1.2 – Formality). The creative agent, who is usually a smaller enterprise, find the hierarchy and more formalized work processes of the non-creative agent, who most often

is a relatively larger enterprise, hard to understand and grapple with. This is not only due to the fact that their own hierarchy is flat or that their work processes are loose and less governed. It is also due to the impact that these formalizations have on the non-creative agent's work *tempo* (See section 5.1.1 – Tempo/Idea to action), *dynamics* and behavior related to risk (See section 5.1.4 - Dynamics/Risk): To the creative agent the non-creative agent has a very inflexible work structure in which going from idea to action is a lengthy process. Further, the formal structure and hierarchy tends to make the non-creative agents conservative and risk averse, exactly the opposite of the creative agent who acts on ideas and impulses wholeheartedly and with little latency.

A factor contributing to the non-creative agents' tendency to be conservative and less agile and dynamic than the creative agents is the differences in *stakeholders* (See section 5.1.6 – Stakeholders). Whereas the creative agent is often the primary stakeholder in his own activities the non-creative agent always has a series of stakeholders ranging from their superiors, customers and all the way to eventual shareholders in the firm. Therefore, the non-creative agent has a whole series of considerations and interests to cater for, making the non-creative agents' actions more calculated and less impulsive.

Complementing the four mentioned differences is the difference in *logic* and motivation (See section 5.15 – Logic). Besides being different in a range of concrete work-related perspectives, as mentioned above, there is a basic but not less important difference when it comes to what motivates the agents to carry out their activities and the reasoning behind these. Roughly it comes down to whether one is motivated by the economic or creative potential of a task, that is, whether you are in it for the money or for the pure joy of creating and being creative.

To sum up, when the differences between the coupling agents are not acknowledged and coped with a risk of acting based on unfounded ideas of the other arises. In other words, when the coupling agents fail to acknowledge the differences and act accordingly their actions and interactions run the risk of being based on merely an illusion of the other and not based, as it could be, on knowledge and/or understanding of the other. They end up acting on preconceptions of the other.

## **6.2.2 Acting on preconceptions**

Because agents act based on what and who they think the others are, having a perception of being fundamentally different from the others leads to acting as being fundamentally different. This is not necessarily a negative thing, since positively leveraging differences is at the core of the Danish school experience economy. Here, as we have seen, the differences are to a large extent exactly what create the extra value of coupling projects compared to standard development projects. However, if coupling agents do not acknowledge and engage in managing the differences they run the risk of acting and interacting based purely on preconceptions of the other, which sometimes pose challenges to the successful execution of a coupling project. Following are three situations that we experience arising, if differences are left unmanaged and preconceptions left to

govern coupling agents' actions. Two of them are conflicting and regard pricing of the creative agent's services ("pot of Gold" and "Art for Art's sake") and one ("Coupling without collaborating") regards how preconceptions more generally may lead to unengaged coupling between agents.

### **6.2.2.1 Pot of gold**

Based on preconceptions of the non-creative agent and/or organization the creative agent prices his skills, products, and services accordingly. The pricing of the creative agent's services is colored by "who is buying" with a tendency of higher prices the larger and more commercial the non-creative agent is. In other words, the larger and more commercial the non-creative agent and his logic and motivations for the project is believed to be, the larger becomes the tendency of the creative agent to view the non-creative agent as a 'pot of gold' to be exploited (See section 5.2.1 – Pot of Gold).

### **6.2.2.2 Art for art's sake**

The second situation is one similar to the first but reversed. Here the non-creative agent's preconceptions of the creative agent's logic and motivations to create affect the pricing in the exact opposite way. Non-creative agents unfamiliar with creative agents' logic and motivations tend to have the preconception that creative agents' joy of creating is its own reward. In other words, they believe that the creative agent creates art for art's sake and thus price his services accordingly. This potentially leads to creative agents feeling their services being devalued and taken for granted and to potential misunderstandings between the creative and non-creative agents.

There is, however, a grain of truth and reality in the preconception. Creative agents do, to some extent, create art for art's sake (See section 5.2.2 - Art for art's sake). They just do not do it for the sake of anybody else than themselves. The archetypical 'starving artist' would, in other words, rather starve and create his own work than starve and make the work for someone else without proper payment. On basis of our findings we introduce the concept of *motivation threshold* defining the least acceptable monetary reward for the services that must be met if the creative agent is to engage in a coupling project. If the monetary reward of participating in a coupling project reaches or exceeds the threshold then the creative agent is motivated to participate, if not he would rather create for the benefit of himself (See section 5.2.2 - Art for art's sake).

### **6.2.2.3 Coupling without collaborating**

The last situation caused by not managing differences and acting on preconceptions of the other is that of coupling without collaborating (See section 5.2.3 – Coupling without collaborating). Sometimes agents engage in coupling projects but fail to embrace the collaboration wholeheartedly and end up trying to collaborate at arm's length. The perceived fundamental differences between agents create an attraction to the unknown and fascinating aspects of the

other drawing especially the non-creative agent towards the creative agent. But at the same time the differences cause the agents to be filled with awe and anxiety about collaborating with someone so different in all work aspects, that is, forces pulling the opposite direction. These forces affect coupling projects in a potentially negative way. The fascination and forces drawing together may cause coupling projects being initiated haphazardly and if without proper attention to managing the differences the project runs the risk of being detached and at arm's length. During a coupling project the awe and anxiety may cause entrenching and distancing to the other agent who acts and behaves very differently from oneself, again if due diligence is not paid in terms managing the differences. Consequently, fascination and awe potentially lead to sub-optimal and/or arms length collaboration where the result could have been a committed coupling with agents embracing the collaboration wholeheartedly had there been an emphasis on managing the differences (See section 5.2.3 – Coupling without collaborating).

Thus, we see two ways of coupling – committed collaboration where agents embrace and manage the fundamental differences, and arms length coupling where agents are neither prepared for the full impact of a project nor engaged in managing the differences. We should remember though that both ways of coupling have in common that the agents' interest in coupling is genuine, and what distinguishes the two is whether the agents are prepared for and try to manage the fundamental differences (e.g., by developing strategies for convergence). If differences are left unmanaged coupling projects may end up being one-off endeavors because the collaboration process tends to become a process of survival with a goal of completing the project without losing face more than it becomes a synergetic process and a goal in itself. This in turn leads to a suboptimal or even bad result, which again leaves less interest in participating in such projects in the future (See section 5.2.3 – Coupling without collaborating).

### **6.2.3 Developing strategies for convergence**

However, successful coupling projects do occur and coupling agents do engage in managing the differences. We do experience coupling agents developing and employing strategies for circumventing the differences and for avoiding the divergence resulting from one's preconceptions of the other and one's interaction accordingly.

Noticeable are the three employed *strategies for convergence*, that is:

- I. Strategies for meeting the other agent through *ensuring understanding* (See section 5.4 – Ensuring understanding),
- II. Having a *middleman* in the consortium (See section 5.4.4 - The middleman)
- III. Establishing a *shared third agenda* and goal for the individual coupling projects (See section 5.5 – Focusing on a shared third agenda).

#### **6.2.3.1 Strategy 1: Ensuring understanding**

Ensuring understanding is the concept of overcoming the fundamental differences by actively trying to understand the other agent in terms of understanding his domain specific language,

acknowledging and embracing the dimensions of the fundamental differences and acting accordingly. The deeper the understanding of the other agent, his conceptual universe and the differences from oneself, the greater the basis for collaborating successfully becomes (see 5.4 – Ensuring understanding). The deepness of one’s understanding of the other agent matters greatly, since one’s understanding of the other is what makes it possible to interact based on sound knowledge of the other and not only based on preconceptions of the other.

The deepness of coupling agents’ understanding of the other can be conceptualized as different *modes of understanding*:

- *no connection* or understanding at all (See section 5.4.2 – Modes of understanding)
- *Outsider understanding* – that is, analogizing foreign terms and concepts to one’s own conceptual universe (See section 5.4.2 – Modes of understanding)
- *Partial insider understanding* – that is, seeking and meeting around points of convergence between agents’ conceptual universes or by creating and meeting around a shared pool of meaning in the middle (See section 5.4.2 – Modes of understanding)
- *Dual insider understanding* – that is, knowing intricately and/or sharing the other’s conceptual universe (See section 5.4.2 – modes of understanding; and section 5.4.3 – Being a dual insider)

In all modes of understanding time and intention are important factors:

The different modes of understanding are reached through a process of learning by doing, that is, learning from participating in multiple coupling projects as well as learning by doing during the individual coupling project. However, learning does not occur by itself. It takes an effort and most importantly dedication to the coupling. You must have an intention to understand and get to know the other if learning is to occur (See section 5.4.2 – Modes of understanding).

To grasp the modes of understanding fully, however, we must also grasp the different modes of coupling, that is, the different *coupling configurations*, since these correlate with the modes of understanding.

There are three basic coupling configurations:

- *Bilateral configuration* - involving just the non-creative and creative agents.
- *Trilateral configuration* - involving a third agent in the shape of a middleman.
- *Hybrid configuration* - involving a third agent in the shape of a middleman (See section 5.4.1 – Basic coupling configurations).

Coupling bilaterally is largely associated with outsider understanding and partial insider understanding where coupling agents seek to reach mutual understanding on their own.

The trilateral configuration adds to the concoction an intermediary with insider understanding of both coupling agents' – a *dual insider*. This *middleman*, who in the trilateral configuration is hired externally, is capable of translating and mediating between coupling agents to further the understanding in between them and if possible take it to a deeper level, due to his dual insider understanding (See section 5.4.3 – Being a dual insider).

The hybrid configuration resembles the trilateral, but here the middleman evolves from the coupling consortium itself. Instead of dwelling within one of the coupling agents ensuring deep one-way understanding, the dual insider switches to a facilitating role as middleman to ensure mutual understanding.

Ultimately, if a dual insider is present in the coupling consortium the influence of the fundamental differences can be minimized through ensuring understanding because the dual insider knows 'both languages and conceptual universes' and knows how to act, translate and mediate in between agents accordingly (See section 5.4.3 – Being a dual insider).

### 6.2.3.2 Strategy 2: The middleman

Adding a *middleman* to the coupling consortium is an effective supplementing and/or interweaving strategy to that of ensuring understanding (See section 5.4.4 – The middleman). As we have seen, a middleman with dual insider understanding is a person who understands the conceptual universes (i.e., motivations, basic interests, ways of working etc.) of both agents. And being a dual insider, the middleman is capable of ensuring mutual understanding between coupling agents. That is, if the coupling is trilateral and the middleman is hired to fulfill the role of *translator and mediator* (See section 5.4.4 – The middleman) or if a dual insider from within the consortium willingly switches from being a coupling agent to fulfilling this particular role<sup>25</sup> making a hybrid coupling configuration.

The translating and mediating role is, however, not the only role taken on by the middleman. The middleman may also assume a more passive role, that of *the matchmaker* (See section 5.4.4 – The middleman), or a more active role, that of *the director or deliverer of creative potential* (See section 5.4.4 – The middleman).

As a *matchmaker* the middleman's intricate understanding of non-creative as well as creative agents enables him, prior to commencement of a potential coupling project, to select and couple agents willing to and capable of collaborating. Having done that the middleman may exit the coupling project and become a more passive stakeholder.

The ability to choose which agents to engage in a coupling and the ability to translate and mediate between these are abilities necessary for assuming the role of *the director or deliverer of creative potential*. During projects his understanding of the agents enables him to choose among prospective subcontractors if necessary and to ensure understanding among these. But what is more the director fulfills the role of orchestrating the competences and resources of the coupling

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<sup>25</sup> Of course the middleman is not necessarily a man. This role may just as possible be fulfilled by a woman.

project to the most fruitful way possible. In other words, the middleman not only knows which resources, competences, and agents to use in the coupling he also knows how to make the best of them all together – he is able to deliver the full creative potential of the coupling consortium.

A concrete methodical move, that the coupling agents themselves or the middleman often make, is one of negotiating, establishing and/or imposing a shared third agenda as a guiding principle for the coupling consortium as a whole.

### **6.2.3.3 Strategy 3: Focusing on a shared third agenda**

This third strategy is a strategy relying on the employment of either of the others - successfully establishing a shared third agenda depends either on a certain level of mutual understanding between coupling agents' or on the presence in the coupling consortium of a middleman.

If there is a certain amount of understanding (partial insider- or deeper understanding) between the coupling agents, establishing and focusing on a third shared agenda together makes possible a committed collaboration: A coupling where the coupling agents commit to a shared goal and collaborate, that is, cater to one's own interests *as well* as to the interests of the other coupling agents wholeheartedly.

Catering to other interests than one's own is not an easy task, though. To be able to establish a shared agenda without a middleman the coupling agents must be able to negotiate not only the shared agenda but also their own agendas and those of their stakeholders accordingly. In other words, the coupling agents have to negotiate and modify agendas to establish a fit between own agendas and the shared agenda (See section 5.5 - Focusing on a shared third agenda).

The shared third agenda may also, however, be one imposed onto the coupling consortium by the middleman. Due to the middleman's dual insider understanding the middleman is able to be the one catering for both coupling agents' interests by establishing and imposing a third shared agenda or goal to the benefit of both. Further he is able to mediate and translate between coupling agents should there initially be low (or no) understanding in between these. In other words, the middleman is the component that makes possible harnessing the full potential of an otherwise, *not connected*, coupling consortium (See section 5.5 – Focusing on a shared third agenda).

Thus, as becomes evident utilizing either of the shared agenda strategies relies greatly on successfully ensuring mutual understanding between coupling agents or employing the middleman strategy. However, these strategies are not mutually exclusive. The more strategies for convergence successfully employed the greater the chances are of obtaining a committed collaboration in which the result is more than the sum of its parts – a successful coupling.



## 7 Saturation, evaluation and validity in Grounded Theory research

The relationship between saturation and validity of GT research is often confused. Too much focus is put on reaching saturation and too little focus is put on providing valid results (Charmaz, 2007). This confusion not only compromises validity of the research but also weakens the perceived validity of GTM per se (Charmaz, 2007). To avoid any confusion in regards of our research we now provide an account of our criteria of validity:

In constructivist GT(M) it makes little sense to adhere to the classic trinity of evaluation criteria – Reliability, Validity, and Representativeness - since these belong to an objectivist correspondence theory where knowledge is evaluated on its truthful (objective) representation on the phenomenon in question and on whether it is replicable (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Kvale, 1997). Consequently, we find other ways of evaluating and establishing the validity of this project. Common points of critique towards qualitative research are that it is too subjective, difficult to replicate, hard to generalize from, and that it lacks transparency (Bryman & Bell, 2003). However several theorists have contributed to the subject of validity in qualitative research in an attempt to overcome these points of critique.

Glaser & Strauss (1967) suggest that the criteria for valid GT research are *fit*, *relevance*, *workability* and *modifiability*: “Thus, the theory must fit the empirical world it purports to analyze, provide a workable understanding and explanation of this world, address problems and processes in it, and allow for variation and change that make the core theory useful over time” (Charmaz, 2007, p. 527). Charmaz (2007) suggest a different set of criteria to correlate with her constructivist approach to GTM. These criteria are *credibility* (is there sufficient evidence, data, analysis etc. in the research to backup the researchers subjective results), *originality* (does the research contribute with fresh insights or new renderings of the data?), *resonance* (do the analytical insights correspond with the members experiences and lives?), and *usefulness* (is the research useable in the area of study or able to spark new ideas for research?). While Glaser, Strauss and Charmaz offer solid criteria for evaluation of validity in the research we have some general concerns to both sets of criteria. The pivotal point of our critique is the lack of data proximity in these criteria. In our view, the ultimate ‘Achilles heel’ of the GTM is the risk of ‘black box’ approaches where the link from data to category to theoretical concepts and finally to theory development is not properly explained and exhibited. Without an elaborate account of how we have coded the data, raised codes to categories, categories to theoretical concepts and theorized on basis of these categories and theoretical concepts, the validity of the research is difficult to assure or defend. In other words what we miss in both Glaser & Strauss and Charmaz’ work is a criteria for data proximity and transparency. Kovalainen & Eriksson (2008) provide a different set of criteria for validity that entails such data proximity and thus we draw on their criteria instead. While not aimed specifically at GT research their criteria are developed to fit qualitative research

with relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology. In other words these criteria fit our GT approach informed by symbolic interactionism (relativism) and constructivism in general.

### **7.1 Dependability**

“This is concerned with our responsibility for offering information to the reader, that the processes of research have been logical, traceable and documented. All these activities establish the trustworthiness of research” (Kovalainen & Eriksson, 2008, p. 294)

To meet the requirements for dependability we have provided a substantial level of detail concerning our gathering of data. The interviews have been conducted using recording equipment and have afterwards been transcribed verbatim inclusive of pauses, nonverbal sounds etc. according to Kvale (1997). Furthermore we have provided the reader with accounts of our overall methodology and analysis and explained the steps involved. The nonlinearity of GTM implies that analysis of data is an ongoing and reoccurring action throughout the project. This is a challenge in relation to giving the reader a logical account of the process. Therefore we have decided to present our research as a linear process. There are two reasons for this choice: *First*, we do not feel it limits the dependability of our research since all processes are carefully explained. In other words we do not cover over any steps in the method but spare the reader of meticulous accounts of how small observations kept influencing our final theory production throughout the project. *Secondly*, and following the first point, we are influenced by the writings of Golden-Biddle & Locke (2007) on the subject of academic writing (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 2007). This implies producing a text that is both focused on being academic but also focused on being a ‘text’ *readable* and *engaging* to the reader (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 2007).

### **7.2 Transferability**

“This is concerned with your responsibility to show the degree of similarity between your research, or parts of it, and other research, in order to establish some form of connection between your research and previous results. The idea of transferability is not about replication, but more of whether some sort of similarity could be found in other research contexts” (Kovalainen & Eriksson, 2008, p. 294).

The issue of transferability could be claimed to be inherent in the GT(M) approach. One of the characteristics of this method is exactly that it is formalized to some degree and therefore has great similarities across different research projects. However, as we have mentioned before, there are many approaches to GTM with varying epistemology and ontology. Therefore we point towards our method’s correlation with that of Charmaz (2006).

### **7.3 Credibility**

“...Whether you have familiarity with the topic and whether the data are sufficient to merit your claims? Whether you have made strong logical links between observation and your categories? Whether any researcher can, on the

basis of your materials, come relatively close to your interpretations or agree with your claims?” (Kovalainen & Eriksson, 2008, p. 294)

In traditional GTM as proposed by Glaser & Strauss preexisting knowledge of the research field should be limited to secure that no presuppositions contaminate the category- and theory development (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This correlates poorly with the focus in credibility on the issue of ‘familiarity with the topic’. However, Charmaz disagrees with Glaser & Strauss on this issue and supports the idea of building a foundational understanding of the research field prior to engaging in analysis of data (Charmaz, 2006). We have adopted the idea of Charmaz and thus provide a literary review and theoretical foundation as an introduction to our GT research. Thereby we build a foundational understanding of theories on creativity, creative industries, mergers etc. On the subject of sufficient data we have adopted the concept of *saturation*. Having already touched upon this issue we will not elaborate it further here but instead inform the reader that saturation has been a goal of the data collection and category development. Furthermore, by adopting the method of theoretical sampling we have sought to develop our categories to the fullest possible potential within our research and sought for informants both within the creative industries, the non-creative industries and mediators between the two fields. As a final remark on credibility we have provided substantial accounts of our work with coding and raising categories to the final theory. We are convinced that should other researchers sift through our data they would find categories and codes resembling ours to some degree or at least approve of our thoughts and subjective findings.

## **7.4 Conformability**

“...the idea that the data and interpretations of an inquiry are not just imagination. Conformability is about linking findings and interpretations to the data in ways that can be easily understood by others” (Kovalainen & Eriksson, 2008, P. 294).

This criterion is an important one since it addresses the abovementioned risk of ‘black-boxing’<sup>26</sup>. As already mentioned we have provided substantial accounts of every step in our method and sought to indicate how we develop the categories etc. Furthermore, to prevent ‘black boxing’ we have included our personal coding figures in the appendices to present the empirical data that form the foundation for our resulting theory. Especially we highlight two circumstances: Exhibited memos: By including an example of our personal memos (see 3.3.1.3) we have given the reader the possibility of looking behind the final written account (the report) and get an impression of our thoughts on selected categories and codes. By doing this we have exhibited some of our interpretations of the data and provided accounts and examples of our subjective work prior to writing this report.

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<sup>26</sup> We suggest this word as an indicator of grounded theory methods where the links between the data and ultimately the developed theory is insufficient. Thus the research becomes a black box only decodable to the researcher(s).

Exhibited coding example: We have included a representation of the development from raw data to focused codes (3.3.1.2) in an attempt to demonstrate our method. Further, in the appendices (see appendix 5) we have included figures covering all developed categories.

Further all coding documents and transcriptions are included in the appendices, which makes tracing the process possible.

## 8 Discussion

One of the basic premises of engaging in a GT(M) approach on the subject of coupling projects in the experience economy is the claim that no theoretical framework exist to cover this area of study and thus the focus of this thesis. Indeed, our goal has been to break new ground on the subject. However, there are theories *related* to coupling projects in the experience economy and theories otherwise related to the subject. Some of these theories were reviewed in the first chapters of this report but we argued that they had a limited fit with the subject of this thesis<sup>27</sup>. Having already covered the issue of why these theories were not fitting the subject of coupling projects we wish to provide the reader with a discussion of these theories in relation to our GT as to point towards correlations and differences with our GT. Drawing on Charmaz (2006) and Corbin & Strauss (2008) we also include supplementary extant theory<sup>28</sup> in our discussion where applicable.

Overall, we divide the following discussion into three parts. *First* we focus on experience economy literature from the first chapter in relation to our GT. *Second* we focus on theories of the creative industries and the agents employed in such industries (here we also include theories of creative environments). *Third* we address the issue of mergers and acquisitions theory in relation to our GT on coupling projects.

### 8.1 A comparison of the experience economy literature and our grounded theory

As argued in the first chapters the theories and reports on the experience economy are wide and divided into several areas of focus: experience economy as 1) value creation through coupling projects or collaboration across industries (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2003; NESTA, 2007; NICE, 2007; NyX, 2003; Regeringen, 2003), 2) value creation by an organizational effort to couple experiences to products (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) and 3) value creation in the creative industries in general (DCMS, 1998 & 2001). As should be evident as a result of our preliminary discussion of such theories neither of these address what challenges agents are likely to meet in a coupling project or what strategies can be employed to overcome these challenges. Furthermore, while

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<sup>27</sup> For a discussion of why the theories presented in the first chapters were dismissed please see 2.4.3

<sup>28</sup> Theory not covered in the first chapters but somehow relevant to the discussion of our merged grounded theory.

reports on the subject of coupling projects (and what we call the Danish school of experience economy) impose a hope in us that value creation is possible (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2003; NESTA, 2007; NICE, 2007; NyX, 2003; Regeringen, 2003) they do not focus on how coupling agents most fruitfully couple and reach such value creation. Therefore, they are not directly useable in answering important questions pertaining to the field of this thesis and consequently we apply the GTM to create our own GT. But what is so different about our GT? First of all our method is fundamentally different from the reports that constitute the Danish school of experience economy. While these reports focus on the monetary potential for value creation in coupling projects and collaboration across industries (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2003; NESTA, 2007; NICE, 2007; NyX, 2003; Regeringen, 2003) we focus on accounts of the actual process of coupling and are thus able to ground a theory of challenges (theoretical concept of *Acting on preconceptions*) and strategies for overcoming these challenges (theoretical concept of *Strategies for Convergence*) in coupling projects empirically. One might ask the question whether a theory on the subject of coupling projects is really necessary since our data yields indications that coupling agents grow better for each time they engage in coupling projects (See section 6.2 – A grounded theory of coupling projects). In other words a simple trial and error approach will - over time - make coupling agents better and increase the chances of successful coupling projects (see 6.2.3 - Developing strategies for convergence). We acknowledge that a trial and error approach may work but simultaneously state the claim that if the trial and error period can be shortened - at best completely avoided - then more value creation will be possible as a result of a higher rate of successful coupling projects. We hope our GT can contribute to a better understanding of coupling projects and thus help coupling agents reach good results faster.

## **8.2 A comparison between theories on creative industries, - agents and -environments and our grounded theory**

Caves (2000) and Hesmondhalgh (2007) address the issue of how creative industries differ from other industries. Such theories are very interesting compared to our GT since ultimately we address the same issue (category: Fundamental differences). We find a number of important correlations between our theory and Caves (2000) and Hesmondhalgh (2007). Furthermore we find correlations in extant theories.

First, our research indicates that the agents in coupling projects have a perception of the other part as being fundamentally different from him-/herself (see 6.2.1 – Being fundamentally different). While neither Caves (2000) nor Hesmondhalgh (2007) focus on these differences (rather they focus on presenting a theoretical framework about the creative agents and their industries) one might claim that by focusing on special traits of the creative industries Caves (2000) and Hesmondhalgh (2007) also inherently claim that these industries are different from other industries – a claim broadly shared by other theorist as well (see for instance Pine & Gilmore, 2009; or for a more individual focus on the creative agents (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). In other words, there is some correlation between our theory and other theories on the subject of

differences between creative and non-creative agents and their industries. However, while Caves (2000) and Hesmondhalgh (2007) develop their theories mainly through analysis of the creative *industries* (a macro perspective) we have grounded our theory in statements from *agents* belonging both to the creative- and the non-creative industries (a micro perspective) and this has yielded results that are interesting to discuss in relation to existing theories:

In our GT the issues of motivation and reward play a large role (see 6.2.2.2 - Art for art's sake; 6.2.2.1 - Pot of Gold). Several theories have been developed on the subject of motivation and rewards in creative work. Some address the oft mentioned issue of doing *Art for art's sake* by claiming that (some) artists do art for the sake of only that and not for the sake of a monetary reward (Caves, 2000; Pine & Gilmore, 2009; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006<sup>29</sup>). Other theories address the issue of motivation by dividing between intrinsic (i.e., motivation as a result of self sustained need satisfaction) and extrinsic motivation in organizations ( i.e., motivation reliant on monetary compensation) (Osterloh & Frey, 2000), while claiming that creative agents are driven to a large extent by intrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1996). Through our GT we are able to develop a contributing concept covering coupling projects. With reference to our analysis we argue that the motivation of creative agents in coupling projects is affected by a '*motivation threshold*' (see 6.2.2.2 - Art for art's sake). The motivation threshold is a 'limit' that must be exceeded in terms of monetary reward to make the artist interested in coupling with a non-creative agent. The coupling project must provide the creative agent with sufficient monetary reward in order to make the creative agent leave the art for art's sake mindset and engage in a coupling project (see 6.2.2.2 - Art for Art's sake). If the artist does not feel that the monetary reward or potential in a coupling project exceeds the motivation threshold the creative agent will not couple but instead focus on his/her own creative endeavors (see 6.2.2.2 - Art for Art's sake). While creative agents' predilection for self-employment is not a new phenomenon (see for instance Frey & Benz, 2008) we nonetheless find it interesting to note that coupling projects have their own dynamics in relation to motivation of the creative agents.

As an opposite of the Art for Art's sake category we find the category Pot of Gold. Here we learn that creative agents tend to think that the non-creative agents are capable of paying larger wages for the artists' creative services than they actually are willing to (see 6.2.2.1 - Pot of Gold). In other words, once the creative agent becomes interested in a coupling project he/she will seek to maximize the monetary reward for him-/herself – often beyond what the non-creative agents finds reasonable (see 6.2.2.1 - Pot of Gold). We argue, on basis of our results (see 6.2.2 - Acting on preconceptions; 6.2.2.2 - Art for art's sake; 6.2.2.1- Pot of Gold) that conflicts arising from different views on what is appropriate in regards of motivation between the coupling agents can be detrimental to coupling projects' success and note a similarity with Osterloh & Frey (2000) who claim that when intrinsically motivated agents cooperate with extrinsically motivated agents communication difficulties are prone to arise (see also Lorenzen & Frederiksen, 2005).

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<sup>29</sup> see also Frey & Benz (2008) for a more general discussion of agents being motivated to work by- and for themselves

Furthermore we emphasize that motivational issues and differences can be successfully managed (see 6.2.3 – Developing strategies for convergence) – a claim we also find evidence for elsewhere e.g., Eikhof & Haunschild (2006) and Amabile (1993).

Closely linked to the discussion of motivation is the discussion of pricing the creative services – and what influences such pricings: Both Caves (2000) and Hesmondhalgh (2007) point towards star quality and creative talent as a driver for the (monetary) reward a creative agent can claim for his/her services – ‘A list/B list’ (Caves, 2000) and ‘Stars’ (Hesmondhalgh, 2007). Our research yields results that put such theories in a new light once imposed on the subject of coupling projects: Star quality and talent also counts in coupling projects but only to a certain degree. Non-creative agents are, at least to some extent, more focused on the expenditures related to the coupling project than on the name, talent or star quality of the creative agent with whom they are working. For example we learn that non-creative agents will sometimes let go of a creative agent and look for cheaper and less famous creative agents simply because these demand less or no monetary reward for their services. This circumstance stands at odds with Caves’ (2000) *Motley Crew* principle - the theory of multiplicative production relationship in creative goods (or popularly speaking, the chain is only as strong as the weakest link). The non-creative agents who engage in coupling projects do not act according to Caves’ (2000) *Motley Crew* principle. Rather the non-creative agents are sometimes willing to work with lesser known or less talented artists (since these artists claim smaller rewards for their services) regardless of the creative agents’ warnings that the lesser known or talented creative agents will not provide the same quality of service and skill to the coupling project (see 6.2.2.2 - Art for Art’s sake).

Overall, we maintain our initial claim that neither Caves (2000) nor Hesmondhalgh (2007) provide a theoretical framework capable of explaining the dynamics of coupling projects in the experience economy with sufficient accuracy (neither do they intend to). However, we find it interesting to note that there are many correlations between our GT and theories of both Caves (2000), Hesmondhalgh (2007) but also other extant theories including Pine & Gilmore (2009), Amabile (1996), Eikhof & Haunschild (2006;), Lorenzen & Frederiksen (2005), Osterloh & Frey (2000).

Before moving on to a discussion of merger theories we turn to discuss the theories presented in the first chapter on the subject of *creative environments*:

Lampel, Lant and Shamsie (2000) claim that there is a ‘balance’ that must be obtained in an organization in order to nurture a creative environment and Amabile (1996) claim that there are certain issues in the organizational environment that directly affect the level of creativity an organization can leverage. Especially, we find it interesting to see the correspondence between our GT and the theories of Amabile (1996) since our research methods have some degree of similarity (both theories are based on interviews). Amabile (1996) address the issue that strict rules, structures and formality in organizations will impede the creativity in an organization. Through our research we come to similar findings: First and foremost we also identify how

formality in management of work not only distinguishes the creative agents from the non-creative agents but also limits the creativity of the creative agents in coupling projects (see 6.2.1 – Being fundamentally different). Furthermore we also address the issue that the organization and its hierarchical structures can be an inhibiting factor for creativity in coupling projects (see 6.2.1 – Being fundamentally different).

### ***8.3 A comparison of mergers and acquisitions theories and our grounded theory***

In chapter one we addressed the subject of whether merger theory could provide a theoretical framework through which coupling projects could be understood and managed. While we maintain our tentative conclusion that merger theory is not directly transferable to coupling projects in the experience economy due to fundamental discrepancies of focus (see the first chapter) we however recognize some similarities between our GT and aspects of the merger theory:

As already presented, Datta (1991) claim that lack of organizational fit is detrimental to post-merger success. It is obvious that such theory is not directly transferable to coupling projects in the experience economy since the value of coupling projects in the experience economy lies in coupling agents from differing industries (EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2003; NESTA, 2007; NICE, 2007; NyX, 2003; Regeringen, 2003). However if we consider our GT which suggest that coupling agents must find a third agenda or a shared goal the theory of Datta (1991) has some interesting points: One can argue that a shared agenda is fundamentally an attempt to align the coupling agents expectations and cultures and thus this process has some resemblance to the process of creating a fit between the organizations. Also if we focus on the factors through which Datta (1991) measures organizational fit (formality, risk, participation and self-reliance) Datta's theoretical framework becomes even more interesting since two out of four factors are also present in our GT category of *fundamental differences*. In other words, our argument that creative- and non-creative agents perceive of each other as being different (see 6.2.1 – Being fundamentally different), and that these differences must be managed in order to achieve a successful coupling (see 6.2.3 – Developing strategies for convergence), shares some resemblance to the argument of Datta (1991) that organizations must have some degree of fit in order to achieve post-merger success.

Our GT of a shared agenda has some resemblance to the theories of Seo & Hill (2005). Their claim is that successful mergers happen when both cultures embrace the new situation and let go of their own idiosyncrasies (Seo & Hill, 2005). This argument is very close to that of our GT on the subject of a 'third agenda'. We argue, along with Seo & Hill (2005), that organizations that fail to embrace the collaboration in a coupling and instead choose to collaborate at arm's length (see 6.2.2.3 - Coupling without collaborating) jeopardize long term value creation (see 6.2.2 - Acting on preconceptions).



The final correlation we will touch upon between merger theory and our GT we find within theories of which leadership strategies provides the best merger results. While this is an extensive subject we have already presented a theory by Bligh (2006), which is comprised of an aggregation of a large selection of existing theories on the subject of leadership in merger situations (Bligh, 2006). The main point from Bligh (2006) can be summarized as Best practice leadership integrates the two cultures and creates coherence between the merging cultures (Bligh, 2006). On a more practical scale Bligh (2006) claims that the best leader is a person who “actively team builds across previous site memberships”; “utilizes employee input into post-merger changes” and “communicates informally about cultural differences” (Bligh 2006, p.11). The link to our GT on *strategies for convergence* is obvious: First of all Bligh adds focus to the skill of integrating two cultures and creating coherence. This correlates very well with our category of a *middleman* – the intermediating person who can gather the coupling partners around a shared agenda (see 6.2.3.2 – Strategy 2: The middleman). Secondly, we also recognize a link to the recommendation by Bligh (2006) towards communication on the subject of cultural differences. One of the main arguments in our GT is exactly the importance of *ensuring understanding* in the coupling projects. This requires a person who is capable of speaking both ‘languages’ and capable of translating and mediating between agents.

Initially we discarded a direct transfer of M&A theory due to significant discrepancies with the subject of coupling projects. However the correlations between M&A theory and our grounded theory indicate a potential for further research. An alteration of M&A theory to suit coupling projects might prove to bring valuable insights and guidelines for future coupling projects. However, such adaptations are premature at the moment and call for further research.

## 9 Concluding remarks and prospects for the future

As our research questions states the aim of this project has been to investigate coupling projects within an experience-based business development context and to outline challenges and strategies connected to such projects:

*The aim of the project is to develop an empirically grounded theory of collaborative challenges and strategies related to project-based couplings and interaction between non-creative and creative agents within the framework of experience-based business development.*

While our GT provides the answer to a large part of our research question<sup>30</sup> there are however some additional discussions and conclusions that we wish to sum up on.

While there are many definitions of the experience economy we have focused on what we have called the Danish school, that is, experience based business development through couplings

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<sup>30</sup> We kindly refer to chapter 6

between creative and non-creative agents (as supported by EBST, 2008; EM & KUM, 2003; NyX, 2003; Regeringen, 2003). Given the large role the creative industries play in this equation we therefore set off with a review of literature on the subjects of creativity and creative industries. From this review we learn that the creative industries are fundamentally different from other industries. The agents employed in such industries manage work differently, have different perceptions of- and strategies to cope with risk, and they are driven by special incentives such as the joy of creating or the joy of doing art. Following this literary review of theories on the subject of creative industries we turned to investigate whether there are already theories present that could suit the subject of coupling projects between creative- and non-creative agents. We tentatively concluded that there is little theoretical foundation for such coupling projects. Instead we discussed a series of theories that were somehow peripherally related to the subject of coupling projects. We focused on theories of business mergers and acquisitions but found fundamental differences between the premises these theories and the premises of coupling projects. First of all mergers and acquisitions theory differed in temporal aspects since coupling projects are temporary while mergers are permanent. Secondly the mergers and acquisitions theories we addressed were all focused on intra-industrial couplings while coupling projects in the experience economy are defined as being inter-industrial (i.e., coupling creative industries with other industries). Third, we saw that merger theory focuses on the entire organization while coupling projects often only affect a smaller project team. Finally we saw that merger theories advocate homogeneity between cultures in merging organizations while coupling projects in the Danish school of experience economy create value by coupling agents from diverse industries with diverse backgrounds. Given the lack of suitable theories and the lack of fit of those that were peripherally connected to the subject of coupling projects we argued that no theories exist on the subject of coupling projects in the experience economy. Consequently we applied the GTM to develop our own theory on this subject<sup>31</sup>.

We found some correlation between our GT and the theoretical framework of creative industries, applied creativity and merger theory presented in chapter one:

Our GT correlates with theories about the creative industries by acknowledging that there are fundamental differences between the creative agents and the non-creative agents (and their industries respectively). However the differences identified in our GT are not the same as the differences depicted in Caves (2000) or Hesmondhalgh (2007).

Further, we also recognize similarities between our GT and the theories of mergers and collaboration: We saw a connection between management challenges in merger situations and management challenges in coupling projects. Both situations call for integrative leadership capable of bringing together the coupling agents and secure understanding and collaboration between the coupling agents. Also, we saw a connection between what situations were most likely to result in successful mergers and successful coupling projects: Both mergers and couplings require the parties involved to fully embrace the new situation. No mergers can be successful if

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<sup>31</sup> For an elaborate account of this theory we kindly refer to chapter 6 where our GT is presented.

handled halfhearted just like no coupling projects can be halfhearted either. While this might seem like a general prerequisite for many situations we have seen that it is however an often occurring challenge in coupling projects.

Despite similarities between our GT and the theoretical framework presented in the first chapter (theories of creative industries, applied creativity and merger theory) we argue that a direct transfer of existing theory to the issue of coupling projects in the experience economy is unfeasible. The differences between fields are too great and theories must be altered significantly to fit the subject of coupling projects of the experience economy. Due to the similarities we do posit, however, that critical reviewing and empirical testing of literature on creative industries and M&As and cross-applicability in between yields potential for further developing theory of couplings within experience-based business development. Positing such claim would not be possible, though, had we not gone out in the field and created a theory of couplings with which to compare other theory.

Thus, besides contributing to the field by providing a sibling to existing theories - a theory suited for coupling projects in the experience economy – we have also provided a starting point and something to compare with in regards of further theorizing on the subject.

#### **A question still stands: What are the implications of our research?**

Having completed our research we are left with an important question: what are the implications of our research? Of course we have laid out a theory on coupling projects that can be applied in the future but by doing so we also hope to have helped nuance the debate about what the experience economy is and what it can do. We find it appropriate to claim that the experience economy is a term or concept that is under some pressure. Indeed to say that the experience economy is one of the proverbial business words of present time is not exaggerating. Just like with other proverbial words from management and business academia (innovation quickly comes to mind) there is a risk of watering the concept by not being critical about its usage and therefore risk never getting to the core of the concept. A Danish consultant in experience based business development pinpoints this problem in a recent article:

“It is a great challenge to secure that we do not grow tired of talking about experience economy. The concept has been used a lot in recent years – in education, in business development and in development strategies of all kinds. While there have been many attempts to define what the experience economy is we still do not completely agree. But maybe that is ok? There is no doubt that the content in the experience economy is more important now than ever before. And I think that in the future we will see new concepts that describe the many elements of the experience economy so we can become more precise when we are working with experience economy” (Porse, 2010).

Following this quote we hope to have contributed to a better and more nuanced understanding of the subject of experience economy and especially coupling projects by getting to the core of such concepts and providing a set of theory tailored to suit this field of study.

Despite having contributed to the debate about coupling projects and the experience economy we also hope that our research can provide a theoretical foundation with which coupling projects can be planned and executed with maximum value creation. As of today businesses are encouraged to engage in couplings projects but they are provided little help for what to do once the project has been initiated or how to best manage different situations occurring during the project. The businesses and organizations are often left to themselves and, as we have seen, the result can be coupling projects that build little – if any – value. Following this is a vicious circle: Organizations and businesses that have engaged in couplings ‘burn their fingers’ and end up with a bad experience. They abandon the idea that value can be created through coupling projects and the very foundation for at least the Danish school definition of the experience economy falls apart. Luckily, as we have seen, the helping hand is close by. We do not claim to have solved the mystery or outlined an exhaustive theory that will make all future coupling projects succeed. But we do claim to have taken a first step by indicating that coupling projects follows a certain dynamic, or pattern, that can be managed and catalyzed and thus drive positive results. We have shown that rather than taking a leap of faith into a coupling project while hoping for the best there are guidelines and practices that can be followed to overcome challenges and reap the full potential of coupling projects in the experience economy.

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# 11 Appendices

## 11.1 Appendix 1

### 11.1.1 The evolution of the term creativity

#### ***Archaic cultures – no word for creativity***

In ancient Greece the word 'Creativity' did not exist. The concept of art was interwoven with rules and traditions surrounding the crafts and every action that adhered to these premises was considered 'Art'. Art was mimetic in a sense that there was no creation – only imitation of reality. In other words, the art world of the ancient Greek cultures did not value novelty but instead focused on imitating nature and, once the code of nature had been broken or closely imitated, copying already existing works. Art was defined as "The making of things according to rules" (Tartarkiewicz, 1980, p. 92). Thus, the 'artist' might as well be a skilled craftsman, such as a carpenter, as he might be an architect, painter etc (Tartarkiewicz, 1980). Likewise the Greek language had no way of expressing whether something was 'fine art' or more 'common art'.

#### ***First signs of change – the Roman Empire***

In the Roman cultures there are signs of change in the perception of creation and art. Several accounts witness that the perception of poetry as something free and beyond rules is starting to affect also the rest of the arts: Philostratos, a Greek sophist from the Roman empirical period is quoted to have said that: "One can discover a similarity between poetry and art and find that they have imagination in common" (Imag. [Proem.] 6" (Tatarkiewicz, 1980, p. 246).

#### ***Medieval: Rise of Creatio ex nihilo (Creation from nothing)***

During the course of the next thousand years the word 'create' becomes more widespread but mainly linked to the conceptual world of theology: "[...] the expression *creatio* came to designate God's act of creation from nothing, *creatio ex nihilo*." (Tatarkiewicz, 1980, p. 247). In other words it meant more than just to make – it was an action reserved for divine powers and thus derived of human functions: "things made and created differ, for he can make, who cannot create" (*Cassiodorus Exp. In Ps CXLVIII*) (Tatarkiewicz, 1980 p. 247)

The art world of the medieval was heavily reliant on rules and traditions and thus the ancient view of art being apart from creativity also ruled here. In fact during the medieval even poetry, which had been considered a free act in ancient Greece, was subdued to rules leaving little room for the creative artist to unfold his 'creative' skills (Tatarkiewicz, 1980).

#### ***The dawning emancipation of the Renaissance***

"It is widely known that Renaissance men had a sense of their own independence, freedom and creativity" (Tatarkiewicz, p. 247). But despite the rebirth of the intellectual, artistic and cultural values of man the word creativity still did not find its use in the renaissance. However the renaissance witnessed an important change of paradigm: where earlier times had perceived of art as man's imitation of nature the view of the renaissance was profoundly different. In the renaissance the artist realized his visions rather than imitated nature (Tatarkiewicz, 1980). But despite such apparent connections to contemporary definitions of art and creativity the theological dominance over the word create (*creatio*) lasted as long as well into the age of Enlightenment (Tatarkiewicz, 1980).

### ***The birth of the word 'creativity'***

17th century Pole, poet and theoretician of poetry: Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (1595-1640) is by some believed to have been the first to use the word 'create' in a manner that closely resembles our contemporary use of the word: "He not only wrote that a poet "invents" (confingit),"after a fashion builds" (quadammodo condit), but also, finally invoking the expression, said that the poet "creates anew" (de novo creat)" (*De perfecta poesi l. 1*, in Tatarkiewicz, p. 248). Throughout the 18th century: the concept of creativity appears more frequently and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the term 'creator' and later the noun 'creativity' enter the language surrounding art (Tatarkiewicz, 1980). However, even though the word becomes more widespread it is still delimited to talk about art and nothing else (e.g., there is no such thing as 'creative' problem solutions). Creator thus becomes a synonym for artist but despite a widened use there is still resistance to the usage. Tatarkiewicz outlines three reasons for this (Tatarkiewicz, 1980):

- 1) The linguistic reason: creation was perceived to be reserved for use in the 'old' theological context of the term *creatio ex nihilo*. The rejection is based on the claim that *creatio* is an action reserved for divine powers and that man is derived of this possibility
- 2) The philosophical reason: creation was considered mysterious (because of its link to superhuman powers) and mysteries and mysterious thinking was not allowed in Enlightenment psychology.
- 3) The artistic reason: artists of Enlightenment were still deeply attached to rules and tradition in art.

### ***20<sup>th</sup> Century and up until today – Pancreationism***

While some European languages still have different word for God and (human) creativity, both French, English, Italian and German have a single word that encompasses both God and human creation (Tatarkiewicz, 1980). Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and up until today creativity has spread from its confinement in the world of art to, today, practically every aspect and corner of the human culture. We talk of creative scientists, creative businessmen, creative politician etc.

#### **Today –**

"the very expression 'creativity' is ambiguous, for it has changed in meaning over the course of history, and the final meaning, current today, is (...) at best clear, but indistinct. In spite of that, there is no reason to get rid of the concept of creativity; it is not a working concept, but it is a useful watchword. One might say: it is not a scientific concept, but it is a philosophical one. Comparing art to an army, we would say that it is not a sword or a rifle, but it is like a banner. Banners too are necessary, certainly at ceremonies and sometimes even in battle." (Tatarkiewicz, p. 265).

## 11.2 Appendix 2

### 11.2.1 Interview guide - Initial sampling (in Danish):

#### Framing

Introduktion

- Af os
- Af emnet

Fortæl hvordan interviewet forventes at blive afviklet og dets forventede længde. Spørg om lov til at optage interviewet.

#### Hvad vil vi høre om?

- Fortællinger fra konkrete projekter han/hun har deltaget i.
- Koblingen mellem kreative erhverv og traditionelle erhverv
- Konkrete erfaringer han/hun har gjort sig med koblinger mellem kreative og non-kreative ift. forståelse af hinanden.

#### Interview

*Har du nogle spørgsmål før vi begynder? Gennem vores research indtil nu har vi fundet frem til en række karakteristika, der kendetegner koblingsprojekter mellem kreative og "ikke-kreative". I den forbindelse kunne vi godt tænke os at høre dine betragtninger omkring disse samt selvfølgelig også, hvis du har ting at tilføje etc:*

#### Spørgsmålstyper

Første åbne spørgsmål:

- Fortæl om din oplevelse med \_\_\_\_\_. Vi vil gerne høre historien med dine egne ord og skulle jeg have nogle opklarende spørgsmål tager vi dem hen ad vejen eller bagefter.

Indledende:

- Fortæl mig om hvad der skete.
- Hvem, hvis nogen, var involveret i dette? Hvordan?
- Hvornår oplevede du for første gang \_\_\_\_\_?
- Fortæl om hvordan du lærte at håndtere \_\_\_\_\_.
- Hvad tænkte du? Hvem, hvis nogen, influerede dine handlinger? Fortæl hvordan.
- Kan du beskrive begivenhederne der ledte op/førte til \_\_\_\_\_?
- Hvad bidrog til \_\_\_\_\_?

Løbende:

- Kan du beskrive en typisk situation for dig når du \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Hvad skete der derefter?
- Når nu du kigger tilbage på \_\_\_\_\_, er der så andre hændelser/begivenheder der træder frem i din erindring?
- Kan du fortælle om den mest værdifulde lærdom du har lært gennem oplevelsen af \_\_\_\_\_?

- *Hvordan har det ændret din praksis/handlinger?*

Afsluttende:

- *Efter du har gjort dig de erfaringer, hvilke råd ville du så give til én/nogle der\_\_\_\_\_?*
- *Er der noget som du ikke har tænkt over tidligere som er dukket op i løbet af dette interview?*
- *Er der noget andet du synes jeg bør vide for at kunne forstå\_\_\_\_\_ bedre?*
- *Har du nogle spørgsmål?*

**Afrunding**

Tak for hjælpen...

Anerkendelse af interviewpersonens indsats etc.

Aftale at interviewpersonen får en kopi af den færdige rapport

Social afslutning

## 11.3 Appendix 3

### 11.3.1 Interview guide - Theoretical sampling (in Danish):

#### **Framing**

Introduktion

- Af os
- Af emnet

Fortæl hvordan interviewet forventes at blive afviklet og dets forventede længde. Spørg om lov til at optage interviewet.

#### **Hvad vil vi høre om?**

- Fortællinger fra konkrete projekter han/hun har deltaget i.
- Koblingen mellem kreative erhverv og traditionelle erhverv
- Konkrete erfaringer han/hun har gjort sig med koblinger mellem kreative og non-kreative ift. forståelse af hinanden.

#### **Interview**

*Har du nogle spørgsmål før vi begynder?*

*Gennem vores research indtil nu har vi fundet frem til en række karakteristika, der kendetegner koblingsprojekter mellem kreative og "ikke-kreative". I den forbindelse kunne vi godt tænke os at høre dine betragtninger omkring disse samt selvfølgelig også, hvis du har ting at tilføje etc:*

Emne	Spørgsmål
<b>En faciliterende trediepart/eller rolle i koblingsprojekterne eller ej?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hvad skal en evt. trediepart skulle?</li><li>• Oversætter, mediator, forløser af projektets fulde potentiale?</li><li>• Mediering synes ofte at foregå i retning af den kreative ud fra en forudindtagelse om at kreative er lidt skrøbelige og skal have budskaber overrakt på den rigtige måde. Har du nogen erfaring på det område?</li><li>• Har du oplevet koblingsprojekter med inddraget trediepart, hvor det ikke har fungeret? I så fald hvordan?</li></ul>
<b>At have eller skabe et fælles sprog/kommunikationsplatform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hvad er dine erfaringer med det at skulle opnå et fælles sprog?</li><li>• Har du oplevet <i>ikke</i> at have en fælles kommunikationsplatform?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Hvordan afspejlede det sig i samarbejdet?</li></ul></li><li>• Hvordan sikrer I at I, i koblingsprojekter, har/får et fælles sprog.</li><li>• Mødes i midten vs dual insider vs trediepart</li><li>• Uforudsigelighed ift. om man 'connector'?</li></ul>
<b>Vigtigheden af at forstå hinanden både</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Er der en forskel?)</li></ul>

<b>sprogligt og verdensbilledemæssigt</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversætte vs mediere vs forløse?</li> </ul>
<b>Akkumuleret erfaring med koblingsprojekter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tidligere erfaring med koblingsprojekter bliver i flere tilfælde nævnt som meget vigtigt for succesfulde koblinger. Har du oplevet det eller noget lignende?</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Spørgsmålstyper</u></b></p> <p><u>Første åbne spørgsmål:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortæl om din oplevelse med _____. Vi vil gerne høre historien med dine egne ord og skulle jeg have nogle opklarende spørgsmål tager vi dem hen ad vejen eller bagefter.</li> </ul> <p><u>Indledende:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortæl mig om hvad der skete.</li> <li>• Hvem, hvis nogen, var involveret i dette? Hvordan?</li> <li>• Hvornår oplevede du for første gang_____?</li> <li>• Fortæl om hvordan du lærte at håndtere_____.</li> <li>• Hvad tænkte du? Hvem, hvis nogen, influerede dine handlinger? Fortæl hvordan.</li> <li>• Kan du beskrive begivenhederne der ledte op/førte til_____?</li> <li>• Hvad bidrog til_____?</li> </ul> <p><u>Løbende:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kan du beskrive en typisk situation for dig når du_____? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hvad skete der derefter?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Når nu du kigger tilbage på____, er der så andre hændelser/begivenheder der træder frem i din erindring?</li> <li>• Kan du fortælle om den mest værdifulde lærdom du har lært gennem oplevelsen af_____?</li> <li>• Hvordan har det ændret din praksis/handlinger?</li> </ul> <p><u>Afsluttende:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efter du har gjort dig de erfaringer, hvilke råd ville du så give til én/nogle der_____?</li> <li>• Er der noget som du ikke har tænkt over tidligere som er dukket op i løbet af dette interview?</li> <li>• Er der noget andet du synes jeg bør vide for at kunne forstå_____ bedre?</li> <li>• Har du nogle spørgsmål?</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Afrunding</u></b></p> <p>Tak for hjælpen...</p> <p>Anerkendelse af interviewpersonens indsats etc.</p> <p>Aftale at interviewpersonen får en kopi af den færdige rapport</p> <p>Social afslutning</p>	

## ***11.4 Appendix 4***

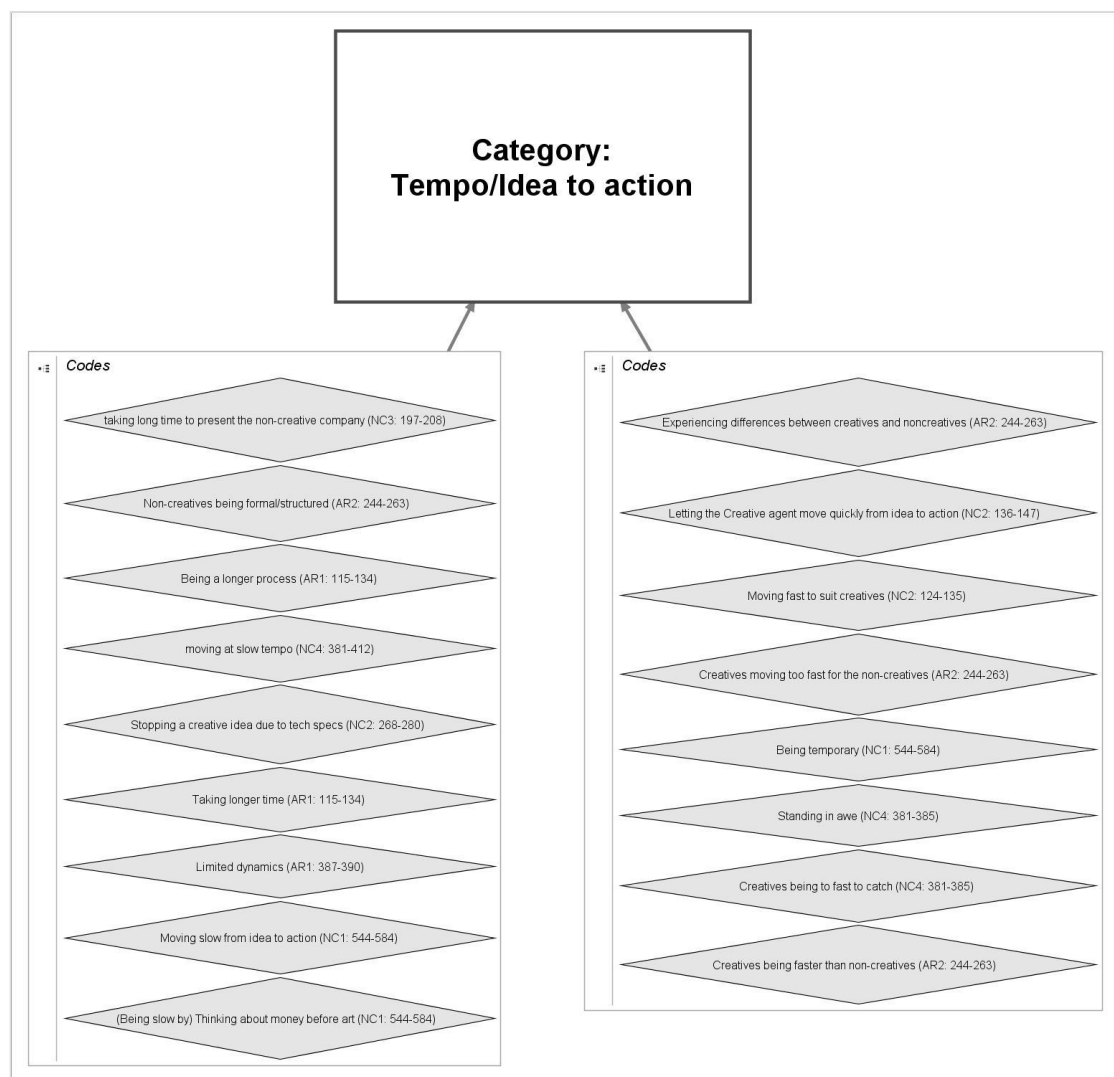
### **11.4.1 Transcriptions, initial codes, and focused codes.**

## 11.5 Appendix 5

About the figures: The following figures represent the codes that constitute the categories from our GT. The codes in each figure are presented in no special order and no codes are subordinated to others. There are two types of figures: Figures with codes ordered in two columns and figures with clusters of codes.

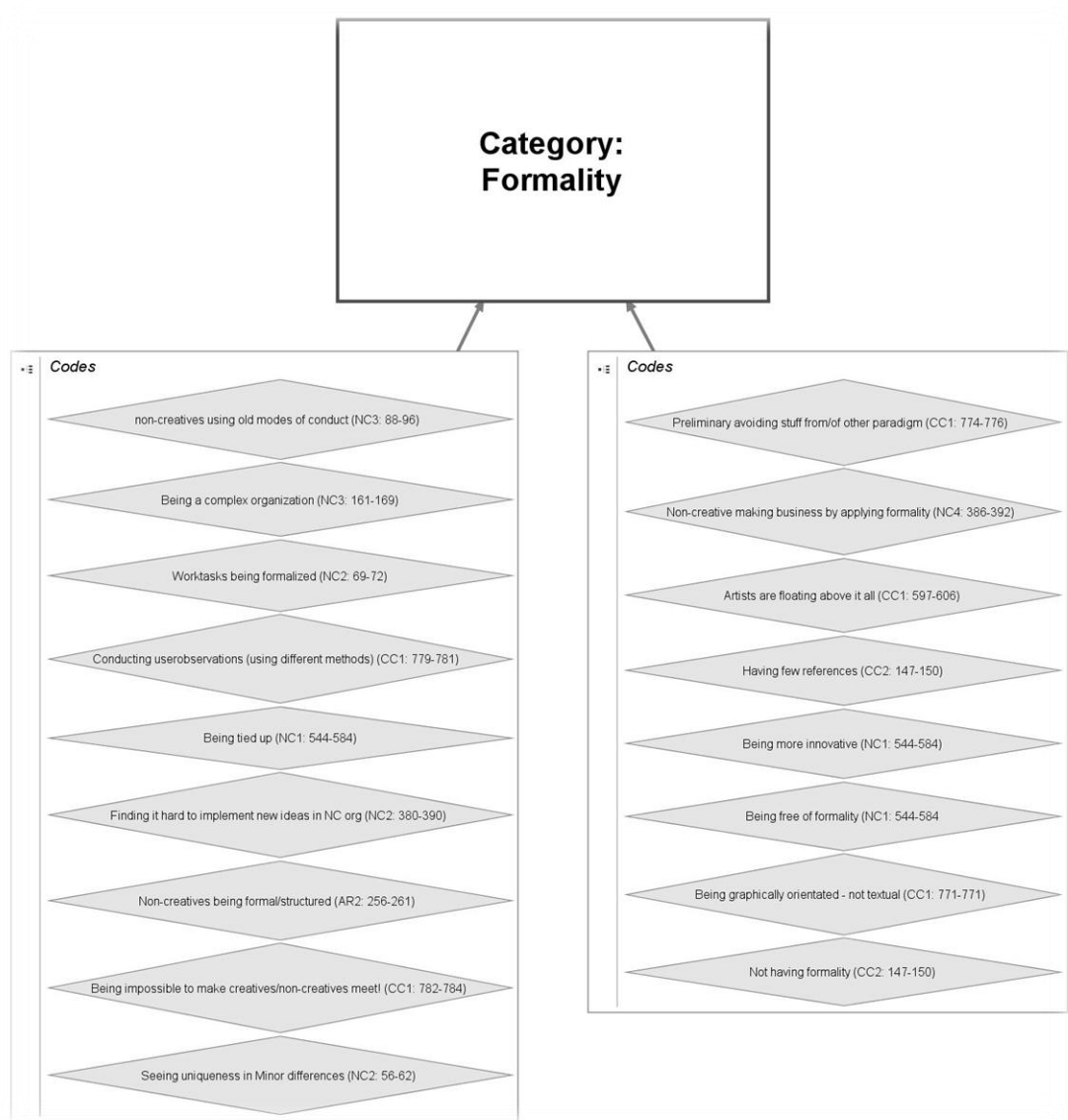
- The clustered codes represent the complete codes that make up a category.
- The codes arranged in columns are no different than the clustered figures. However, these figures have been divided between statements about “the other”. In other words we have arranged the codes in two columns as to provide our readers a quick overview of how the creative. And non-creative agents perceive of each other.

### 11.5.1 Figure: Tempo/Idea to action

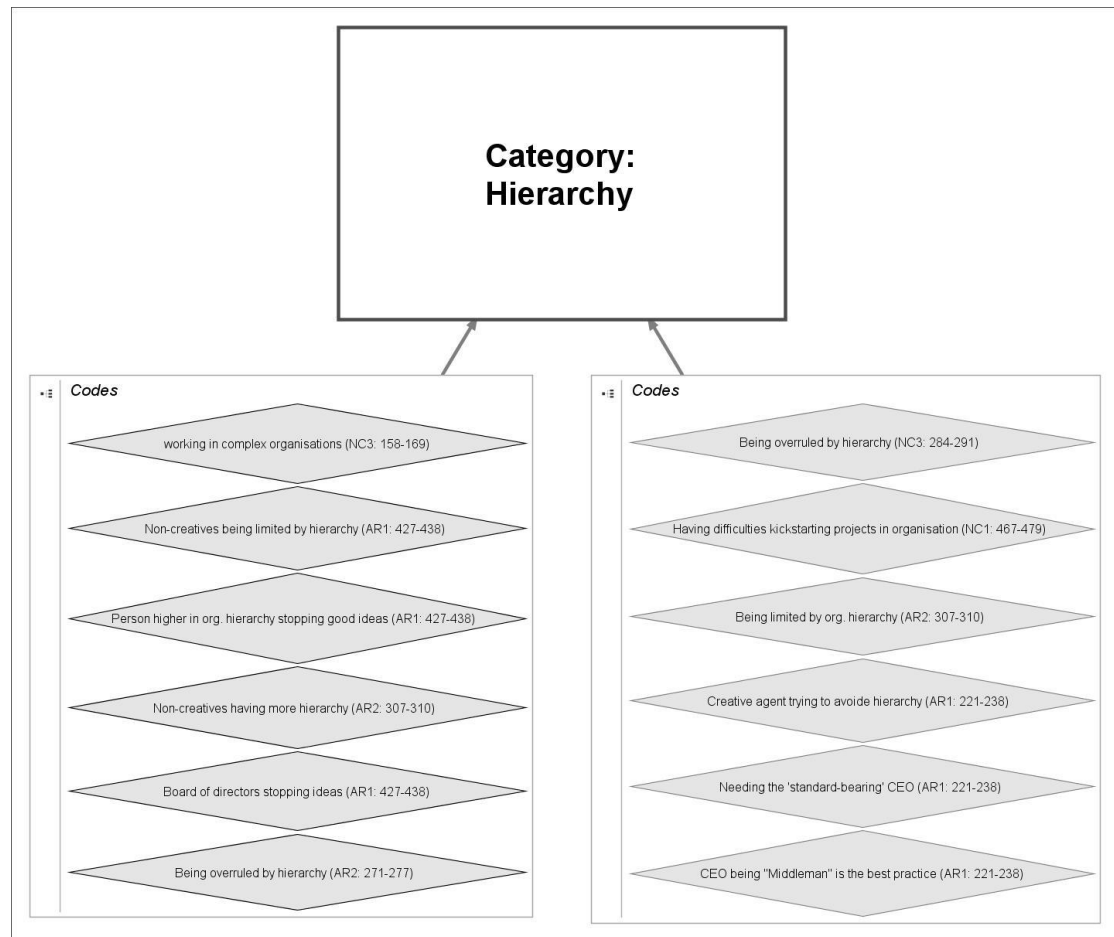




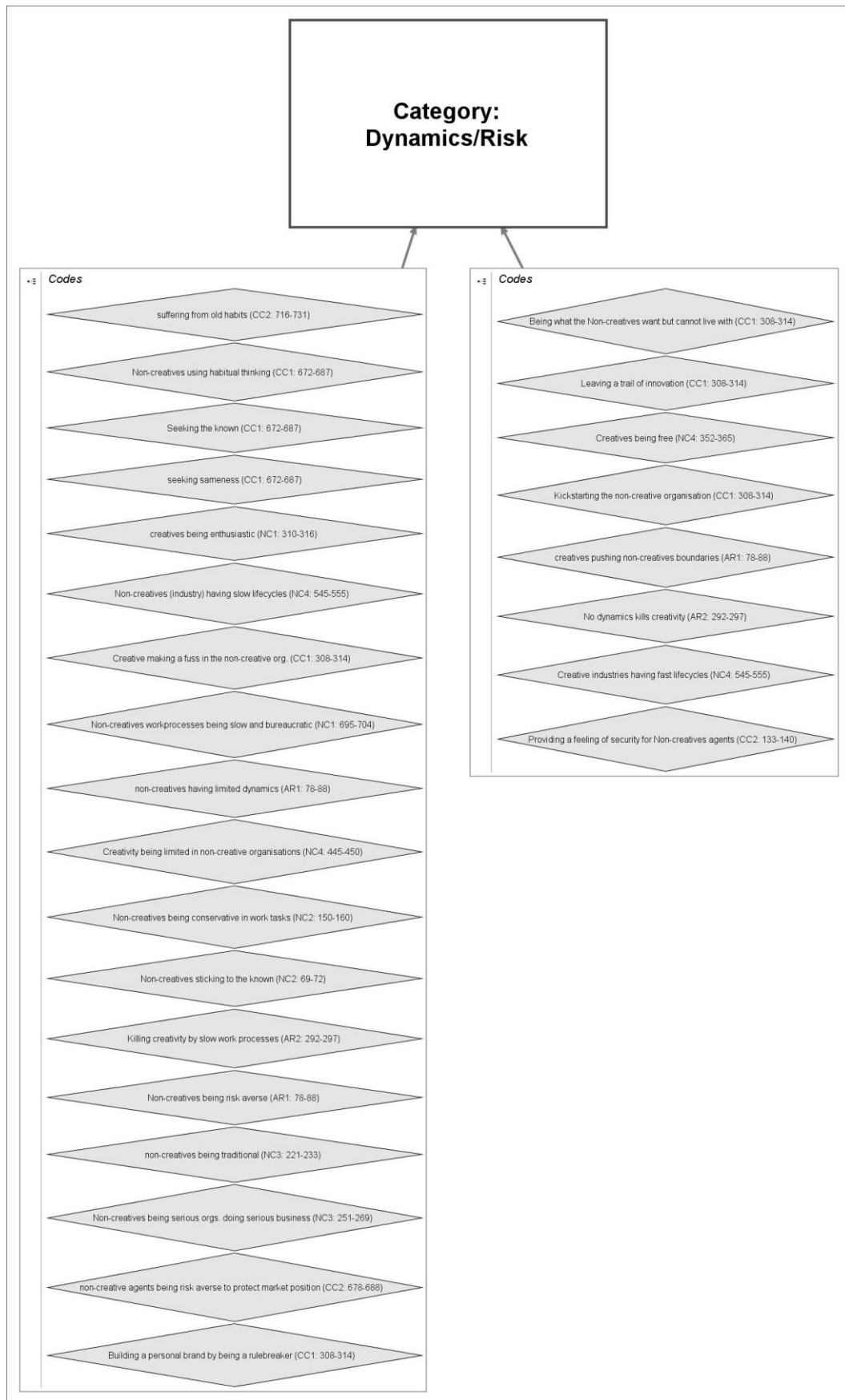
## 11.5.2 Figure: Formality



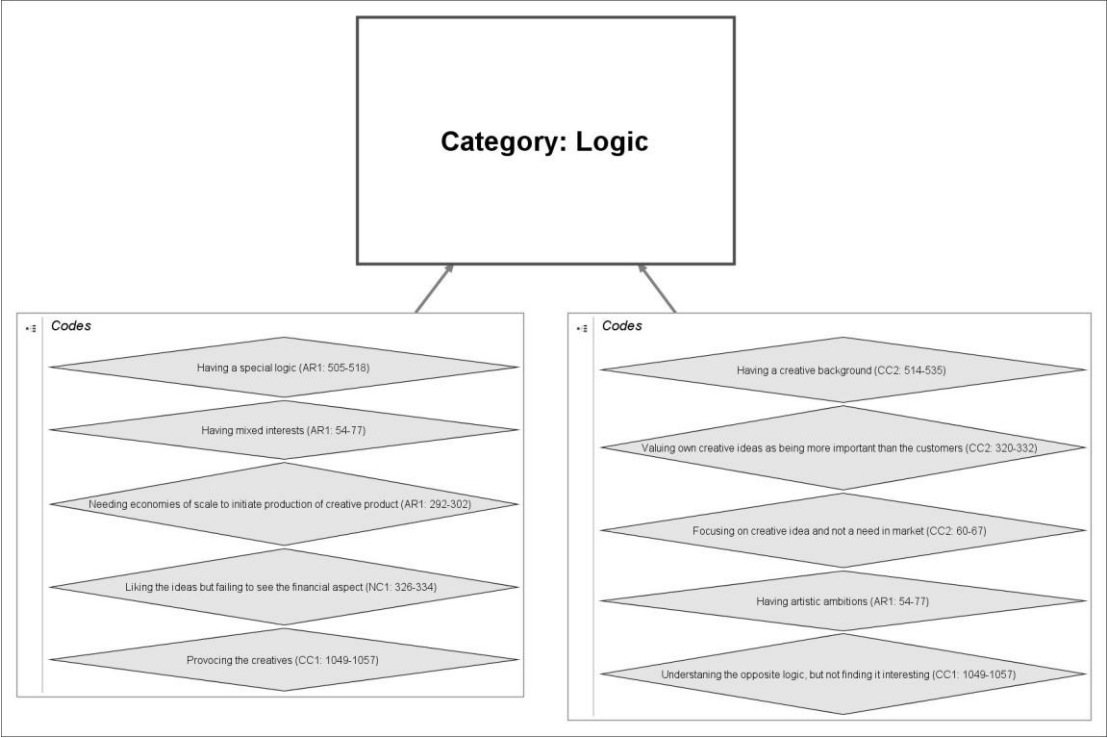
### 11.5.3 Figure: Hierarchy



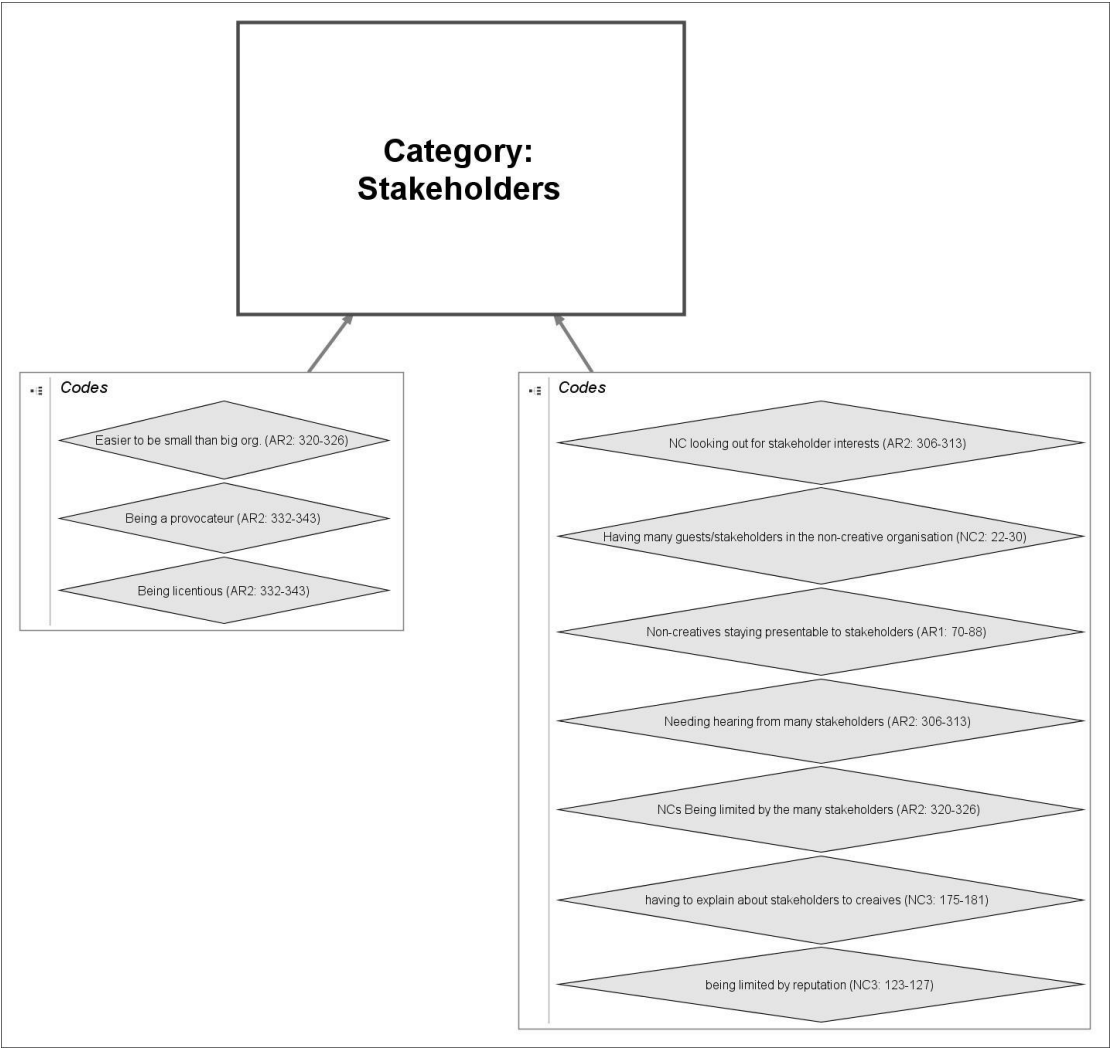
## 11.5.4 Figure: Dynamics/Risk



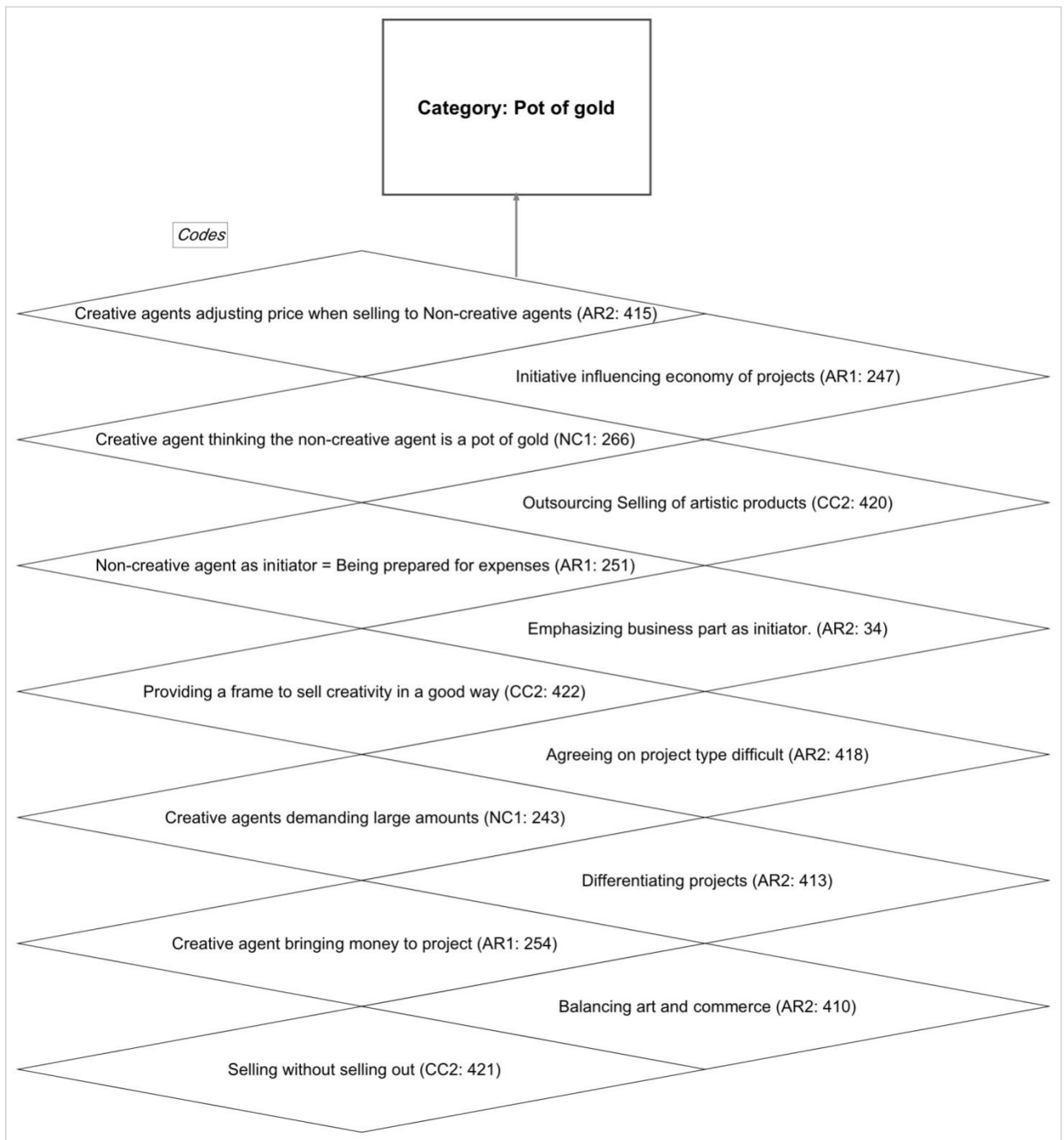
11.5.5      **Figure: Logic**



11.5.6      **Figure: Stakeholders**

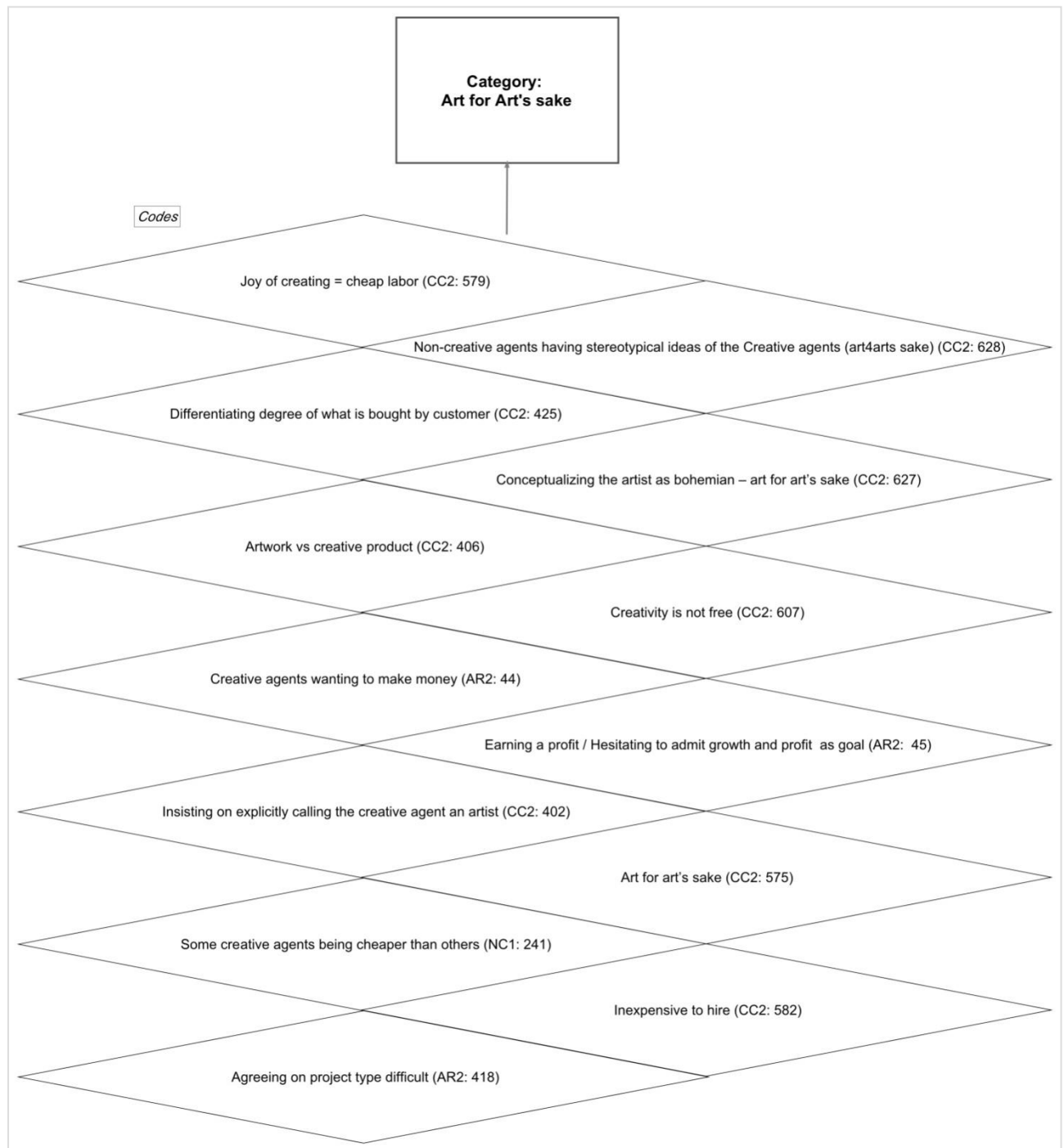


## 11.5.7 Figure: Pot of Gold



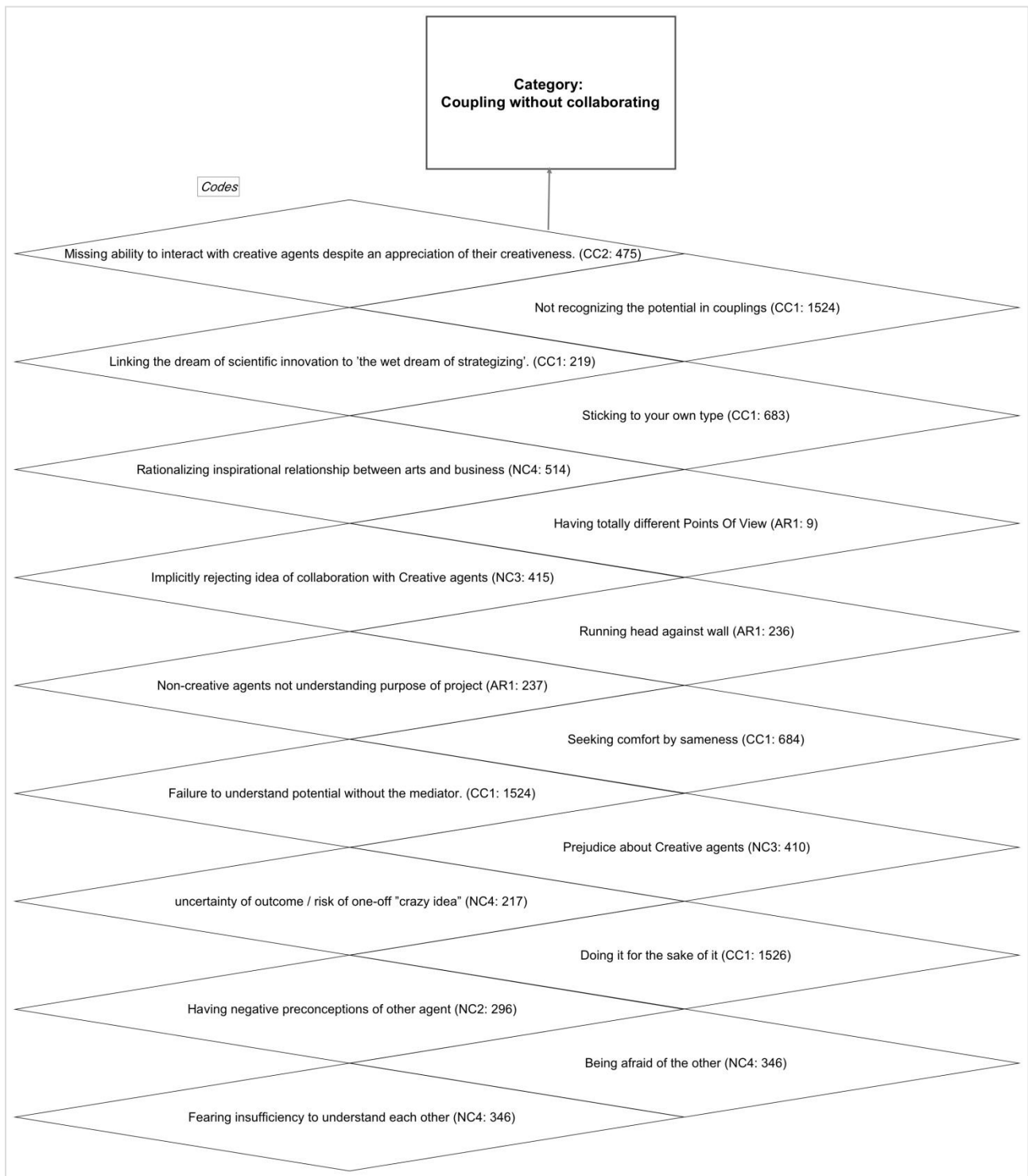
## 11.5.8

## Figure: Art for art's sake



## 11.5.9

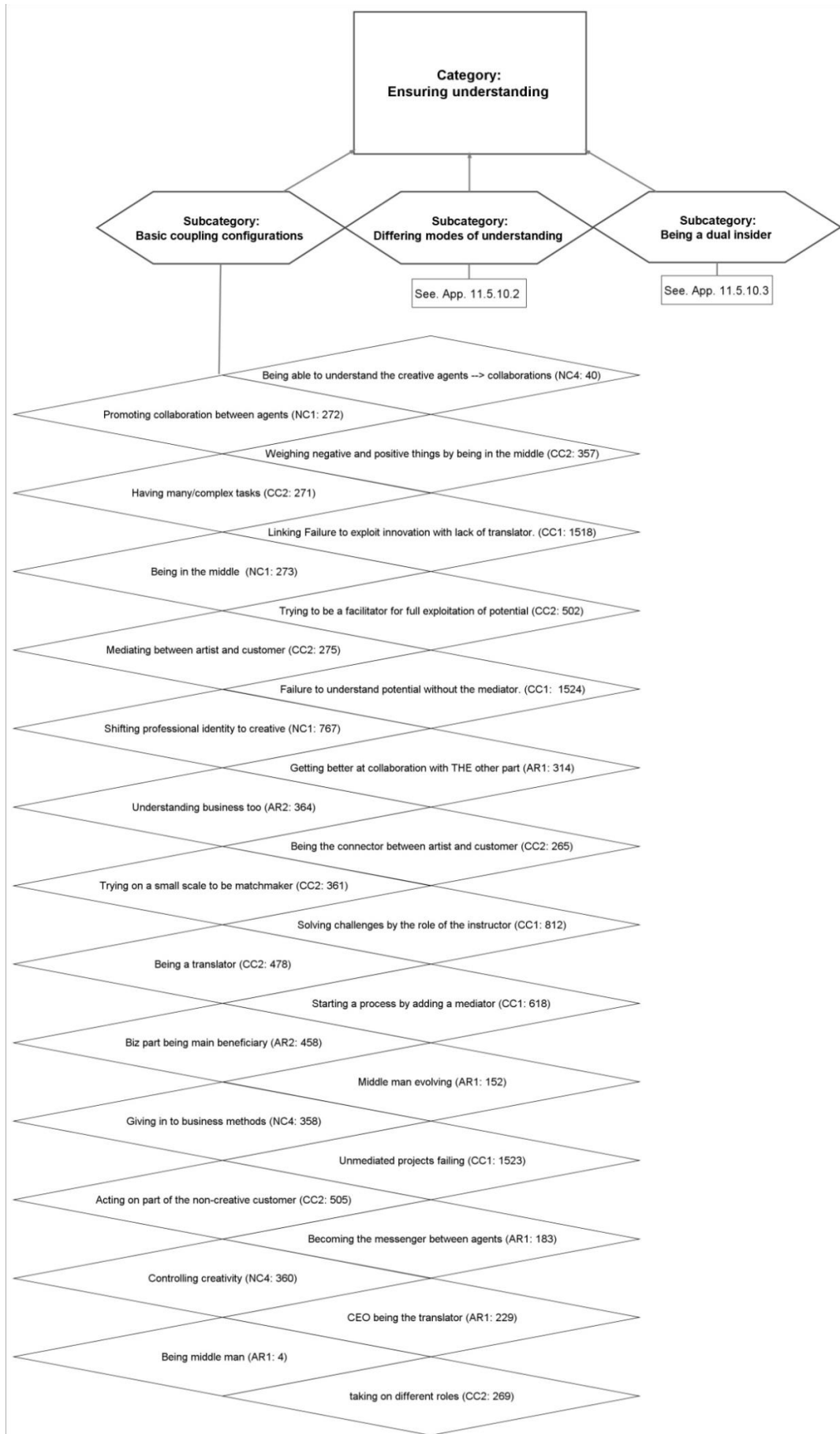
## Figure: Coupling without collaborating





## 11.5.10 Figure: Ensuring understanding

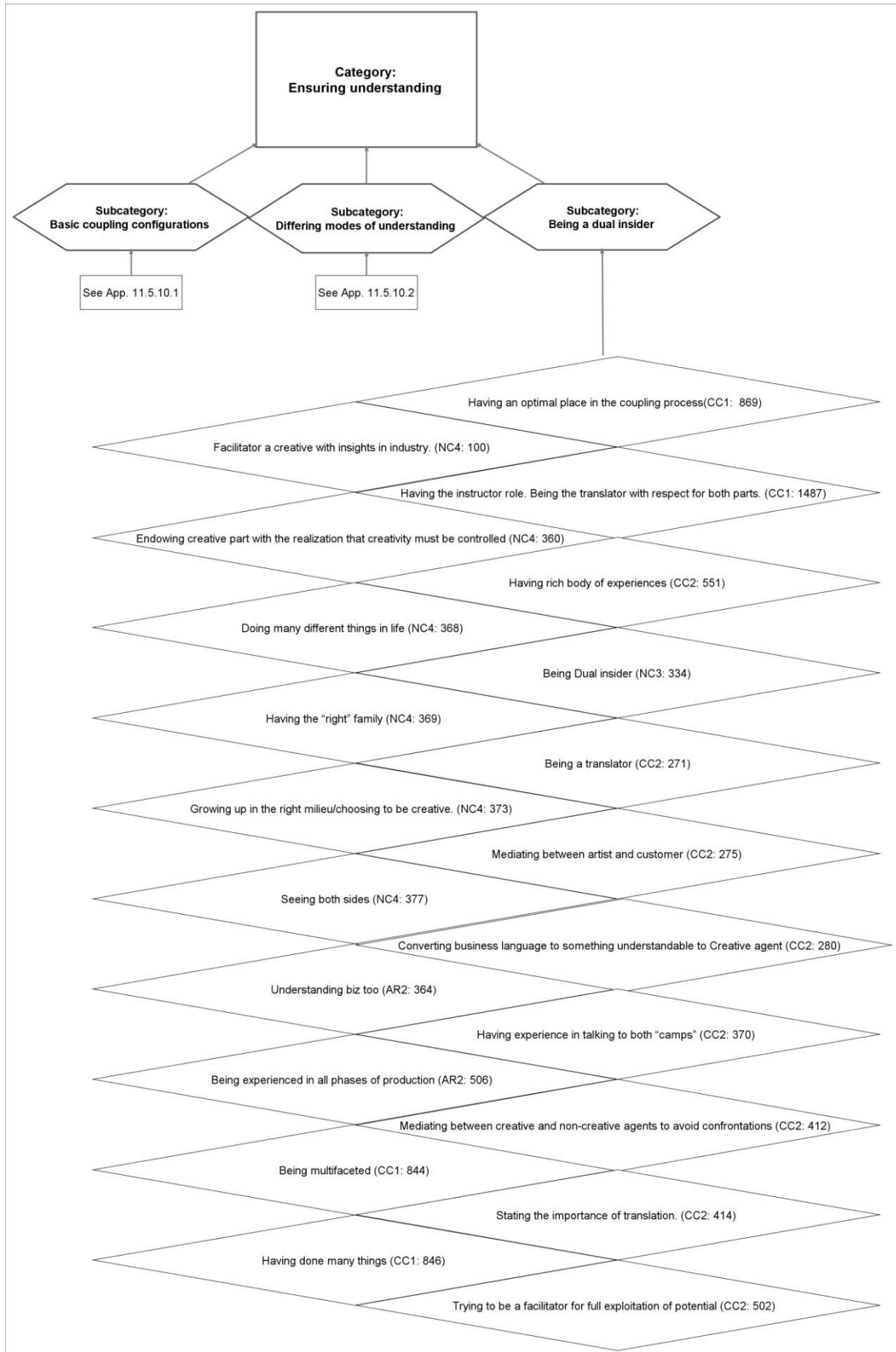
### 11.5.10.1 Basic coupling configurations



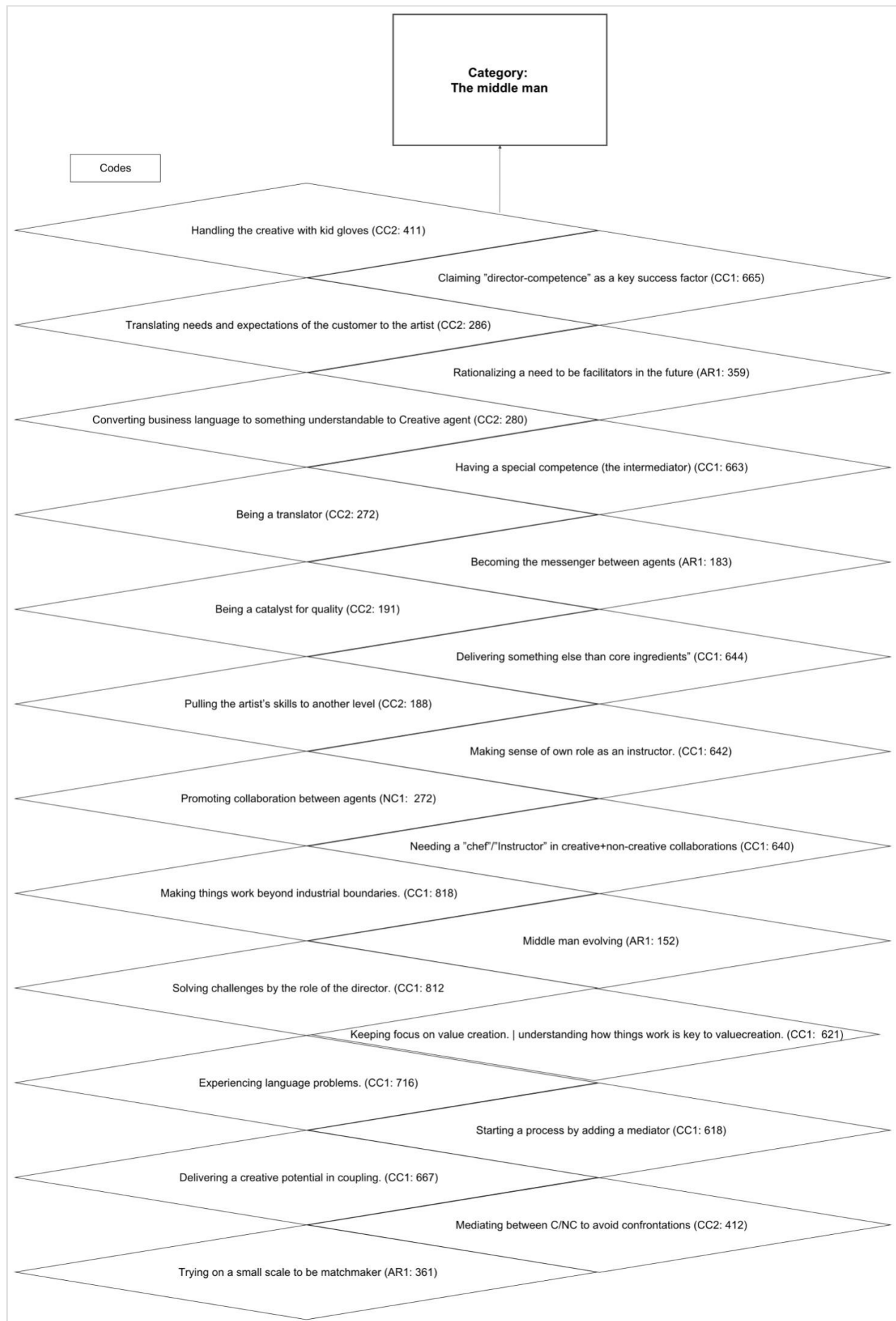
## 11.5.10.2 Differing modes of understanding



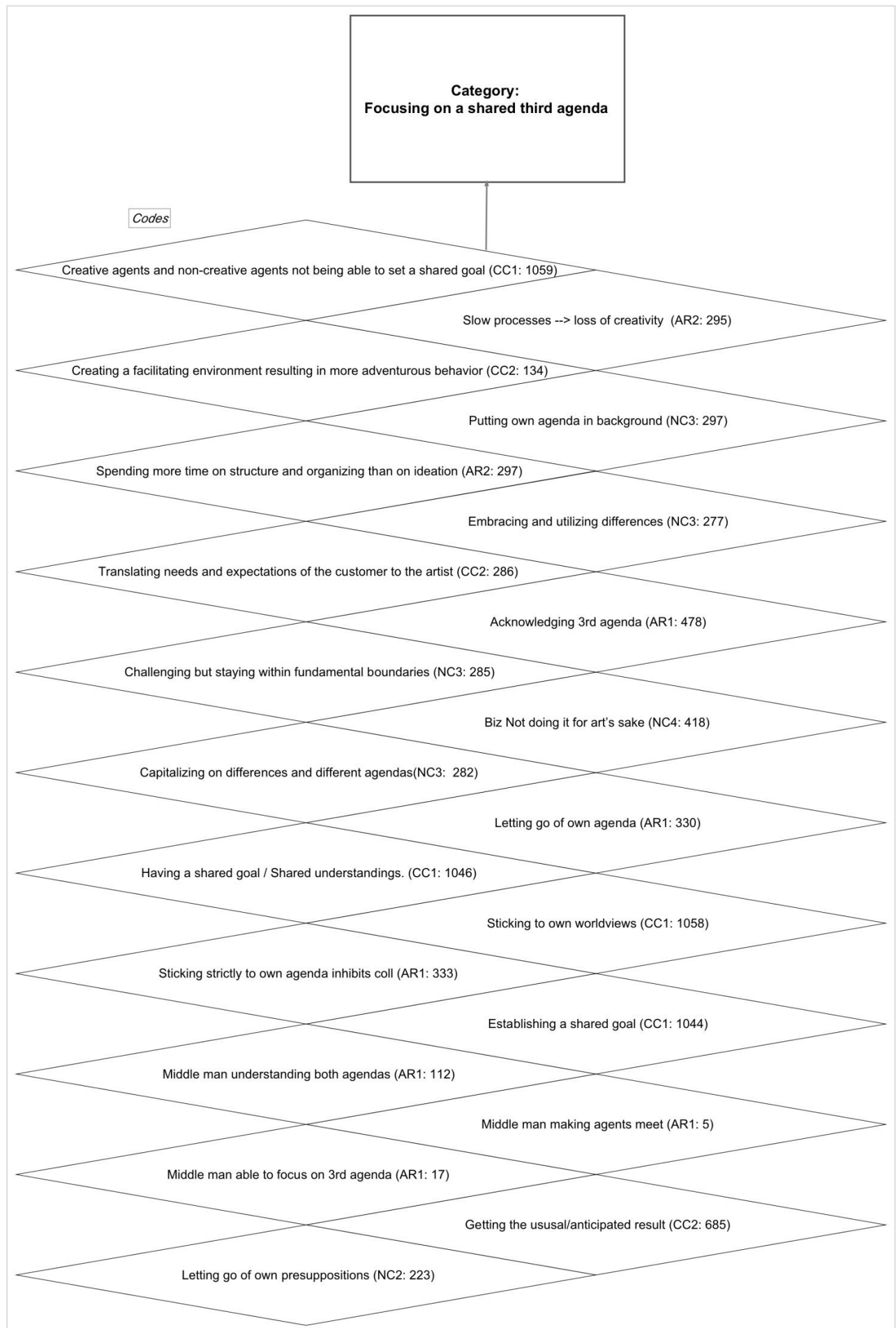
### 11.5.10.3 Being a dual insider



## 11.5.11 Figure: The middleman



## 11.5.12 Figure: Focusing on a shared third agenda



## **11.6 Appendix 6**

### **11.6.1 Table: Datta, 1991**

1. Approach to management problems (proactive vs. reactive and cautious).
2. Degree of emphasis on R&D and innovation.
3. Degree of reliance on external borrowings or stock issues vs. funds generated from operations to finance growth.
4. Riskiness of the investments pursued.
5. Usage of sophisticated analytical techniques in decision-making.
6. Importance accorded to the long-term planning of investments and their financing.
7. Reliance on personal experience and judgment rather than on experts.
8. Orientation in decision-making (long-term vs. immediate future).
9. Extent to which the communication channels are structured and access to important financial information restricted.
10. Emphasis on adapting freely to changing circumstances without too much concern for past practice.
11. Usage of sophisticated control and information system for tight formal control.
12. Getting personnel to follow formally established procedures.
13. Getting line and staff personnel to adhere closely to formal job descriptions.
14. Participation sought by top management in decision-making relating to product- or service-related decisions.
15. Extent of participation in decision making among top management relating to capital budgeting decisions.
16. Extent of participation in decision-making in decisions related to long-term strategic growth and diversification.
17. Strongly individualistic decision-making by formally responsible executive vs. group- oriented consensus decision-making.